

# The *have yet to* Construction: A Microcomparative Account

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## 1. Introduction

Sentences like that in (1), which exemplifies the “have yet to” (HYT) construction, are found in all major dialects and idiolects of English (as far as we know).

- (1) John **has yet to** visit his grandmother.

The HYT construction poses several puzzles for syntax and the syntax-semantics interface. First, it has a negative meaning—(1) means that John has *not* visited his grandmother yet—and it contains a Negative Polarity Item (NPI) (*yet*), but there is no overt sentential negation. Second, it has the semantics of perfect aspect, but no visible perfect participle.

What is possibly most interesting about the HYT construction, however, is that closer investigation reveals numerous dimensions of microvariation in its underlying syntax. For one thing, speakers seem to differ as to whether they actually treat the HYT construction as syntactically negative or affirmative—in many cases, different negativity tests give different results. For another, speakers seem to differ as to whether *have* must be an auxiliary or whether it can behave as a main verb. And all of this variation exists despite the construction having basically the same meaning across speakers, no matter what the underlying syntax is for those speakers.

The goal of this study is to sort out the microsyntax of HYT across speakers, in the face of contradictory empirical claims and mutually incompatible proposals in the existing literature. We develop an analysis of the variation and support that analysis with data from two acceptability judgment surveys of 361 and 520 speakers each. In this paper, we explore in depth one dimension of variation: the status of *have* (as an auxiliary or a main verb).

We find that the majority of speakers who can treat *have* as a main verb can also treat it as an auxiliary verb. The reverse does not hold: many speakers can treat *have* as an auxiliary verb, but not as a main verb. This result leads us to conclude that the difference between the main verb and auxiliary verb analysis is a relatively minor one, and we propose that it has to do with where in the structure an interpretable perfect feature [iT:PERF] is introduced. Nearly all speakers allow it in its canonical position, leading to the acceptability of the auxiliary use. Some speakers, in addition, allow it to be introduced much lower, leading to the acceptability of the main verb use.

The paper is structured as follows. In section 2, we provide a discussion of previous work on HYT, and along the way provide a preview of our analysis by discussing what aspects of each proposal we do and do not adopt in our own. In section 3, we present a brief overview of our own proposal, and in section 4 we present empirical data to support it. Section 5 provides novel evidence regarding the position of *yet*. 6 briefly discusses a second major area of variation—the status of negation—and section 7 concludes.

## 2. Background

Since Kelly’s (2008) snippet on the *have yet to* construction, at least three detailed analyses of it have been proposed: Kelly (2012), Harves & Myler (2014) and Bybel & Johnson (2014). What is striking is that although they share many theoretical assumptions, they end up with very different analyses based on

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different judgments of the crucial data points. In this section, we outline the main points of contention, as well as some of the specific details of the analyses that have been proposed.

The primary points of contention concern (i) whether *have* is treated as a main verb or an auxiliary verb, and (ii) whether the construction is understood to have syntactic sentential negation or not. Our primary interest in this paper is the status of *have*, but we will briefly discuss the status of negation as well.

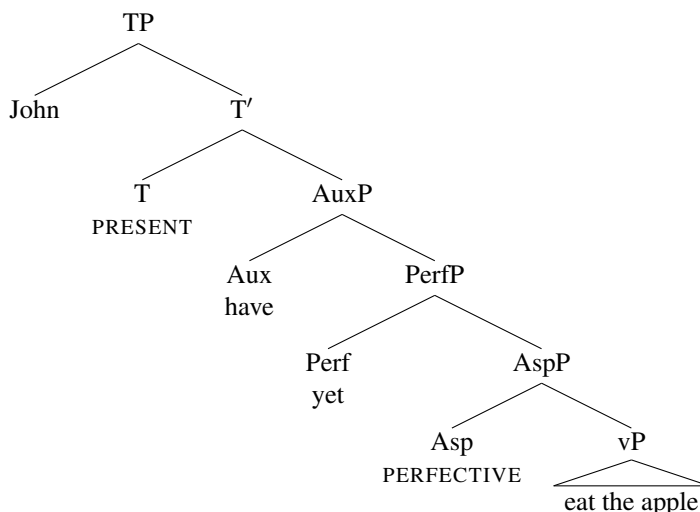
Kelly (2012) argues that HYT involves auxiliary-*have* (henceforth aux-*have*) and sentential negation. Harves & Myler (2014) also argue that HYT involves aux-*have*, but that it involves no sentential negation. Bybel & Johnson (2014) argue that HYT involves main verb *have* and sentential negation. The logical fourth position, that HYT involves main verb *have* and no sentential negation, has not been proposed as far as we know. Below, we will partly resolve this tension by showing that there is genuine speaker variation regarding the main verb/aux-*have* question. Regarding the status of sentential negation, the picture is complex, and for a more complete analysis see Tyler & Wood (2016).

