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The "be/have" variation with intransitive (mutative) verbs: the development of the construction in PDE.

The "be/have" variation with intransitive (mutative) verbs: the development of the construction in PDE.

BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

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Děkuji vedoucí své bakalářské práce, PhDr. Pavlíně Šaldové, Ph.D., za čas,
který mi věnovala, její ochotu, laskavost a cenné rady.

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně a že jsem uvedla všechny použité prameny a literaturu.

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I declare that the following BA thesis is my own work for which I used only the sources and literature mentioned.

Abstract

So far the perfective construction of intransitive verbs, which apart from the dominant auxiliary verb *have* occurred in the past also the auxiliary *be*, has been analysed especially from the diachronic point of view focusing on the period between the 17th and 19th centuries, when the majority of verbs ceased to be used with the *be* marker. The present study deals with the occurrence of the *be* perfective construction in the contemporary English, i.e. the 20th century English. Drawing on grammars and previous studies, the theoretical part of the thesis provides an overview of the present approaches to the issue, presents the conclusions drawn from the analyses of the diachronic material as well as overview of important terms. The research project consists of two parts: drawing from the corpora search the first part assembled the evidence for a group of intransitive verbs and also attested under what conditions a labile verb might acquire the perfective reading. As the *be* perfective might be considered a fairly rare construction, not only the British National Corpus and the Corpus of Contemporary American English were used but also the web corpus of a considerably larger size. The collected database was used for further analysis related to genre categories, co-occurrence patterns and language variety.

Abstrakt

Perfektní konstrukci intranzitivních sloves, která vedle převažujícího pomocného slovesa *have* v minulosti užívala i pomocné sloveso *be*, byla dosud věnována pozornost z hlediska především historické lingvistiky s důrazem na vývoj mezi 17. a 19. stoletím, kdy došlo k výraznému ústupu *be* ve prospěch slovesa *have*. Tato práce se naopak chce zaměřit především na vývoj v současné angličtině (resp. v širším pojetí na vývoj ve 20. století). Teoretická část práce má především vytvořit podklad pro část výzkumnou, tj. uvést přístupy a závěry dosavadního výzkumu a vytvořit přehled užívané terminologie. Výzkumná část se skládá ze dvou částí. Na základě korpusové rešerše ověřuje výskyt vybrané skupiny sloves v současné angličtině. Protože se jedná o poměrně řídce se vyskytující konstrukci, tak vedle Britského národního korpusu a Korpusu současné americké

angličtiny je použit také mnohem rozsáhlejší internetový korpus UkWaC. Nalezený vzorek je dále použit k další analýze, především s ohledem na distribuci z hlediska žánru, kolokací a jazykové variety.

Contents

List of tables

1. INTRODUCTION

The thesis addresses the question of the present-day distribution of the *be* marker in the English perfective construction. Although the dominant perfective marker in the 20th century English is the auxiliary *have*, up to the 19th century there existed a variation of two auxiliaries *have* and *be* with a propensity to oust *be* from its original environments. At the end of the 19th century the syntactic change favouring the auxiliary *have* was more or less completed, nevertheless residual forms of the past situation rarely occur even in the 20th century texts. The *be/have* variation might be exemplified by the extracts from the 18th century classic, Tom Jones by Henry Fielding:[1]

(1) *Her father is come to town, and hath carried her away from us both.*

The perfective auxiliary variation has also been historically attested in the infinitive, participle or pluperfective forms:

(2) *One pretends to be come from Gloucester, and the other from Upton; and neither of them, for what I can find, can tell whither they are going.*

(3) *Being arrived here, they chose for their house of entertainment the sign of the Bell, an excellent house indeed, and which I do most seriously recommend to every reader who shall visit this antient city.*

(4) *To this woman she imparted what had happened, and the design upon which she was*

1 Example sentences 1-4 are taken from Henry Fielding, History of Tom Jones, A Foundling, p. 438, 390, 230, 25 Digireads.com Publishing, 1. 1. 2009 <http://books.google.cz/books?id=o851sg2hbuQC&dq=tom+jones+%22Her+father+is+come+to+town%22&hl=cs&source=gbs_navlinks_s>

come thither that morning.

So far the majority of studies dealing with the development of the *be/have* variation in the perfective construction in English focused either on the beginnings of the periphrastic perfective in the Old English period or on the Early Modern development when the major quantitative shift in the distribution of the two auxiliaries occurred. (e.g. Visser 1973;Rydén, Brorström 1987; Kytö 1997) Only rarely is the present day situation referred to and not one paper exists that will provide a profound analysis of its 20th century occurrence.

The thesis aims to analyse the present day occurrence of the *be* perfective construction as it is reflected in the large corpora of the British as well as American variety of English. As the construction is expected to be fairly rare, our study will also draw on the data from the Internet based corpus as it might provide more examples that would be presumably impossible to find in the standard corpora .The thesis is structured as follows. The description of the theoretical background after this introduction will cover comprehensively three areas of research concerning the perfective auxiliary variation:

1. the specification of the group of verbs displaying the particular syntactic behaviour under investigation;
2. the development of the syntactic shift from the Old English period till the 20th century, also paying special attention to aspects that would have influenced the shift;
3. as the homonymous form *be* + past participle (henceforth abbreviated as PastP) corresponds to several constructions (apart from the perfective of intransitive verbs, it is also used in the passive as well as the copular *be* + adjectival participle; henceforth abbreviated as AdjP), the reinterpretation or overlap of the three constructions might be expected to occur; the final section of the theoretical background thus covers various aspects of the *be* + past participle

construction with regard to the various function slots it occupies in the present-day English.

The structure of the project is as follows: first the characterisation of the corpora used is provided, then the method and criteria which were employed to optimise the excerption results. The results are contrasted against the claims which have so far appeared in the studies concerning the development of the perfective construction in English. The analysis of the research results aims to outline the possible trends that could be further studied with respect to the description and modelling of the language change, esp. the question of residuals in language. More particularly the issues of genre category, co-occurance patterns and language variety are considered. Furthermore a single verb synchronically considered only in terms of the passive construction will be analysed in terms of the possible perfective reading. Conclusion at the end of the study is not concerned not only with the interpretation of the search results but rather wants to suggest possibilities for further research.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The perfective auxiliary variation in English

To establish what group of verbs can either diachronically or synchronically appear with the *be* perfective marker is not a fully resolved problem. This issue is further complicated by the fact that the perfective auxiliary variation has been recognized and analyzed not only in English and not only in Germanic but also in Romance languages (especially in Italian and Dutch there exists a number of analyses). Cross-linguistically the auxiliary variation seems to correspond to different levels of consistency, i.e. the borderline between verbs selecting the auxiliary *be* and verbs selecting the auxiliary *have* will be different in different languages, some verbs will exhibit different syntactic behaviour in various contexts, diachronic stability of the perfective auxiliary variation is also widely discussed.

2.1.1 Verbs occurring with the be perfective marker

Probably the most often encountered and to a certain degree traditional definition connects the *be* perfective marker with mutative intransitive verbs. The mutative verbs are defined as verbs denoting some kind of change - positional or otherwise (Zimmerman 1973: 107, Rydén and Brorström 1987: 9, Kytö 1997: 17, Traugott 1992: 192); Quirk et al. identifies them as verbs of motion and completion (Quirk et al. 1985: 170-171). No matter if the basic definitions disagree in detail, all these authors assume that particular lexical qualities of an intransitive verb determine its syntactic behaviour. Visser provided a more detailed characterisation of these verbs (Visser 1973: 2044-2084, for groups 1-4 also Kytö 1997: 27):

Group 1: verbs of motion (*arrive, come, go, pass, ride, advance, ascend, fall, land, retreat, sail, sink, enter, meet, retire, shrink, slip, steal, travel, etc*)

Group 2: verbs of process/change (*alter, change, abate, age, amend, become, grow, improve,*

increase, recover, turn, etc)

Group 3: verbs of appearing/originating (*appear, arise, begin, emerge, return, descend*, etc)

Group 4: verbs of finishing/disappearing (*cease, decay, decline, expire, die, abscond, depart, escape, melt, perish, vanish, flee, waste*, etc)

Group 5: verbs of happening (*befall, happen, chance*, etc)

The basic concept as presented by different authors proves to be rather problematic as Visser in his comprehensive overview stretching from the OE period to the 2nd half of the 20th century) also included examples of verbs which were diachronically attested with the auxiliary *be*, nevertheless cannot be characterised as mutative: *abide, be, remain, bide, cleave, cling, dwell, last, lie, rest, stay.* Although the relevance of some examples given might be questioned, others (5), (6), (7) provide evidence that the group of verbs liable to perfective auxiliary variation might not be as easy to determine as previously assumed. (Visser 1973: 2044-2046) Furthermore, also in Rydén and Brorström (1987) I found at least one example of a non-mutative verb used with the auxiliary *be* in the perfective construction:

(5) *Vsing in their fightes many guyles and craftes, which <u>are remained</u> to them from their auncestors*. (Rydén and Brorström 1987: 147)

(6) *The plough <u>was</u> in mid-furrow <u>staid</u>*. (Visser 1973: 2046)

(7) *Mrs. Tulliver, foreseeing nothing but misbehavior while the children remained indoors, took an early opportunity of suggesting that, now they <u>were rested</u> after their walk, they might go and play out of doors.* (Visser 1973: 2045)

The problem of the perfective auxiliary variation has been addressed and further elaborated in connection with the Unacussative Hypothesis, first proposed by David M.Perlmutter in 1978. The Unaccusative Hypothesis presumes that intransitive verbs can be divided in two groups:

unaccusatives and unergatives. Building on the transformation grammar paradigm and more particularly on Fillmore's theory of deep cases it proposes that unaccusative verbs take for their surface subject a D-Structure object while unergative verbs take the underlying subject. (Levin and Rappaport Hovav, 1995: 2-3) The perfective auxiliary variation is thus explained not in terms of lexical qualities of the verb but in terms of the syntax-semantics interface. The Unacussative Hypothesis may be exemplified with the help of comparable transitive constructions, e.g.

