Auxiliary Selection and Aspect in Bangla[1]

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ABSTRACT

The possibility of relating auxiliary selection (<u>have</u> or <u>be</u>) and Case (e.g. the Ergative/ Absolutive parameter) suggested in Mahajan (1994) is critically examined and an alternative based on the aspectual structure of the clause is suggested. Specifically, the paper argues against the position taken in Mahajan by showing that Bangla can be shown to be underlyingly SVO, which in addition, accounts for cases where inanimate possessives in "<u>have</u>" sentences contain an optional P (obligatory in Hindi) appearing over and above the subject case, a construction, Mahajan's theory fails to account for. Further, it is shown that the failure of P-incorporation can be maintained even in an SVO order if there is an intervening head between the verbal and the auxiliary heads. Finally, such a head is shown to be motivated by aspect and genericity.

1 Introduction

Most research in auxiliary selection is concerned with the equation <u>have</u> = <u>be</u> + empty P. The empty P originates as a sister to the subject and can incorporate into the adjacent auxiliary in SVO languages but not in SOV/ VSO languages. In verb peripheral languages, this results in the retention of an unincorporated <u>be</u> form of the verb, the P surfacing, Mahajan (1994) suggests for Hindi, as the Ergative Case in the perfective or oblique Cases for other non Case-assigning predicates. Such an account fails to account for at least the following: (i) non-ergative SOV languages selecting <u>have</u> (German and Dutch) or <u>be</u> (Non-ergative South Asian languages) (ii) SVO languages with <u>be</u> but no ergativity (Slavic and Hungarian) (iii) VSO with <u>be</u> but no ergativity (Celtic), etc.

Apart from these problems, it is shown in this paper that syntactically this account is not applicable if verb final languages are underlyingly SVO. The syntactic claim made in this analysis reconfirms the view that the possession relation is encoded in the syntax (rather than

lexically). The P-incorporation analysis is further made irrelevant for inanimate possessives in

"<u>have</u>" sentences which contain P ('near' in (1), optional in (1a), obligatory in (1b)):

(1) a. John-er   (kache)   tin-Te   gaRi   ache   (Bangla)
       John-GEN near   three-CLA car   be
       'John has three cars'
   b. John-ke paas   tin   gaaRi   hai   (Hindi)
       John-GEN near   three   car   be.PRS.3
       'John has three cars.'

Here, I will suggest that a prepositional PP shell structure, similar to a vP structure, derives (1)

with a series of leftward XP movement in keeping with the leading idea that head-final

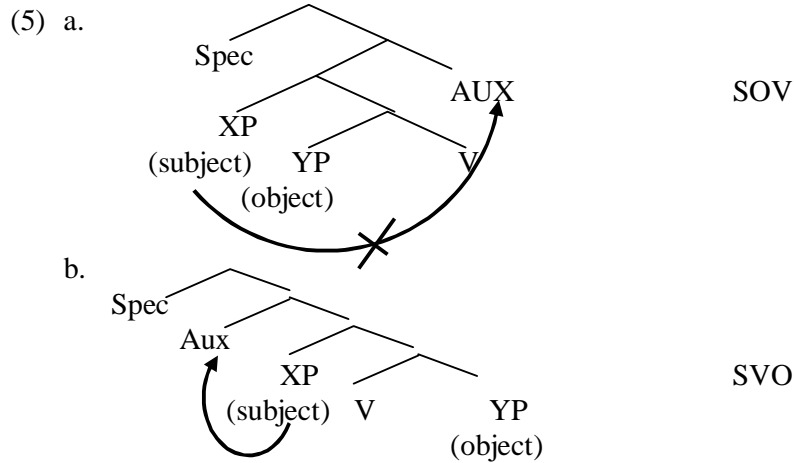languages are perhaps underlyingly head-medial.

2 Mahajan's system and its problems

Let us first look at Mahajan's (1994) account of auxiliary selection in SA languages, making

them <u>be</u> rather than <u>have</u> languages. Mahajan wants to relate (2) and (3) below through his

account.