Before turning to our novel data and the analysis we propose to capture it, we outline the most important aspects of the specific analyses developed by previous researchers. We turn first to Kelly (2012), followed by Harves & Myler (2014) and Bybel & Johnson (2014).

### 2.1. Kelly (2012)

Kelly (2012), based primarily on his own judgments, argues that HYT involves aux-*have*. He proposes the structure in (2b) for the HYT sentence in (2a). In that structure, *yet* merges in the Perf head, acting as a portmaneteau morph that simultaneously carries sentential negation and perfect semantics.

- (2) a. John has yet to eat the apple.  
b.



The analysis is thus mono-clausal, with one main verb (e.g. *eat*) and one auxiliary verb, *have*. Kelly (2012:131) suggests, following similar proposals by Epstein & Seely (2006) and Wurmbrand (2007), that *to*, in this construction, is simply the realization of the absence of verbal inflection.

Our analysis below shares with this approach the idea that the *yet* in this construction carries the appropriate features responsible for the perfect semantics of the HYT construction. However, we will see below that there are several empirical problems with the core assumptions underlying Kelly's analysis. There is evidence, for example, that the construction must be biclausal, and that speakers do not need to have the auxiliary use of *have* in order to get the perfect semantics of the HYT construction.

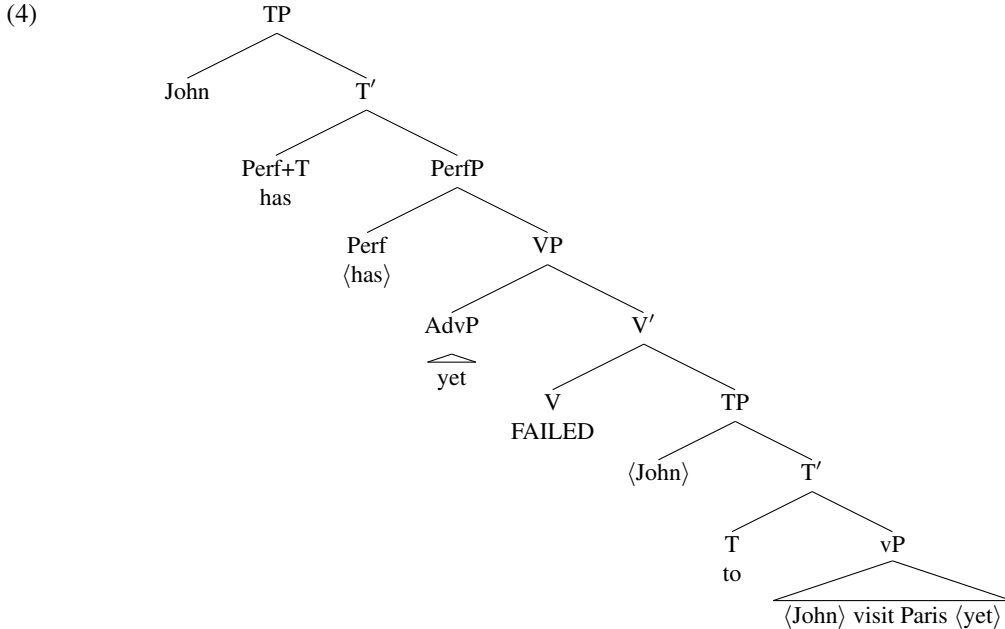
### 2.2. Harves & Myler (2014)

Harves & Myler (2014) argue for a biclausal analysis of HYT. They agree with Kelly that many speakers do treat *have* as an auxiliary. This auxiliary then selects a silent main verb, which has the right kind of negative semantics to license the NPI *yet*. The verb selected is essentially the silent counterpart

of the verb *fail* (written ‘FAIL’). They point out that *fail* not only licenses NPIs, but also has a somewhat bleached semantics that basically entails HYT sentences. Thus, (3a) and (3b) are mutually entailing (on the bleached reading of *failed* in (3a)).

