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Remarks and Replies

Wanting, Having, and Getting: A Note on Fodor and Lepore 1998

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This article takes up Fodor and Lepore's (1998) account of the meaning of [*want* DP] structures, according to which the verb *to have* is introduced at interpretation. With certain DP complements a *want to have DP* paraphrase of *want DP* is ill formed; the correct paraphrase uses *get* or *give.* To allow for this, F&L would have to vary the introduced verb depending on the meaning of the DP, but this would make their proposal ''co-compositional,'' defeating its original purpose. If *have, get,* and *give* all contain the abstract preposition P_{HAVE} (Harley 1995, Richards 2001), however, F&L's treatment may be appropriately revised: the element introduced by *want* is not *have* but P_{HAVE}. F&L can avoid co-compositionality at the price of allowing lexical decomposition.

Keywords: lexical decomposition, atomism, compositionality, idiom, *have*

1 *Wanting DP* as 'Wanting to Have DP'

Fodor and Lepore 1998 (henceforth, F&L) repropose an old treatment of the semantics of *want:* when *want* takes a DP complement, it does not compose with the DP directly. Rather, a *want*-specific composition rule passes the interpretation 'want to have DP' to the VP mother node. F&L's account, while maintaining their atomistic, denotational view of lexical items, allows a single lexical item to contribute different meanings to its mother node in different circumstances.[1]

This general approach is remarkably robust in accounting for many otherwise mysterious syntactic and semantic facts about [*want* DP] constructions. I will show here, however, that F&L's proposal suffers from a potentially fatal problem: the verb *have,* whether introduced at

My thanks to Terry Langendoen, Andrew McIntyre, Massimo Piattelli-Palmarini, and especially two anonymous *LI* reviewers for helpful comments and suggestions.

[1] Den Dikken, Larson, and Ludlow (1997) argue that such an ''interpretive'' approach is unnecessary: they propose that [*want* DP] selects for a covert [*to have* DP] complement clause in the syntax, which goes unpronounced owing to reconstruction. The account ultimately indicated by the discussion here would also adopt the idea that the covert element is present in the syntax as well as the semantics; without such an approach, the particle shift facts noted in (6) and (7) would remain unexplained. For the central line of argumentation about co-composition and atomism here, however, it does not matter whether the covert element is present in the syntax or inserted at interpretation.

Linguistic Inquiry, Volume 35, Number 2, Spring 2004
255–267
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interpretation or covertly present in the syntax, is not the appropriate covert element in a particular class of cases.

Essentially, F&L's proposal is this. It is evident that *want* denotes a relation that holds between a wanter y and a state of affairs x when y wants x. In *John wants to go,* JOHN_i is the wanter y and PRO_i TO GO is the state of affairs x that he wants to hold.[2] The problem is that sometimes *want* takes a DP complement, not a state-of-affairs complement, as in *John wants a beer.* F&L note, however, that the nature of ''wanting'' remains the same across the two kinds of complement. That is, it seems reasonable to say that the instances of *want* in *John wants a beer* and *John wants to go* denote the same relation WANT. How can this WANT compose with a DP, when it needs to compose with something that denotes a state of affairs?

F&L's solution hinges on the intuition that *John wants a beer* and *John wants to have a beer* are synonymous in the strictest sense. They propose that when *want* combines with a DP, its own lexical entry works to ensure that what is wanted is a state of affairs. *Want,* when it is forced to compose with a DP, applies a *want*-specific composition rule, which introduces the English predicate *have* into the meaning of the whole. Just in the case when its complement is a DP, it passes the meaning 'want PRO to have DP' up to its mother node. Thus, the denotation of the VP [*wants a beer*] ends up being WANTS PRO_i TO HAVE A BEER. To quote F&L: ''. . . the operation [of interpreting the VP node] is driven by a composition rule that is part of the lexical entry for *want:* namely, if the constituents of VP_i are $\langle wants_V, X_{NP}\rangle$, then the interpretation of VP_i is 'want to have F(X)' '' (F&L 1998:285).

2 Background

F&L present this analysis in the context of an argument against the ''co-compositional'' interpretive mechanisms employed by Pustejovsky in his Generative Lexicon framework. In particular, F&L argue against the notion that the apparent ''polysemy'' of a verb like *bake* should be accounted for by co-composition.

