

It wasn't elided, but it could have been:

Optional deletion of auxiliaries in VP ellipsis

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Ellipsis workshop,
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Overview

1. **Introduction: the pattern**
2. Preliminaries: the verbal structure
3. Analysis, Part I: the ellipsis site
4. Analysis, Part II: auxiliary ellipsis
5. Extending the analysis: VP fronting
6. Digging deeper: predicate ellipsis
7. Conclusion and further issues

Introduction: the pattern (1)

VP ellipsis (VPE) = non-pronunciation of the verb phrase

- (1) Betsy was hassled by the police, and Peter was, too.
= ... and Peter was [~~hassled by the police~~], too.

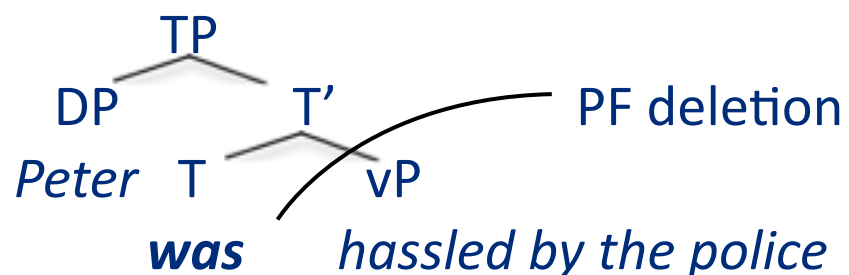
Finite auxiliary remains overt.

(English) main verb is always deleted, even when finite.

- (2) Betsy ate an apple, and Peter **did**, too.
= ... and Peter [ate an apple], too.

Introduction: the pattern (2)

- Standardly:
Under a deletion approach to ellipsis, VPE is analysed as PF deletion of VP, or more recently vP, licensed by the auxiliary or the T head (Johnson 2001, 2004; Merchant 2001; Gengel 2007 and many others)



Introduction: the pattern (3)

Main research question in this talk:

What happens in sentences with more than one auxiliary?

- (3) Betsy must have been being hassled.
- = finite modal – perfect *HAVE* – progressive *BE* – passive *BE* – V

Introduction: the pattern (4)

Answer: More than just VP/vP is targeted by VPE (Akmajian & Wasow 1975, Sag 1976).

- (4) Betsy must have been being hassled by the police, and...
- a. * Peter must ~~have been being~~ hassled by the police, too.
 - b. Peter must have ~~been being~~ hassled by the police, too.
 - c. Peter must have been ~~being~~ hassled by the police, too.
 - d.* Peter must have been being hassled by the police, too.

Introduction: the pattern (5)

Akmajian & Wasow (1975), Sag (1976):

- Lexical verb obligatorily elided under VPE
- *Being* obligatorily elided under VPE
- *Have*, modals and finite auxiliaries never elided under VPE
- *Be/been* optionally elided under VPE

	Modal/ finite aux	Have	Be	Been	Being	Lexical V
Elided	*	*	(✓)	(✓)	✓	✓

- Aim: explore and explain this observation

Introduction: the pattern (6)

Main claims of this talk:

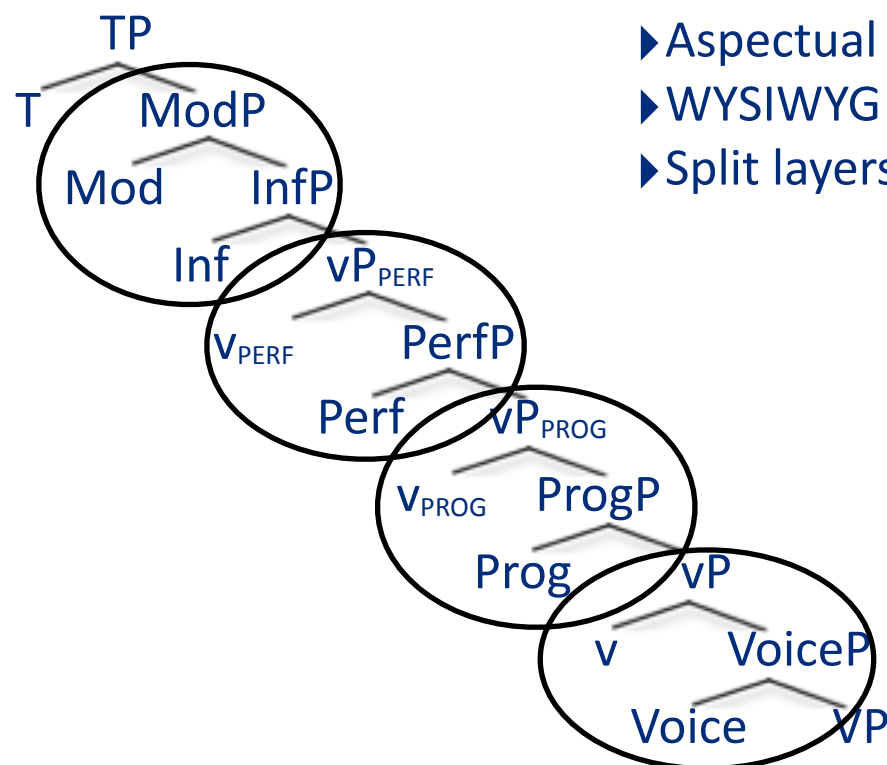
- VP Ellipsis targets the progressive aspectual layer (when it is present in the derivation).
- Optional auxiliary ellipsis = optional raising of auxiliaries out of the ellipsis site + rescue by PF deletion of the non-raised auxiliaries
- VPE = predicate ellipsis

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Preliminaries: The verbal structure (1)

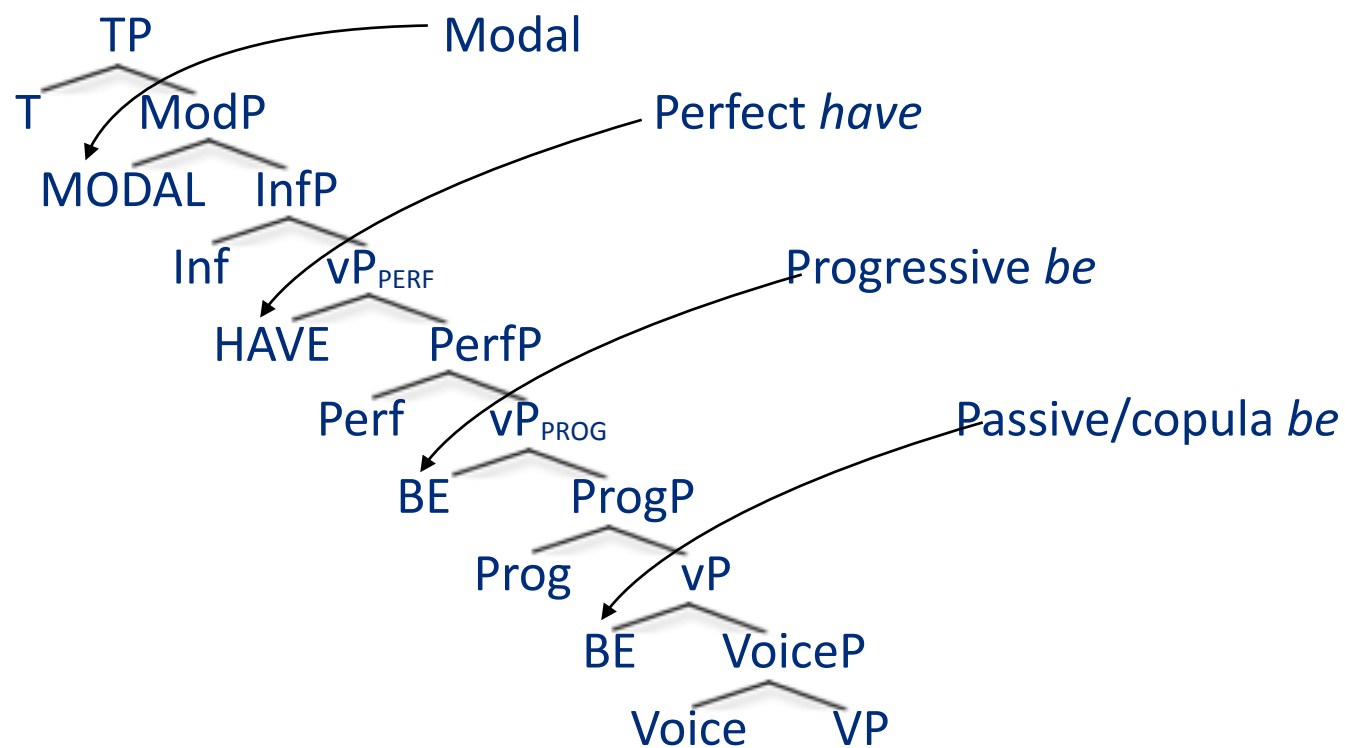
Bošković (2012), Cinque (1999), Harwood (2011):



- ▶ Aspectual layer + vP shell with auxiliary
- ▶ WYSIWYG approach
- ▶ Split layers = necessary for auxiliary raising