- (3) a. John has failed to visit Paris yet.  
b. John has yet to visit Paris.

*Yet* raises to the specifier of FAIL, its licensor, which in turn licenses its non-pronunciation.



Harves & Myler (2014) note, however, that some speakers treat *have* in HYT as a main verb. This fact is obviously incompatible with the analysis above, so they propose that such speakers use possessive, main verb *have* along with a possibly deverbal NP object that serves the syntactic and semantic function of the verb *fail* in the aux-*have* version. They suggest that, for such speakers, *John has yet to arrive* could be derived from *John has a failure to arrive yet*, which they report to be acceptable to some speakers.

However, there are some problems with this proposal. Setting aside the acceptability of *have a failure*, it is unclear how the structure would work. Does *yet* move to the specifier of the noun? Will this noun still have ‘raising’ syntax? More importantly, below we will see that there is a closer syntactic connection between the speakers who treat *have* as an auxiliary and those who treat it as a main verb than would be expected under a treatment that takes them to contain structurally different licensors. Finally, it is not clear that *fail*, in and of itself, licenses NPIs. It only does so when it takes a clausal complement:

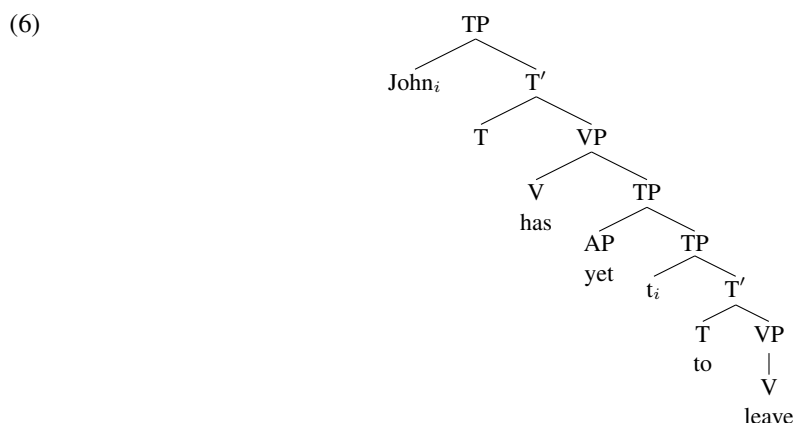
- (5) a. \* John has failed anything.  
b. John has failed to finish anything.

Thus, verbs like *fail* have been argued to select for a CP headed by a C with a negative feature (see discussion below). If so, then there is no motivation to move *yet* to SpecVP, since V is not by itself the licensor of the NPI.

Nevertheless, we will adopt several features of Harves & Myler’s proposal: we also take a biclausal approach, and we agree that there is a silent main verb in aux-*have* variants of the HYT construction. However, we will see that this silent verb is not necessarily *fail*—rather, it selects for a complementizer that licenses *yet*. Furthermore, we follow Harves & Myler’s proposal that *yet* raises to the specifier of its licensor. In our analysis, however, the licensor is the complementizer selected by the main verb in the matrix clause, rather than the verb itself.

### 2.3. Bybel & Johnson (2014)

Bybel & Johnson (2014), in contrast to the previous proposals, argue that *have* in HYT is the main verb of modal *have to*, and not an auxiliary. HYT sentences are built by adjoining *yet* to a TP complement of this modal *have*:



They propose that *yet* is licensed by the modality of *have to*, citing examples like *John might yet eat his food* (where the modal *might* seems to license *yet*).

However, there is reason to think that it cannot be the whole story. First, *yet* cannot normally be licensed by the modality of *have to*, as shown by the unacceptability of *yet* in its ordinary, final position.

(7) \* John has to leave yet.

Second, Harves & Myler (2014:231) point out that the modality of *have to* is not present in the HYT construction. Thus, sentences like (8) are not at all contradictory.

(8) John has yet to visit Paris, although he doesn't have to visit Paris.