Pustejovsky uses co-composition to determine, for instance, whether *bake* is interpreted in a 'creation' sense (*bake a cake*) or a 'change-of-state' sense (*bake a potato*) (Pustejovsky 1995: 122–127). For Pustejovsky, the interpretation of *bake* crucially depends on whether the qualia structure of its object includes the information that it is an ''artifact'' (*cake*) or a ''natural kind'' (*potato*), as well as information about the manufacturing process involved in the creation of a particular artifact like a *cake.* That is, Pustejovsky claims that *bake* contributes a different meaning to the VP containing it depending on the semantic content of the DP in its complement, hence ''co-composition.''

F&L argue against this position, noting that the range of interpretations available for *bake a potato* is equally available for *bake a cake,* and concluding that *bake* is in fact contributing the

[2] I have taken the liberty of introducing PRO into F&L's complement infinitival clause, since *to go* by itself does not denote a state of affairs; this, of course, is consistent with Den Dikken, Larson, and Ludlow 1997.

same information to the VP in both cases. You certainly can bake an already existing cake in the same way you can bake an already existing potato, for instance.

F&L go into the semantics of *want* because Pustejovsky argues that a similar phenomenon is at work with verbs like *want, begin,* and *ask.* These verbs, he claims, also employ a form of co-composition, supplemented by an operation of type coercion. Pustejovsky uses examples of such verbs with a DP complement to illustrate the separate functions of these two key interpretational mechanisms in his framework. He summarizes them as in (1) (Pustejovsky 1995:139) and illustrates with the examples in (2).

(1) a. The ability of the verb to coerce its complement
b. The ability of the complement to metonymically reconstruct the required coercing type from the semantic structure within the complement

(2) a. John wants a beer. (*to drink*)
b. Mary wants a book. (*to read*)
c. Harry wants another cigarette. (*to smoke*)

Pustejovsky also adopts the idea that the complement of *want* does need to be a specific type—the type denoted by an infinitival complement (for him, ''event''). He adopts a type-shifting mechanism (p. 111) that lifts the semantic type of a DP in the complement of *want* to the appropriate ''event.'' This mechanism gives his system the property in (1a). F&L's composition rule for *want* accomplishes much the same thing, and they do not object to operations like (1a) in principle, as long as the mechanism is contained within each relevant lexical entry. Their criticism of Pustejovsky's approach to *want* focuses on the co-composition he employs to capture (1b).

Pustejovsky's type-shifting mechanism ensures that an infinitival verb is generated that allows the DP to compose with *want.* His co-composition mechanism specifies *which* infinitival verb. In (2), the purpose clauses in italics illustrate the supposed need to specify different verbs for different DP complements to *want:* if you want a beer, you want to drink it, while if you want a cigarette, you want to smoke it. Thus, co-composition: the particular event that is inserted by the type coercion mechanism is determined by the lexical semantics of the DP complement. It is this aspect of Pustejovsky's analysis that F&L argue against most vigorously: Pustejovsky's treatment of *want DP* involves variable interpretations—*want,* on Pustejovsky's approach, is not univocal.

The interest of the *want* example for F&L is that it's a case in which they agree that the verb does sometimes contribute more to its VP's meaning than meets the eye, and that the conditions in which it does so are determined by its complement. They say, ''But here we agree with JP; [a sense-enumerative treatment involving two verbs $want_1$ and $want_2$] is too unrevealing to be plausible. In particular, it misses the equivalence of *wants a beer* and *wants to have a beer*'' (p. 284).

However, for F&L it is important that it is *not* the lexical semantic content of the complement that determines what extra meaning is contributed; rather, it is the syntactic type of the complement. Recall that for F&L, although [$_{VP}$ *want* [$_{IP}$ PRO *to go*]] is interpreted directly as 'want to go', [$_{VP}$ *want* [$_{DP}$ *an apple*]] is interpreted as 'want to have an apple', not as 'want an apple'.

For F&L, the 'to have' part of the VP's interpretation is contributed by *want* if and only if its sister is a DP. It does not matter whether the DP is *an apple, a cigarette,* or *a book:* for F&L, the verb that *want* introduces is simply *have.* (They say (p. 283), ''There is no evidence that the meaning of governing expressions is ever modulated by the semantics of the expressions that they govern.'') According to F&L, Pustejovsky's purpose clauses in (2) are too specific: in all cases, a perfectly synonymous paraphrase is provided if the infinitival verb is *have.*

(3) a. John wants a beer. = John wants to have a beer.
b. Mary wants a book. = Mary wants to have a book.
c. Harry wants another cigarette. = Harry wants to have another cigarette.