(2) Ergative Case marking patterns are found only in verb peripheral languages (SOV and

      VSO). Verb medial languages are not Ergative

(3) The auxiliary <u>have</u> is (usually) not available in Ergative languages

His solution is based on Kayne (1993), among others, which proposes that <u>have</u> = <u>be</u> + empty

P/D. The empty P in Mahajan, as in Kayne, originates as a sister of the subject. The difference

between the two language types is explained by the directionality parameter as shown in (5) for

the Hindi and French examples in (4).

(4) a. raam-<u>ne</u>   voh   kitaabeM   paRhii   <u>thii</u>
       Ram-ERG those   book.FEM.PL read.FEM.PRF   be.FEM.PST
       'Ram had read those books'
   b. Paul les <u>a</u> repeintes
       Paul them has repainted
       'Paul has repainted them'

(5) a.

Spec
        AUX   SOV
XP
(subject) YP   V
           (object)

b.

Spec
   Aux
      XP   V   YP   SVO
      (subject) V   (object)

Given that adjacency is crucial for incorporation, P to Aux incorporation will fail for Hindi as in (5a). The P, which fails to thus incorporate, shows up as a Case marker on the subject. Ergativity in Hindi is thus a matter of Hindi being SOV. The absence of <u>have</u> in SOV languages also follows from this since it is only P-incorporated <u>be</u> that shows up as <u>have</u>. Realization of P is limited to the context of the verb being of a non-Case-assigning type. Apart from the perfect participle, in Hindi, dative subject construction (with a psych predicate) and possessive constructions also include a non-Case-assigning predicate:

(6) a. raam-<u>ko</u> sar dard hai   (Dative subject)
        Ram-DAT head ache be.PRS
        'Ram has a headache'
    b. siitaa-<u>kii</u> do bEhnẽ   haĩ   (Genitive subject)
        Sita-GEN two sisters   be.PRS.PL
        'Sita has two sisters'

This, essentially, is the main point of Mahajan's theory.

2.1 Problems with Mahajan's account

However, there are problems with this account. The neat typological results obtained in through presence versus absence of P-incorporation, in reality, is not so neat as Mahajan himself points out. The following is a list of some of the problems:

(7) Exceptions to the P-incorporation theory

(i) There are some non-ergative SOV languages like German and Dutch which nonetheless select the auxiliary <u>have</u> rather than be. Likewise there are Non-ergative SA languages like Bangla among many IA languages, Dravidian and most Tiebto-Burman languages which select <u>be</u>. That is, there is no clear typological bifurcation in terms of word order and ergativity.

(ii) There are a few SVO languages like all the Slavic languages and Hungarian which select the auxiliary <u>be</u> but do not show any ergativity.

(iii) At the other spectrum of verb peripheral languages, there are VSO languages like Celtic which select <u>be</u> but do not show any ergativity.

(iv) The P-incorporation account also does not have anything to say about V2 languages, some of which display ergativity, like Kashmiri.

(v) Finally there are Ergative languages like Basque which select the <u>have</u> auxiliary.

Most of the problems of this account are due to the fact that it is based on directionality of movement, i.e., verb final languages show rightward Head movement whereas verb non-final languages must move the head to the left. However, if the LCA (Linear Correspondence Axiom) of Kayne (1994) shown to hold then an analysis based on directionality will have problems. Is it then possible to develop an alternative account?

3 Leftward XP Movement in Bangla

First, I would like to submit that by now there is enough evidence to show that Bangla may really be underlyingly verb medial. Here, I will report only two special cases to make this point, one from the realm of nominal structures (DP) and the other from clausal structures.

(I) Evidence from DPs

Within the Bangla DP, it can be shown that there are several instances of phrase-internal phrasal (i.e., XP) movement. I will briefly review evidence involving specificity, Kinship Inversion and Gerunds for this purpose.

(i) Specificity related movement

It has been shown convincingly in Bhattacharya (1998 et seq) that a specific NP with the Bangla DP moves left across the Numeral-Classifier/ Quantifier-Classifier head (italicised below) as in (8b). Consider the following examples in this connection.

(81) a. ami du-To   boi dekhechi   Non-specific Order: [NUM-CLA NP]
          I   two-CLA book seen.1
          'I have seen two books'
     b. ami boi du-To   dekhechi   Specific Order: [NP NUM-CLA]
          'I have seen the (specific) two books'

The leftward movement of the specific NP boi in (8b) can be shown in the simplified tree diagram as in (9).

