ON THE STRUCTURE OF THE VP IN THE SPANISH OF WESTERN ASTURIAS: *TER* + THE (IN)VARIABLE AGREEMENT PARTICIPLE

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1. Introduction

The Galician language presents certain peculiarities in its use of *ter* + participle, allowing for variable agreement of the participle when preceding the verbal complement, yet prohibiting it when following the complement. Consider the following sentences from Santamarina (1974: 161):

(1) Teño lido muitos libros
(2) Teño lidos muitos libros
(3) Teño muitos libros lidos
(4) *Teño muitos libros lido

The consequences of such an auxiliary system upon spoken and written Spanish is an area yet to be examined. I intend to show that the regional variety of Galician spoken in Navia (Principality of Asturias, Spain), although rapidly disappearing, has affected an analogous and similar system in Spanish, thus creating forms that would be otherwise unacceptable in Standard Spanish. In essence, the Spanish spoken in this zone has, to a greater or lesser extent, apparently borrowed a syntactic structure of a neighboring sister variety.

Few have discussed these auxiliary structures in Galician[1] and Asturian in the literature, and even fewer have discussed the effect of the linguistic substrata. In other words, few have discussed what is referred to in Asturias as *amestao* or *mecío*, or a mixture of Spanish with the local variety. I will show that this mixing goes well beyond the standard lexical borrowing commonly attributed to languages in contact and then will propose a syntactic analysis for this phenomenon.

2. Auxiliary vs. lexical status of *tener*

Harre (1991) is one of the few, if only, extensive analyses on the uses of *ter/tener* + participle. Harre discusses the problematic nature of deciding and determining a verb's status as either auxiliary or lexical. Depending on its use in a determined sentence, a verb may be more or less grammaticalized. The problem remains where one should

[1] Uriagereka (1995) does discuss Galician, but I prefer to not discuss clitics in this paper, despite the fact that they are a related issue, a fact that Christina Schmitt (1998) well illustrates.

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draw the boundary line between lexical and auxiliary verb. Consider the following sentences from Harre (1991):

(5) Yo tengo un perro
(6) Este perro no tiene amo

In (5), *tener* expresses obvious possession, yet in (6) the dog is the subject and yet truly does not possess anything. In examples from Cano Aguilar's (1981: 96-106) semantic loss criteria, as cited in Harre (1991), one can see that the demarcation is indeed something more complex:

(7) Las derechas y las izquierdas… tienen cosas buenas y razonables
(8) No tenemos otro móvil que el egoísmo
(9) El túnel de castaños tiene cerca de dos kilómetros en línea recta
(10) Nuestro padre tiene ahora setenta y cinco años

Examples (5) through (10) are referred to by Cano Aguilar as 'estato-descriptivo', yet all convey a different sort of characteristic or quality that evades true possession. Cano Aguilar also points out availability, as in (11) and (12), yet *tener* may also bear the meaning of *sostener* (13) or *tomar*, as in (14) —all examples from Harre (1991: 17):

(11) Tienes todo el día para ir a la capilla
(12) Allí, a la mano derecha, tenía la verja de la casa por la que preguntaba
(13) Es como si tuviera sobre las espaldas una de las pirámides de Egipto
(14) Ten el libro que buscabas

Harre considers many methods of classification, ranging from lexical value considerations, to the purely diachronic, to word order, to clitic pronoun raising, to that of full paradigmaticity. Each method has its difficulties, and the author admits that "(o)ne seems to be left with the somewhat unsatisfying conclusion that there is no clear means of defining auxiliary status, and that all attempts to delimit the field must be based on a rather vague eclectic method which relies heavily on the choice made by the individual as to which criterion should be applied in which circumstances" (Harre 1991: 23-24).

Fernández Vior (1997) describes such expression in a variety of Galician (often referred to as 'a fala') found the Navia-Eo as one which "al igual que aquellas lenguas que no poseen formas verbales compuestas, presenta un número de perífrasis muy alto. Esto proporciona una riqueza de matices y permite expresar relaciones modo-temporales que las solas formas verbales no alcanzaban a cubrir en toda su extensión" (Fernández Vior 1997: 345).