(8) a. *The rules changed.* (unaccusative)

b. *The council changed the rules.*

(9) a. *They danced.* (unergative)

b. *They danced a waltz.*

The problem of the auxiliary variation in Germanic and Romance languages is addressed alongside a number of other lexical and morphosyntactic phenomena, such as resultative constructions, locative inversion or position of clitics in Italian etc.

Apart from the existing exceptions, the two major concepts are not able to explain the exceptions, but also neither of them answers the question why in different languages the *be* marker occurs with different verbs (for details e.g. Sorace 2000: 850-860) or why these languages were subject to different diachronic development (e.g. the comparable situation between English and German in the Early Middle Ages and the differences today). That is the reason why more detailed treatment of the perfective auxiliary variation, nevertheless still drawing on either or both major approaches, has been introduced by several linguists.

Zimmermann tried to explain the existence of verbs which - though they prefer *be* in the perfective construction - took what he called "object-like" complements. He divided these complements (in

correspondence with Fillmore's theory of deep cases) into locative (10), temporal (11) and instrumental (12):

(10) a. *We <u>were entered</u> a vast great forest.*
b. *The enemy <u>is passed</u> the marsh*. (Visser 1963:2043)
(11) *He <u>is igone</u> two hours.* (Zimmermann 1973: 109)
(12) *He <u>is riden</u> on the horse.* (Zimmermann 1973: 111)

Working in the generative grammar tradition, he tried to resolve the discrepancies between the theoretical expectations and textual evidence by stipulating several rules. In the OE period the surface transitive verbs with objects representing the deep structure locative, temporal and instrumental semantic roles took the auxiliary *be*. During the ME period a shift occurred: all verbs with objects (no matter what the semantic role of the object was) occurred with the auxiliary *have*. (Zimmermann 1973: 110-113) Another claim he presents to explain why some verbs could take both perfective markers is the idea that mutative verbs were normally used with *be* when location or direction were emphasized while *have* was used when the activity was in the focus (these constructions commonly co-occurring with adverbs of manner). (Zimmermann 1973: 116, also Fischer 1992: 260-261)

Recently two linguists, Th. F. Shannon and A. Sorace, have addressed the problem again, both of them assuming that the perfective auxiliary variation can be explained not via a binary approach, but rather built their models on the prototype theory, elaborating a number of selection criteria that enter the process of syntactic change and condition the development in a particular language. Shannon introduces a rather complex model which rests on the interplay of his three prototypes (high transitivity, low transitivity, high mutativity) and lexical aspect categories (activity, accomplishment, state, achievement). Nevertheless, if the model is explained in the most simplified way, it seems that it is the telicity that tends to influence the perfective marker selection most, each

language showing different preferences for the aspectual use of a verb. (Shannon 1995:132-135)

Sorace (2000) assumes there exists auxiliary selection hierarchy:

syntactic behaviour	lexical qualitity of the verb
↑ *BE* selection	change of location
	change of state
	continuation of a pre-existing state
	existence of state
	uncontrolled process
	controlled process (motional)
↓ *HAVE* selection	controlled process (nonmotional)

Table 1: *The perfective auxiliary selection hierarchy according to Sorace (Sorace 2000: 863)*

The more centrally a verb is placed, the bigger the chance of *be/have* variation while the verbs positioned towards the ends of the scale will behave consistently selecting only one auxiliary. The crucial quality that influences the placement of a verb is again telicity. (Sorace 2000: 862)

It is not easy to asses to what extent the three attempts to treat the perfective auxiliary variation as a more complex phenomenon are valid, nevertheless they all seem to suggest (even if Zimmermann does not work in this intention, his conclusions do not seem to contradict the possibility that the sentences with "object-like" complements can underline the telicity of the whole construction) that telicity might be the clue to the explanation of the perfective auxiliary selection, nevertheless to assess how exactly the disappearance of *be* variant in English depended on the telic/atelic qualities of the sentence, a more detailed study based on an extensive textual evidence would have to be

undertaken.

2.2 Historical development of the perfective auxiliary variation in English

2.2.1 Pre-1900 development

The distributive character of the two auxiliaries is attested already in the Old English Period, nevertheless the relation between the two forms, their semantic values or the pace of grammaticalization of the two constructions have not been satisfactorily explained and agreed on so far. (Carey 1994: 104-105) The stative-possessive construction, which later developed into the present-day perfective construction, with the majority of verbs comprised *have* and either inflected or uninflected past participle of a transitive or intransitive verb.

The inflected forms of past participles occurred only with transitive verbs taking an accusative object and it is more or less tentatively assumed that they might be interpreted as possessive adjectival (=stative) constructions, i. e. the verb *have* would refer to the present state resulting from the past action expressed by the past participle functioning as an adjectival complement of the object. (e.g. Traugott 1992: 191-3, Bybee 1994: 68 etc.) Towards the end of the Old English Period the number of inflected forms decreases and also the position of the object shifted; this development is usually connected with the semantic shift – the original resultative changed to the anterior reading.[2]

A certain group of intransitive verbs (generally described as mutative, i.e. involving a change of place or state) is known to have been used with the auxiliary *be*, the past participle is found in inflected as well as uninflected form. (Traugott 1992: 192) Inflected forms again are believed to

[2] For the definition of the resultative and the anterior see the following page.

have been truly adjectival (as with inflected forms occuring with *have*), some authors consider all *be* perfectives (no matter if inflected or uninflected) as stative (Bybee 1994: 68). For the Middle English Period Fischer, probably drawing on Zimmermann's analysis, claims that the difference in distribution between *be* and *have* is not as clear-cut as desired, the *be* marker may also occur with non-mutative verbs. She also hesitates to make a clear distinction in semantic interpretation of the two constructions – *have* construction denoting action and *be* construction denoting state – as it seems that the two constructions were often interchangeable. Furthermore she pointed out that if we accepted the clearly divided semantic distribution, we would not be able to explain the replacement and loss of the *be* marker. (Fischer 1992: 260, Zimmermann 1973: 107)

Bybee in her crosslinguistic comparative study provides a detailed description of the semantic extension accompanying the process. While all *be* perfectives as well as *have* perfectives with inflected participles signal resultative meaning, the *have* (uninflected) construction denotes the anterior. That is, while the resultative describes a state that is the result of some action in the past, the relation between the past and the present is more general in the anterior denoting the past action with current relevance. (Bybee 1994: 61-63) The difference between the two semantic interpretations is today probably most distinctly pronounced in the use of the verb *go*:

(13) a. *They are gone.* (result.)

b. **They are gone and come back.*

c. *They are still gone.*

(14) a. *They have gone.* (anter.)

b. *They have gone and come back.*

c. **They have still gone.*

Bybee also tries to resolve the problem suggested by Fischer, i. e. why the syntactic change could take place even though the meaning of the *be* perfective construction was different from the *have* perfective (adjectival/stative vs verbal/action). The relation between the past and the present in the

anterior is more general than with the resultative, the semantic change thus may be perceived as some kind of a generalization of meaning. (Bybee 1994: 69)

From the 11th century onwards another process - this time concerning the quantitative aspect of *the* perfective auxiliary variation became apparent in the textual data: the auxiliary *have* started to encroach the *be* environments.[3] The major quantitative shift towards the *have* auxiliary occurred only over the course of the 18th and the 19th centuries, the process being more or less accomplished by the end of the 19th century, as shown e.g. by Kytö or Smith (Kytö 1997: 32, Smith 2007: 261)

	be	*have*	TOTAL
ME3 (1350-1420)	134	50 (27%)	184
ME4 (1420-1500)	120	56 (32%)	176
EModE1 (1500-1570)	105	49 (32%)	154
EModE2 (1570-1640)	152	74 (33%)	226
EModE3 (1640-1710)	106	65 (38%)	171
ARCHER1 (1650-1700)	95	61 (39%)	156
COPC (1680-1780)	135	273 (67%)	408
ARCHER2a (1700-1750)	80	71 (47%)	151
ARCHER2b (1750-1800)	113	180 (61%)	293
ARCHER3a (1800-1850)	40	149 (79%)	189
ARCHER3b (1850-1900)	39	298 (88%)	337
ARCHER4a (1900-1950)	10	95 (90%)	105

[3] Differrent authors do not seem to agree on the time when the shift actually started, e.g. Kytö set the beginning of the process as far as the 1400s; Visser claims that the first occurrences of mutative verbs with *have* can be found from the 11th cent. on and also provides examples. (Kytö 1997: 18, Visser 1973: 2044).
Another question concerns the French origin of a number of mutative verbs (*arrive, pass, enter, change, recover, increase, improve, appear, depart, expire, decline, decay, cease, waste, vanish, perish, expire*) and to what extent it could influence their syntactic behaviour.