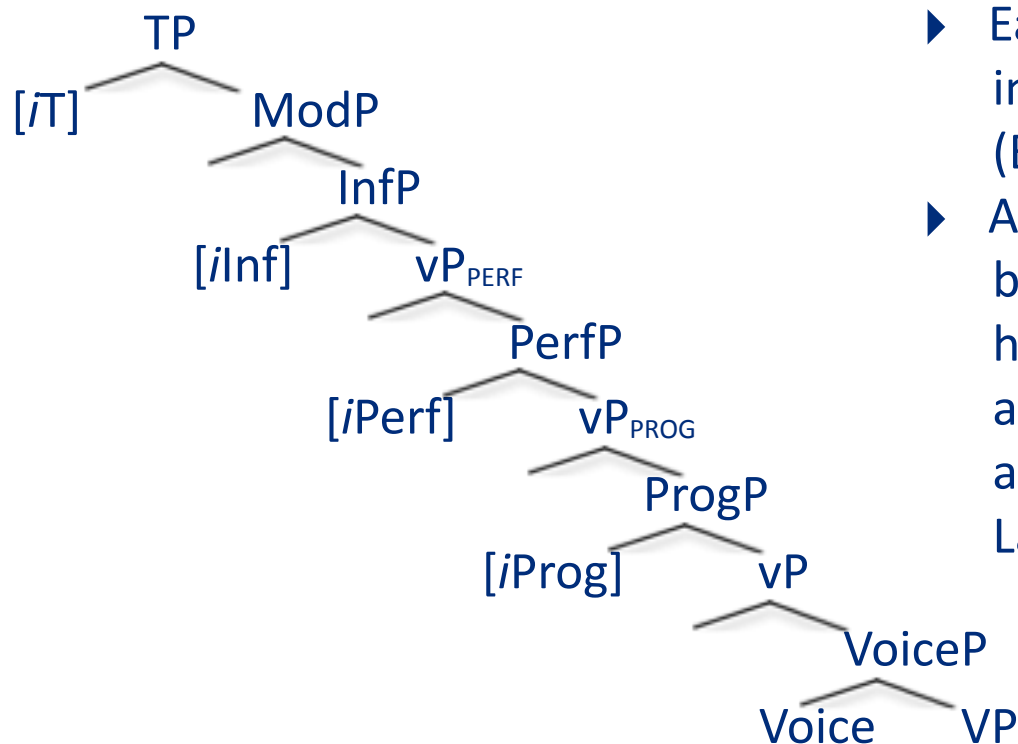
Preliminaries: The verbal structure (2)

Base positions



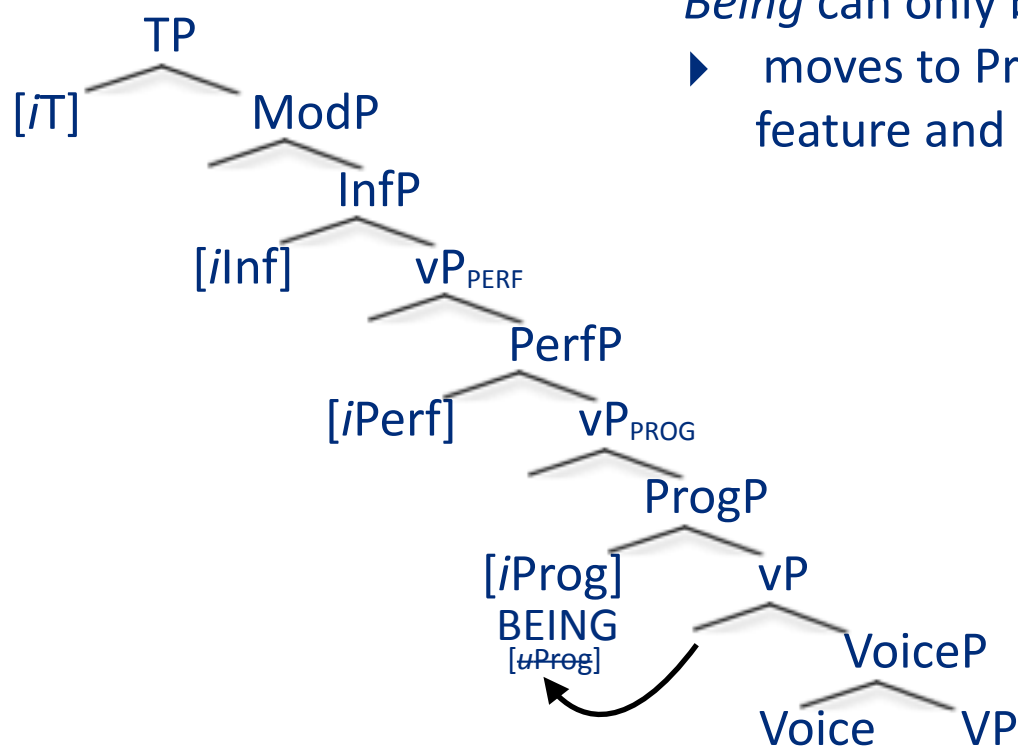
Preliminaries: The verbal structure (3)

Lasnik (1995): Auxiliary raising for feature checking



- ▶ Each aspectual head bears an interpretable inflectional feature (Bjorkman 2012, Lasnik 1995)
- ▶ Auxiliaries are merged inflected, but their morphological form has to be licensed by checking of a PF feature against the relevant aspectual head (Chomsky 1993, Lasnik 1995)

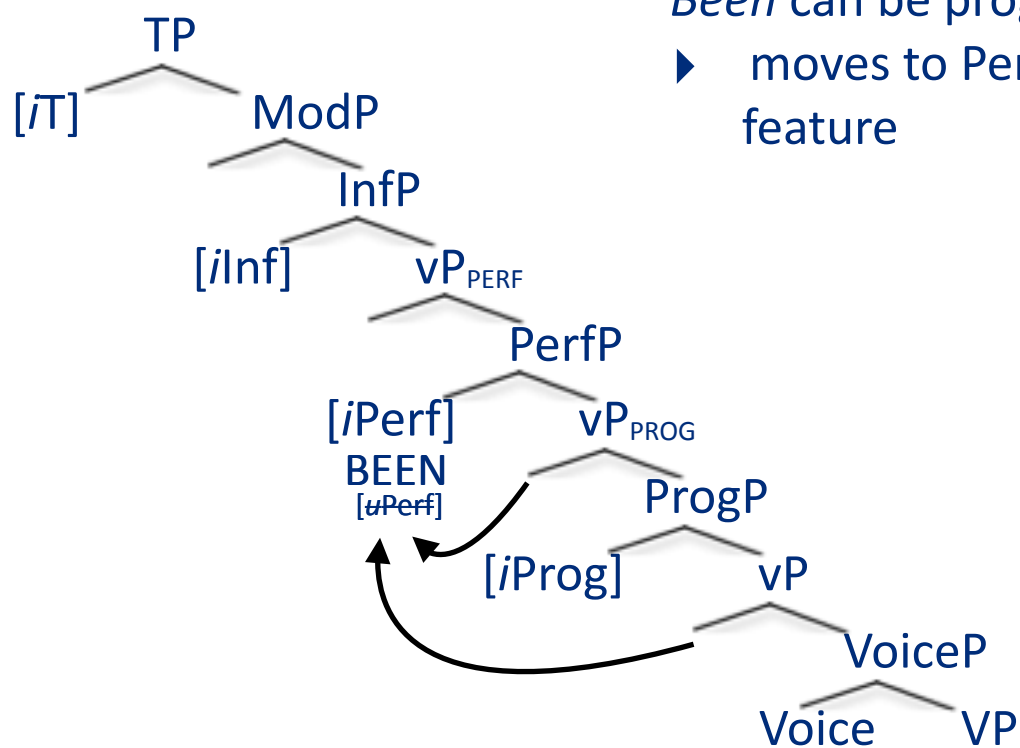
Preliminaries: The verbal structure (3)



Being can only be copular or passive BE.

- moves to Prog to check its inflectional feature and license its morphological form

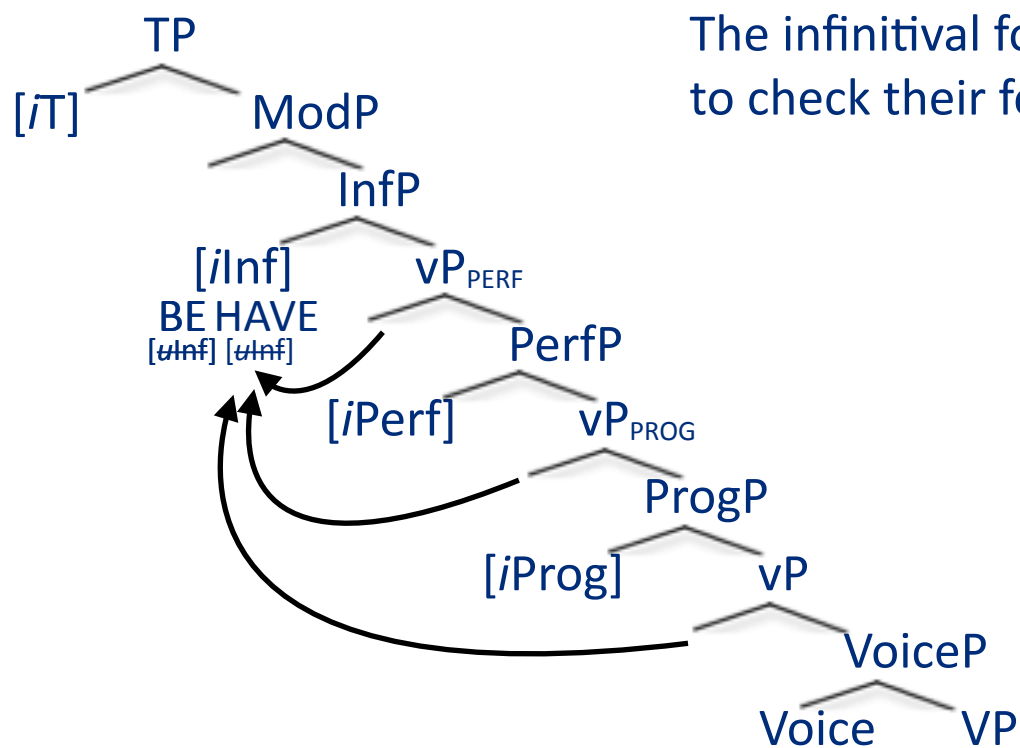
Preliminaries: The verbal structure (3)



Been can be progressive, passive or copular BE.