(9)
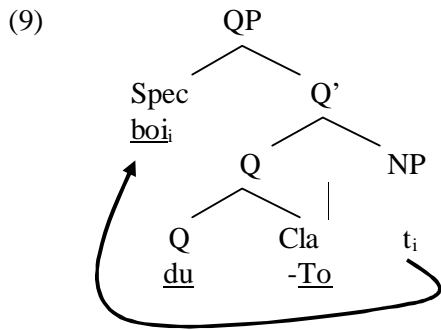
(ii) Kinship Inversion

Kinship Inversion is displayed by some kinship terms moving leftward to obtain a specific meaning (to do with affection, for example) in these NPs:

(10) a. amar   bhai   unmarked order: POSS   NP
          mine   brother
          'My brother.'
     b. bhai   amar   marked order: NP   POSS
          'Brother mine.'

(iii) Gerunds

Finally, Gerunds in Bangla show movement of an internal argument (naTok here) of the predicate to the left of the predicate head (lekha here) in (11b):

(11) a. amar   lekha   naTok   (adjectival participle)
         my   written   play
         'a play written by me'
     b. amar   naTok$_i$ lekha   t$_i$ (gerund)
         my   play   writing
         'my play writing'

(II) Evidence from clausal structures

Among the evidence from the clausal domain, I will briefly mention two, one interrogatives and the other je-internal sentences (i and ii, respectively).

 (i) Wh-clausal pied-piping

In Simpson & Bhattacharya (1999, 2003), it is claimed that a Wh embedded clause pied pipes from a post-verbal position to a pre-verbal position as shown in (12). This implies Wh-movement in Bangla which is nevertheless well disguised due to unusually high position of subjects in this language.

(12)   Subject [$_{CP}$ …wh…]$_i$ V   t$_i$

The pre-verbal positioning of the Wh-phrase implies strong preference for the Wh-phrase to have wide matrix scope which should be unavailable in the post-verbal position. This is indeed supported empirically:

(13) a. ora [$_{CP}$ ke aSbe   (bole)] Suneche   Sub [$_{CP}$ ..wh..] V
         they   who come.FUT.3 COMP hear.PAST.3
         i. Who have they heard will come?
         ii. They have heard who will come.
     b. ora Suneche   [ke aSbe]   Sub V *[$_{CP}$ ..wh..]
         they hear.PAST.3   who come.FUT.3
         i. *Who have they heard will come?
         ii. They have heard who will come.

Furthermore, in (14), the lowest CP must have undergone long Wh-CP movement to the matrix clause since it is not an argument of the matrix verb think and therefore can only have reached the post-subject position via movement:

(14)   tumi   [ke   cole   gEche]$_i$ bhabcho meri   bollo t$_i$
        You   [who   left   gone]   think.2 Mary   said
        'Who do you think Mary said left?'

(ii) Clause-internal COMP

Finally, in Bhattacharya (2000b,c, 2001a and 2002) it is shown that je-internal clauses (i.e., where the complementiser je is not in the initial position of the embedded clause) cannot remain in the post-verbal position and must move to a pre-verbal position within the matrix clause:

(15) a. amra   jantam   [je jOn-er   ma   asbe]   Unmarked order
         we   knew   that John's mother come-will
     b. [jOner je ma (je) aSbe]$_i$, amra jantam t$_i$
     c. amra [jOner je ma (je) aSbe]$_i$,   jantam t$_i$
         '(as for) the fact that John's mother will come, we knew it'

Note also the fact that (15b,c) necessarily get a topicalised meaning as a result of this movement. Thus like Wh sentences, je-internal sentences move leftward to a pre-verbal position for a reason.

Having shown that Bangla does not behave like a typical verb-final language and is in fact underlyingly verb-medial, note that Mahajan's account of the difference between these two typologically differing languages in terms of selection of the auxiliary (be or have) as shown in (5a,b) does not hold anymore. In the following section, I show that there are empirical reasons for abandoning the P-incorporation story.