Since the modality is not present in the HYT construction, it cannot be called upon as a licenser for *yet* in that same construction.

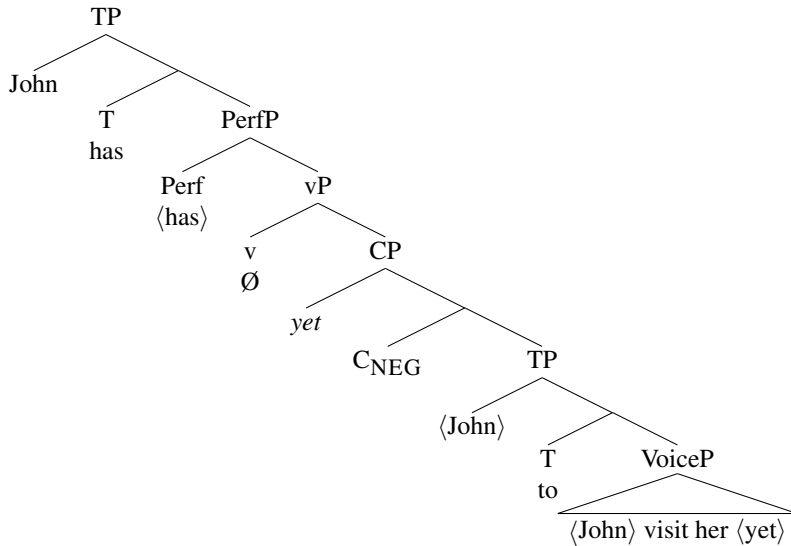
Nevertheless, there are several insights to be taken from Bybel & Johnson's work. The first is that we must admit a structure, in at least some cases, with an overt main verb *have*, even if it cannot be exactly the modal *have to*. Secondly, there is reason to believe that *yet* merges below the main verb, in the complement clause, rather than above the main verb.

### 3. Proposal

We follow Harves & Myler (2014) and Bybel & Johnson (2014) in proposing a biclausal structure for *have yet to* sentences. In the matrix clause, the main verb, shown as *v*, selects for a negative complementizer (cf. Landau 2002). This negative complementizer licenses the NPI *yet*, and attracts it to SpecCP (in a similar fashion to what Harves & Myler 2014 propose for FAIL). In addition to being an NPI, *yet* has an unvalued temporal feature [uT:\_\_\_], which must be valued by a higher c-commanding interpretable Tense feature [iT:VAL] (using Wurmbrand's (2012) *Reverse Agree* framework). In *have yet to* sentences, this valuing feature is a [iT:PERF] feature. We argue that the [iT:PERF] feature that licenses *yet* is (a) always spelled out as *have*, and (b) can be introduced in one of two places: either it is introduced in the canonical position for introducing PERF features—the Perf(ect) head in the auxiliary field—or it is introduced as a feature on the main verb *v* (the predicate that selects for negative C).

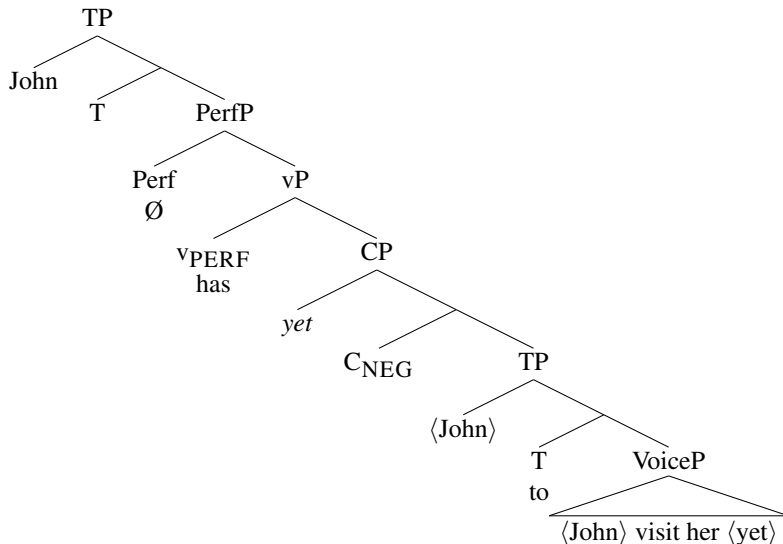
Accordingly, *have* should behave in one of two ways. First, consider what happens if the [iT:PERF] feature is introduced on the Perfect head in the matrix clause, as in (9). The Perfect head is spelled out as *have* and the main verb *v* goes unpronounced, and so in *have yet to* sentences constructed in this way, *have* behaves like a typical auxiliary. (See Tyler & Wood 2016 for further discussion of the spellout of *v*.)