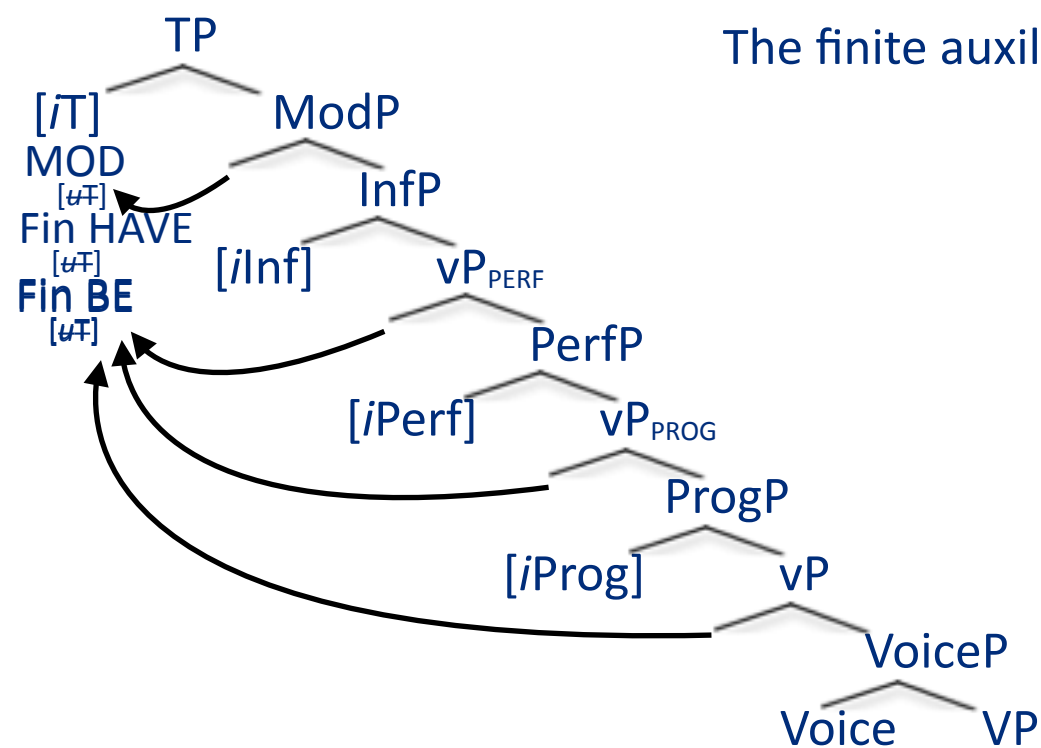
- moves to Perf to check its inflectional feature

Preliminaries: The verbal structure (3)



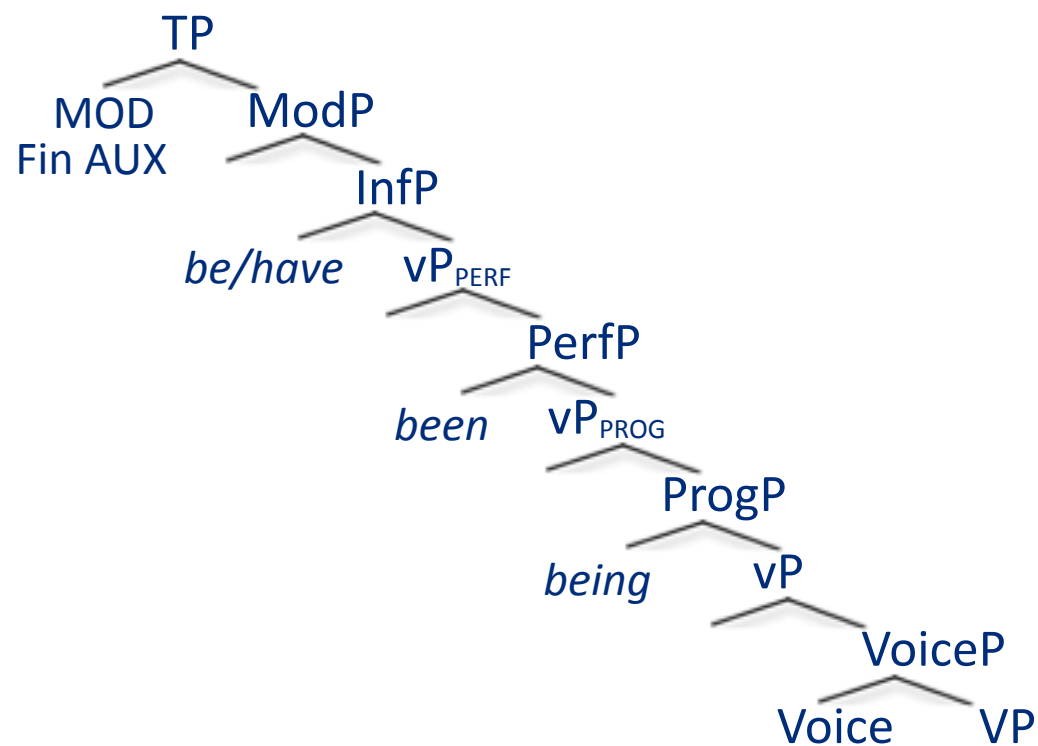
The infinitival forms *have* and *be* move to Inf to check their features.

Preliminaries: The verbal structure (3)



Preliminaries: The verbal structure (4)

Surface positions:



Preliminaries: The verbal structure (5)

IMPORTANT: The overt movement of auxiliaries is a concern for PF.

Auxiliaries could potentially move covertly to check inflectional features at LF, BUT...

No overt movement/checking = crash at PF

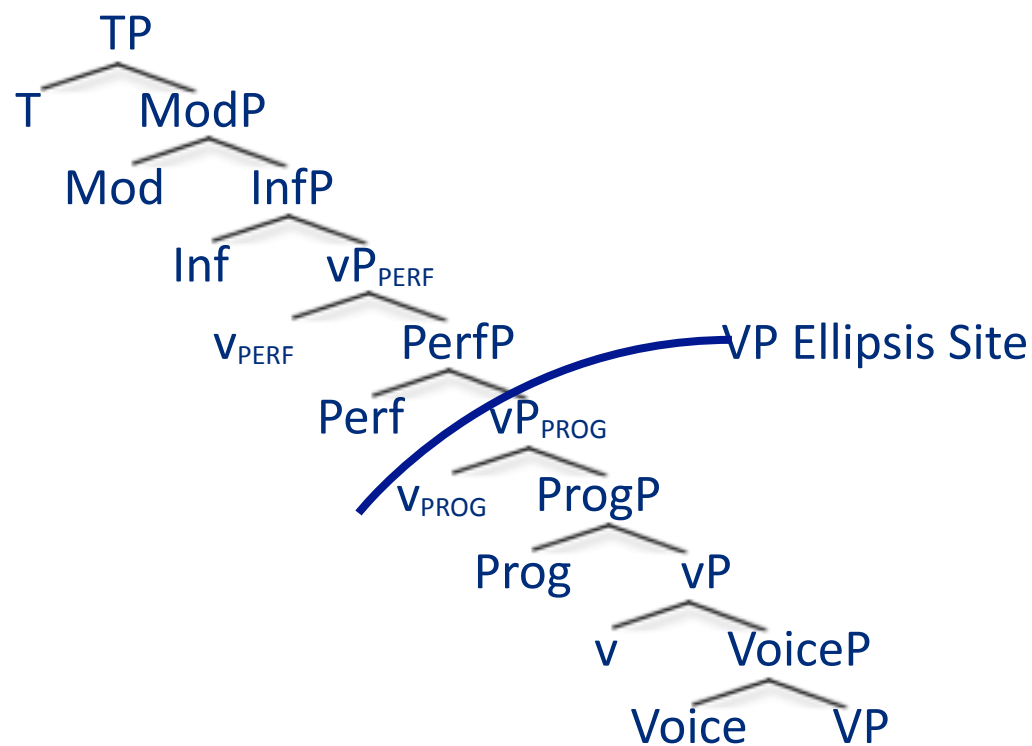
(See Chomsky 1993, 1995; Lasnik 1995; Roberts 1998)

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Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (1)

Our claim: VPE elides as much as the progressive layer (vP_{prog}), if present.



Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (2)

Argumentation behind this claim:

Only auxiliaries generated inside the ellipsis site can ever be elided.

- ▶ Two basic accounts for optional auxiliary ellipsis:
 1. Optional extension of ellipsis site (Akmajian, Steele & Wasow 1979, Bošković 2012)
 2. Optional raising of auxiliaries (Sailor 2012, Thoms 2012)

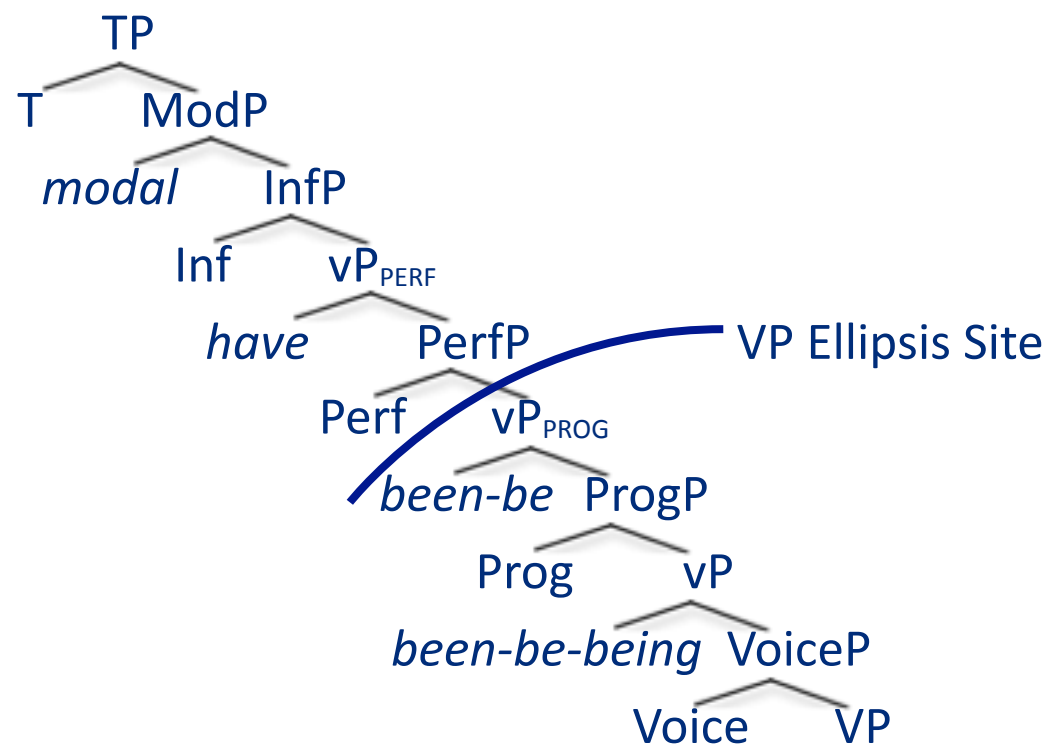
Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (3)

Consensus: auxiliaries can only be elided if they are at some point contained within the ellipsis site.