4 pP

The P-incorporation analysis is further made irrelevant for inanimate possessives in "have" sentences which contain an optional P ('near' in (16a) is optional but obligatory in (16b))

essentially showing that possessions are existentials with human location, an intuition captured in Freeze (1992).

(16) a. JOn-<u>er   (kache)</u>   tinte   boi   <u>ache</u>   (Bangla)
         John-GEN near   three   book   be
     b. JOn-<u>ke   paas</u>   tiin   kitaabẽ   <u>hai</u>   (Hindi)
         John-GEN near   three   books   be
         'John has three books'   (English)

Further, for existentials, whereas French uses <u>have</u>, English, Bangla and Hindi use <u>be</u>. This too is problematic for the P-incorporation account as English is typologically different from Bangla/ Hindi.

(17) a. Il y <u>a</u> un livre sur la table   (existential)   (French)
         It there has a book on the table
         'there <u>is</u> a book on the table'   (English)
     b. tebal-<u>ke   upor</u>   ek kitaab   <u>hai</u>   (Hindi)
         table-GEN on   one book   be
     c. tebil-<u>er   upore</u>   ek-Ta boi   <u>ache</u>   (Bangla)
         table-GEN on   one-CLA book   be

However, with a head-medial account pf PPs, these sets of data can be easily accounted for in a uniform manner. A prepositional <u>p</u>P shell structure (proposed in Dasgupta (1999) in a different context), similar to a <u>v</u>P structure, derives (16 and 17) with a series of leftward XP movement in keeping with the leading idea that head-final languages are perhaps underlyingly head-medial. The simplified template for (16a) is shown below:

(18)   [[$_{PP}$ jOn$_i$ -er t$_i$] kache t$_{PP}$]

This approach when applied to <u>have</u> languages for deriving the Benveniste connection may perhaps ascertain that "SVO" languages involve more Head movement, a consequence of LCA that has been around since Cinque (1996) and Bhattacharya (1999a) but somewhat ignored.

5 Asp in Bangla

The preceding two sections have shown that not only the P-incorporation theory of auxiliary selection as expounded in Mahajan (1994) is untenable, but the head-medial nature of Bangla

forces us to look for an alternative theory of auxiliary selection. In this section, I discuss the possibility of actually maintaining the P-incorporation theory within a head-medial structure, only if P-incorporation can be blocked, not through non-adjacency as in Mahajan, but through some other means. Positing an Asp head between the Aux and VP, I will claim, is one such course to take. In what follows, I will only look at Gerunds and Conjunctive Participle in Bangla to motivate the Aspectual head above the Bangla VP.

5.1 Gerunds in Bangla

Following Grimshaw (1990), gerunds can be thought of as denoting complex event nominals (CEN). CENs have an obligatory argument structure and the event structure they project can be broken down into aspectual sub-parts. For example, an accomplishment event like John breaks X can be broken down into an activity such as John's breaking X and a resulting state such as X is broken. Thus gerunds can be seen as composed of aspectual subparts.

Now the structure of gerund DP proposed in Bhattacharya (2000a), has exactly one such Asp head between the nominal (=D) and verbal (VP) part of the gryphons-like gerund structure which houses the gerund morpheme (w)a/no.

5.2 Conjunctive Participle

Although the Conjunctive Participle (CP) affix seems to be widely used in IA languages, it has not received much attention in the literature. Some examples follow:

(19) a. radha-ke por-e bollam   (Bangla)
          Radha-DAT read-CP said.1
          'I told Radha after reading (it)'
     b. raadhaa bahaar aa-ke   (Hindi)
          Radha   outside come-CP
          'Radha, having come outside'
     c. tithe jaa-uun   (Marathi)
          there go-CP
          'having gone there'

Thus the light verb seems to be sheltered by the CP. Hook (1973) argues that the relation of compound to a simple verb is an aspectual one, with the compound expressing completion of

an action. Thus, for Hook, the LV is an aspectual auxiliary. Since the meaning obtained in the above examples is one of completion, Bhattacharya, Hany Babu and Sahoo (2001, 2002) identify the shell as aspectual.