ARCHER4b (1950-1990)	17	301 (95%)	318
total	1146	1722 (60%)	2868

Table 2: *The overall perfective auxiliary variation in the corpora research by Kytö (Kytö 1994: 33)*

Period of English	Number of anterior tokens	Proportion of *be*-construction tokens	Proportion of *have*-construction tokens
Old English	103	21% (18)	79% (85)
Early Middle English	283	24% (69)	76% (214)
Later Middle English	108	11% (12)	89% (96)
Early Modern English	332	4% (13)	96% (319)
19th Century	877	4% (38)	96% (839)

Table 3: *The token statistics based on a selection of texts from the OE period to the 19th century (Smith 2001: 371)*

So far no satisfactory explanation has been published to assess the reason for this syntactic change, i. e. the disappearance of the auxiliary *be* in the perfective construction, nor is there any scenario explaining why the change has taken appr. 900 years to finish, significantly accelerating only in the 18th and 19th centuries.

2.2.2. 20th Century

Apart from the tentatively expressed predictions of some authors based on their knowledge of the syntactic shift before 1900, the only comprehensive study attempting to include the 20th century development is, as far as I am informed, the already mentioned Kytö's analysis of the perfective

auxiliary variation covering the period between 1350-1990. Nevertheless as the *be* variant is still present in a number of the present-day dialects and several studies trying to cover its occurrence have been published bringing interesting results, the following section will deal with Standard English separately from the non-standard varieties.

a) Standard English

According to Rydén and Brorström's conclusions (1987) the *be* variant is expected to be almost extinct in Standard English, although the marker is still available, preferably with high frequency verbs such as *go, do* and *finish.* (Rydén, Brorström 1987: 211; also Smith 2007: 255). With every verb in their database Rydén and Brorström outline the post-1900 situation in more detail and the following verbs are expected to resist the *have* encroachment: *alter, a/rise, arrive, change, come, expire, finish, go, grow, improve, pass, recover, retire, retreat*, furthermore *become* is expected to appear predominantly in the pluperfective construction. (Rydén, Brorström 1987) Visser (1973) in his list of verbs diachronically attested with the *be* perfective marker provides also 20th century examples with the following verbs: *become, begin, grow, rise, spring, arrive, come, go, meet, retire, return, sail, turn, die, finish* and *vanish.* Sorace finds that the vestigial examples of the *be* variant will occur with the change-of-location verb class, as its members have the highest degree of telicity and cross-linguistically maintain the most consistent choice of *be* – nevertheless this assumption seems to partly contradict the textual evidence mentioned above. (Sorace 2000: 863-864) Consistently with Rydén and Brorström's generalisation Smith concludes that in his sample only 8 verbs out of 319 select *be* in the 19th century, out of 38 tokens he finds that 11 occur with the verb *come* and 17 with *go*. He also assumes that should the *be* marker occur with a low frequency verb, it will be in a specific (e.g. literary) contexts. (Smith 2007: 261-262) McFadden and Alexiadou suggested that relic forms will be used only in fixed phrases, e.g. *Christ is risen*. (McFadden, Alexiadou 2006: 238)

As Kytö's analysis is the only in-depth attempt to describe the overall 20th century development, I will introduce its preliminaries and conclusions more extensively. The 20th century material is extracted from the ARCHER corpus (version 1 compiled between 1992-1993, comprising 1,299,670 words for British English and 594,041 words for American English). Some concessions had to be made to the diachronic corpora used, so only the following text types were analysed: prose fiction, drama, journals, letters, science, sermons (the 1900-1990 thus comprising the total of 377,400 words), the American English variety still further abridged as only period between 1950 and 1990 was considered and the science text type had to be omitted. (Kytö 1997: 20-21,26) What is more significant the study was not aimed to provide so much qualitative as rather quantitative analysis of the phenomenon, examining the frequencies within specified periods and then statistically evaluating those linguistic as well as extralinguistic factors that could help or prevent the spread of the *have* marker to the originally *be* environments. That means that the situation in the 20th century is not treated separately but only as a part of the overall comparison within the long-term development. It is not even possible to exctract those verbs that occur with *be* in the 20th century as the list of verbs attested is not chronologically detailed enough (the relevant information concern only the period between 1650-1990). (Kytö 1994: 71)

It also seems that the acceptability of archaic perfective forms with *be* may differ from verb to verb. Quirk et al. is willing to accept 15) as archaic but possible but refuses 16) as ungrammatical: (Quirk et al. 1985:413)

(15) *The guests are departed.*
(16) **The prisoner is escaped.*

Nevertheless he does not provide any clues nor criteria which determine the borderline between acceptability and unacceptability of a construction.

b) Dialects

Rydén and Brorström suggest that the *be* marker might be appearing in dialects more often that in Standard English and, indeed, there exists a number of studies analysing the use of *be*-perfective in several present-day dialects of English. Probably the most featured variety where the *be*-perfective has been pointed to along with other rather specific perfective constructions is Irish English. (Rydén, Brorström 1987) While older studies (such as Harris 1984: 38) describe the use of the *be* marker as related to mutative verbs in general, Filppula's analysis of a corpus of Hiberno English indicates that there exists lexical restriction, the *be* marker being vastly favoured by the verb *go*. (South)western dialects might also display higher productivity assigning the *be* marker to the verbs *come, vanish, wear, wither, fade* or *dry*. (Filppula 1999:117) Apart from these findings there exists a parallel line of research focusing on the perfective auxiliary selection with transitive verbs in Shetlandic, Orcadian dialects of Scots and in Irish or Canadian English. (overview with literatureYerastov 2012: 29-30)

2.3 Factors affecting the process of syntactic change

The following section summarises the most often presented aspects that enter the process of the perfective auxiliary shift in the English context. The factors will be divided into those that are believed to have affected the process positively, either igniting or speeding it, and those affecting the process negatively, i.e. slowing it down or preventing it from spreading to some verbs. The following list makes no claim that the factors should be influencing the shift along the whole period of change, nor does it want to insist that some factors should be more important than others.

2.3.1 Factors positively affecting the perfective auxiliary shift

One of the most readily quoted factors is analogical levelling which presumes that as there are more

non-mutative verbs than mutative verbs, the behaviour of the less numerous class could have yielded to the more numerous one. Another factor that will have possibly played a significant role is the use of the clitics *'s* or *'d* dissolving the distinction between the two auxiliaries in the 3rd person singular of the perfective and in all persons of the pluperfective, thus promoting the shift towards the more numerous class especially if the verb's token frequency was rather low. Systemic functional load of the auxiliary *be* also probably sped the introduction of *have* in the originally *be* environments: apart from being the auxiliary of the perfective construction as well as the progressive forms, the systemic functions of *be* were further burdened with the disappearance of the other passive auxiliary *weorÞan* during the Early Middle English period, allowing also for the ambiguous reading of the *be* + PastP construction.[4] (Zimmermann 1973: 109) A very interesting observation, coined also the "irrealis effect" claims that cross-linguistically the shift from *have* to *be* occurs prominently in irrealis environments, such as conditional or optative clauses and also negative statements and questions. Shannon presented a hypothesis that the replacement was used to cancel the implication that the resultative state had actually been reached. In other words in conditionals, questions and negatives the result has not been reached or its realization is weakened, which is marked with the *have* variant.[5] (Shannon 1995: 138-144) Apart from these often discussed factors, other influencing aspects could be:

1. the specific forms of the perfective, i.e. the perfective infinitive, the -ing constructions and the pluperfective according to Kytö tend to promote *have;*
2. the presence of a complement;
3. the origin of the verb: loans were preferably introduced with *have.* (Kytö 1997: 52-57, 61)

Extralinguistics factors will comprise the text type (journalistic texts of the early modern period promoted the *have* variant), gender (female writers seem to have behaved more conservatively) and

4 The overload argumentation is questioned by Toyota (2008: 39-40) who points out the unsatisfactory theoretical backing of the hypothesis (to what extent can be a grammatical item loaded?) and empirical ambiguity (how is it that *be* started to be later on used as a progressive and verbal passive marker?)