2.1. *Ter* in Galician and Asturian

Much of the grammars on Galician and Asturian varieties deny the existence of periphrastic forms. In general, this argument is made in order to stress the difference between the auxiliary structures in Spanish and those in Asturian and Galician. One work, Cueto (1994), makes no such claim, explaining uses of *tener* as such:

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> *Dicimos que la llingua asturiana nun tien* ***tiempos compuestos*** *col verbu* haber*, pero en cambiu tienlos* ***col verbu*** **tener** *(como'l gallego y el portugués), y* ***tamién col*** **llevar**. *Faen tamién referencia al pasáu, a los actos y los fechos cumplíos nel pasáu. L'esquema d'estes construcciones compuestes ye'l siguiente:*
>
> ***presente*** **TENER / LLEVAR**
> **+**
> **participiu masculín singular del verbu conxugáu**

Some examples of these constructions (Cueto 1994: 57):

(15) Tengo ganao munches carreres
(16) Los tos hermanos tiénenme llamao coses mui fees
(17) Lleva comío más de tres platos
(18) Tenía-yos dicho que nun trabayaren tanto
(19) Esti añu lleven fecho poques carreteres, etc.

Denial of existence of periphrastic/auxiliary forms. Evidence to the contrary. Similarity with Portuguese.

2.2. Evidence from Spanish

Alicia Yllera, in her impressive work on Medieval periphrastic constructions in Spanish, documents the diverse uses of *tener* + *participle* and its evolution. Citing examples from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, she discusses the following former uses of possession: (20) parts of the body; (21) feelings and spiritual qualities; (22) of material objects; (23) of people; (24) durative, with the sense of retention, like the Spanish verbs 'retener,' 'guardar', 'mantener', 'llevar', etc.; (25) spiritual; y (26) in the sense of "una acción durativa o reiterada que no produce un verdadero estado, aproximándose al valor del perfecto con *tener* en portugués" (Yllera 1974: 288). She provides the following examples for each usage (Yllera 1974: 285-288):

(20) Guareció de la mano que *tenié trasecada* / Soltóse la lengua que *tenié* mal *travada*
(21) la voluntad agora la *tengo* bien *pagada*
(22) Que de los sus miraclos los diezmos non avemos / Lo que saber podiemos *escrito* lo *tenemos*
(23) Sacó su cuchellijo qe *tenié amolado*
(24) Tarssiana a las duenyas que el *tenie conpradas*
(25) *tenié* en la cabeza corona muy *onrrada*, / de suso una impla, blanca y muy delgada / a diestro e siniestro la *tenié* bien *colgada* ("llevar")
(26) el conseio que ella *tenie asmado* de fazer
(27) Bien creo que *tengo fecho* en tal manera que non puede durar gran amistad entre los dos amigos

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Yllera admits that, "(e)n el siglo XIII se echaron las bases del empleo auxiliar de tener con participio" (*ibid*., 289). In fact, she states that completely periphrastic uses of *tener* were more the exception than the rule.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the evolution of *tener* continued: "se decide a la vez que se extiende su uso a casos antes desconocidos, llegando, a fines de siglo, a alternar con *haber* con escasa diferencia" (Yllera 1974: 291). During this time, one can find reiterative acts described with the past participle:

(28) de los grandes yerros que tu *tienes fecho* (Yllera 1974: 292)

In the fifteenth century, *tener* triumphed over *aver*, thus becoming the principle verb used for possession. Alternation between the two was moreso a stylistic difference. Yllera makes note of the appearance of the constructions *aver (de)* + inf. y *tener (de)* + inf., forms that still exist and the similarities between these and auxiliary constructions, which leads, according to Yllera, to a construction "con participio invariable según el modelo de *aver* + pp." (Yllera 1974: 293). She illustrates this with the following examples from the period:

(29) El rrey de Persia *tenia çercado* la cibdat onde hera obispo…de los grandes yerros que tu *tienes fecho* (Yllera 1974: 292)

Yllera mentions various authors that have dealt with the periphrastic qualities of *tener* + *participle*, yet concludes stating that "en la lengua moderna, *tener* no ha alcanzado el empleo como auxiliar para el perfecto que presenta en el asturiano, gallego, o portugués. Difiere de las formas con *haber* por su carácter resultativo, su especialización con verbos transitivos y la menor gramaticalización de auxiliar" (*ibid*.).

One work that examines Verb Phrase syntax is Zagona (1988), which compares the English and Spanish Verb Phrase. Her only mention of *tener* is in a footnote, where she states that "***tener*** does not function as an auxiliary or semi-auxiliary" (Zagona 1988: 158).