Consider further the perfective in Malayalam which is different from the above compound verb structures in that it is made up of a CP with the vector and auxiliary acting as the perfective morpheme:

(20)   ezhut<u>i</u>-ir-unnu   (Malayalam)
        write.CP-PRF-PST
        'has writtten'

The stem is made up of the root plus a particle –<u>i</u> (in bold), the CP, followed by the Perfective auxiliary <u>ir</u> which itself is derived from a verbal root meaning 'to sit' in contemporary Malayalam. In the Bangla and Oriya equivalents in (21) and (22) below, the affixes in bold are followed by the copular form:

(21) a. likh<u>e</u>-ch**-i**   (Bangla)   b.   likh<u>ta</u>-s**-i** (Eastern Bangla)
(22) a. lekh<u>i</u>-(a)ach**-i** (Oriya)   b.   likh<u>u</u>-(a)ach**-i**   (Oriya)
         write-PERF-AGR   write-PROG-AGR
         '(I) have written'   '(I) am writing'

The implication here is that originally these verbal complexes denoted a sequence of states of events like {<u>writing</u>} and {<u>sitting</u>/ <u>being</u>}. The conjunctive particle is actually a reflex of a union of states of events. Since these particles are affixal (and are therefore functional heads) and denote completion of an event, we take these to contribute to the aspectual information of the verbal complex. The particle thus constitutes an aspectual outer shell of the V as follows:

(23)   [$_{AspP}$ [$_{Asp'}$ CPrt] VP]

Given the presence of a head between the Aux and the VP which houses the base-generated position of the subject, the P, generated under the subject, cannot incorporate into the Aux crossing the Asp head.

10

6 Genericity and Auxiliary Selection

In this section, I will look at the connection between genericity expressed in the sentence and the position/ status of the auxiliary selected. By doing this, I hope to show that genericity reconfirms the existence of the Asp head above the VP and the derivation of a certain marked position of the auxiliary is then better accounted for by such a structure.

Lawler (1973) proposes that sentences like <u>Fido chases cars</u> are to be represented as involving quantification over events, the events in this case being Fido chasing cars. This sentence is true only if Fido has chased cars on x number of occasions. Alternatively, one can think of a system where set membership gives the quantification reading, that is, if Fido belongs to the set of things that chase cars, then the sentence is true. Habituals can thus be thought of as generic (as they can be paraphrased with <u>always</u>, Chierchia 1995). Thus an aspectual force ensues a certain kind of modality.

In Bangla a <u>be</u>-less sentence (without <u>ache</u>/ <u>thake</u> in 24) can be either existential or generic (i.e., it obtains a habitual reading):

(24)　　jOn kolkata-y (ache/ thake)
　　　　John calcutta-LOC be/ stays
　　　　(i) 'John is in Calcutta'
　　　　(ii) 'John lives in Calcutta'

The generic modality can be understood in terms of the Asp head encoding modality. The following section, furthermore, shows that "obligational" modality is also aspectual.

6.1 Obligation is Aspectual

Bhatt (1998) pointed out that <u>have</u> has an Obligational Construction:

(25)　　John has to drive tonight

In South Asian languages it takes the form: V+ing be$_{FUT/PRS}$

(26) a.　JOn-ko　　　jaa-naa　hai　　　　　　　　(Hindi)
　　 b.　JOn-ke/-er　je-te　　hObe　　　　　　　(Bangla)
　　　　 John-DAT/GEN go-INF　　be.PRS(Hindi)/FUT(Bangla)　　　　Bhatt (1998)

For Bhatt, modality of the clause is located not at <u>have</u> but at an empty M head which selects a VP. However, since we can accommodate modality within an aspectual theory, we can do without an M head.

Other uses of <u>have</u> also support the aspectual analysis. Consider the following in this connection, where (27) roughly translate as (28) in Bangla:

(27) a. have it!
     b. have a go!
     c. have a look!

(28) a. nie   nao   (Bangla)
           take.CP   take.2
     b. ceSta   kOro
           try   do.2
     c. dekhe   nao
           see.CP   take.2

In all these cases, in Bangla using a light verb (LV) is a strong option. It is well known that light verbs convey aspectual information (see section 5) as in the following:

(29)   kore-phele-che
          do.CP-drop.CP-has
          '(he) has done it (up)'

Here a perfective or a telic reading is obtained.