In other words: if an auxiliary can be elided, its base position needs to be included in the ellipsis site.

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (4)

Base positions of the auxiliaries:



Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (5)

We show that all auxiliaries generated within or below the progressive aspectual layer can be elided.

➡ VPE targets vP_{prog}

► Copula *BE* can be elided:

- (5) a. John has been in the garden, and Mary has (**been**) ~~in the garden~~, too.
b. John will be in the garden, and Mary will (**be**) ~~in the garden~~, too.

► Passive *BE* can be elided:

- (6) a. John has been arrested, and Mary has (**been**) ~~arrested~~, too.
b. John might be arrested, and Mary might (**be**) ~~arrested~~, too.

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (6)

Progressive *BE* can be elided:

- (7) a. John may be questioning our motives, but Peter won't (**be**)
~~questioning our motives.~~
b. John may have been questioning our motives, but Peter hasn't (**been**)
~~questioning our motives.~~

!! There is a mismatch interpretation available without progressive *BE*:

- (8) a. ...Peter won't ~~question our motives.~~
b. ...Peter hasn't ~~questioned our motives.~~

► How can we be sure the progressive auxiliary is ever actually elided?

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (7)

Can we find contexts that show whether progressive *BE* can genuinely be elided?

► Our answer: YES, and they show it can be elided.

- Ellipsis and existential constructions
- **Ellipsis and idiomatic expressions**

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (8)

Ellipsis and idiomatic expressions

Certain idioms are dependent upon progressive aspect:

- (9) a. John is dying to meet you. = He is keen to meet you.
b. #John has died to meet you.
c. #John will die to meet you.
d. #John died to meet you.

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (9)

If we apply ellipsis, a mismatch interpretation without the progressive would not result in an idiomatic interpretation.

Results: All our informants retained the idiomatic reading when *be/**been* was not pronounced.

(10) John has been dying to meet you, even though he says he hasn't
(**been**) ~~dying to meet you~~.

(11) Q: Are you sure Bob will be dying to meet George Lucas?
A: He most certainly will (**be**) ~~dying to meet George Lucas~~.

► Progressive *BE* is optionally elided.

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (10)

Recapitulating:

- Passive *BE* can be elided.
 - Copula *BE* can be elided.
 - Progressive *BE* can be elided.
 - Perfect *HAVE* is never elided.
 - Modals and other finite auxiliaries are never elided.
- ➡ However, there is some discussion as to whether or not perfect *have* can be elided:
- ▶ Perfect *have* cannot be elided - Sag (1976), Lobeck (1987), Johnson (2001), Bošković (2012), Sailor (2009, 2012), Wurmbrand (2012)
 - ▶ Perfect *have* can be elided - Akmajian, Steele & Wasow (1979), Thoms (2010)

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (11)

Akmajian, Steele & Wasow (1979), Thoms (2011): *have* can be elided!

(12) John might have called, and Bill might, too. (Wurmbrand 2012:10)

! Wurmbrand (2012): the acceptability of (12) is due to the available mismatch reading in which perfect aspect is altogether absent from the elided constituent:

(13) John might have called, and Bill might [~~call~~], too.

Wurmbrand (2012) uses conflicting time specifications to rule out the mismatch interpretation: ellipsis of *have* is then rejected:

(14) * John might have called yesterday, and Bill might, two days ago.

(Wurmbrand 2012: 10, example (36b'))

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (12)

Can we find other contexts that show whether *have* can genuinely be elided or not?

- Ellipsis and fixed expressions
- Ellipsis and identity requirements
- *Before*-clauses (Sailor 2012)

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (13)

Ellipsis and fixed expressions

Certain expressions are dependent on perfect aspect:

- (15)
- a. We have been to Rome.
 - b. * We are being to Rome.
 - c. * We will be to Rome.
 - d. * We are to Rome.

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (14)

If VPE is applied to these expressions, no mismatch interpretation without the perfect aspect will be available.

► This context shows whether perfect *have* can be elided.

Result: 80% of our (British English) informants rejected ellipsis of *have* in these cases.

(16) * This time next year John will have been to Rome, and I will ~~have been to Rome~~ **have** as well.

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (15)

Ellipsis and identity requirements

Auxiliaries can only be elided if they have an identical antecedent
= Syntactic Identity condition; see Lasnik (1995), Warner (1986)

- (17)a. Sue has **been** eaten by cannibals, and Rob might ***(be)**, too.
b. First Sue will **be** eaten by cannibals, and then Rob will **(be)**.
c. Sue **was** eaten by cannibals after Rob had ***(been)**.
d. Sue has **been** eaten by cannibals, and Rob has **(been)**, too.

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (16)

In a sentence with *been* in the antecedent clause, VPE can only elide *been* if the ellipsis clause contains perfect aspect, otherwise *been* would not be identical in form to its antecedent (see (18a)).

► This context shows whether *have* can be elided or not.

Result: Our informants unanimously rejected deletion of *have*. (Contra Thoms 2011)

- (18) a. John might have **been** fired, and Ted might have (**been**) ~~fired~~, too.
b. *John might have **been** fired, and Ted might, too.
 = Ted might have ~~been~~ fired, too.
 = Ted might ~~be~~ fired, too.

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (17)

***Before*-clauses (Sailor 2012)**

Before-clauses are sensitive to perfect aspect.

Sailor (2012): These sentences are ungrammatical if *have* is deleted, and without *have* they don't have a sensible reading.

(19) Mary could have studied harder for the exam. Before finally taking it yesterday...

a. she really should have.

b. * she really should.

(Sailor 2012, his (36))

Although there still is some discussion, and there might be some dialectal variation involved, we take ellipsis of *have* to be impossible.

Analysis, part I: The ellipsis site (18)

Recapitulating:

- Passive *BE* can be elided.
 - Copula *BE* can be elided.
 - Progressive *BE* can be elided.

 - Perfect *HAVE* is never elided.
 - Modals and other finite auxiliaries are never elided.
- The ellipsis site must include the base position of progressive *BE*.
- ➡ Claim: VPE elides vP_{prog} .

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Analysis, part II: Auxiliary ellipsis (1)

Reminder

	Modal/ finite aux	Have	Be	Been	Being	Lexical V
Elided	*	*	(✓)	(✓)	✓	✓

- Ellipsis site = vP_{prog}
- Auxiliaries raise to the relevant tense/aspectual head to license their morphological form (by checking a PF feature).

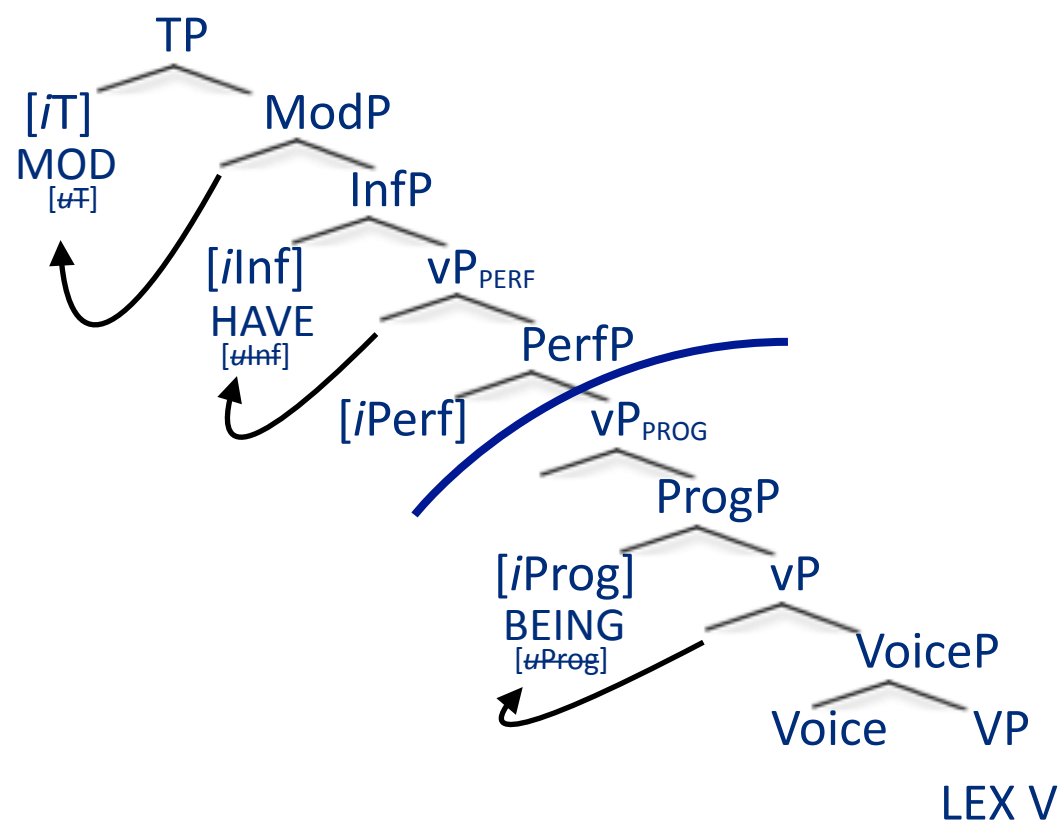
Analysis, part II: Auxiliary ellipsis (2)

A. *Modals/have* and *being/lexical V*

B. *Be* and *been*

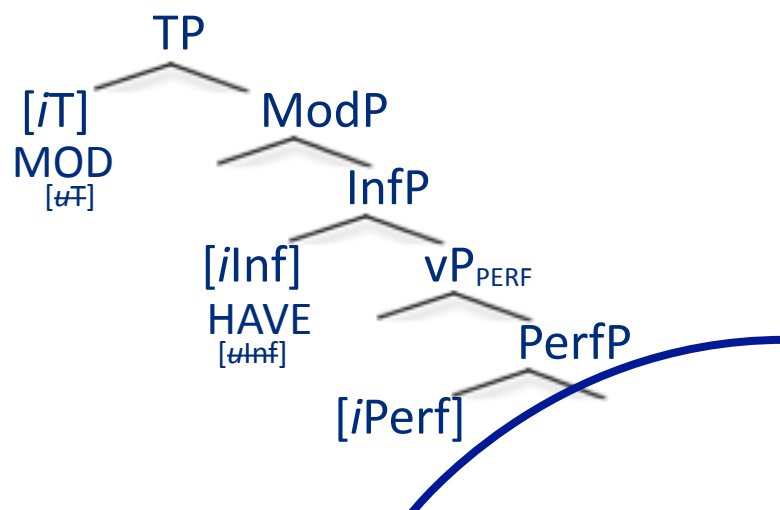
Analysis, part II: Auxiliary ellipsis (3)

A. Modals/*have* and lexical V/*being*



Analysis, part II: Auxiliary ellipsis (3)

A. Modals/*have* and lexical V/*being*



Elided

- Lexical verb: merged inside the ellipsis site and never raises out
- *Being*: merged inside the ellipsis site and only raises to Prog°, INSIDE the ellipsis site

Not elided

- *Have*: merged outside the ellipsis site
- Modals: merged outside the ellipsis site

Analysis, part II: Auxiliary ellipsis (4)

B. *Be* and *been*

Be/been are merged inside the ellipsis site.