In a previous experiment in Gupton (1998), I found that Peninsular Spanish speakers accepted more uses of *tener* + participle than Latin American speakers, yet these were not the 'regional' uses, unique to the northwestern portion of the peninsula as mentioned in Harre.[2] These regional uses include the variable agreement participle. Since there are obvious difficulties with defining the status of (what I will, regardless, call) the auxiliary verb, perhaps it is easier to define the structure by its participle, when not in agreement, and adjective, when in agreement with the verbal complement. This is not such an easy proposition either, as one can see in the examples from Navia below.

2.3. Evidence from Navia

The evidence I gathered from Navia may suggest a rather greater extent of grammaticalization of *tener* than is usually supposed. The examples, which were put to grammaticality judgements, were taken from actual conversation and from grammars on

[2] This could be related to the more frequent use of the present perfect *haber* + participle among peninsular speakers, a widely attested fact.

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varieties spoken in Asturias and Galicia, the Navia-Eo region in particular. These samples were then translated as best possible into Spanish in order to test the acceptability[3] of what would otherwise be 'dialect' examples. Among the data are examples with masculine verbal complements, in which the status of the participle/adjective is debatable:

(30) En esta zona se tiene plantado mucho trigo
(31) Tengo avisado a mi hermano de mis planes
(32) Tiene considerado el plan de los jóvenes
(33) José tiene descubierto un hueco en el techo
(34) Tienen clasificado este vino "superior"

Each of these sentences could arguably be transformed, placing the 'participle' after the complement, therefore making a case for the agreement between object and adjective:

(35) En esta zona se tiene mucho trigo plantado
(36) Tengo a mi hermano avisado de mis planes
(37) Tiene el plan de los jóvenes considerado
(38) José tiene un hueco en el techo descubierto
(39) ?? Tienen este vino clasificado "superior"

The one exception to this transformation is (39), which is arguably better with 'como' inserted, as in (40). In any case, the adjective may not follow "superior":

(40) Tienen este vino clasificado como "superior"
(41) *Tienen este vino "superior" clasificado

In example (42), 'estado' might be interpreted to be in agreement with 'mucho tiempo', but this is impossible, as can be seen in (43), in which it may not be placed following:

(42) ?? Tengo estado mucho tiempo en mi pueblo
(43) * Tengo mucho tiempo estado en mi pueblo

Example (43) is arguably very different in comparison with other time statives with *tener* such as "tengo muchos años en este pueblo" or "llevo mucho tiempo en mi pueblo", which do not contain the participle.

Many of the above sentences are potentially more or less iterative. It appears from the data that the more iterative an action could possibly be, the greater its acceptance among the subjects:

(44) ?? Tengo lavado cinco platos
(45) ?? Me lo tenías dicho cuando ella lo supo
(46) ?? Mi hermano tiene publicado muchos artículos

[3] A sentence is deemed 'acceptable' if accepted by at least half of the subjects (total of 17). Those examples which were deemed acceptable by eight of the subjects are given status of ??. Less than eight are treated as marginal at best and are marked as either ? or *.

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(47) ?? Mi hermano es juez. Tiene juzgado varios pleitos

(46) and (47) both describe events that, although not repeated, are durative. They are actions that have been going on until the present moment, even including the present moment. This use is quite similar to the use of *ter* + participle in Portuguese. Sentences (44) and (45), however, seem to not force iteration. Schmitt (1998) illustrates that, in Portuguese, the past perfect never forces an iterative reading. (44), then, might seems to be a bit of an anomaly, however, one could arguably have washed five plates on various occasions, as in (48), although only partially acceptable:

(48) Tiene comido más que tres platos en varias ocasiones.
(49) Tengo visto a esta mujer muchas veces.
(50) ¿Esta mujer? Sí. La tengo visto pasar por aquí mucho.

In (49) and (50), the participle may not agree with the object if it is adjacent to the verb, yet it may not be moved either, which would result in the nonsensical "*Tengo a esta mujer vista…". The sentences below offer more complexities:

(51) Tengo ganado muchas carreras
(52) Tus hermanas me tienen llamado cosas muy feas
(53) Me tiene llamado varias veces para que le ayude
(54) Les tenía dicho que no trabajaran tanto
(55) Tiene estudiado todas las asignaturas para los exámenes
(56) Tengo comprado cuatro cuchillos de esa tienda de la esquina

Among these sentences, (51), (55), and (56) may be transformed. Example (51) is the only one that may be transformed without changing the resulting meaning of the sentence. The transformation of (55) switches the focus from the process to the final state of having the study entirely completed. When one transforms (56), the speaker is suddenly not necessarily the person who bought the knives. Sentences (50), (52), (53), (54) may not be transformed.