Bhatt also notes the similarity between the following pair:

(30) a. raam-ko phal khaa-naa   hai   (Hindi)
          Ram-DAT fruit   eat-GER be-PRS
          'Ram has to eat the fruit'
     b. raam-ko phal khaa-naa   caahiye thaa
          Ram-DAT fruit eat-GER   should be-PST
          'Ram should have eaten the fruit'

In Bangla this equivalence is captured as follows:

(31) a. radha-ke phOl khe-te hObe   (Bangla)
          Radha   fruit   eat-INF be.FUT
          'Radha has to eat a fruit'
     b. radha-<u>r</u> phOl   kha-<u>wa</u> ucit
          Radha-GEN fruit   eat-GER   needed
          'Radha should/ must eat fruit'

Bangla obligatorily uses Genitive on the subject and a gerund predicate in the case of overt modal. Also, the meaning obtained is like a "future" habitual, that is, the sentence states that Radha must eat fruit in future on a regular basis. Both these notions are captured in a structure with an aspectual shell and a generic interpretation of aspect. The overt modal lacks a [AFFECTED] feature and therefore is stranded in the lower VP. The difference may be attributed to the difference in event types as in nouns. The matter of the subject case is determined by the nature of the predicate. Generally, the Genitive is obtained in nominal contexts (as in the gerundial in (31b)) and the dative in an infinitival context.

6.2 Left dislocation (LD)

Finally, in this section, it is shown that the aspectual shell structure above the VP also accounts for certain marked word orders obtained in Bangla as in the following where the SVO structure with the Aux is actually available on surface:

(32) a. Jon-er   ache   boi
        John-GEN be   book
        'As for John, it is a book that he has'
    b. chele   du-To-r   ache boi
        boy   two-CLA-GEN be   book
        'As for the two boys, it is a book that they have'
    c. *du-To   chele-r   ache   boi
        two-CLA   boy-GEN   be   book

Notice that the meaning obtained has both a topicalised as well as a clefted component. An account of this data implies the assumption that definite subjects in Bangla are left-dislocated. Le us see how this can be worked out.

The typology of the resumptive pronoun on which is based various Left-Dislocated (LD) structures is as follows (Riemsdijk & Zwarts 1997):

(33) a. The man I admire <u>him</u>   (HTLD)   (English)
    b. De Hollanders, <u>die</u> zijn te flegmatiek   (CLD)   (Dutch)
       'The Dutch, they are too phlegmatic'
    c. Al mare, <u>ci</u> siamo già stati   (CLLD)   (Italian)
       to the-seaside there have.1 already been
       'To the seaside, we have already been there.'

This typology can easily accommodate LD null <u>pro</u> languages like Bangla:

(34) <u>chele-Ta</u>$_i$,   <u>pro</u>$_i$ Radha-ke dekhlo
      boy-CLA,   Radha-ACC saw
      'the boy, saw Radha'

A'-minimality effect test ascertains the status more clearly:

(35) a. [kon   boi-Ta]$_i$ chele   du-To   t$_i$ poRlo   +def/specific
         which   book-CLA boy   two-CLA   read
         'Which book the two boys read?'
     b. ??[kon   boi-Ta]$_i$ du-To chele   t$_i$ poRlo   -def/specific

Since definite subjects are left dislocated (and indefinites by definition are bad topics which explains (32c)), for (32a), the suggestion here is that first the object moves out of AspP to a preverbal focus position followed by movement of the remnant AspP to a sentence topic position as in the case of (31) earlier:

(2)   [$_{TopP}$ [$_{AspP}$ jOner ache t$_{boi}$] … boi $_{t_{AspP}}$]]

The derivation also implies that so-called verb-final languages employ a heavy use of XP and Remnant movement to derive the surface V-final order, a conclusion also reached in Bhattacharya (1999a) and Mahajan (2000).

7 Conclusion

Based on evidence from syntax (gerunds and conjunctive participle) and semantics (generic and obligational modality), it is suggested that a an aspectual shell is projected over the VP in Bangla. The aspectual phrase in turn provides the only possibility of prohibiting a (zero) P from incorporating into the auxiliary resulting thus in a <u>be</u> auxiliary and quirky case on the subject of non-case-assigning predicates.

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