

**On the *Have Got* Construction**  
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In this research, we deal with the *have got* construction, schematized as NP *have got* NP, and examine their semantic and syntactic behavior. As is well known, it denotes possession:

- (1) They've got a plenty of money.

Syntactically, the *have got* construction shows the following behavior with respect to the interrogative and negation:

- (2) a. Have you got any interesting books?  
b. \* Do you have got any interesting books?
- (3) a. I haven't got much to talk about this evening.  
b. \* I don't have got much to talk about this evening.

These facts clearly prove that *have got* consists of an auxiliary and a verb.

We, however, encounter difficulties when examining the other syntactic behavior of the *have got* construction more closely. As for the tag question and VP deletion, it exhibits problematic behavior, as shown in the following examples:

- (4) a. \* John has got a dog, hasn't he?  
b. John has got a dog, doesn't he?

(Battistella (1986:214))

- (5) a. \* Mary has got a dog, and John has too.  
b. Mary has got a dog, and John does too.

(Battistella (1986:216))

To the extent that *have got* counts as being composed of an auxiliary and a verb, as shown in (2) and (3), one can predict that the auxiliary *have* appears in both the tag question and VP deletion in correspondence with the main clause. Contrary to our prediction, both the tag question in (4) and VP deletion in (5) require not the auxiliary *have* but *do*-support.

LeSourd (1977) and Fodor and Smith (1978) discuss the syntactic two-facedness shown above, resolving it transformationally. However, we cannot accept their view because it completely ignores the semantic aspect of the construction. Instead, we give a more plausible semantic account of the two-facedness in this research.

Toda (1993) makes an important statement on the semantics of the *have got* construction, in which it does not have a common semantic value with the possessive *have* construction (NP *have* NP):

- (6) - I haven't got any whiskey.

According to Toda, possession described by the *have got* construction is temporary and must be associated to the time of speech. Therefore, example (6) implies that whiskey is out of

stock right now. That is, we use the *have got* construction instead of the possessive *have* construction in order to emphasize the sense of temporary possession at the time of speech.

Two important questions now arise: why do the *have got* construction (i) describes temporary possession at the time of speech and (ii) shows the syntactic two-facedness? One of the cognitive operations offers the key to these two questions: we claim that the *have got* construction results from blending (operation), in which some events, which are distinct but strongly related, are integrated into a single event. Generally speaking, such a cognitive operation offers the ability to cut and paste events relatively freely on sentence, just like making a craft. As for the *have got* construction, we assume the following:

- (7) The *have got* construction is a form in which two events are integrated into a single event by blending (operation), resulting in describing temporary possession at the time of speech.

To put it more concretely, the possessive *have* construction formally blends with the acquisition *got* construction (NP *got* NP):

- (8) a. John has a linguistic book. (possession)  
 b. John got a linguistic book. (acquisition)

The blend of these constructions is semantically motivated: the events described by these constructions are integrated via a metonymic relation between possession and acquisition. Theoretically speaking, the obtainer of the acquisition *got* construction, i.e. *John*, is mapped onto the possessor of the possessive *have* construction. The same goes for the object of the constructions: the obtainee, i.e. *a linguistic book*, is mapped onto the possessee.

Under our assumption, we can solve the syntactic two-facedness shown above in a natural way. It is clear that *have got* consists of the auxiliary *have* and the verb *got* as proved in (2) and (3). If, as we have claimed, the possessive *have* construction blends with the acquisition *got* construction, it is predicted that the two main verbs, i.e. *have* and *got*, are juxtaposed in a single construction. Since such a juxtaposition of main verbs has to be ruled out in an English system, the *have* is reanalyzed as an auxiliary. We, however, must note that the *have* semantically functions as the main verb in the sense that it is contributed to the semantics of the *have got* construction. Namely, the *have* and *got* semantically function as a single verb and hence draw the sense of temporary possession at the time of speech. As Nakau (1994) claims, since the tag question and VP deletions are formed in correspondence with the semantic structure, those of the *have got* construction need *do*-support.

As we have seen, the syntactic two-facedness shown in the *have got* construction is solved in terms of blending. Although the *have got* syntactically consists of an auxiliary and a verb, it semantically functions as a single verb. Hence the two-facedness of the *have got* construction.