3. Arguments for the borrowing of syntactic structures

Cases of intense contact have led to well known occurrences of structural borrowing as well as phonological borrowing. One of the best known cases of this is the Balkan Sprachbund, where a "long period of widespread back-and-forth migrations of small groups, caused by the Turkish invasions, resulted in mutual bilingualism and multilingualism rather than the one-way bilingualism that is common, though not universal, in two-language situations" (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 95). Thomason and Kaufman cite examples as well of structural borrowing between typologically similar languages or dialects, such as Bombay Hindi and Marathi, in which word order, question particles and past participles have been affected, and standard Serbo-Croatian and its Čakavian varieties. In the case of Serbo-Croatian, these "dialects on which standard-dialect pressure is strongest have undergone (or are undergoing) changes that upset the old regularities and replace them with the standard ones" (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 31). Although most instances of borrowing involve the lesser prestige

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language borrowing characteristics of the prestige language, the "flaw in the prestige claim is that it can hardly be true for cases of interference through shift when the shifting group is a true substratum (rather than an adstratum or superstratum). In such cases the dominance relationship is clear, and the interference features are sure to be nonprestigious, if not definitely stigmatized. Moreover, prestige often seems to be irrelevant in cases of borrowing as well. Certainly, this is true of dialect interference". (Thomason and Kaufman: 44) The question remains: Has Spanish in this area borrowed a feature from (Astur-)Galician? Or has (Astur-)Galician borrowed a structure from Spanish, which in turn, has resurfaced in the Spanish spoken in the region via borrowing? Is it as simple as this or something more complicated? It could feasibly be that (Eonavian-) Galician borrowed the tendency to use *haber* as an auxiliary and that the Spanish of the region borrowed the extended use of *tener* and the variable agreement participle. Were it thus, it would not be a case of borrowing of structures, but of certain features. Yet this is exactly what happens in cases of borrowing: "(C)lose structural similarity in verb inflection permitted the borrowing of Bulgarian inflectional verb endings into Meglenite Rumanian." (Weinreich 1955: 32 as cited in Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 98). Cueto (1994) treats this phenomenon when, after a discussion of sociolinguistic factors that have great influence in the region, he discusses *amestao* or *mecío*, a linguistic hybrid, which he describes as particularly alive in cities. He provides some concrete examples (Cueto 1994:112):

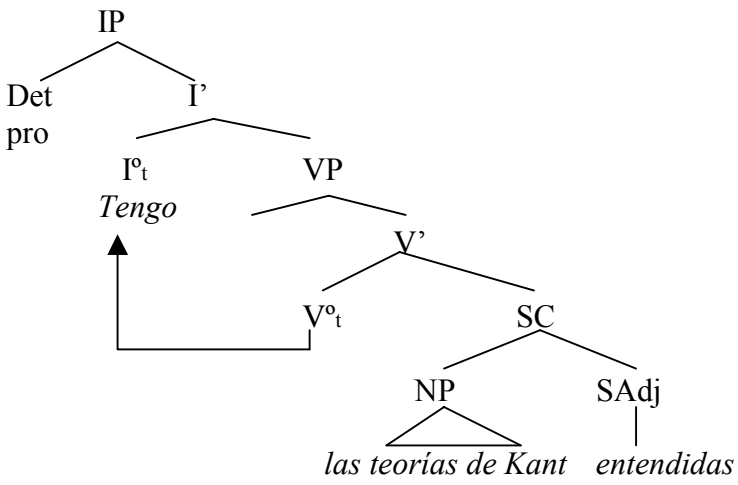
(57) (ast.) Díxome que morrió la muyer de Pepe.
(58) (cast.) Me ha dicho (dijo) que ha muerto la mujer de Pepe.
(59) (mecío) Díjome que murió la muyer de Pepe.
(60) (ast.) Nunca fai lo que-y manden na escuela.
(61) (cast.) Nunca hace lo que le mandan en el colegio (en la escuela)
(62) (mecío) Nunca haz lo que-y manden ena escuela, etc.