(9)



Next, consider what happens if the [iT:PERF] feature is introduced on the main verb *v* head itself, as in (10). The *v* is spelled out as *have* and the Perf head is null (or perhaps left out entirely).<sup>1</sup> Consequently in HYT sentences constructed in this way, *have* behaves like a main verb.

(10)



Note that in the sentences in (9)–(10), the subject of the embedded clause must raise to the subject position of the matrix clause. In essence, therefore, we agree with both Bybel & Johnson (2014) and Harves & Myler (2014) that *have yet to* derivations involve raising verb syntax.<sup>2</sup> We also agree with Harves & Myler (2014) that derivations may involve a null main verb (as in (9)), but we argue that the main verb is pronounced as *have* whenever it comes equipped with an [iT:PERF] feature (as in (10)).

We now turn to evidence in favor of our analysis. In section 4, we show that the structures in (9)–(10) each predict the *have* of a HYT sentence to behave in a different way, and give rise to different judgments. We show that the pattern of judgments across speakers falls out of our analysis. In Section 5, we provide evidence that the main verb selects a CP rather than a TP, and that *yet* is located in the embedded SpecCP position.

<sup>1</sup> We remain agnostic here about whether functional heads are present when not being used, as argued by Cinque (1999, 2006), or whether they're not merged at all. We present the Perf head for consistency across structures.

<sup>2</sup> This does entail that raising is permitted across a CP. See Ormazabal (1995), Epstein & Seely (2006) for independent arguments in favor of this approach.

## 4. Main vs. Aux-*Have*

In this section, we discuss the distinction between *aux-have* and main verb *have*, and show how our analysis accounts for the somewhat complex pattern of judgments. We report on the results of a large-scale acceptability judgment survey and discuss how they relate to our proposal.

### 4.1. Survey results

Recall that the availability or unavailability of the structures in (9)–(10) comes from the possibility or impossibility of merging [iT:PERF] in different positions. A grammar that permits [iT:PERF] to be generated only at the Perf head will always treat *have* as an auxiliary in HYT, and consequently, *do*-support will be judged unacceptable. A grammar that only permits [iT:PERF] to be generated as a feature of the lower little *v* in HYT will always treat *have* as a main verb.<sup>3</sup>

To investigate the distribution of auxiliary *have* and *do*-support in the HYT construction, we conducted a large-scale acceptability judgment survey using Amazon Mechanical Turk (see Sprouse (2011), Wood et al. (2015), and Erlewine & Kotek (2016) for validation of this methodology). We asked for acceptability judgments of the sentences in (11).<sup>4</sup>

- (11) a. i. Oh, she has yet to finish, has she?  
 ii. Oh, she has yet to finish, does she?  
 b. i. What have you yet to eat?  
 ii. What do you have yet to eat?  
 c. i. Has John yet to win the hearts of his classmates?  
 ii. Does John have yet to win the hearts of his classmates?  
 d. i. Hasn't John yet to win the hearts of his classmates?  
 ii. Doesn't John have yet to win the hearts of his classmates?

Acceptance of the *do*-support variant implies that a speaker treats *have* as a main verb; acceptance of the *have*-raising variant implies that a speaker treats *have* as an auxiliary.

Participants did not necessarily treat all pairs the same. In (12), we cross-tabulate the maximum ratings speakers gave to *do*-support and *aux-have* sentences. We will refer to ratings of 4 and 5 as “accept” or “good” and 1 and 2 as “reject” or “bad”, (although this is of course an idealization across gradient data). We shade the areas of the chart that we are focused on.