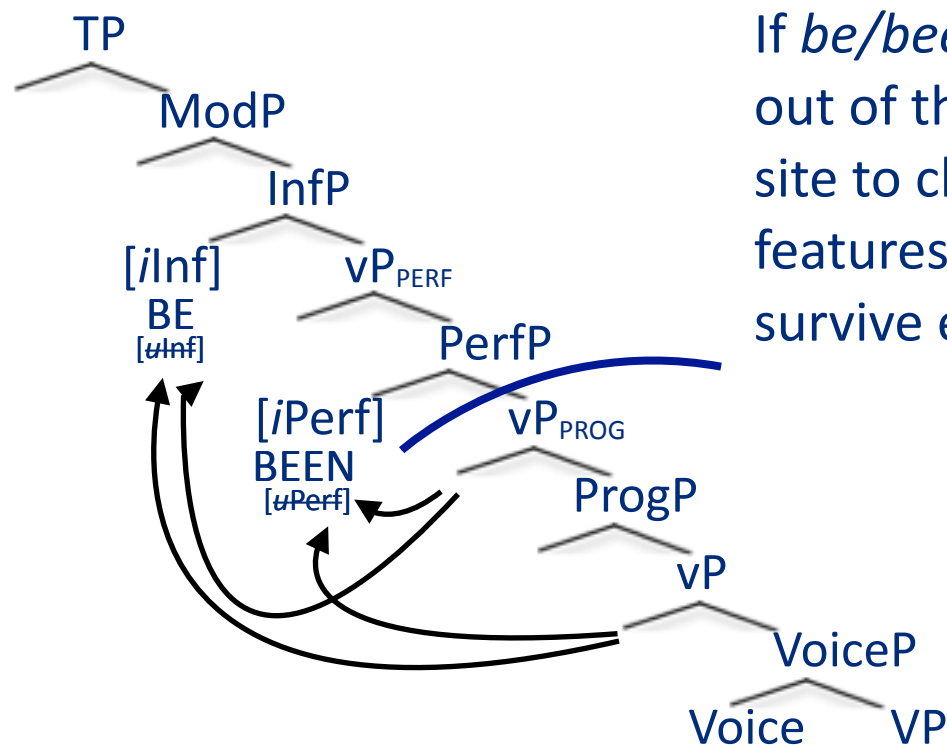
They raise out of the ellipsis site for checking.

► Two options available:

1. Raise and check = survive ellipsis.
2. Remain within the ellipsis site and be deleted via ellipsis, thereby removing the problematic PF features from the derivation.

Analysis, part II: Auxiliary ellipsis (5)

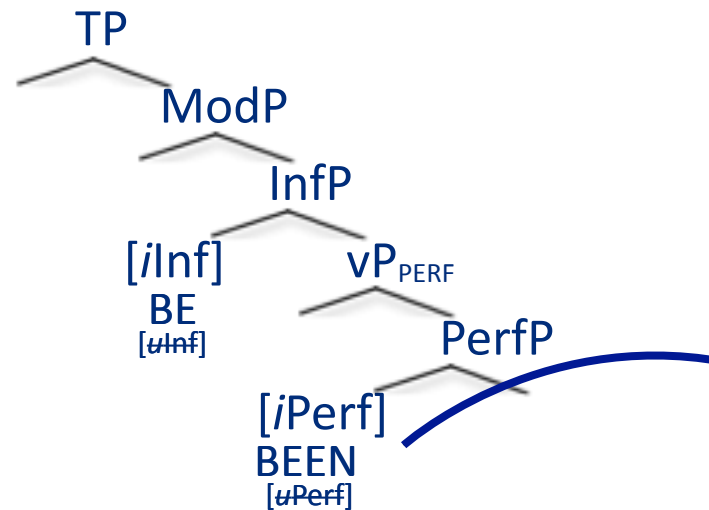
Non-ellipsis of *be/been*



If *be/been* raise
out of the ellipsis
site to check their
features, they
survive ellipsis.

Analysis, part II: Auxiliary ellipsis (5)

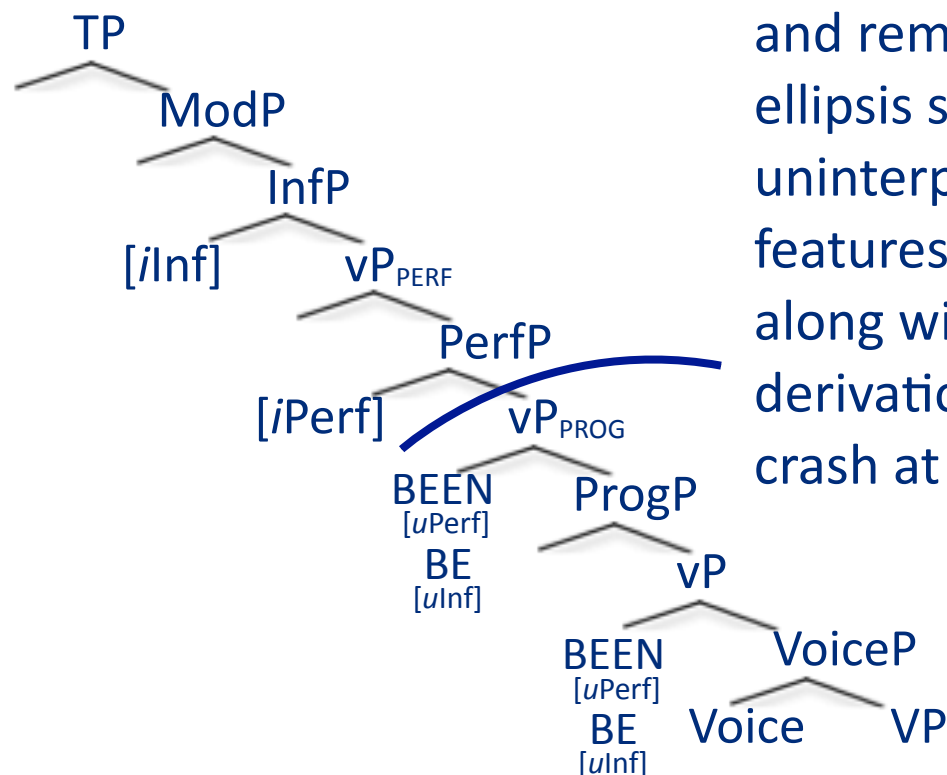
Non-ellipsis of *be/been*



If *be/been* raise out of the ellipsis site to check their features, they survive ellipsis.

Analysis, part II: Auxiliary ellipsis (6)

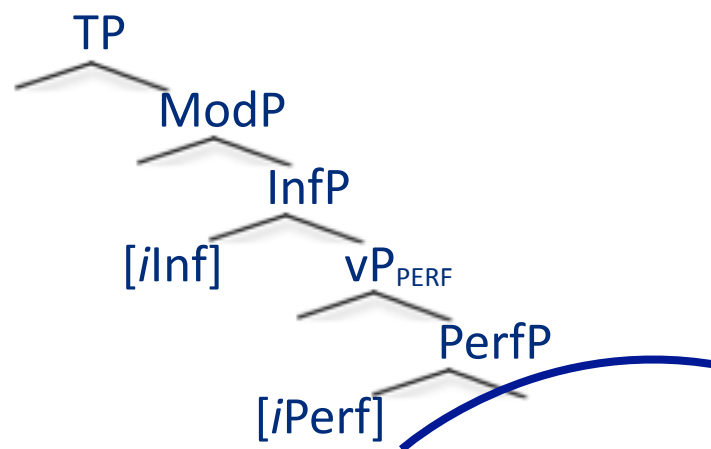
Ellipsis of *be/been*



If *be/been* do not raise and remain in the ellipsis site, their uninterpretable features are elided along with them, so the derivation does not crash at PF.

Analysis, part II: Auxiliary ellipsis (6)

Ellipsis of *be/been*



If *be/been* do not raise and remain in the ellipsis site, their uninterpretable features are elided along with them, so the derivation does not crash at PF.

Analysis, part II: Auxiliary ellipsis (7)

- ▶ Optional raising only made possible by rescue via ellipsis
- ▶ Prediction: auxiliary raising obligatory in all other contexts.

Relevant data: VP fronting.

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Extending the analysis: VP fronting (1)

VPF targets the same chunk of structure as VPE (Zagona 1982; Johnson 2001; Kim 2003; Aelbrecht & Haegeman 2012; Funakoshi 2012; Aelbrecht 2012)

- The lexical verb is fronted
- *Being* is fronted
- *Have* is never fronted
- Modals are never fronted

Extending the analysis: VP fronting (2)

Lexical verb and *being*: always fronted

- (20) a. * If John says he has eaten fish, then [fish] he has **eaten**.
b. If John says he has eaten fish, then [**eaten** fish] he has.
c. * If John says he was being seduced, then [seduced] he was **being**.
d. If John says he was being seduced, then [**being** seduced] he was.