What is particularly important for F&L is that *have* results in a suitable interpretation in all contexts where *want* takes a DP complement. If it did not, *want*'s meaning would not be univocal. They say (p. 286), ''. . .it's part of what we take to be the context insensitivity of *want* that it always introduces the same 'light verb' into the VP it governs.'' They consider it to be a ''necessary truth'' that ''every y that wants NP ipso facto wants to have NP.''

The meaning of *have* is ''flexible'' to the exact degree that sentences like *Harry wants another cigarette* are flexible. If Harry is a nonsmoker building a little tower out of cigarettes, his utterance of the sentence *I want another cigarette* would be anomalous if interpreted as 'I want to smoke another cigarette'—but the interpretation 'I want to have another cigarette' is still right on the money. Pustejovsky's co-composition rules need to refer not only to the lexical-semantic content of the DP, but also to the whole discourse context, while F&L's proposal with *have* is both beautifully simple and interpretively robust.

F&L's interpretive composition rule means that *want* can contribute the same lexical content in all cases and hence can be univocal, not polysemous. According to F&L, ''the cost of this univocality is complex lexical entries, which determine not only the content of an item, but also the logical syntax of the phrases to which they contribute their content'' (p. 286). It further, and crucially, relies on the fact that the ''light'' element 'have' that *want* introduces is the *same* no matter what DP occurs in its complement position. This is what makes *want* univocal.[3] F&L's rule makes no reference to the meaning of the complement DP, unlike Pustejovsky's mechanism, where the particular shifting that goes on is very much dependent on the semantic content of the DP itself. Hence, on F&L's account, synonymy is preserved between the pairs of sentences in (4a–d).

(4) a. John wants a car. ⇔ John wants to have a car.
b. John wants the car. ⇔ John wants to have the car.
c. John wants a daughter. ⇔ John wants to have a daughter.
d. John wants Mary. ⇔ John wants to have Mary.

F&L's account is more robust than they show, particularly in examples (4c–d). One point in its favor is that, significantly, the various ''readings'' that any *have DP* expression can have

[3] For atomists like F&L, it is essential that this element just *is* the regular English verb *have;* the interpretation *have* receives is whatever interpretation it normally receives.

are all available with a *want DP* expression. When *have*'s complement is a DP that denotes offspring, like *daughter* or *child,* as in (4c), *have* easily receives a 'parenting' interpretation, and this is exactly the most felicitous interpretation for the covert *have* in *John wants a daughter.* Similarly, there's the sexual kind of *having,* which is easily accessible when its subject is male and its object female; again, this effect carries over to the covert *have* in *John wants Mary.* An even more subtle effect is detectable in (4a–b). Jacqueline Guéron (personal communication) notes that when *have* takes an indefinite object, as in *John has a car,* the most likely reading is one of permanent ownership. When *have*'s object is definite, however, as in *John has the car,* the most likely reading is that the ownership is temporary—John has the car right now, but there's not such a strong implication that it's his own car, or that he will always have it. (No such effect shows up with more ''lexical'' verbs: in *John owns a/the car,* the use of the definite or indefinite determiner simply depends on the normal discourse factors that affect speakers' choices in such matters.) And indeed in (4b), *John wants the car,* one easy reading to get is that John wants temporary possession of the car, while in (4a), *John wants a car,* an easy reading is that John wants permanent possession of a car—that is, he wants to own a car. These meaning variations are exactly what we expect if *want* introduces *have* in order to compose with DPs: exactly the range of interpretations that *have* prefers in varying contexts is passed along to the interpretation of [*want* DP]. (Similar subtle semantic effects are observed by Ross (1976:264) with respect to the interpretation of complements like *a sister, a cold,* and *freedom*).

Of course, F&L's point for *bake* holds for these examples with *have,* too. *John had Mary,* for instance, is multiply ambiguous—he might have had her as an employee, a team member, a designated subject of inquiry, or whatever, as well as sexually. And in the context of the movie *American Pie,* for example, even the sentence *Jim wanted the apple pie* can get the 'sexual' interpretation. The relevant point is that *John wants Mary* or *Jim wanted the apple pie* is multiply ambiguous in exactly the same way that *John wants to have Mary* or *Jim wanted to have the apple pie* is, making the notion that *want* introduces *have* into the interpretation of [*want* DP] very plausible.