### (12) Max Rating

Do-support	Aux-have							
	Bad		Marginal		Good		Total	
Bad	18	3%	36	7%	84	16%	138	27%
Marginal	10	2%	25	5%	79	15%	114	22%
Good	5	1%	24	5%	239	46%	268	52%
Total	33	6%	85	16%	402	77%	520	

The relation between these variables was significant,  $\chi^2(4, N = 520) = 49.08, p < .001$

<sup>3</sup> Note that this scenario is somewhat unlikely, since the grammar of English does in fact generate [iT:PERF] as a feature of the Perf head outside of the HYT construction (i.e., in ordinary perfect sentences like *He has left*). So a *do*-support-only grammar requires a marked situation, one where the ordinary way of placing the [iT:PERF] feature is somehow ruled out only in the HYT construction. We return to this point below.

<sup>4</sup> Note that we used a positive tag in (11a) so that it would be testable whether a speaker treated HYT as syntactically negative or syntactically affirmative. For the former speakers, the tag would simply be an ordinary tag with the opposite polarity from the polarity of the clause it is attached to. For the latter speakers, the tag would be a so-called “reduplicative tag” (McCawley, 1998:501), used when the speaker does not want to take responsibility for the proposition expressed in the clause (Cattell, 1973:615). Since reduplicative tags are generally not possible with negative sentences (Cattell 1973:615; McCawley 1998:501), a negative tag would not have had the advantage of being possible in principle—on at least some reading—across all speakers.

We see in the lower right hand shaded cells of (12) that 46% of participants accepted both *aux-have* and do-support sentences. However, we also find a striking implicational relation between them. Almost everyone who accepts do-support also accepts *aux-have*, but not vice-versa. Consider the shaded cells in the lower lefthand corner: only 1% of participants accept do-support but reject *aux-have*. In contrast, a good number of participants accept *aux-have* but reject do-support. Consider the shaded cells in the upper righthand corner: 16% accept *aux-have* while rejecting all examples of do-support. This is a large enough number speakers to take seriously in terms of a formal grammar.

We can see the asymmetry in another way, without bundling 1s and 2s as “bad” and 4s and 5s as “good”. 39% (201/502) of participants gave *aux-have* and do-support the same (max) judgment. Another 47% (244/502) rated *aux-have* as better than do-support. The remaining 14% (75/502) rated do-support as better than *aux-have*. Of those 14%, however, 80% (60/75) judge *aux-have* as at least marginal. That is, the *aux-have* derivation is overwhelmingly the unmarked one; speakers by and large do not accept do-support and reject *aux-have*. They either accept both, or they accept only *aux-have*.<sup>5</sup>

This result tells us two things. First, the semantics of HYT cannot rely on the presence of *aux-have*; the HYT construction can be built without any auxiliary *have*. Second, *main-have* must somehow be the “marked” variant, not available to everyone, while *aux-have* is much more widely available. Our analysis captures this asymmetry: all speakers of English have access to the general Perf-head that may introduce an interpretable [iT:PERF] feature; the ability to introduce [iT:PERF] on a main verb—even if it is just a “light” little *v*—requires something extra.

The analysis also accounts for the behavior of the—until now undocumented—group of speakers who allow *have got yet to*, as in (13). (13b–c) provide attested examples of this construction, which is accepted by one of the authors of this paper.<sup>6</sup>

- (13) a. We’ve got yet to visit our grandmother.  
 b.  $\gamma$  She blocked her eyes and drew the curtains with knots I’ve got yet to untie.  
 (Michael Penn – No Myth).  
 c.  $\gamma$  That’s what I’ve got yet to see.  
*Everybody’s Magazine*, Volume 47, page 143

For these speakers, the otherwise null *v* may be spelled out as *got*.

Finally, the account correctly predicts that speakers will be able to introduce the [iT:PERF] feature on both the main verb and in Perf, as in (14). (14b–c) provide attested examples of this construction.

- (14) a. He has had yet to pay me for 29 years now.  
 b.  $\gamma$  Although the UFC has had yet to make a public announcement as of the time of publication...  
 c.  $\gamma$  Financial Services in Britain account for a full 10% of the economy even though the industry has had yet to fully recover from the 2008 financial crises.

The existence of the construction is strong support for the availability of [iT:PERF] (i.e., *have*) in the main verb position. Notice that ordinary periphrastic perfect constructions do not allow this.

- (15) a. \* He has had been aware of that rule for 29 years now.  
 b. \* The UFC has had made a public announcement...  
 c. \* The industry has had fully recovered...