He states that "esti híbridu tampoco nun ofrez estabilidá. Paez ser namás qu'un estáu intermediu que, cada vez más rápido, va aceptando rasgos del español y perdiéndolos del asturiano" (Cueto 1994: 112), despite the fact that one could argue the other way as well, especially in regions such as Oviedo, which, due to massive worker influxes from other regions, is more 'castellanizado'. The regions of the Eo-Navia region differ in that they have little population influx, and are in fact, suffering severe depopulation such that it is estimated that in 30 years many villages will suffer complete depopulation and desertion. This is a region that is poorly communicated with its autonomous region's capital Oviedo via roads and telecommunications. This is a region that has historically been agricultural and has been better communicated with Eastern Galicia (Vigo, in particular) and has suffered these depopulations at the hand of technology and progress. The young generation moves away to attend the university in Oviedo, attempting to ensure a chance for prosperity in the coming century, a century that will be dominated by English and Spanish.

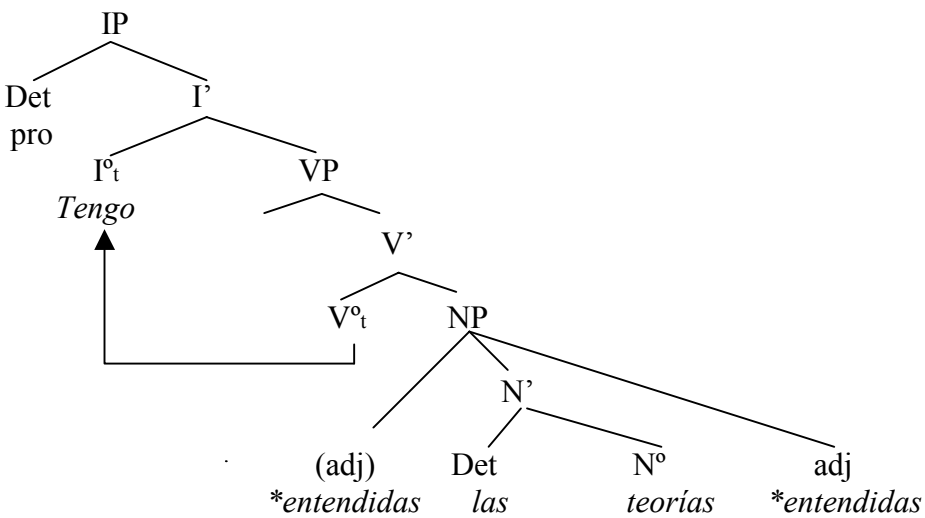
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4. Previous analyses (mine)

(63) Participle as Small Clause



(64) Participle as adjunct of NP



The problems with (64) are multiple. If Kayne's antisymmetry (1994) is correct, right adjunction is impossible, one of the main possibilities here. As well, if the adjective *entendidas* was placed to the right, then one would have to adjunct *de Kant* as well. The determiner (Det), unable to also be placed at the same level as the adjuncts, must be placed at the same syntactic level as the nucleus (N°), thus violating endocentricity. At

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any rate, the NP is overburdened. Such a quantity of subordinate elements, all at the same level would begin to indicate any possible word order, which is simply not true.

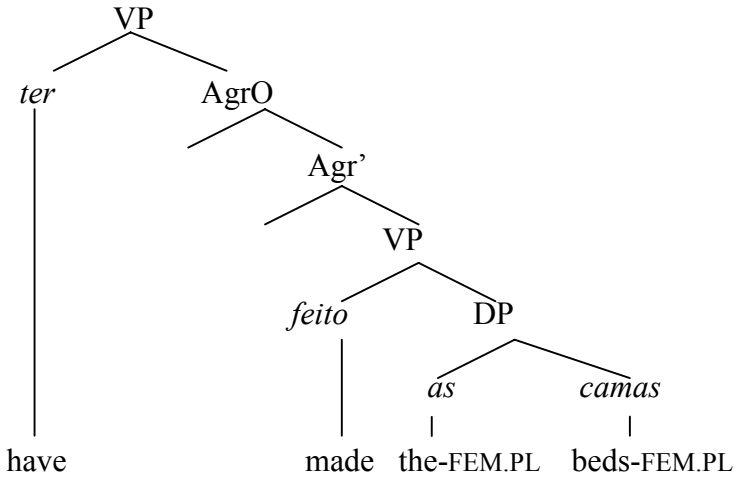
The representation in (63), which utilizes the small clause is effective, but not near as elegant as Schmitt's proposal for agreeing participles in (66), below.

