

Semantic Constraints on the HAVE+A+V Construction*

Toyoko Amagawa

1. Introduction

This paper is concerned with a type of expression which is prevalent in British English. Example sentences are shown in (1) and (2):¹

(1) I had a little stroll around the garden this morning. (COBUILD¹)

(2) Have a look at this letter. (OALD⁵)

Wierzbicka (1982,1988) claims that the direct object of the main verb have in sentences such as those in (1) and (2) consists of an indefinite article and a verb, not a noun, though syntactically it requires a noun. As supporting evidence for this, Wierzbicka (1988:348) gives the following example, claiming that use involved is pronounced [ju:z], but not [ju:s].²

(3) May I have a use [ju:z] of your pen for a moment?

In this paper I will follow this claim and hence call the configuration exemplified in (1)-(3) have+a+V.

Several properties and corresponding restrictions on this frame have been observed in previous studies. First, the subject NP must be human; hence (4) is unacceptable.

(4) *That stone had a roll down the grassy bank. (Dixon 1991:347)

Second, the action denoted by a+V is voluntarily carried out by a human subject; this suggests that the thematic role of the subject can be viewed as an actor. For instance, in (1) the person who strolled around the garden is the same as the subject. This restriction excludes (5) and (6) from consideration here:

(5) I had a punch from Mary. (Dixon 1991:344)

(6) a. He had a nasty cough.

b. She has a nice smile. (Wierzbicka 1988:295)

In (5) the instigator of the action expressed is not the subject I, but Mary. In the sentences in (6), as Wierzbicka (p.295) claims, a cough and a smile are nouns and the role of the subject is an experiencer, not an actor. This restriction also prevents verbs like slip from occurring in a+V, as shown in (7); one's slipping cannot be regarded as a voluntary action.

(7) *She had a slip on the ice. (Dixon 1991:224)

Third, in syntax, the object a+V does not undergo passivization:³

(8) *A swim was had.

(Dixon 1991:345)

Fourth, the construction under consideration is used colloquially. Thus, verbs such as pee, think, and chat can occur in it, but verbs like urinate, contemplate, and converse do not:

- (9) a. have a pee/*urinate
 b. have a think/*contemplate
 c. have a chat/*converse

(Wierzbicka 1988:297)

Note that we have expressions such as John had a converse with Mary, but this expression does not fall into our construction; the primary accent of converse involved is on the first vowel, which indicates that the word is a noun.

Although these semantic and syntactic properties of the have+a+V frame have been known in previous studies, no adequate explanation has thus far been given as to why some verbs occur in this frame, but others do not.

The present paper is aimed at specifying the type of verb which enters into this construction. To attain this goal, we will take what I call a dual approach which claims that a+V is a factor in determining the type of verb occurring in it, and that verbs eligible for this form are further imposed by constructional constraints. A detailed explanation of this approach will be given in section 3.

Since Jespersen (1956: PartVI;117) called have used in the have+a+V frame a "light" verb, it has been agreed in the literature that the verb contributes little to the understanding of the sentence in which it is involved. This is tantamount to saying that it embodies only the associated grammatical information of tense and number (Cattell 1984:2). The dual approach outlined above will suggest instead that have not only conveys such grammatical information, but also plays an active role in selecting verbs which can appear in this construction.

The present paper is organized as follows. Section 2 looks over previous analyses of the have+a+V construction and points out problems with these analyses. Section 3 discusses motivations for adopting the dual approach in the present paper, by making reference to other constructions which appear to involve a+V and Japanese linguistic forms equivalent to this. Section 4 presents illustrations of constraints imposed by a+V, placing a probe into the lexical semantic properties of the verbs which fill this form. Section 5 provides three constructional constraints. Concluding remarks are made in

section 6.