#### 4.2. Discussion

Ultimately, the core intuition guiding our proposal is that the two variants are not very different from each other. They involve merging essentially the same sets of features in different parts of the clause.

<sup>5</sup> See Tyler & Wood (2016) for discussion of the geographic distribution of the do-support judgments and finer-grained details about the patterns of judgments. For now, we stick with reporting the basic results, making that point that do-support speakers also accept *aux-have*. This point holds after scrutinizing the data more closely.

<sup>6</sup> To indicate attested example found on Google, we mark them with the “Google gamma” (see Horn 2011, 2013; Horn & Abbott 2012).

All speakers have a little *v* that selects for a CP which has *yet* in its specifier. This is just a fact about English. All speakers have a Perf head in a dedicated position in the clausal spine, and the vast majority of them allow this head to value the [uT:\_\_\_] feature of *yet*. However, some speakers have an additional option, in that the same *v*-head that selects for the *yet*-clause may value [uT:\_\_\_] feature on *yet*. This is in some sense more economical (since all the work is done by one head), but it is also more marked (since English doesn't generally allow a low, "lexical" *v* to assign [iT:PERF]).

The correlation across speakers—that the do-support speakers *are also* aux-*have* speakers—suggests that the syntactic difference between the two derivations cannot be very great. The two structures have the same basic meanings, and the same basic syntactic pieces. We must assume that there is a minimal difference in syntactic dependencies across the two derivations.

Due to considerations of markedness, we do not want to say that *have* always starts out as a main verb, but it is forced to move for some speakers, and only optionally moves for other speakers. It is V-to-T movement that is marked in English, not its absence. It would be exceedingly strange to say that only the *have* that selects for *yet* is forced to be able to move for all speakers, but allowed to stay in place for a subset of them. It is not even clear how one would operationalize this while excluding the same set of derivations for other uses of *have*:

- (16) a. He had his class walk out on him again.  
 b. Did he have his class walk out on him again?  
 c. \* Had he his class walk out on him again?
- (17) a. He had it on good authority that Jessie was gone.  
 b. Did he have it on good authority that Jessie was gone?  
 c. \* Had he it good authority that Jessie was gone?

Since our analysis ties the main vs. auxiliary status of *have* in HYT directly to the positioning of perfect features, we do not expect it to extend to other uses of *have*. Moreover, we fully expect the markedness to go in the direction it goes in: speakers generally allow Perf to be introduced above the VoiceP level and value [uT:\_\_\_] features in its c-command domain. That's just how English works—and it leads to the aux-*have* derivation. Some speakers simply have an additional option: to introduce the [iT:PERF] features lower in the structure, on the lexical *v* head.

We now turn to another of the major aspects of our proposal: that *yet* is located in SpecCP.

## 5. The position of *yet*

In this section, we provide evidence that the embedded clause in a HYT sentence is indeed a CP rather than a TP, and we show that *yet* is located in SpecCP.

Kelly (2012) and Harves & Myler (2014) propose that *yet* is high in the structure, above the matrix verb. For Harves & Myler (2014), *yet* is located in the specifier of the main verb, and for Kelly (2012), it is in the Perfect head. Under our analysis, however, *yet* must be lower: even in HYT sentences with do-support such as (18), which we have argued involve a main verb *have*, *yet* follows the matrix verb.

- (18) Do you {\*yet} have {yet} to visit your grandmother?

It also appears to the right of the verb *got* in the *got yet to* construction and the lower *have* in "double perfect" constructions illustrated in (14) above. Therefore, *yet* must be located below the main verb, in the complement clause. In this respect, we follow Bybel & Johnson (2014). Further evidence comes from the fact that *yet* survives in the absence of a higher predicate, as in the following small clause:

- (19) With the bride *yet* to arrive, the wedding was falling apart.

Bybel & Johnson (2014) propose that the main verb selects a non-finite TP complement, to which *yet* is adjoined (see the tree in (6)). This makes sense, given that *yet* precedes the non-finite T head *to*. However, we argue that the clause selected by the main verb is in fact a CP, and that *yet* is located in SpecCP. Our evidence comes from sentences like (20), in which there is an overt complementizer *for*.