4.1. Current analyses

Current analyses have been performed by Schmitt (1998) for Portuguese for non-agreeing participles (65) and agreeing participles (66):

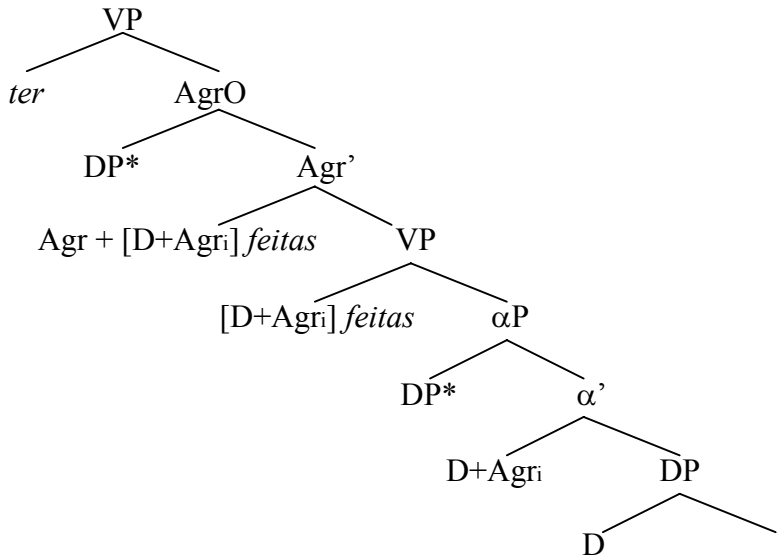
Non-agreeing participles

(65)



Agreeing participles

(66)



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4.2. Notes on Passive Tranformations

Harre notes that passive transformation with *tener* is not possible in Spanish. She states that "in general *tener* must combine with a past participle of a transitive verb, and thus cannot combine with the past participle of *ser* to form a passive construction." (Harre 1991: 30), thus rendering the following sentences ungrammatical:

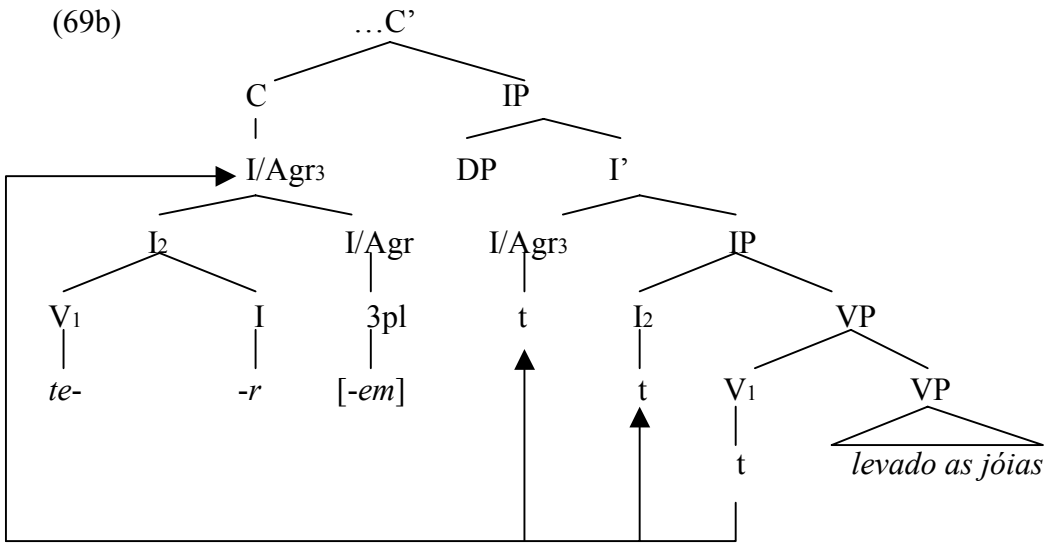
(67) * La carta tiene sido escrita (por Paco)
(68) El libro tiene sido mandado (por Juan)

Raposo (1992) provides the following transformation for the passive personal infinitive in Portuguese for the following sentence:

(69a) *A polícia pensa terem os gatunos levado as jóias.*

The syntactic diagram for the significant portions is as follows (from Raposo 1992: 234):