5 Again, telicity seems to be the decisive factor influencing the choice of the auxiliary.

the influence of the prescriptive grammarians in the Early Modern English period favouring the *have* auxiliary. (Visser 1963: 2043)

2.3.2 Factors negatively affecting the perfective auxiliary shift

If the high type frequency of the *have* perfective variant caused *have* to encroach the *be* environments, the high token frequency of the main verb offers itself as one of those factors that could slow down the process of the morphosyntactic shift. According to Bybee the Conserving Effect based on the fact that repetition strengthens memory representations is connected to high token frequency, thus working against regular language change. (Bybee 2007: 10, Yerastvov 2012: 429) That would suggest that main verbs with high token frequency tend to keep the *be* marker longer that less frequent verbs. Aaron K. Smith built his comparative analysis of English and German perfectives on this idea attempting to explain the stark difference the two languages show in comparison to the much more corresponding situation in the Early Middle Ages. Nevertheless Kytö followed four high frequency verbs in her sample and the results were not as persuasive as expected – high frequency verbs *fall* and *pass* did not show any significant lag in comparison with less frequent verbs. That might mean that combination of more inter-related factors should be at least in some cases considered.

2.4 Homonymy of the be + Past P construction

The last issue in the theoretical background section that must be treated is the homonymy of the *be* +PastP construction, expressing as many as three semantically and functionally different structures:

1) the passive with the auxiliary *be*

2) the perfective construction with the auxiliary *be*

3) the copular *be* and the adjectival past participle

While 1) and 2) will contain verbal participles, 3) includes an adjectival participle. There exist several tests to distinguish between verbal and adjectival participles, usually building on the assumption that if all adjectival contexts are excluded then the participle is verbal. Thus it is usually assumed that the participle is adjectival if there exists a possibility of[6]: (e.g. Quirk et al. 1985: 414, Laskova 2007: 127-9)

a) adverbial premodification (*very, rather, too, so much* etc.)

b) replacing *be* with other copular verbs (e.g. *seem, feel, become, look, remain, sound* etc.)

c) coordination with other participle or adjective (e.g. *we were encouraged and content*)

d) adjectival gradation (*more, most*)

e) *un-* prefixation[7]

f) creating a concessional relative phrases beginning with *however* (*however unsatisfied he felt...*)[8]

The distinction between the passive and *be* perfective constructions may be signalled by the *by* agentive construction in the passive, otherwise the two forms can be difficult to distinguish (Table 4).

[6] Apart from the criteria given in the list, a research analyzing the prediction that the semantic environment in the passive and adjectival construction will also be a distinguishing criterion, has been carried out: adjectival constructions will be surrounded by expressions characterizing the subject's resultative qualities and never by expressions from this point of view irrelevant while the passive will contain expressions characterizing the subject up to the resultative point. Nevertheless this analysis was undertaken only for German and suggested as plausibly valid also for Czech, so it cannot be taken in account here. (Karlík 2004: 109)

[7] Of course, some verbs may also be prefixed with *un-*, neverthelesss with adjectives the prefix is interpreted as describing an event that has never taken place (*unsatisfied, untouched*) and where there is no correspondent verbal counterpart (**unsatisfy, *untouch*), while with verbs the participle denotes reversative meaning (*undo → undone, unbelt →unbelted, unzip →unzipped*).

[8] This argument first used by Bresnan (1995: 7-8)

	passive construction	*be* perfective construction
semantic role of the subject	patient	patient
aspect	dynamic/stative denotes either action or state	stative denotes a resultative state[9]
transitivity	transitive	intransitive
meaning	passive	active
context	possibility of *by* agentive construction	relevant time expressions

Table 4: *The overview of clues distinguishing between the verbal passive and perfective construction. Nevertheless all information included in the be perfective column must be perceived with caution as the previous passages concerning the diachronic development suggest*

Table 4 also allows to assume that considering a large number of English verbs being neutral in terms of transitivity (labile verbs) the differences between the stative passive and *be* perfective construction do not necessarily have to be always clearly defined. Consider (15):[10]

(19) *I was knocked out, but I bear Rossi no ill-will. The fight is finished.*

Allowing that the *be* + PastP construction might be read as

1) the passive (implication of the agent possible)

2) the *be* perfective (no implication of the agent → possible paraphrase: *The fight has finished*.)

Quirk et al. in the section on the affected role of the subject proposes the very same interpretation: the presence or the absence of agency is the major difference between the interpretations with either

9 The resultative as defined by Bybee signals that the state persists at the reference time (Bybee 1994: 63)

10 The following passage builds on the assumptions of Toyota , nevertheless intentionally omits some of his conclusions which seem to lack argumentative force. (Toyota 2008: 46-47)

transitive or intransitive verb. Furthermore he assumes that if the affected participant is being given the position of the subject, then it "acquires a status that appears to assign it some responsibility for the process. Hence, there is greater constraint on what can appear as subject in the intransitive construction than in the corresponding passive construction." (Quirk et al. 1985: 744) He further elaborates on the constrains showing that in some cases adverbials (e. g. adverbial of purpose) abolish the double interpretation.

The previous remarks on the homonymy of the form suggest that clear criteria for the distinction of the three concepts need to be assessed. While the distinction of the adjP may rest on the list given above, the distinction between the passive and the perfect construction might not be as easily assessed. The perfect construction with the auxiliary *be* is further defined as

1. an event, state or habit leading up to the present (Quirk et al. 1985: 192)

   for dynamic conclusive verbs (i.e. their meaning implies the accomplishment of a change of state) Quirk et al. assumes that a single event might imply that it is recent or the result of the action is relevant for the presence (Quirk et al. 1985: 193)

2. test: ability to replace *be* with *have* without the change of meaning

3. RESEARCH PROJECT

3.1 Claims and hypotheses

The aim of the project is to test the claims concerning the occurrence of the *be* perfective in the present-day English that have appeared in different studies on the perfective auxiliary variation in English so far, as described in section 2.2.2, on pages 20-21. These claims may represent a good point of departure for the research. Thus the three hypotheses below are based on the more or less intuitive remarks of the previously mentioned studies:

1. Various authors have assumed the occurrence of the *be* perfective with the following verbs:

   alter, a/rise, arrive, change, come, expire, finish, go, grow, improve, pass, recover, retire, retreat; *become* (Rydén and Brorström 1987)

   become, begin, grow, rise, spring, arrive, come, go, meet, retire, return, sail, turn, die, finish, vanish (Visser 1873)

   come, go (Smith 2007)

   As the scope of this work does not allow to search for all the verbs from the three lists, seven verbs with a high score in contemporary frequency lists (under the assumption that their frequency might further increase the probability of the *be* perfective occurrence in the corpora) have been selected; these verbs are – from the point of the present-day valency patterns – recognized as intransitive, namely *appear, arise, arrive, become, come, happen, remain.*[11] The verb *go*, which could presumably rank as the most expected to occur, has been opted out for reasons described on page 18.

[11] To assess the frequency of the verbs, a simple word list for verbs based on the British National Corpus was used as presented on the companion website for the Word Frequencies in Written and Spoken English by Geoffrey Leech, Paul Rayson, Andrew Wilson (2001), <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/bncfreq/lists/5_2_all_rank_verb.txt>
For the verb *come* Oxford English Dictionary also lists a quasi-transitive use, today considered marginal, which has not been come across during the analysis in either of the corpora.

hypothesis 1: the perfective forms with the *be* marker with the verbs *appear, arise, arrive, become, come, happen* and *remain* will occur in the corpora of the present day English.

2. Rydén and Brorström (1987) believe that *become* will predominantly appear in the past perfective construction. It is difficult to assess what exactly "predominantly" might mean; it will be presumed that over 50% of all tokens found will be identified as the past perfective.
hypothesis 2: More than 50% percent of *become* perfective constructions with the *be* auxiliary will be in the past perfective form.

3. While the previous hypotheses concerned the grammatical form, the following ones propose restrictions imposed on the productivity of the *be* perfective construction. Smith (2007) assumes that should the *be* marker occur with a low frequency verb, it will be in specific (e.g. literary) contexts (for Smith only *come* and *go* are verbs found with the *be* marker in the PDE, and as his argumentation is based on the high frequency of the two verbs, all other verbs are considered to be of low frequency). Furthermore McFadden and Alexiadou (2006) suggest that relic forms will be used only in fixed phrases, e.g. *Christ is risen*, i.e they suppose that the *be* perfective construction is no more productive and will be manifested only in quotes and paraphrases from older texts. The literature does not seem to agree to what extent the terms *fixed phrase, set phrase* and *fixed expression* are synonymous or overlap, in addition the relation to the concepts of a *collocation, compound* or *idiom* is fuzzy as well. In this paper the understanding of the fixed phrase will follow the definition from Hartman where he uses fixed or set phrase and fixed expression as synonymous and defines them as "a phrase whose constituent elements cannot be moved randomly or substituted without distorting the overall meaning or allowing a literal interpretation." (Hartman 2002: 57)
hypothesis 3a: With the exception of *come* all the occurrences of the *be* perfective with the

six verbs will be in literary contexts, i.e. will be found within the fiction genre category

hypothesis 3b: The perfective with the *be* marker will only occur in fixed phrases.

Apart from the previous claims, Toyota suggests that assuming a large number of English verbs neutral in terms of transitivity (labile verbs), the differences between the stative passive and the *be* perfective construction do not necessarily have to be always clearly defined. (Toyota 2008: 46-47) The verb *increase* has been chosen to assess if there exists a possibility of the perfective reading in the forms which are today unanimously perceived as passive. No hypothesis will be specified as the aim of the section is to outline the mere possibility of this interpretation.