- (20) a. John has yet for anyone to openly oppose him.  
 b. I have yet for this battery to last longer than a couple of hours.

In (21), we provide attested examples found on Google.

- (21) a.  $\gamma$  I have yet for Teen Wolf to tweet me telling me they love me, I've been following/watching since day 1.  
 b.  $\gamma$  I have yet for the tv to be delivered but what size tv stand would be good for this tv?  
 c.  $\gamma$  I still have yet for it to disappear after one try like it is suppose to.  
 d.  $\gamma$  David Tennant still has yet for many people in the USA to discover him.

In these sentences, *yet* follows *have* but precedes *for*, leading us to locate *yet* in SpecCP. Not all speakers accept such examples, but many do, and the interpretation is similar enough the canonical HYT construction that we should assume that the syntax of sentences like (20) can tell us about the syntax of the canonical HYT construction. An interesting property of these examples is that the subject of the matrix clause is interpreted as an experiencer, making this an instance of 'experiencer *have*' (Ritter & Rosen 1997; Myler 2014). For further discussion of these kind of examples, see Tyler & Wood (2016).

In the final section, we briefly provide an overview of the other main dimension of variation that has been discussed in the literature, namely the status of negation in HYT.

## 6. The status of negation

As mentioned in section 2, previous researchers have disagreed on whether HYT is sententially negative. Part of this disagreement is a result of contradictory empirical claims. For instance, one test for sentential negation from Klima (1964) is the ability to be continued with a *neither*-phrase, as in (22a), and an ability to be continued by a *so*-phrase, as in (22a). Harves & Myler (2014) claim that (22a) is ungrammatical while (22b) is fine, while Bybel & Johnson (2014) make the opposite claim.

- (22) a. John has yet to attend Mary's lecture, and **neither has Jim** H&M: \*; B&J:  $\checkmark$   
 b. John has yet to attend Mary's lecture, and **so has Jim**. H&M:  $\checkmark$ ; B&J: \*

Part of the disagreement also arises from the fact that different tests lead to contradictory conclusions. In our surveys, for instance, we found that while HYT passes the "not even" test for the majority of respondents, with 79% judging (23a) as good, it generally fails the "I don't think" test (known as *slifting*, Ross 1969), with only 19% of respondents judging (23b) as good.

- (23) a. Jordan has yet to read it, not even once.  
 b. John has yet to eat dinner, I don't think.

This variation in judgments can be explained by two things. First, there is microvariation with respect to the status of negation in HYT. Second, the tests are not in fact all sensitive to the same type of negation.

We propose that only the embedded clause, and not the main clause, is syntactically negative. Since the matrix clause does not contribute anything lexically, the effect is very similar, semantically, to main clause negation. But the consequence of this is that negation tests split according to whether they must target the matrix clause or whether they can target an embedded clause as well. The "not even" test, for instance, can be passed by a negated embedded clause, as in (24a) while the "I don't think" test can only be passed by matrix clause negation, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (24b).

- (24) a. The bouncer was stopping [anyone from coming in], not even if they had a ticket  
 b. \* The bouncer was stopping [anyone from coming in], I don't think.

For further discussion of sentential negation in HYT, see Tyler & Wood (2016).

## 7. Conclusion

There is a lot more microvariation in the HYT construction than has previously been appreciated. We found that speakers overwhelmingly can treat *have* as an auxiliary, but that many speakers can treat it as either an auxiliary or a main verb. We proposed that this stems from the way that the construction is built, in that there are two places where perfect features can be introduced.

A broader point to be taken from the results of this study is that in the face of variation, it is not enough to know simply that two or more variants exist. The relationship among them is important. In some cases, judgments can be noisy enough that broader patterns can only be revealed with large-scale judgment studies. An acceptability judgment is a performance task, not a direct window into grammar. In this case, when we ask several hundred people, the patterns that emerge are much clearer than when we ask only a few. The relationship between do-support and *aux-have* needs to be encoded in the grammar.

We need grammars that can generate both do-support and *aux-have*, within one speaker, and we need *aux-have* to be the more generally available variant—the one that is more closely tied in with the general features of English syntax shared by all speakers. While we do not think we have said the final word on the topic, the results of this study provide new insight into the workings of the *have yet to* construction in particular, and the nature of syntactic variation in American English more generally.

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