Other syntactic and semantic arguments for the introduction of *have* into the meaning of *want DP* sentences are legion in the literature. F&L are far from the first to suggest that [*want* DP] is interpreted with a covert *have* element. Such an account was also proposed in the Generative Semantics literature by McCawley (1974) and Ross (1976), and by Bach (1968:119), Partee (1974: 98–100), and Dowty (1979:244–250). Indeed, as Dowty notes, it is even sketchily outlined as early as Quine 1960:155. The original motivation for McCawley's account, as for many of the decompositional proposals in Generative Semantics, was the scope of adverbials, like *until June* in examples like these (from McCawley 1974:85–86):

(5) a. Bill wants your apartment $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{until June}\\ \text{for 6 months}\\ \text{while you're in Botswana}\end{array}\right\}$.

b. Right now Bill wants your apartment until June, but tomorrow he'll probably want it until October.

c. A week ago Bill wanted your car yesterday.

d. *A week ago Bill painted your car yesterday.

In example (5a), the state of affairs that is modified by the *until June* adverbial is the time that Bill thinks he should *have* the apartment, not the time of his wanting it. This is clearer in (5b–c), where Bill's wanting time is modified separately from the desired having time. (This argument is also mentioned in Pustejovsky 1995:109.) No such ''double'' temporal modification is possible with more pedestrian transitive verbs like *paint,* as in (5d). Other arguments showing the parallel behavior of *want DP* and *want to have DP* from Ross 1976 and other references cited above are reviewed in Den Dikken, Larson, and Ludlow 1997 and will not be reexamined here.

McIntyre (2002) points out a striking and previously unnoticed syntactic restriction on *have* that carries over to *want* with a DP complement. With most English verb-particle constructions, the particle can occur on either side of the direct object, the well-known phenomenon of particle shift. McIntyre shows that *have* resists particle shift (compare (6b,d) with *take*).

(6) a. He had his jacket off. cf. *took his jacket off*
b. *He had off his jacket. cf. *took off his jacket*
c. The doctor had the splinter out in no time. cf. *took the splinter out*
d. *The doctor had out the splinter in no time. cf. *took out the splinter*

He observes that *want* with a direct object DP also resists particle shift (see also the discussion of example (15)).

(7) a. The doctor wants those stitches out.
b. *The doctor wants out those stitches.
c. The doctor wants those clothes off.
d. *The doctor wants off those clothes.[4]

Whatever one's treatment of facts like these, they provide strong support for any proposal that involves including *have DP* in the representation of *want DP*. Since *want DP* and *have DP* exhibit a strikingly similar array of semantic and syntactic properties, it would be surprising and disappointing to find that these properties did not arise from a similar source. To the extent that the covert *want to have DP* account is likely to allow a unified explanation of these facts, it looks very promising.

2 *Wanting DP* as 'Wanting to Get DP'

With another class of DPs, however, things aren't so rosy. Consider the examples in (8) (similar examples were noted in McCawley 1974:92).

[4] On the reading where the doctor says, ''Take off your clothes,'' of course. There is a good reading where the doctor is on the clothes and wants to *get* off them; see discussion below.

(8) a. John wants a compliment. #John wants to have a compliment.
b. John wants a pat on the back. #John wants to have a pat on the back.
c. John wants a kiss. #John wants to have a kiss.
d. #John has a compliment. OK John has a compliment for you.
e. #John has a pat on the back. OK John has a pat on the back for you.
f. #John has a kiss. OK John has a kiss for you.

In fact, it seems as if there's a class of abstract event-denoting DPs that can be ''given'' or ''received,'' but not exactly ''had,'' because as soon as they're given or received, they cease to exist. Insofar as you *can* ''have'' such a DP, it means that you have one *to give* (compare the sentences with and without the benefactive *for you* phrase in (8d–f)). But that's not what wanting one of these DPs means at all: if you want such a DP, you want to *get* it; the paraphrases with *get* and *be given* in (9a–c) are good synonyms with the original *want DP* construction.

(9) a. John wants a compliment. ⇔ John wants to get a compliment.
John wants to be given a compliment.
b. John wants a pat on the back. ⇔ John wants to get a pat on the back.
John wants to be given a pat on the back.
c. John wants a kiss. ⇔ John wants to get a kiss.
John wants to be given a kiss.