2. Previous Studies

2.1 Wierzbicka (1982, 1988)

Wierzbicka claims that the have+a+V construction has three semantic properties: (i) The action reported in this construction continues for a limited period of time; (ii) it cannot have an external goal; and (iii) it must be seen as repeatable. These criteria correctly predict that expressions such as those in (10) are acceptable, while expressions like those in (11) are not:

(10) have a bite/ a cough/ a jog/ a run/ a shave/ a walk

(11) *have an arrive/ a build/ a depart/ a study/ a work

According to Wierzbicka, the action denoted by arrive and depart is accomplished momentarily; the action denoted by study and work is associated with an "external goal," which is discussed in detail in section 5; and the action denoted by build cannot be repeatable. As a result, all those verbs do not occur in the have+a+V construction.

As far as the data in (10) and (11) are concerned, it is possible to say that Wierzbicka's three criteria in (i)-(iii) are characteristic of the verbs occurring in a+V. In sections 4 and 5, we will discuss them again in terms of our approach to be presented.

Wierzbicka also claims that the sentence involving the verb which meets the three criteria above must describe an atelic event when it is converted into the have+a+V frame. Consider the following examples:

(12) a. John drank water *in/ for a few minutes.

b. John drank a glass of water in/*for a few minutes.

(13) a. John had a drink of water.

b. *John had a drink of a glass of water.

As the choice of a temporal adverb demonstrates, (12a) describes an atelic event, and (12b) a telic event. The contrast in acceptability between (13a) and (13b) thus shows that only the sentence describing an atelic event can have a have+a+V frame.

This claim, however, is unsatisfactory. It is well known that the verb eat yields the same parallelism as drink in terms of telicity (Tenny (1994:45), Levin and Rappaport (1995:57), and Jackendoff (1996:306)), as illustrated in (14):⁴

- (14) a. Bill ate custard *in/ for an hour.
 b. Bill ate the apple in/*for an hour. (cf. Jackendoff 1996)

Given this, it will be predicted that eat behaves in the same way as drink in the have+a+V frame. Contrary to this prediction, the verb is blocked from a+V even when the object NP is unbounded like custard, just like water in (13):

- (15) a. *Bill had an eat of custard.
 b. *Bill had an eat of the apple.

Here the judgements indicated on (15) should not be ascribed to telicity; I would like to suggest instead that they pertain to lexical semantic properties inherent in eat. A close examination of the contrast between (12) and (13) on the one hand, and (14) and (15) on the other, will be made in section 4.3.

2.2 Kageyama (1996)

Kageyama classes "activities," which is one of the four types of verbs proposed by Vendler (1967), under two subtypes "ACT" and "ACT ON." ACT-type verbs are those that have one argument, of which unergative verbs such as work, quarrel, talk, and rain are typical representatives. The verbs that belong in ACT ON are those which have two arguments such as hit, kiss, and kick. Based on this classification, Kageyama claims that verbs occurring in the a+V in the have+a+V construction fall into either ACT or ACT ON.

This claim per se is correct in saying that verbs which belong in neither ACT nor ACT ON cannot occur in the have+a+V frame. A closer examination of the data, however, reveals that whether ACT ON verbs such as kick and punch can co-occur with this construction depends on the context. Consider (16) and (17):

- (16) a. John had a kick of the ball around here.
 b. ??John had a kick of the ball over there.
 (17) a. Go on, you have a punch of the punch ball now. (Dixon 1991:348)
 b. ??He had a punch of the pillow.

In (16), sentence (a) implies that the subject kicked the ball repeatedly, while (b) implies that he did it once. The same applies to the examples in (17): in (a) the addressee will punch the punch ball many times; and in (b) he punched the pillow once. To account for the difference in acceptability between (a) and (b) in (16) and (17), finer examination of the nature of ACT ON verbs like kick and punch and the contexts where they occur will be required. We will discuss (16) and (17) in detail in section 4.2.

3. What is Dual Approach?

Notice that the approach taken in the previous analyses discussed above biases restriction only towards the construction as a whole. It has been shown, however, that such an exclusively constructional approach does not give a satisfactory account of the occurrence of verbs in the have+a+V frame.⁵

If one took a compositional approach to the present matter, the result would also be unsatisfactory. This approach assumes that the meaning of a construction can be obtained from the projection of the meanings of its parts. As we have seen in (4), repeated as (18) below, the subject of the have+a+V frame is limited to human. This fact, however, cannot be accounted for by compositional approaches, since this restriction is ascribed to neither of the components of the frame; the verb have, for example, has no such restriction. Rather it is ascribed to the construction as a whole.