3.2 Method of research

The method of excerption has been very much influenced by the fact that the *be* perfective construction is considered a very rare, almost non-existent structure, and presumably only fairly large corpora can be used for the purpose of analysis: *The British National Corpus* (henceforth abbreviated as the BNC) and for American English *The Corpus of Contemporary American English* (henceforth abbreviated as the COCA). Furthermore the web corpus of British English containing over 2 billion tagged words, has been used. First to avoid the floor effect, i.e. should the BNC with 98,363,783 tokens and even the COCA with 464,020,256 tokens prove too small to provide any record of the *be* marker, the web corpus of the considerably larger size could provide some evidence. Secondly to examine if a larger corpus might provide, even if the BNC and the COCA give some results, more substantial proof of the *be* marker use. As the BNC and COCA are well-established tools regularly employed for linguistic analysis, the following passage will focus on the web corpus used in this study outlining its basic characteristics and constraints in order to assess the advantages and shortcomings of its use.

3.2.1 The UkWaC

The UkWaC belongs to the family of corpus utilities developed by the *Web-As-Corpus Kool Yinitiative* (WaCky) between 2005-2007. It is a 2 billion word corpus constructed by web crawling of the .uk domain webpages, today accessible via the website interface of the Institute of the Czech National Corpus or via their manager Bonito. Several problems are necessary to be considered in relation to the characteristics of the UkWaC:

1. The corpus was developed between 2005 and 2007, which means that the majority of website contents have been either changed or the website ceased to exist. Thus it is not always possible to consult the wider context of the construction found in the corpus.
2. The fact that the corpus was created from .uk domain webpages does not guarantee that the corpus data represent the British English variety only.
3. The Wacky utilities do not cover the American English variety and the analysis will thus lack the counterpart to the COCA results.
4. Probably the most significant drawback is the fact that a search result is identifiable only by the URL of the website. The corpus does not provide any information commonly accessible in the other corpora. This means that the UkWaC will not provide systematic information about the text type, the author, the publication date etc.
5. The UkWaC tokens will not be fully comparable with the results provided by the BNC or COCA as the authors did not aim to make the corpus contents representative in the sense that the traditional corpora strive to be; especially the spoken component present to a certain extent in the BNC (17.78%) and slightly more satisfactorily in the COCA (20.53%) is altogether absent or not easily identifiable in the UkWaC. Of course, genres of the texts from the websites are not identifiable, nor is it possible to create a more detailed chronology of the *be* perfective construction usage.

To summarise the strategy followed in the choice and use of different corpora: the most straightforward approach, i. e. to use the BNC and COCA would have provided the most consistent results but also data probably not quantitatively substantial enough for an analysis. The addition of the UkWaC will thus allow to explore the claim that even the biggest corpora are not extensive enough to cover rare structures.

3.2.2 The criteria used in the corpora search

This section outlines the basic principles and constraints observed in the excerption. The BNC and UkWaC being accessed via a single provider – the website interface of the Institute of the Czech National Corpus – will be treated together, while the search in the COCA – because of the specific features of its interface – will be described separately. For the BNC and the UkWaC the following principles were as followed:

- the construction was searched via the past participle of the verbs and the left context (assuming that adverbs might be inserted in between – for up to 2 positions),
  e.g. [lemma="be"][]{0,2}"broken"
- negative filter was applied for the following forms:
  - contracted forms with *'s* (*has/is*)
  - contracted forms with *'d* (*had/should/would*)
  - *been* (the presence of the form excludes the perfective interpretation)
  - articles *the/a/an* in the left context (as the pastP is usually allowed in the attributive position)
  - other relevant forms systematically occurring with each individual verb were excluded (e.g. *arrive at*)
- the results were manually searched to exclude other intrusive constructions, for details see

the following section.

For the COCA a different approach had to be undertaken. All verbs were searched via the following syntax (lemma + up to 2 free positions + participle), e.g.:

[be] appeared

[be] * appeared

[be] * * appeared

As the COCA orders the search results alphabetically into a list, only required constructions were taken into consideration and further manually searched using the same criteria as for the BNC and the UkWaC.

With the labile verb *increase* a different approach was decided for. To search all three corpora did not seem to be excessive – during the preliminary intuitive search in the BNC even the least numerable corpus provided enough material to work on. Thus the COCA and the UkWaC were not considered for this part, also because the aim is purely to test if any passive/perfective reading is possible and if it is in any respect promising for further research. Thus the procedure in the BNC search was as follows:

- the verb was searched via the left context (assuming that adverbs might be present for -2 positions), e.g. [lemma="be"][]{0,2}"increased"
- negative filter was applied for the following forms:
  - contracted forms with *'s* (*has/is*)
  - contracted forms with *'d* (*had/should/would*)
  - *been* (the presence of the form excludes the perfective interpretation)
  - articles *the/a/an* in the left context (as the unaccusative participle are usually allowed in the attributive position)
- a randomized sample of 250 sentences was taken and manually searched for intrusive

constructions (e.g. clefts, passive forms etc), translations into English, quotations from sources older than the 20th century (usually Shakespeare, the Bible and other fiction).

3.2.3 The tests and criteria used in the manual search

During the manual search for the *be* perfective constructions the tests as presented towards the end of the section on the theoretical background, page 28 were applied, i.e. a token was considered to allow the perfective reading if

1. the verb phrase in a sentence corresponded with the time specifications relevant for a perfective construction
2. the *be* marker was replaceable with *have*

This test also applied if an adverb was placed between the auxiliary and the PP (e.g. *he was newly arrived*) allowing also the adjectival interpretation, i. e. if the identical construction with the *have* marker was identified in one of the corpora, the construction was accepted as possibly perfective

These tests allowed to exclude a large number of similar constructions (e.g. clefts, modal idioms etc), in addition translations into English, or quotations from texts older than the 20th century (usually Shakespeare, the Bible and other fiction) and also the duplicate hits in the UkWaC were excluded. In the process of the manual selection, a number of problems in the UkWaC – as they have been described above – showed as gravely handicapping the search process. Most significantly it was only with difficulties that the approximate publication date of the text considered could be determined. The results especially for *come, arrive* and *become* contained a large number of Biblical and classical literature quotes and references (e.g. *Jesus is come, New Jerusalem is risen* etc.). This situation was further complicated by the fact that esp. sermons were written in such a style that it was impossible to asses how old and how original the text might be. Therefore, all the

religious texts in the UkWaC, and consequently also from the BNC and the COCA, have been excluded from the excerption. Only actuated or ironic references to the Bible occurring in non-religious contexts have been preserved, e.g.

(17) *For the great day of his wrath **is come**. David Koresh was an uneducated product of Rural Texas.* (BNC: HE3)

Similarly, repetitive quotes and fixed expressions, e.g. the standard translation of Nefertiti as "the beautiful one is come" or the Mahabharata quote "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds", commonly used as a reference to the atomic bomb throughout the 20th century, have been left out. Furthermore all the corpora also contained a number of spoken language excerpts where the structure and the function of the construction were not clear (false starts, repetition, etc); in that case the excerpt was left out as well, e.g.

(18) *This **is** **come** -- this is coming from askmen.com.* (COCA:2011:SPOK NBC_Today)

4. THE RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 The Intransitive Verbs: General Overview

The search for the *be* perfective construction of the seven intransitive verbs in the three corpora has yielded the results as summarised in Table 5. The table thus presents the answer to hypothesis 1 covering the basic occurrence patterns of the *be* perfective of the seven intransitive verbs. With regard to the figures in Table 5, the verbs can be divided into 3 groups:

I) verbs with less than 10 tokens in total (*appear, arise, remain*)

II) verbs with less than 100 tokens in total (*arrive, happen*)

III) verbs with over 100 tokens (*become, come*)

This grouping will allow at least partly to generalize the results of the excerption. The following paragraphs will firstly provide detailed information about the results for each group of verbs and secondly will analyse patterns that appear to exist in the distribution of the *be* perfective.

	BNC					COCA					UkWaC					total
	pres. perf.	past perf.	inf.	part.	∑	pres. perf.	past perf.	inf.	part.	∑	pres. perf.	past perf.	inf.	part.	∑	
appear	0	0	0	0	**0**	0	0	0	0	**0**	3	0	0	0	**3**	3
arise	0	0	0	0	**0**	1	0	0	0	**1**	0	0	0	0	**0**	1
arrive	3	2	0	0	**5**	13	9	1	0	**23**	13	12	1	1	**27**	55
become	11	0	0	1	**12**	27	4	0	0	**31**	84	14	0	0	**98**	142
come	27	8	0	0	**35**	48	9	0	1	**57**	54	30	0	0	**84**	176
happen	1	0	0	0	**1**	7	2	0	0	**9**	10	2	0	0	**12**	22
remain	0	0	0	0	**0**	0	0	0	0	**0**	4	1	0	0	**5**	5

Table 5: *Results for the intransitive verbs in the BNC, the COCA and the UkWaC*

Nevertheless, before analysing the results it is also necessary to supplement the information about the number of texts in which the tokens have been identified. Table 6 provides information that allows to conclude if the distribution of the tokens is not restricted to only a small number of texts. For the BNC and COCA a text was determined according to the identification codes. Identical codes within the same genre category in the COCA (e.g. tokens coming from the same magazine or

newspapers were further manually checked and if they originated in two different articles, they were counted as two texts). For the UkWaC two tokens were considered to belong to a single text if they belonged to the same web address.