McCawley (1974) concluded that *want* sometimes selects for (and deletes) *have,* and sometimes *get.*

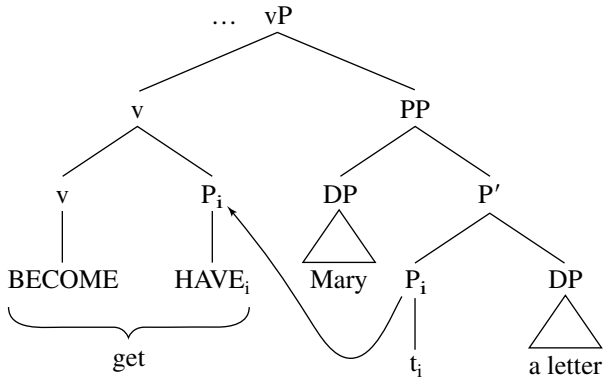
Here, F&L are facing a serious problem. There is no visible syntactic difference between *a compliment* and *a beer;* they are both (indefinite) DPs. Whatever difference there is between them—say, that one denotes a concrete object while the other denotes a punctual event—lies entirely in their internal semantics. If F&L have to make the particular light element introduced by *want*'s composition rule dependent on the semantics (here, say, ontological type) of the DP in question, their position, by their own argument, is untenable. Recall that it is crucial for their analysis that ''it's part of what we take to be the context insensitivity of *want* that it always introduces the same 'light verb' into the VP it governs'' (p. 286). If *want DP* sometimes is interpreted as *want to have DP* and sometimes as *want to get DP,* they've admitted co-composition.[5] Do F&L have to allow for Pustejovsky-style co-composition after all?

I wish to argue here that F&L do *not* need to allow for co-composition, but only at a price they may not be willing to pay. Recent work on *get* and *give* (e.g., Harley 1995, 2002, Richards 2001, Beck and Johnson 2004) has argued that *get* and *give* are constructed in the syntax by

[5] It is important to realize that for F&L, it is essential that the light verb introduced by *want*'s composition rule is nothing other than the actual English verb *have.* For them, it cannot be the case that the verb is sometimes *have* and sometimes *get;* given Fodor's atomistic semantics, *have* and *get* are distinct lexical items and consequently distinct atoms. In consequence, anything that is a well-formed English string as *want DP* should be a well-formed English string as *want to have DP:* if *I want a compliment* is a good string of English, then *I want to have a compliment* should also be good.

combining a stative preposition (P_{HAVE}) with an inchoative or a causative light verb, respectively (see also Pesetsky 1995). On such an account, the underlying structure that ends up being realized as a sentence like *Mary got a letter* is the structure in (10).

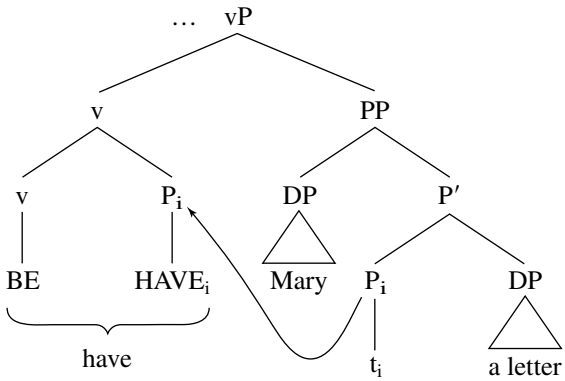
(10)



(*Mary* will subsequently raise to the subject position to get Case and satisfy the EPP, of course, resulting in the surface word order.)

On this account, the abstract preposition P_{HAVE} that combines with a null light verb BECOME to produce *get* is identical to the abstract preposition P_{HAVE} that many researchers have proposed combines with BE to produce the verb *have* in languages like English, and is realized as a verb *be* plus a preposition in many other languages (see, e.g., Benveniste 1966, Freeze 1992, Kayne 1993, Guéron 1995). That is, the structure of a sentence like *Mary had a letter* in (11) is identical to the structure for *get* in (10), except with a different verbal element in v.

(11)



Richards's (2001) evidence for this decompositional representation in English comes from idiom paradigms like those in (12).

(12) a. John got the boot.
b. Mary gave John the boot.
c. I got the creeps (just looking at him).

d. The Count gives me the creeps.
e. I have the creeps.