Extending the analysis: VP fronting (3)

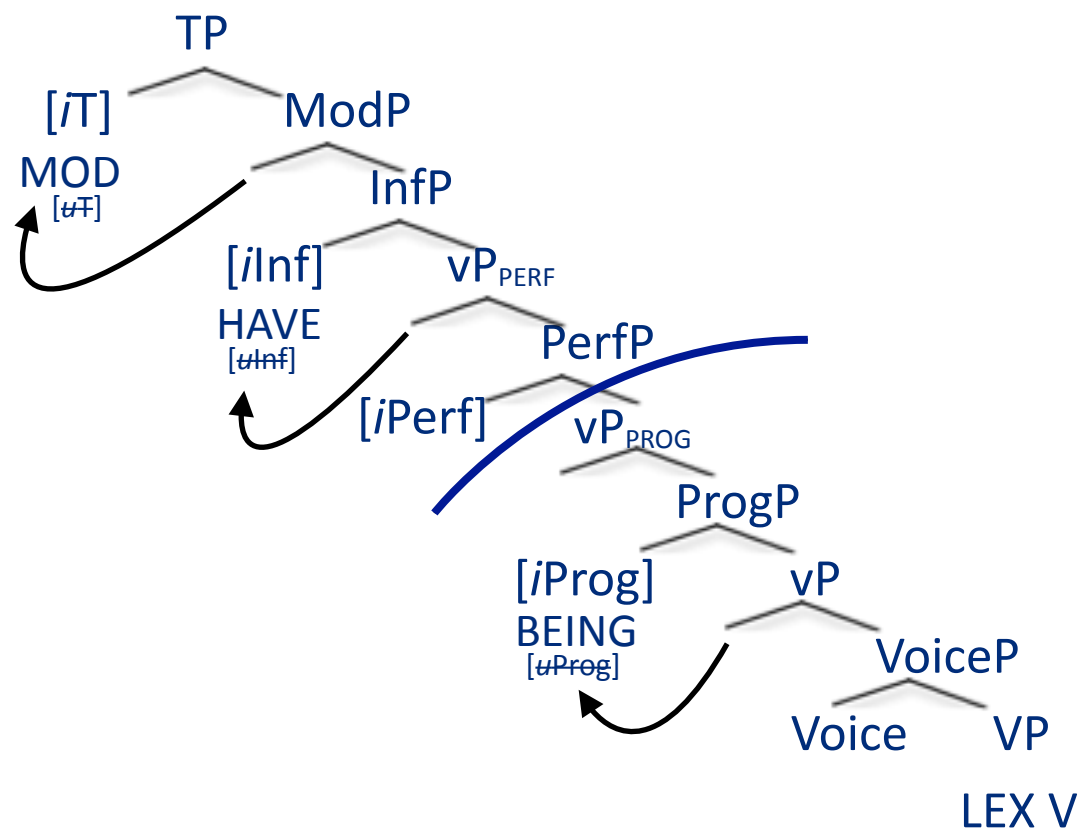
Modals and *have*: never fronted

- (21) a. If John says he may have eaten fish, then [eaten fish] he may **have**.
b.* If John says he may have eaten fish, then [**have** eaten fish] he may.
c. If John says he will eat fish, then [eat fish] he **will**.
d.* If John says he will eat fish, then [**will** eat fish] he.

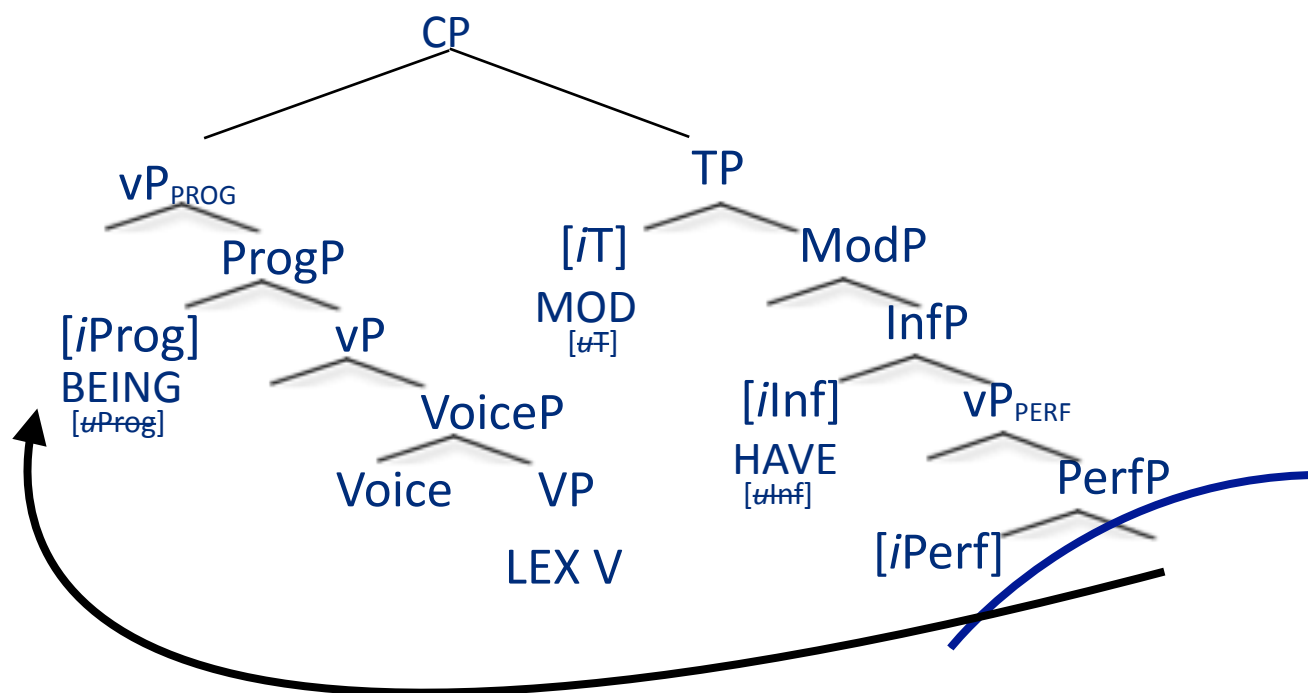


Explanation: VPF targets same constituent as VPE: vP_{PROG} !

Extending the analysis: VP fronting (4)



Extending the analysis: VP fronting (4)



Extending the analysis: VP fronting (5)

Akmajian, Steele & Wasow (1979) and Roberts (1998): *be/been* can never be fronted, not even optionally:

- (22) a. If John says he'll be working late, then [working late] he will **be**.
b.* If John says he'll be working late, then [**be** working late] he will.
c. If John says he has been working late, then [working late] he has **been**.
d.* If John says he has been working late, then [**been** working late] he has.

= remarkable contrast with VP ellipsis.

► This can easily be explained by our analysis.

Extending the analysis: VP fronting (6)

Fronted constituent same as ellipsis site: vPPROG

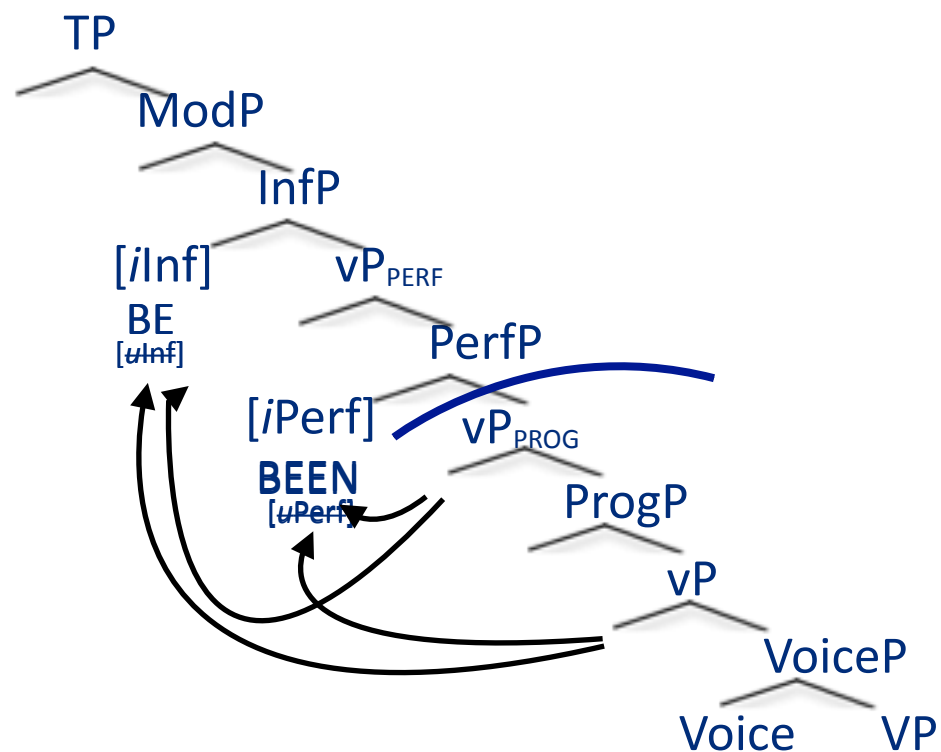
Be/been are generated inside fronted constituent

▶ Two options for *be/been*:

- *Be/been* raise out of VPF site to Perf°/Inf° to check features.
 - ▶ Not fronted, derivation fine.
- If *be/been* do not raise and remain in the VPF site, no ellipsis occurs to rescue the derivation.
 - ▶ The unchecked features remain and the derivation crashes.