	BNC					COCA					UkWaC				
	pr. perf.	past perf.	inf.	part.	**total**	pr. perf.	past perf.	inf.	part.	**total**	pr. perf.	past perf.	inf. perf.	part.	**total**
appear	0	0	0	0	**0**	0	0	0	0	**0**	2	0	0	0	**2**
arise	0	0	0	0	**0**	1	0	0	0	**1**	0	0	0	0	**0**
arrive	3	2	0	0	**5**	13	9	1	0	**23**	12	12	1	1	**26**
become	9	0	0	1	**11**	26	5	0	0	**31**	81	14	0	0	**95**
come	20	7	0	0	**27**	44	9	0	1	**54**	50	27	0	0	**77**
happen	1	0	0	0	**1**	7	2	0	0	**9**	10	2	0	0	**12**
remain	0	0	0	0	**0**	0	0	0	0	**0**	4	1	0	0	**5**

Table 6: *Number of texts for the intransitives in the BNC, the COCA and the UkWaC*[12]

The tokens for all the verbs seem to be fairly evenly distributed among a number of texts. Predictably – because of the highest number of tokens found – the verb *come* is slightly restricted as to the number of texts: 27 tokens of the present perfective construction in the BNC had been identified only in 20 texts and 54 tokens of the present perfective construction in the UkWaC had been found in 50 texts. A similar, still less profound, imbalance can be seen with the verb *become*. Still, in no case are the tokens found appropriated by only a small number of texts.

4.1.1 Verbs with less than 10 tokens (*appear, remain, arise*)

The tokens of the two verbs in the first group (*appear, remain*) have been found only in the UkWaC. For *arise* only one token has been identified and that in the text that falls into the category of literary contexts, otherwise the *be* perfective with this verb seems to be non-existent. Nevertheless

12

the two first verbs provide more interesting material for consideration than might be assumed from the low number of tokens.

As happens also with other verbs, the verb *appear* occurs in a number of sentences in the form of the auxiliary *be* +pastP where it cannot be easily classified as either the perfective, passive or adjectival construction. The homonymy of the form invites situations where the speakers use the construction ungrammatically. Nevertheless apart from the unsystematic use one type of usage appears frequently and it might be questioned whether it does not represent yet another innovative use of *be* + pastP (with the past reference), e.g.

(19) *He **was** also **appeared** on the BBC 's Springwatch programme (2005) where he presented some ' top tips ' for wildlife gardeners.*

(UkWaC: http://www.spacefornature.co.uk/aarichardburkmar.htm)

(20) *The -- the cases in Illinois and Texas were singular cases where the individuals **were appeared** to be acting alone, motivated to commit terrorist acts. Fortunately, contacted by FBI undercover agents and sources early on and so those were singular cases.* (COCA: SPOK CBS_Early)

or also with the future reference, e.g.

(21) *The Ensemble **will be appeared** at the CBSO Centre on Friday 8 September as part of ArtsFest, performing new music that includes part of "Breath Heart Life" by Andy Garbi-Armii from the Four Dwellings.* (UkWaC: http://www.sounditout.co.uk/Pages/fusion1.html)

Thus seen from the perspective of the non-standard use of the *be* + pastP, the three tokens found in the UkWaC do not necessarily need to represent a conscious use of the prefect construction, even if they satisfy the tests. To what extent they may be interpreted as causative use of the be + pastP

construction could be subject to further research as well as the question of the contexts where they occur (the examples given might suggest restrictions to the media contexts).

Similarly the search for the perfective construction with *remain* yielded tokens of non-standard use:

(22) *When there was no internet facility , starting a business* ***was remained*** *with lot of risks involved in it.* (UkWaC*: http://www.articlesnet.co.uk/Category/Humanities/19/pdate/desc/8)*

*(*23) *A body not cremated on the same day as the coffin is received at the Crematorium may only* ***be remained*** *overnight on the written consent of the Applicant for cremation or in exceptional circumstances deemed necessary by the Cremation Authority.*

(UkWaC*: http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/sitemap/cd_bs_code_of_cremation_practice)*

Again, there exists a small number of satisfactory tokens, all originating on the Internet, nevertheless their number is too small to come to any conclusions about a concise use of the perfective construction.

Altogether what might be said about the existence of the *be* perfective construction with the verbs *remain, arise* and *appear* is that in the contemporary use it is almost non-existent. Some tokens of *remain* and *appear* have been identified only in the UkWac and if further research should be undertaken, it would have to use a very large corpus or Google Search. In addition it would be probably more interesting not to focus only on the *be* perfective but to take into consideration all possible uses of the form *be* + PP.

4.1.2 Verbs with less than 100 tokens (*arrive, happen*)

Two verbs (*arrive* and *happen*) provided a considerable number of tokens in all the three corpora,

for the COCA and the UkWaC there seems to be a slightly more prevailing occurrence – nevertheless the numbers are still so small that it is not possible to assess any significant differences with certainty. With the verbs *arrive* – apart from the problem of distinguishing elided cases of *arrive at* with the preposition missing – it proved to be problematic to assess if the forms *newly arrived, recently arrived, happily arrived* and *safely arrived* can be interpreted as the perfective construction or rather adjectival participles. Nevertheless, none of the constructions allow to replace the auxiliary with a copular verb and furthermore, for *newly arrived*, *recently arrived* and *safely arrived* the couterpart with the auxiliary exists *have* too, e.g.

> *(*24) *In an effort to maximise worldwide sales , the two lead roles in the new programme are played by a British 13-year-old - whose character* ***has newly arrived*** *in North America - and a Canadian adult...* (UkWaC: http://www.bipa.co.uk/getArticle.php?ID=229)

> 25) *R. Chan , the Managing Director of Sakata UK , who* ***has recently arrived*** *from Japan, made a press statement in which he said:* (BNC: BPD)

> 29) *Jan 2006 YES , the parcel and its contents* ***have safely arrived*** *and I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your ongoing worrying about this.*
>
> (UkWaC: http://www.mastersgames.co.uk/misc/Testimonials-2006.htm)

Thus, all of the tokens have been accepted as perfective. Of course it cannot be safely claimed that there is no whatsoever difference between the use of *be* and *have* in these formally similar sentences but further analysis would be necessary, also taking in consideration that sentences with past reference exist with the past perfective reading unlikely:

> (26) *If (as is virtually certain) these settlements are indeed the work of the Israelites , it seems unlikely that they* ***were*** *newly* ***arrived*** *in the late 13th century BC.*
>
> *(UkWaC:* http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/article_canaan_bimson.html)

As was already described with verbs *appear* and *remain* in the first group, the results in all the three corpora for the verb *happen* provided a number of forms not satisfactorily classifiable as the perfective or passive construction or copular *be* + adjP. They generally represent instances of spoken language and may be understood as false starts or misprojected utterances, e.g.

> (27) *It **was** just **happened** to be spotted by Richard , fortunately , whilst he was erm , between jobs and actually being up a steps, walked in a saw the smoke coming out of one of the er, main switch areas* . (BNC: FLS)

> (28) *amazed I actually did erm what happened erm I **was happened** to be upstairs and my wife shouted quick quick there 's a zither , so I zoomed down here and the lady* (BNC: KM2)

Nevertheless despite the above described cases, both verbs provide a number of tokens that allow to assume that the perfective construction survives in BrE as well as AmE. Especially interesting is the result for the *be* perfective with *arrive* in the COCA where a large number of tokens emerge in co-occurrence with several adverbs – adjuncts of time or manner (detailed overview of these forms can be found in Table 10). A similar effect of co-occurrence was recognised also for the verbs in the last and largest category and is discussed in detail on pages 45-46.

An issue of transcription arises in connection with the verb *happen.* In the COCA all the tokens for the *be* perfective with *happen* occur only in the spoken language; considering the closeness of the contracted form *´s happened* and *is happened,* a question arises if the conventions used in the transcription in the COCA have not influenced the interpretation of the form actually used. On the other hand, one token is in the plural form where the replacement is not possible.

4.1.3 Verbs with more than 100 tokens (*come, become*)

The detailed structure of the corpus data distribution for the two verbs with over 100 tokens *come* and *become* (i.e. in terms of genre categories and co-occurrence patterns) is the only one worth

looking into. The following section will consider the distribution of the *be* perfective construction with *come* and *become* with relevance to the genre category, co-occurrence patterns. As the verbs *arrive* and *happen,* even though not comparable in terms of the number of tokens, can still be involved in some of the structural considerations, they will be – together with *come* and *become* – treated with relevance to the language variety and only *arrive, come* and *become* to the corpus size.