(18) *The stone had a roll down the grassy bank.

The dual approach proposed in this paper is a synthesis of a compositional and a constructional approach. On the compositional side the form a+V, a part of the have+a+V frame, has its own meaning and the right to select appropriate verbs; and on the constructional side the frame per se has its own implication and constructional constraints. I will give further supporting evidence for the present approach.

Two points should be noted on the reliability of the dual approach proposed in the present paper. The first point is concerned with the fact that there are other constructions which seem to have a+V as the object, i.e. the take+a+V construction and the give+NP+a+V construction.⁶ The distribution of verbs in the three constructions including the have+a+V construction is of interest. Some verbs occur not only in the have+a+V construction, as in (19a), but also in the take+a+V and the give+NP+a+V construction, as shown in (19b) and (19c), respectively. By contrast, some verbs are prohibited from occurring in the three constructions, as in (20), and others are only permitted in one or two of them, as shown in (21):

- (19) a. have a glance/ a glimpse/ a look/ a stare
 b. take a glance/ a glimpse/ a look/ a stare
 c. give NP a glance/ a glimpse/ a look/ a stare

- (20) a. *have a break/ a build/ an eat/ a kill/ a love/ a watch
 b. *take a break/ a build/ an eat/ a kill/ a love/ a watch

- c. *give the doctor a break/ the house a build/ the apple an eat/ the chicken a kill/ Mary a love/ the baseball game a watch
- (21) a. have a drink/ a push/ a read/*a stir/ a wink
 b. take a drink/*a push/*a read/*a stir/*a wink
 c. give NP *a drink/ a push/*a read/*a stir/*a wink

This fact leads us to assume that a+V has its own restriction to determine the verbs occurring in it.

The second point to be considered is that Japanese has two forms which are equivalent to English a+V: One is, as Kageyama (pp.82-83) points out, hito'one'+V; and the other ichi'one'+V. First consider the examples of the hito+V form in (22):

- (22) a. hito aruki 'a walk', hito hashiri (hitop-pashiri) 'a run', hito keru 'a kick', hito oshi 'a push', hito oyogi 'a swim'
 b. *hito kiri 'a cut', *hito koroshi 'a kill', *hito kowashi 'a break', *hito tsukuri 'a make',

There is a parallelism in acceptability between the Japanese verbs in (22) and the corresponding English verbs when used in the a+V of the have+a+V sentence, as shown in (23).

- (23) a. have a walk/ a run/ a kick/ a push/ a swim
 b. *have a cut/ a kill/ a break/ a make

Next look at the examples of the ichi+V form in (24):

- (24) ichi betsu 'a glance', ichi doku 'a read', ik-koo 'a think'

- (25) have a glance/ a read/ a think

As (25) shows, their English counterparts are also acceptable when in the a+V of the have+a+V sentence.

Note that both forms, namely, the hito+V and ichi+V forms, are usually combined with the light verb suru'do':

- (26) a. hito-aruki suru 'do a walk', hito-hashiri suru 'do a run'
 b. ichi-betsu suru 'do a glance', ichi-doku suru 'do a read',

Interestingly, however, Japanese verbs like benkyoosuru'study', hataraku'work', and rensyuusuru'exercise' can enter into the hito+V form preceded by suru, as shown in (27), while their corresponding English verbs do not fill the a+V in the have+a+V frame, as in (28).

- (27) hito-benkyoo suru 'do a study', hito-hataraki suru 'do a work', hito-rensyuu suru 'do an exercise'

(28) *have a study/ a work/ an exercise (Wierzbicka 1988:304)

To account for this fact, I will assume, on the basis of the observation in (18)-(26), that the a+V form can accommodate verbs such as work, study, and exercise as well as their Japanese equivalents, hataraku, benkyoosuru, and rensyuusuru. Then, what makes it impossible for these English verbs to co-occur with the have+a+V construction is that semantic properties they have are incompatible in some regards with semantic properties implied by have; more precisely, they do not meet constructional conditions the frame itself has.