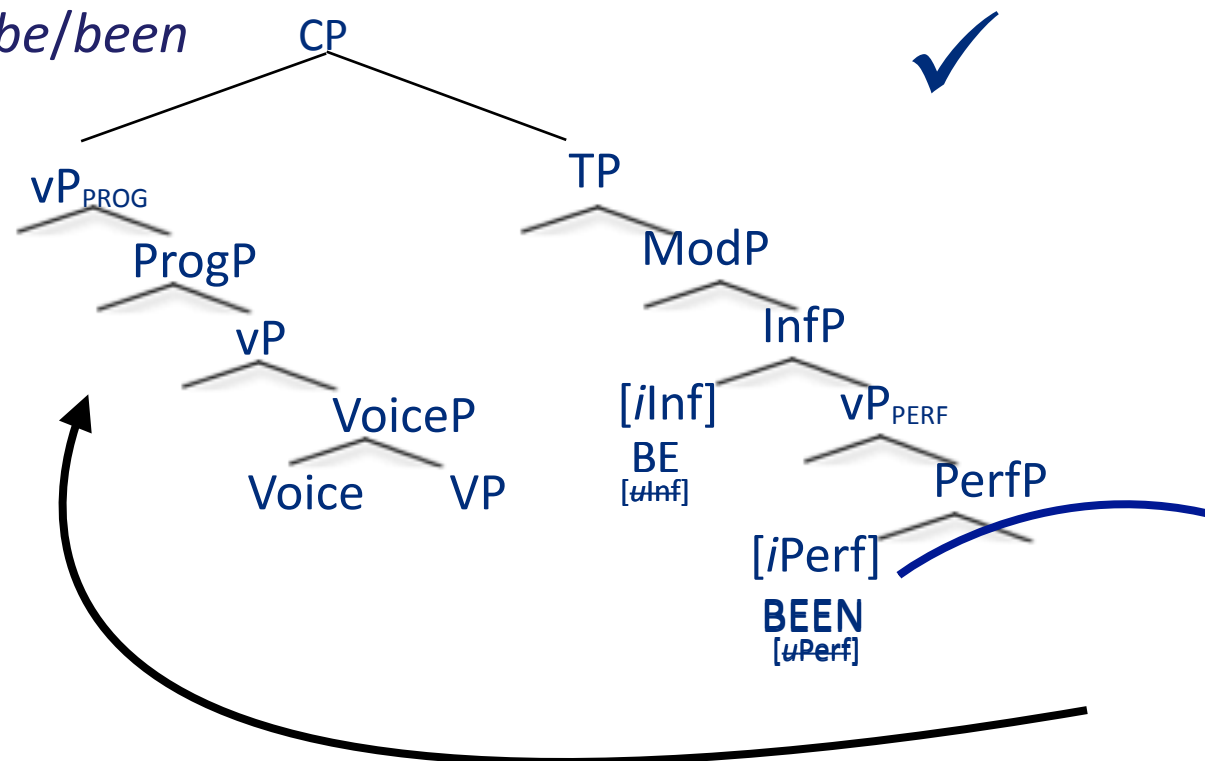
Extending the analysis: VP fronting (7)

Raising of *be/been*



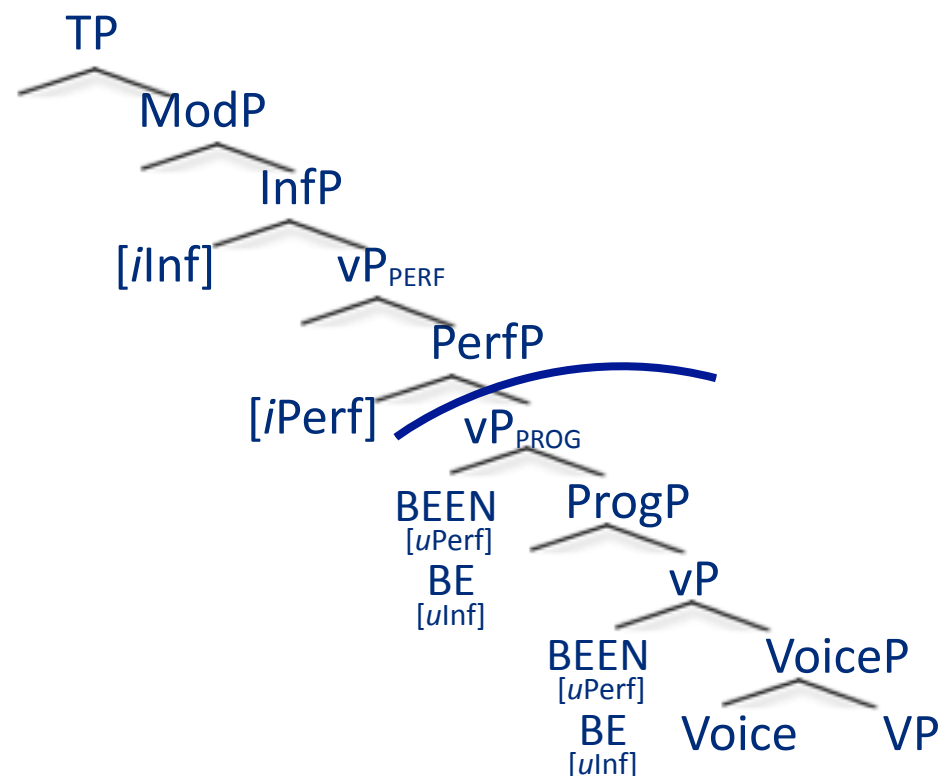
Extending the analysis: VP fronting (7)

Raising of *be/been*



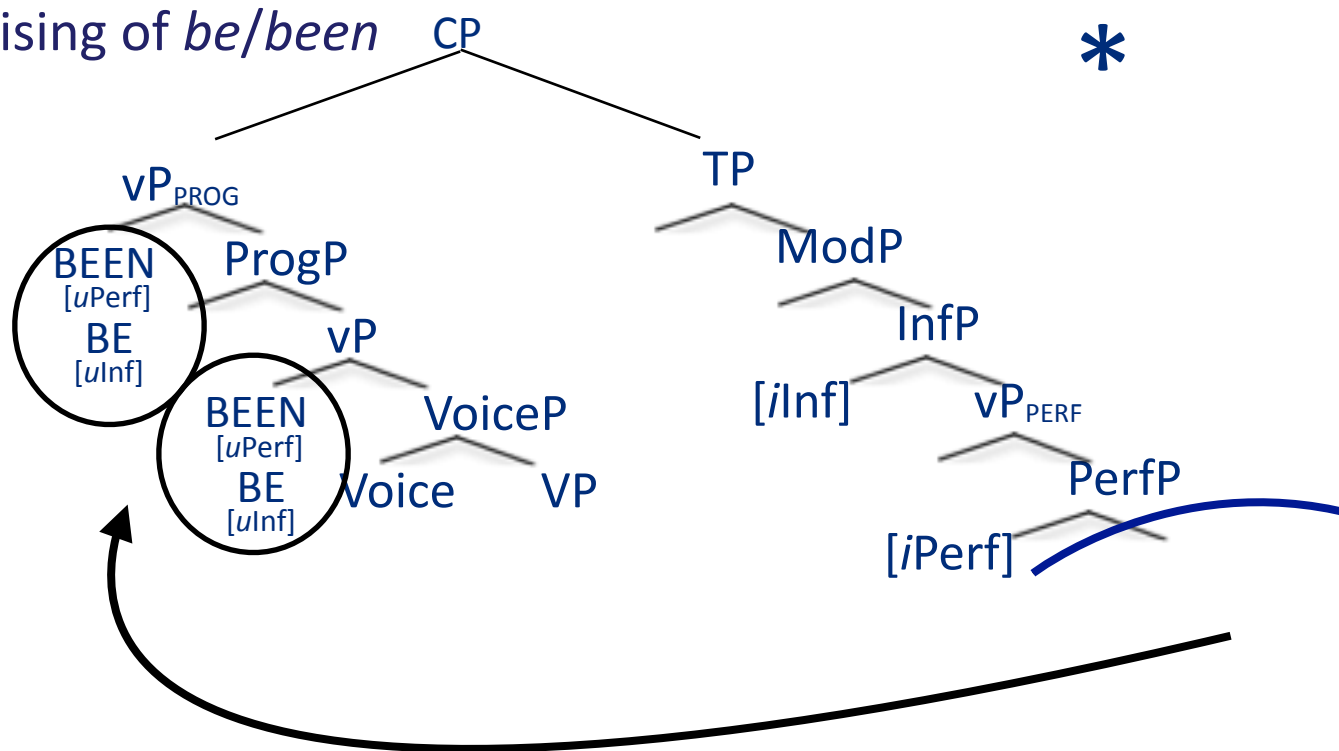
Extending the analysis: VP fronting (8)

Non-raising of *be/been*



Extending the analysis: VP fronting (8)

Non-raising of *be/been*



Extending the analysis: VP fronting (9)

Extending the data set even more:

We expect other phenomena that make use of either VPE or movement of the verb phrase to exhibit the same pattern.

- ➡ Phenomena involving VPE: optional deletion of *be/been*.
- ➡ Phenomena involving movement: obligatory stranding of *be/been*.

This prediction is borne out in:

- Tag questions in American English (involving VPE)
- Specificational pseudo-clefts (involving VPF)
- Predicate inversion (involving VPF)

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Digging deeper: Predicate ellipsis (1)

Our claim: VPE elides as much as vP_{prog} .

! If progressive aspect is absent from the structure VPE elides vP .
= ‘variable ellipsis site’

(Note: ‘variable’ depending on what is present in the structure, not in the sense of Akmajian, Steele & Wasow 1979 and Bošković 2012, for whom VPE can optionally elide more or less, and who explain the optional deletion of *be* and *been* in this way.)

Digging deeper: Predicate ellipsis (2)

Problem: If the constituent being targeted by VPE varies, it is harder to formalise how ellipsis is licensed.

For instance, if the ellipsis site is recognised as ‘the constituent that is the complement of the head bearing an E-feature’ (Merchant 2001), does the E-feature sometimes occur on v_{perf} and sometimes on v_{prog} or v ?

How to formalise the licensing of ellipsis, and more specifically, how to determine the size of the ellipsis site formally?