Evidently, if the idiom involved in (8c–e) is something like [$_{P'}$ P_{HAVE} [$_{DP}$ *the creeps*]], and if *have, get,* and *give* all contain [P_{HAVE}] as a subpart, the univocality of the idiom across all three verbal frames is accounted for.[6]

3 *Want DP* = [$_{VP}$ *want* [$_{PP}$ PRO [$_{P'}$ P_{HAVE} DP]]]

We can understand how to solve the problem of *want a compliment* if the light element that *want* introduces when its complement is a DP is not the English verb *have,* but the abstract preposition P_{HAVE}.[7]

Prepositional phrases, predicated of a subject, denote a state of affairs, and hence (like other small clauses) are appropriate complements to *want.* In F&L's system, the states of affairs denoted in the PP small clauses in (13) would compose directly with *want.*

(13) a. $Bill_i$ wants PRO_i off the team.
b. Mary wants Bill off the team.
c. $Jill_i$ wants PRO_i out of that marriage.
d. Bill wants Jim in the game.

[6] The adverbial modification facts discussed above, as well as some tricky obviation facts noted by Ross (1976: 267) also support the notion that *give* contains prepositional HAVE. Temporal modification of *give* also allows modification of the result having state as well as the giving event, as in (i); the same applies to *get,* as in (ii).

(i) I gave Ted my keys until tomorrow.
(Ross 1976:267)

(ii) I got the keys until tomorrow.

If the structure of *give* and *get* is something along the lines proposed in the tree in (10) (where *give* contains a v predicate CAUS instead of BECOME heading little v), the availability of a lower scope for *until tomorrow* is transparently explained.

Ross's argument from obviation is similar. Certain kinds of DPs in the complement of *have* (and *want*) must have a possessor that is disjoint from the subject of *have.*

(iii) You have my/*your sympathy.

(iv) I want your/*my sympathy.

No such effect is visible with other kinds of verbs.

(v) I described my cooperation.

The same effect is visible in sentences with *give.*

(vi) You got my/*your sympathy.

(vii) I gave you my/*your sympathy.

I consider this additional support for analyzing *give* as [$_{vP}$ DP [$_{v'}$ v_{CAUS} [$_{PP}$ DP [$_{P'}$ P_{HAVE} [$_{DP}$ DP]]]]].

[7] McIntyre (2003) argues that in fact P_{HAVE} is sometimes realized as an independent preposition in English, in particular as *with;* he notes that *with* is subject to the same animacy effects with alienable possession as *have.*

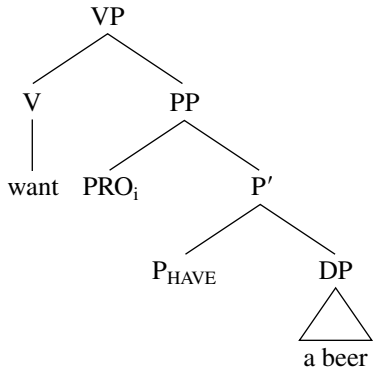
(i) a. The woman had a book.
b. the woman with a book

(ii) a. The shelf had a book (*on it).
b. the shelf with a book (*on it)

F&L's composition rule, then, could introduce a preposition, rather than a verb, when the complement of *want* is a DP, since PPs denote appropriate states of affairs. It could, consequently, say that the interpretation of [$_{VP}$ *want* DP] is the same as the interpretation of [$_{VP}$ *want* [$_{PP}$ PRO$_i$ [$_{P'}$ P$_{HAVE}$ DP]]], as long as [P$_{HAVE}$ DP] is a well-formed piece of English, which it is.

The proposal is, then, that the ''logical syntax'' (to use F&L's term) of *want a beer* is as illustrated in (14).[8]

(14)



That is, if Bill wants a beer, he wants the state denoted by [$_{PP}$ *Bill* [$_{P'}$ P$_{HAVE}$ [$_{DP}$ *a beer*]]] to be true. It so happens that a good paraphrase of this structure in English is *Bill wants to have a beer,* because the 'durative' meaning contributed by the addition of the stative verb BE to P$_{HAVE}$ (the makeup of the verb *have* in the paraphrase) does not create any semantic anomaly when the complement of P$_{HAVE}$ is a concrete object: the state denoted by [$_{P'}$ P$_{HAVE}$ [$_{DP}$ *a beer*]] can have duration.