- distribution with relevance to the genre category

As there exists no categorisation in terms of genre in the UkWaC, it was not possible to include it in this distribution analysis. Eventually only the BNC and the COCA tokens will be considered.[13] Apart from this issue there is also the problem of different categorisation criteria in the BNC and in the COCA, i.e. the BNC recognises different categories from the categories in the COCA. Also with respect to the number of tokens only three distinctions between categories have eventually been made:

1. spoken language

2. fiction (as this category is of special interest for hypothesis 3a); it includes prose as well as dramatic texts

3. all the rest was ascribed to the rather general category "other written"; this includes academic and non-academic non-fiction texts, newspapers and magazines

become	spoken		fiction		other written	
	∑	%	∑	%	∑	%
BNC	2	16.67	7	58.33	3	25
COCA	9	29.03	15	48.39	7	22.58

[13] Nevertheless a manual genre categorisation of the UkWaC tokens is imaginable (as mentioned above), although too elaborate – and the question is to what extent the categories in the UkWaC would be comparable to those on the BNC or the COCA.

***Table 7**: The distribution of become with respect to the genre category*

come	spoken		fiction		other written	
	∑	%	∑	%	∑	%
BNC	12	34.28	21	60.00	2	5.72
COCA	19	34.54	27	49.00	9	16.36

***Table 8**: The distribution of come with respect to the genre category*

The tables provide an answer to hypotheses 3a and 3b: it is not true that only *come* is used in other than specific contexts (i.e. literary contexts). About half of the occurrences of the verb *become* are used in the fiction (for the British variety 58,33%, for the American variety 48,39%), but the *be* marker is also present in spoken language and other types of written texts. *Come* prevails in the fiction texts but also scores high in the spoken language. If we use a similar table applied on the *arrive* data, the BNC results will be too scarce to claim anything, but the figures for the COCA show that the *be* perfective is balanced among different types of texts (Table 9).

arrive	spoken		fiction		other written	
	∑	%	∑	%	∑	%
BNC	1	-	1	-	3	-
COCA	6	25	10	41.67	8	33.33

***Table 9**: The distribution of the verb arrive with respect to the genre category*

- distribution with relevance to the co-occurrence patterns

Hypothesis 3b concerns the assumption that has appeared in the paper by McFadden and Alexiadou, i.e the *be* perfective in the 20th century English will occur only in fixed phrases. (McFadden, Alexiadou 2006) All fixed phrases and direct quotes have been removed during the research, thus disproving their claim, but that does not necessarily mean that the *be* perfective does not tend to

occur in co-occurrence patterns in the corpus data selected. As already noticed with the verb *arrive*, also *come* and *become* tend to co-occur with adjuncts of time and manner though the link is not as strong (i.e. it the percentage of occurrences is not as high as with *arrive*) and as variable as it is in the case of *arrive*.

ARRIVE	∑	%	BECOME	∑	%	COME	∑	%
be newly arrived	28	50.00	be now become	17	11.88	be newly come	9	5.05
be recently arrived	5	8.93	be fast become	9	6.29			
be happily arrived	1	1.79						
be safely arrived	1	1.79						
total	35	62.5						

***Table 10**: Adjunct co-occurrence patterns for the verbs arrive, become and come*

For the verb *come* a more significant feature is the co-occurrence on the position of the subject. More than 25% of all the tokens appear with a temporal subject, as e.g.

> (29) *The only thing more popular than an idea whose time **is come** is an idea whose time is come, come and gone.* (COCA: SPOK, NBC_MeetPress)

The results for the temporal subject co-occurrence pattern are to be seen in Table 12 where the total figure for the tokens in all the three corpora is 25.57%, i.e. one quarter of all occurrences with *come* will have a temporal subject.

COME	∑	%
time	24	13.62
day	4	2.72
hour	6	3.41
other (*autumn, moment of parting* etc)	11	6.25
total	45	25.57%

Table 11: *Subject co-occurrence patterns for the verb arrive*

Lexicalisation might be a useful framework that can help at least partly understand the figures in tables 10 and 11. Lexicalisation has been characterised with respect to various aspects of language change, very often in contrast to the grammaticalisation. For the purpose of this thesis the definition as introduced by Lipka will suffice. He characterized lexicalizarion as: “the phenomenon that a complex lexeme once coined tends to become a single complete lexical unit, a simple lexeme. Through this process it loses the characteristics of a syntagma to a greater or lesser degree ... In my definition an essential condition and a prerequisite for this gradual diachronic process is the fact that a particular complex lexeme is used frequently." (Lipka, 2002: 111) In more general terms a lexicalization is perceived as a process of moving along the scale from the productivity pole (grammar) towards the lexical pole. The *be* perfective having moved away from the productivity rules, might be now moving towards fixed constructions.

4.2 Distribution in reference to language variety (*arrive, come, become, happen*)

The figures for the verbs *arrive, become* and *come* are high enough to provide information on the distribution patterns when comparing the American and British English variety. For the purpose of the analysis the BNC and the UkWaC have been taken as one entity and the tokens for all categories in Table 5 summed. The reason for merging the two corpora figures is that the BNC only cannot

enter the X^2 test, as the conditions require a certain number of tokens. For the same reason only verbs *arrive, happen, come* and *become* were taken in consideration. The figures entering the X^2 test are in Table 12; they were tested at the level of p = 0,05 and the test results (chi-square = 10.098, df = 3, p = 0.01775) proved (even if not strongly) significant. In might be assumed that there exists a correlation between the language variety and the *be* perfective occurrence of verbs in Table 12.

	BNC + UkWaC	COCA	total
arrive	32	23	55
become	110	31	141
come	104	54	158
happen	13	9	22
total	259	117	376

Table 12: *Corpus data used for the language variety test*

4.3 BNC versus UkWaC

Both, the BNC and UkWaC provide information about British English, though it is not altogether obvious to what extent the data are in any way correlated, in other words whether the characteristic of the corpus influences the results of the research. In this case only the verb *arrive, become* and *come* provided enough tokens to enter the test. The verb *happen* does not provide enought tokens in the BNC. At the level of p = 0,05 the X^2 test results proved strongly significant: X-squared = 12.899, df = 2, p = 0.00158. There exists a strong correlation between the structure of the corpus and the results. Aspects that can be considered are:

1) the size difference (BNC = 98,363,783 tokens; UkWaC =2,100,000,000 tokens)

2) the fact that the texts excerpted from the Internet are in their structure different for the BNC texts

3) chronological disproportions (the Internet texts will probably include only the language of

the late 20th century while the BNC texts might stretch over a more considerable period)

This paper cannot bring a closer explanation for the corpus data correlation, nevertheless the future research should be aware of the fact that the entering presupposition and the choice of material can strongly influence the results.

	BNC	UkWaC	total
arrive	5	27	32
become	12	99	111
come	35	84	119
total	52	210	262

Table 13*: Corpus data used for test of corpus correlation*

4. 4 The Results for the labile verb increase

From the 250 tokens excerpted from the randomized BNC search, 180 tokenswere left after the intrusive constructions had been eliminated manually. Table 14 shows the results for the labile verb *increase.* From this paper´s point of view the more important information is not the figures themselves but the list of features that block the perfective interpretation. In some sentences the features overlap and in that case only one of the two was taken into consideration, in other words each token has been counted only once even if it contains two features.

Increase		
perfective		28
passive	adverbial of time	15
	conditional	6
	time clause	6
	modality	74
	by-construction	16
	time clause	9
	co-ordination	8
	subjunctive	1
	adverbial clause of purpose	1
	context	16
total		180

***Table 14**: Features affecting the passive/perfective interpretation of the be +pastP form*

Among the relevant features there is one distinct group concerning the time specifications excluding the perfective reading (adverbial of tome, time clause, context) – nevertheless this is not an unexpected result. Further attention can be drawn to the modality and conditional as they are of prominent concern in the so called “irrealis effect“ hypothesis as briefly mention on page 24.

There have been 28 tokens allowing the perfective reading identified. All tokens come from written language, the majority come from the academic or other non-fiction contexts (although several of them are in the category of miscellaneous written texts with no further specification). All the tokens contain an unanimate subject. At this point it does not seem to be in any way fruitful to connect these tokens to the forms foumd for the intransitive verbs.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The research project has searched three large corpora of contemporary English for the *be* perfective construction to survey the possibilities, directions and limits of the future research. Seven frequent intransitive verbs have been selected to test if the assumptions that have so far appeared in a number of papers on the diachronic development of the perfective construction reflect the actual progress of the *be* perfective disappearance. For all of these verbs at least one token has been found – nevertheless the frequency of the occurrence differs widely. For verbs *remain, appear* and *arise* only a few tokens have been identified, with one exception for *arise* all of them only in the UkWaC – by far the largest of the three corpora. The verbs *happen* and *arrive* returned several dozens of tokens, nevertheless it is only the verbs *come* and *become* that allow the analysis of the token occurrence more closely. As far as hypothesis 2 is concerned, it has not been attested that *become* occurs prevailingly in the past perfective form: the figures for the present perfective construction are higher for all three corpora.