Digging deeper: Predicate ellipsis (3)

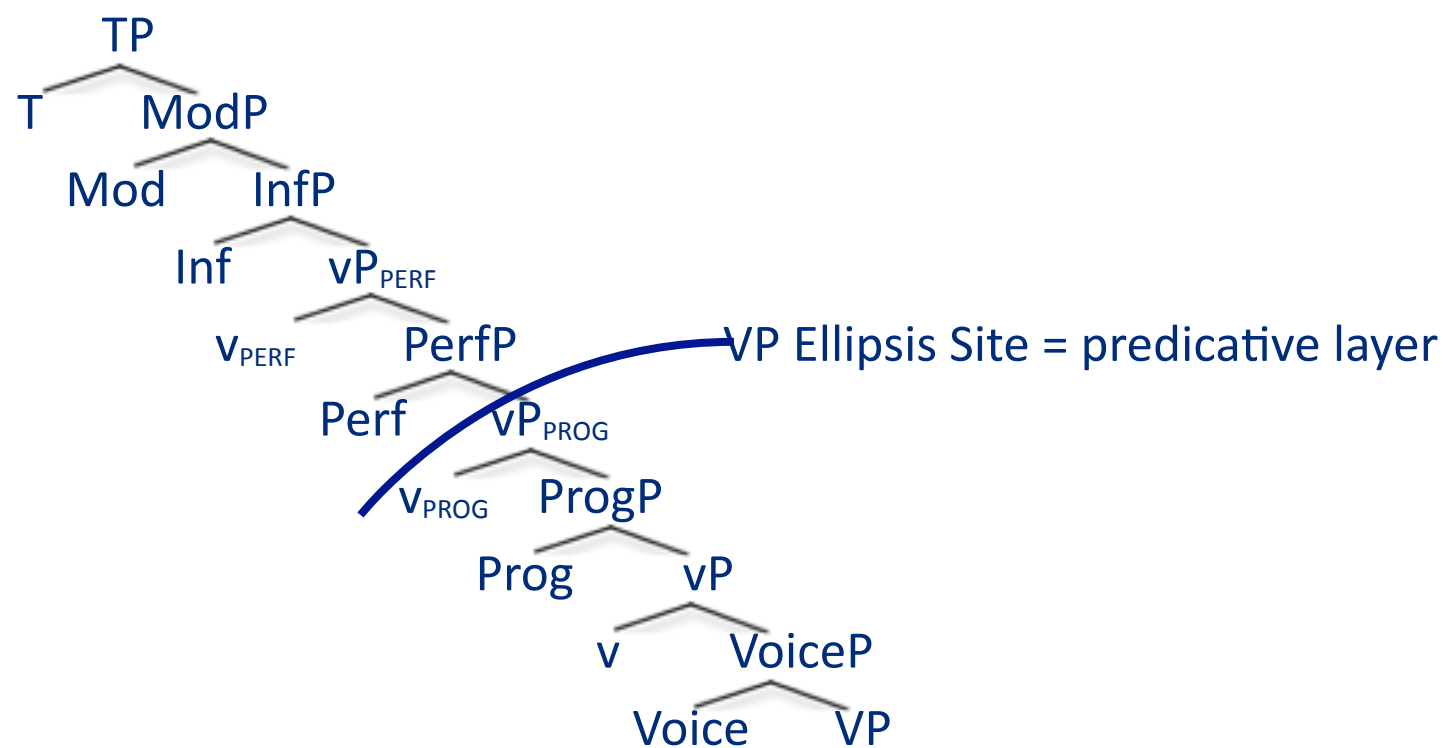
VPE is predicate ellipsis

VPE targets the highest projection in the predicate layer of the clause.

What is included in this predicate layer?

- ▶ Lexical VP/DP/PP/AP
- ▶ The internal and external arguments of this lexical predicate
- ▶ Little v projection: determines some lexical properties, such as agentivity, causality etc.
- ▶ Voice
- ▶ The progressive projection (following Bowers 2002)

Digging deeper: Predicate ellipsis (4)



Digging deeper: Predicate ellipsis (5)

Why would the progressive be part of the predicate layer, and not perfect aspect?

Several indications that suggest that this is the case:

Digging deeper: Predicate ellipsis (6)

1) Morphological form of progressive = nominalisation in several languages

(23) a. Ted('s) growing (of) a beard was the worst idea ever.

b. De krokodil was aan het dansen. (Dutch)

the crocodile was on the dance.INF

'The crocodile was dancing.'

c. Kòjò tò àmì ló zân. (Gungbe)

Kojo imperf oil det nominaliser

'Kojo is using the oil.'

(Aboh 2005: 140)

Digging deeper: Predicate ellipsis (7)

2) Progressive and passive auxiliary is *BE* in English, just like the copular auxiliary in predicate constructions, and unlike perfect aspect *HAVE*:

- (24) a. He was swimming/drunk/in the garden/arrested/a doctor.
b. He has eaten the dolphin sandwich.

!! Whether this is a correlation, is easy to test:

- Serbo-Croatian uses *BE* for perfect aspect as well.
- There are several English dialects (Hiberno-English, Shetland English, Newfoundland English) which use *BE* as the perfect aspect auxiliary.

Digging deeper: Predicate ellipsis (8)

3) Progressive aspect can be included in idiomatic constructions:

Idioms typically include the predicate and one or all of its arguments

- (25) a. The boy was thrown/*tossed to the wolves/*hyenas.
b. The shit/*dirt will hit the fan/*radiator.

Some idioms include progressive aspect as well:

- (26) John <is pushing>/<#has pushed>/<#will push> up daisies.

If idioms target predicate projections (Svenonius 2005), then progressive aspect is part of the predicate layer.

Perfect aspect is not included in idioms, so not in the predicate layer.

Digging deeper: Predicate ellipsis (9)

Our tentative proposal:

- Divide between progressive and perfect aspect in English
- Predicative layer: up to vP_{prog}
- Functional verbal layer: from PerfP up to TP/FinP

(Will's work: vP_{prog} constitutes the clause-internal phase.)

VPE targets the predicative layer, but nothing higher:

- ▶ vP_{prog} when it is present
- ▶ vP otherwise

Digging deeper: Predicate ellipsis (10)

Formalising the proposal

- Merchant's (2001, 2004) E-feature + Aelbrecht's (2010) adaptation
- Grimshaw's (2000, 2005) Extended projections

➡ No time in this talk, but ask us during the Q&A.

Overview

1. Introduction: the pattern
2. Preliminaries: the verbal structure
3. Analysis, Part I: the ellipsis site
4. Analysis, Part II: auxiliary ellipsis
5. Extending the analysis: VP fronting
6. Digging deeper: predicate ellipsis
7. **Conclusion and further issues**

Conclusion and further issues (1)

- ▶ VPE and VPF target vP_{prog} .
- ▶ Lexical verb never raises out of this site: never escapes ellipsis or fronting
- ▶ *Being* raises to Prog° , within the VPE/VPF site: never escapes ellipsis or fronting
- ▶ *Have* and modals are merged outside of the VPE/VPF site: never elided or fronted
- ▶ *Be/been* are merged inside of the VPE/VPF site but raise out to check inflectional features:
- ▶ If they raise in ellipsis contexts, they escape ellipsis.
- ▶ Alternatively, *be/been* may remain in the ellipsis site and be elided, having their unchecked features deleted at PF
- ▶ *Be/been* must raise in fronting contexts because there is no ellipsis operation to alternatively delete their features.

Conclusion and further issues (2)

- VPE targets the predicative layer, which includes the progressive projections, but not the perfect.
- VPE targets as much of this predicate as possible.
- This can be formalized using the E-feature (Merchant 2001; Aelbrecht 2010) and Extended Projections (Grimshaw 2005).

Conclusion and further issues (3)

Further issues

1) Finite *BE*

In our analysis as it stands, finite *BE* has the option to not raise as well, contrary to fact.

Possible solution:

- ▶ T has a feature to be checked as well, it needs to be filled.
- ▶ Auxiliaries have the option to raise, so in this case, they **have** to.
- ▶ Lexical verbs never raise, and in that case, dummy *do* is inserted (as a last resort PF operation, more costly than auxiliary raising).

Conclusion and further issues (4)

2) Voice mismatches

Merchant (2007, 2008): Voice mismatches between antecedent and ellipsis clause are possible under VPE.

- (27) a. The janitor must remove the trash whenever it is apparent that it
should be [~~removed~~]. (Act-Pass)
- b. The system can be used by anyone who wants to [~~use it~~]. (Pass-Act)

Merchant: Voice is not included in the ellipsis site, and therefore not subject to the recoverability condition.

Conclusion and further issues (5)

! Under our approach, Voice *is* included in the ellipsis site, whether VPE deletes either vP or vP_{prog}.

We predict Voice mismatches to be illicit (if we adhere to the syntactic identity requirement), contrary to fact.

Possible solution:

Perhaps speakers who allow for these mismatches, allow for the ellipsis site to be smaller in these cases.

= conflict between ‘elide as much of the predicate as possible’ and ‘elide only recoverable material’

Conclusion and further issues (6)

A point of interest:

When the sentence contains progressive aspect (i.e., when the ellipsis site is vP_{prog}), Voice mismatches are not allowed:

(28) * The system can't be used by just anyone, even though Mary has been [~~using the system~~] all year.

Such mismatches are allowed with perfect aspect:

(29) The system can't be used by just anyone, even though Mary has [~~used the system~~] twice already.

Conclusion and further issues (7)

3) *Being* is always elided?

Quirk et al (1985:875) and Thoms (2012): ellipsis of *being* is not categorial.

- (30) a. Remember, always be respectful and courteous, even if the officer isn't **being**.
- b. Otherwise you may have some integrity problems because the key that apparently should be enforced actually isn't **being**.

→ Is *being* only optionally elided, on a par with *be* and *been*?

Conclusion and further issues (8)

No:

Whilst *be* and *been* are optionally elided...

- (31) a. Ted should be home, and Barney should be ~~home~~ too.
b. Ted should be home, and Barney should ~~be~~ ~~home~~ too.
c. Robin has been fired, and Barney has been ~~fired~~, too.
d. Robin has been fired, and Barney has ~~been~~ ~~fired~~, too.

Conclusion and further issues (9)

Being is always elided, **unless** it is absent from the antecedent:

- (32) a. Bill was punished this morning, and now Ted is **being** ~~punished~~.
b. Bill was **being** punished this morning, and now Ted is (***being**) ~~punished~~.

Being only survives when it is not recoverable from the antecedent.

If it is recoverable, then it is obligatorily deleted, unlike *be(en)*.

Conclusion and further issues (10)

Suggestion:

VPE elides only vP in this case, because of recoverability.

= VPE targets as much of the predicative layer as possible, but only if it is recoverable from the antecedent.

Again:

= conflict between 'elide as much of the predicate as possible' and 'elide only recoverable material'

Thank You!