Similarly, if Bill wants a compliment, he wants the state denoted by [$_{PP}$ *Bill* [$_{P'}$ P$_{HAVE}$ [$_{DP}$ *a compliment*]]] to be true. (We know that this is a well-formed structure of English because *Bill got a compliment* also contains [$_{PP}$ *Bill* [$_{P'}$ P$_{HAVE}$ [$_{DP}$ *a compliment*]]] as a substructure, denoting whatever the relationship is between Bill and a compliment after he's gotten one.) Because a compliment, unlike a beer, is something that does not have a prolonged existence in the real world, trying to make a pronounceable paraphrase by adding the stative verb BE to P$_{HAVE}$

[8] The proposal here would have to be further elaborated to account for the ill-formedness of strings like **John wants Bill a beer,* on the interpretation 'John wants Bill to have a beer'. If structures like (14) are entirely analogous to sentences like *John wants Bill off the team,* then the failure of exceptional Case marking from *want* with P$_{HAVE}$ is mysterious. One possible solution is to allow object control *want* to select for P$_{HAVE}$ but not exceptional Case marking *want* (on the morphological separateness of the two, see Pullum 1997). A more radical approach I am pursuing in separate work treats *want* as a modal and raising predicate that *always* selects for P$_{HAVE}$, which can select for either a DP or infinitival TP complement. The subject of P$_{HAVE}$ is the controller of the PRO in infinitival TP complements of P$_{HAVE}$, so *want to V* sentences are still control sentences, but the control relation is lower in the structure. The subject of P$_{HAVE}$ raises to the subject position of the modal verb *want.* That analysis entails that a sentence like **John wants Bill a beer* is ill formed for the same reason that **John has Bill a beer* is ill formed; P$_{HAVE}$ does not allow a small clause with a DP predicate as its complement.

in this case will produce an anomaly: *Bill wants to have a compliment* is ill formed because the [P_{HAVE} [$_{DP}$ *a compliment*]] state has no internal duration, which the BE part of the verb *have* requires. On the other hand, *Bill wants to get a compliment* is fine as a paraphrase, because adding the eventive light verb BECOME to P_{HAVE}, which produces *get,* makes no commitment about whether the [P_{HAVE} [$_{DP}$ *a compliment*]] state has any internal duration or not.[9] In this case, the paraphrase says that Bill wants to go from a complimentless state to a complimented state, and it works as a paraphrase because if you want a state X to be true, you want whatever is necessary to make X true to happen; that is, you want X to *become* true. Since *get* means exactly BECOME + P_{HAVE}, it's an appropriate paraphrase.[10]

Consider the effect on F&L's system if we substitute P_{HAVE} for *have* in their composition rule for *want.* In most cases, this will be an innocent move, semantically speaking, because *have* is just P_{HAVE} plus *be.* In precisely the cases where we need it to, however, it will yield the correct paraphrase—the one with *get,* not the one with *have.* This is because Mary going from a complimentless state to a complimented state entails Mary becoming complimented—that is, entails a proposition that could be represented in the syntax as [$_{vP}$ BECOME [$_{PP}$ *Mary* [$_{P'}$ P_{HAVE} *a compliment*]]]—which in English (in the past tense) is pronounced *Mary got a compliment.*

The alert reader may surmise, however, that if P_{HAVE} is a subpart of *get,* and if going from a have-not state to a have state entails ''becoming,'' shouldn't we be able to paraphrase all the *want DP* sentences in (1) as *want to get DP* rather than *want to have DP?* That is, maybe F&L (and all the previous authors except McCawley) simply got the particular light element that *want* selects for wrong: it should have been *get,* not *have.* This works reasonably well for (4a–b); if John wants a car, he wants to get a car, and if he wants the car, he wants to get the car. Unfortunately, it does not work for (4c–d). *John wants a daughter* is not synonymous with *John wants to get a*

[9] A reviewer makes the very interesting observation that VPs like [$_{VP}$ *have a compliment*] are fine when they appear in combination with a question *and* an appropriate modal.

(i) a. Can I have a pat on the back?
b. *I can have a pat on the back.
c. *Will I have a pat on the back?

(ii) a. May I have a compliment?
b. *I may have a compliment.
c. *Will I have a compliment?