Contrary to the expectations that were clustered in hypotheses 3a and 3b, it has not been confirmed that the low frequency verbs (i.e. according to the original claim verbs other than *come*) will occur only in specific contexts and in fixed phrases. For the verbs *remain, appear* and *arise* there is no information substantive enough to describe their distribution in terms of genre category, but the verbs *arrive, become* and *happen* seem to be either used in spoken discourse or stretch over all genre categories (i.e. spoken language, fiction and other written texts). Nor can it be concluded that the relic forms occur only in fixed phrases, as suggested by McFadden and Alexiadou (2006). That does not necessarily mean that the *be* marker does not occur in fixed phrases or does not co-occur with certain expressions at all (the number of tokens found in fixed phrases and excluded in the early stages of the search by far exceeded the number of tokens that were eventually left for further analysis). Furthermore, the verbs *arrive, come* and to a lesser extent also *become* show strong

affinity to co-occur either with adjuncts of time or manner, or with a semantically restricted subject, i.e. temporal subject. The relation between the verb frequency, the productivity and co-occurrence patterns with respect to the models of language change might be of interest for future research.

The analysis of the *be* perfective with the more frequent verbs offered other observations as well. In terms of the genre distribution, the verbs *come* and *become* have been found – as expected – prevailingly in fiction; nevertheless they also are represented in spoken language. Additionally the X^2 test shows a mild correlation between the *be* perfective occurrence of the more frequent verbs *come, become, arrive* and *happen* and the language variety. Nevertheless the outcome of the test should be verified on a more representative sample.

On the whole the occurrence of *be* perfective proved to be more frequent than expected, although it is still a fairly rare syntactic construction – thus confirming the theoretical pressumption that the final stages of a language change are considerably slower than the development in the middle stages of the change. The functional fragmentation of the *be + pastP* form might contribute to the conservation of the *be* perfective forms. Also we may ask to what extent are archaic forms used to actuate the discourse (to the same purpose as innovative elements in the language often serve).

The search for the tokens of the verb *increase* brouhgt some results but at the moment they do not seem to represent a suitable material that could further the understanding of the *be* perfective function in the contemporary English.

The future research would have to be organized in such a way as to minimise the drawbacks which this study did not manage to avoid, .i.e it should be able to employ metodology that would allow to cover spoken language variety to a more significant extent than provided by the three corpora. Also,

it should control the context information more and avoid excluding some contexts altogether (as it was conceded to in the present study in relation with religious texts). The dialect interference is another aspect which could not be reflected when working with the three corpora. Finally the research did not allow to cover the chronology patterns within the 20th century development, esp. the results from the UkWaC range from the texts written at the very beginning of the 20th century up to the extracts from the Internet chat forums. Also the approach focusing rather at the *be* + pastP form and its functions in the contemporary English could yield interesting results.

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Sources and tools

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Corpus of Contemporary English (COCA) accessed through http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/ in February 2014

Summary (Shrnutí v češtině)

Bakalářská práce se zabývá perfektní konstrukcí skupiny intranzitivních sloves, která vyjadřují změnu (v angličtině často označovaná jako „mutative verbs“, v rámci generativní tradice a komparativního přístupu jsou považována za tzv. „unaccusative verbs“), v současné angličtině. Tato intranzitivní slovesa se historicky už v období tzv. staré angličtiny (do 11. století) v perfektu objevovala jak s pomocným slovesem *have*, tak s pomocným slovesem *be*. Zatímco v počátcích vývoje převažovalo pomocné sloveso *be,* je nejpozději od 11. století zaznamenán zřejmý posun k intenzívnějšímu provázání s většinovým auxiliárem *have*. Tento trend vyvrcholil v období 17. až 19. století, kdy většina sloves z této skupiny přešla k užívání *have.* Pro 20. století dosud existovaly jen odhady, které uvažovaly o řídkém výskytu perfektního *be* jen s malým počtem (obvykle vysokofrekvenčních) sloves a ve specifických kontextech.

Cílem výzkumné části této práce bylo ověřit tyto předpoklady na materiálu excerpovaného ze tří obsáhlých korpusů současné angličtiny. Britský národní korpus a Korpus současné americké angličtiny se staly přirozenou volbou, ale vzhledem ke skutečnosti, že se jedná o potencionálně opravdu řídce se vyskytující syntaktickou konstrukci, byl výběr korpusů doplněn o internetový korpus UkWaC, který několikanásobně předčí počtem tokenů oba dříve jmenované korpusy. Vzhledem k omezujícímu formátu práce bylo vybráno jen sedm intranzitivních sloves (*arrive, arise, happen, come, become, remain, appear*), která jsou historicky doložená se auxiliárem *be* a současně minimálně jedna studie předpokládala jejich pokračující výskyt v současném diskurzu. Vedle toho bylo přistoupeno i k rešerši u slovesa *increase*, které sice synchronně pouze intranzitivní není, ale v literatuře bylo upozorněno, že i u z hlediska tranzitivity neutrálních sloves se dá v určitých kontextech uvažovat o perfektní interpretaci konstrukce (aniž by byla zároveň vyloučena interpretace pasivní).

Samotnou rešerši ztížilo, resp. omezilo množství problémů, které se vztahovaly částečně ke skutečnosti, že konstrukce *be* + perfektní participium v angličtině naplňuje několik funkcí, a částečně byly způsobeny nestejnými charaktery tří jmenovaných korpusů. Sloveso be a perfektní participium slouží jako forma trpného rodu a dále se ještě sloveso „být“ jako spona pojí s perfektním participiem v syntaktické funkci přídavného jména. V praxi to jednak znamená, že ne vždy je jednoduché tyto tři konstrukce od sebe rozlišit, a také, že rodilí mluvčí mají tendenci konstrukci používat chybně. Co se týče korpusů, tak jako problematická se ukázala především práce s internetovým korpusem, kde byla schopnost nashromáždit a systematizovat velké množství tokenů vykoupena minimalistickým přístupem k doplňujícím informacím o kontextu daného textu. Především není možné jednoduše zjistit stáří excerpovaného textu, což v tomto případě hrálo zásadní roli. Z tohoto důvodu bylo nakonec přistoupeno k systematickému odebrání všech náboženských kontextů (a následně tedy i relevantních nálezů z obou ostatních korpusů), kde se tento problém jevil nejvýrazněji.

Výsledky rešerše přinesla poměrně výrazné výsledky. S ohledem k množství nalezených tokenů byla slovesa rozdělena do tří skupin:

1) slovesa s nálezy do 10 tokenů (*appear, arise, remain*)

2) slovesa s nálezy do 100 tokenů (*happen, arrive*)

3) slovesa s nálezy přes 100 tokenů (*come, become*)

Pouze distribuci sloves z třetí skupiny bylo možné detailněji analyzovat; částečně bylo v některých testech zohledněno i sloveso *arrive* a v jednom případě i *happen* – vzhledem k různorodému výsledku tedy bylo nutné postupovat flexibilně. Poměrně zajímavým se jeví výrazný trend u sloves *arrive* a be*come* (v malé míře i *come*) vyskytovat se s některými příslovci času a způsobu (např. *be*

newly arrived, be recently arrived, be now become). Sloveso *come* vykazuje silnou tendenci vyskytovat se s temporálním podmětem (např. *the time is come, the hour is come* atd.). Chí-kvadrát test, kterým byly srovnány hodnoty pro oba korpusy britské angličtiny oproti korpusu americké angličtiny naznačil, že výskyt perfekta s auxiliárem *be* může být ovlivňován typem jazykové variety (u sloves *come, become* a *arrive*). Podobným způsobem provedené porovnání tokenů mezi Britským národním korpusem a UkWacem s pozitivním výsledkem signalizuje, že také charakter těchto korpusů ovlivnil výsledky (jako relevantní aspekt se jeví nereprezentativnost UkWacu z hlediska mluvené versus psané složky, textových typů, resp. i rozdílné složení z hlediska chronologického). Dále se oproti očekáváním založeným na více či méně intuitivních předpovědích ukázalo, že tato perfektní konstrukce není zdaleka omezená pouze na beletristické texty nebo jen na ustálená spojení. Konstrukce se vyskytuje v mluveném jazyce, v psaných textech různého zaměření a přestože, jak bylo popsáno výše, mají některá sklon vyskytovat se v některých kolokacích, tak se v žádném případě nejedná o plně ustrnulá spojení.

Rešerše slovesa *increase* sice přineslo určité výsledky, kde se dá uvažovat o perfektní interpretaci - ukazuje se, že takřka vždy v odborných textech a s neživotným podmětem, nicméně se nezdá, že zapojení v dalším výzkumu by mohlo přinést nějaké výrazné porozumění tomu, jak perfektní konstrukce v současném jazyce funguje. Zaměřit se na dříve zmíněná intranzitivní slovesa se zdá být mnohem slibnějším směrem výzkumu. Pravděpodobně by se dal výskyt perfekta s *be* mnohem lépe analyzovat, pokud by se podařilo vytvořit metodologii, která by nemusela spoléhat pouze na obecné korpusy – nejenže by se tím mohlo získat více studijního materiálu, ale umožnilo by to snad i vyhnout se metodickým nedostatkům, které ovlivnily výsledky této studie.