(69b)



While a passive transformation is apparently not possible for *ter* + participle in the present, it is possible for most all other corresponding *haber* tenses in Spanish. While, in Portuguese, "parece ter sido roubado o queijo" is more common than "tem sido roubado o queijo"[4], a rarity in spoken language —"foi roubado o queijo" is simply the more common practical choice. It appears that (Astur-)Galician permits this transformation of passive (examples from Vegadeo). This may be the cause or a result of the more widespread use of *tener* —a chicken or the egg sort of dilemna. It is unknown if such passive constructions are possible in the Spanish of the region or in *amestao*/*mecío*. Fernández Vior (1997), however, sheds some light on the situation in his description of the speech of Vegadeo. He states that the passive is not so common in

[4] The difference in meaning should be noted. 'Tem sido roubados os queijos' = 'People have been stealing cheese (lately).'

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Galician, yet goes on to mention two puzzling constructions in this variety of Galician also spoken in the region Navia-Eo (a fala), which are formed with *has ter* + participle and *habías ter* + participle. These two, which apparently combine the two auxiliaries, are described rather cryptically as follows: "la anterioridad a un hecho posterior al origen" and "la anterioridad a un hecho posterior a una referencia" (Fernández Vior, 307), respectively. He clarifies this via two sentences in different sentences:

(69) Cuando cheguemos **comèron** todas as castañas
(70) Xuráronnos que **recollerían** todas as cousas prá hora de xanta

He then states that "(l)as dos últimas frases podrían haberse resuelto mediante las perífrasis citadas" which "prueban cómo se desatiende el que la anterioridad esté referida al origen o a un hecho simultáneo o posterior al origen" (Fernández Vior 1997: 308):

(71) Cuando cheguemos **han ter comido** todas as castañas.
(72) Xuráronnos que **habían ter recollido** todas as cousas prá hora de xanta.

The true passives in Vegadeo are only described as follows (Fernández Vior 1997: 344):

> *"(S)e trata de una construcción poco frecuente en nuestra zona, pues el hablante prefiere las construcciones en las que el agente figura como sujeto de la oración. A pesar de ello, su uso es mayor que en gallego, donde se evita si se puede. Podemos encontrarla en frases en las que ni siquiera el castellano optaría por ella."*

Some examples of these structures are given below (Fernández Vior 1997: 344):

(73) Eu non son nacida de alí.
(74) Convèn nun ser collido por mala sazón.

4.3. Proposed analyses of the data from Navia

Schmitt's analyses (1998), above, appear to be perfectly acceptable for this structure in the Spanish samples taken from Navia, given that they display behavior more similar to analagous structures in Galician and Portuguese. There is a structure for each type of 'participle', as well as acceptable nodes for a pre- or post-posed (in relation to the adjective) verbal complement. The nuances of passive transformations do not seem to affect this analysis, in fact, they tend to facilitate it.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have shown that the Spanish samples gathered in Navia, formed with tener + participle, display features similar to analogous features both in Spanish formed with *haber*, and in Portuguese (and Galician and its varieties) formed with *ter.* The properties and differences between the two auxiliaries and their much-varied uses create a complex issue, which is not easy to sort out. The analysis found in Schmitt (1998)

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appears to be an adequate if not preferable analysis for the data from Navia, which defies classification in Spanish. These structures are clearly a hybrid possessing characteristics of both Spanish and Gallego-Portuguese auxiliaries. Given that the Schmitt analyses are based on clitic left dislocation analyses, it would be worthwhile to examine the behavior of Galician clitics in relation to participles, and to compare these results with its varieties found in the Navia-Eo region. As well, it would be interesting to see the differences and similarities in the context of Richard Kayne's analyses of Romance participle agreement[5]. In addition, it would be interesting to investigate the placement of the agreeing verbal complements in the context of Cinque's (1995) hierarchical analysis of adverb placement. It will be of great interest if further grammaticalization of *tener* takes place in the Spanish spoken in the Eo-Navia region of Spain. It is expected that this phenomenon will die out, as there are progressively fewer speakers of Eonavian Galician. Much of this, for better or worse, depends on the people and government of Spain, for it is the speakers who will decide the fate of their tongue – the problem is that this is not always true.

[5] I chose not to discuss the issue in this paper, mainly because the agreement of the participle is not dependent on a left-dislocated anticipatory clitic.

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