I assume that this paradigm reveals some deep interaction between the modal, the irrealis effect of the question operator, and event structure (see footnote 10 regarding the counterfactual nature of *want*), but I cannot undertake a full exploration here. It may be worth noting that the same facts seem to be true in conditionals: *I'll calm down if I can have a hug.*

[10] Thanks to an anonymous reviewer for pointing out the implications of event structure for the interpretation of *want.* In fact, as discussed by Iatridou (2000:243), the complement of *want* is not *always* counterfactual; that is, someone can want a state of affairs to hold that in fact already holds, as long as that state of affairs is atelic (e.g., *I want to live in Bolivia, and I do live in Bolivia*). Telic states of affairs in the complement of *want,* however, are different: *Sue wants to go to the party* does entail that Sue is not already at the party—that is, the only predicates for which *wanting P* entails ~*P* are telic. For such telic predicates, then *wanting P* entails wanting *P* to become true. The state [P_{HAVE} *a compliment*] in *want a compliment* is telic because of the punctual nature of *a compliment* (see Belvin 1996 for discussion of the effect of the event type of its complement on *have*). Since [P_{HAVE} *a compliment*] is telic, the VP *want* [P_{HAVE} *a compliment*] entails that the state [P_{HAVE} *a compliment*] does not hold at reference time. Consequently, *wanting* [P_{HAVE} *a compliment*] entails *wanting* [P_{HAVE} *a compliment*] to *become* true.

daughter;[11] nor is *John wants Mary* synonymous with *John wants to get Mary.* Indeed, the latter can have an entirely separate idiomatic reading that the former cannot.[12]

This point also applies to the particle shift facts. Recall that neither *want* nor *have* allows particle shift, as illustrated in (6) and (7). In identical sentences with *get,* however, particle shift is fine.

(15) a. The doctor got the stitches out.
b. The doctor got out the stitches.

Assuming that the availability of particle shift is tied to the presence of eventive v, as argued in Harley and Noyer 1998, the difference between *want* and *have,* on the one hand, and *get,* on the other, boils down to the fact that the eventive light verb v_{BECOME} is syntactically present in the verb *get* but not in the stative verbs *want* and *have.* Whatever the account, however, these facts demonstrate that *want* cannot insert a *get* complement clause into its semantics in all cases where some additional predicate is needed to create a wanted state of affairs.

The key is that P_{HAVE} is neither *have* nor *get,* but a subpart of both. It is the crucial subpart involved in the readings under consideration here, receiving an appropriate interpretation when its complement is *a compliment,* and also when its complement is *a daughter.* None of the paraphrases, however, are exact representations of the interpretation of [$_{VP}$ *want* X_{DP}]. The interpretation of [$_{VP}$ *want* X_{DP}] is represented in (16), in F&L's set-theoretic notation.[13]

(16) [$_{VP}$ want X_{DP}] $\Leftrightarrow$ {y: y wants y P_{HAVE} F(X)}

This analysis takes care of the *have*~*get* alternation in *want* paraphrases without appealing to co-composition. However, it does require lexical decomposition of *have* and *get,* of precisely the type that is anathema to an atomistic view of lexical items like *have, get,* and *give.* F&L can either maintain their atomistic position on lexical items and accept co-composition, or accept some decomposition and reject co-composition, but not both.[14]

The moral of the story is, of course, that you can't always get what you want, but if you try sometimes, you just might find you get what you need.

[11] Although, of course, there is an archaic use of *get* or *beget* that would be a beautifully accurate paraphrase.

[12] Idioms can involve just P_{HAVE} and its complement, as in the case of *have/get/give the creeps,* or they can involve P_{HAVE} and the light verb(s) that it combines with, as in *have/*get/*give a fit* or **have/*get/give a rat's ass.* A reviewer points out that some DPs that are fine with *have* cannot appear with *want* (e.g., *have/*want a fit*); this presumably is because *want* selects just P_{HAVE}, while the expression *have a fit* involves BE + P_{HAVE}.

[13] Although I have adopted F&L's notation here, I am obviously of the opinion that in fact P_{HAVE} is part of the syntax of *want DP,* not just its semantics. If it is, not only does it allow an account of the particle shift facts, it also allows a straightforward structural account of the temporal modification facts in (5), according to which the temporal modifier is simply adjoined to P_{HAVE} and thus naturally composes with and modifies it, rather than the wanting itself. See Beck and Johnson 2004 for a similar treatment of temporal modification of P_{HAVE} within *give* double object constructions. Note that F&L say that a syntactic account of this type is perfectly consistent with their claims (p. 286, point 5).

[14] Of course, they could also reconsider their conclusion that the instances of *want* in *want DP* and *want to V* are the same *want,* but if so they've accepted the sense-enumerative approach to *want* that they characterized as ''too unrevealing to be plausible.''

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