We can thus claim that there are two kinds of constraint which are crucial to the determination of the verbs that can occur in this construction: One is imposed by a+V and the other imposed by the whole construction. Both of them function as factors specifying the type of verb occurring in the have+a+V frame. In what follows we will discuss this matter in detail.

4. Constraints Imposed by A+V

I present the two constraints in (29) as the semantic restrictions imposed by a+V:

- (29) (i) The verbs which can occur in the a+V of the have+a+V construction are categorized into "act" in the sense of Nakau (1994:317) and also denote a homogeneous action.
- (ii) The sentence whose main verb abides by (i) must describe an atelic event.

In what follows, I will give a detailed discussion to verify these constraints.

4.1 Nakau (1994)

4.1.1 The Three Types of Predicates

Nakau (pp. 311-373) argues that predicates are divided into three types, "state," "process," and "action," each of which takes an archetype predicate consisting of two arguments:

- (30) a. state: BE (THING, PLACE)
 b. process: GO (THING, PLACE)
 c. action: DO (ACTOR, THING)

The state-type predicate represents a situation in which a thing is in some place. The process-type predicate describes a situation where a thing undergoes some change of state or position. Finally, the action-type predicate represents an event in which an actor does something.

The criteria offered by Nakau for distinguishing state and process from action are distributional: The former occur in the there-construction, the split-subject construction, and the sentence-final subject construction, whereas the latter appears in none of them. Nakau illustrates this as follows:

- (31) a. There stands in the center of the room an old file cabinet.
 b. There followed a long period of peace and prosperity.
 c. *There sneezed a man.
- (32) a. Plans are ready for a long struggle.
 b. A woman entered the room who was wearing a fur coat.
 c. *A bullet killed the animal which was fired from the rifle.
- (33) a. To our left lay the Mississippi River.
 b. In went the sun and down came the rain.
 c. *In the gymnasium exercised our basketball team.

As the contrast between (31a,b) and (31c) shows, the state verb stands and the process verb followed are allowed to occur in the there-construction, while the action verb sneezed is not. The same pattern holds for the contrast between (32a,b) and (32c), and between (33a,b) and (33c). The state verb are and the process verb entered are used in the split-subject construction, while the action verb killed is not. The sentence-final subject construction permits the state verb lay and the process verbs went and came, but not the action verb exercised.⁷

4.1.2 The Three Subtypes of Action

Nakau (p.317) further classifies action into three subtypes, "affect," "effect," and "act," each of which takes two arguments, as shown in (34):

- (34) a. affect (ACTOR, PATIENT)
 b. effect (ACTOR, RESULTANT)
 c. act (ACTOR, RANGE)

To see this, take (35)-(37) for illustration ((35) and (36) are cited from Nakau (p.318)):

- (35) John dug the ground.
 (36) John dug a hole.
 (37) John read Mary's letter.

In (35) the affect-subtype predicate dug is composed of an ACTOR John and a PATIENT the ground; the latter is an entity undergoing a change of state caused by the former's action (PATIENT also includes an entity put through a change of

position). The effect predicate dug in (36) takes an ACTOR John, and a RESULTANT a hole which is brought into existence as a consequence of the ACTOR's digging.⁸ In (37) the act predicate read also comprised two arguments, John and Mary's letter. However, Mary's letter is regarded neither as an entity subjected to some change of state/position by John's reading, nor as an entity produced by that action. Rather it is regarded as referring to the extent of the ACTOR's reading. Here such extent is called RANGE. Note that the predicates which denote a physical voluntary action, such as eat, drink, laugh, and walk, belong in act (Nakau 1994:365).

4.2 Act-Subtype Verbs and A+V

Keeping in mind the predicate trichotomy into state, process, and action, discussed in 4.1, let us first examine which predicate type is compatible with a+V. As (38) and (39) show, neither state nor process verbs fill this form:

(38) *have a contain/ a lie/ a love/ a stand/ a surround

(39) *have an arrive/ a come/ an enter/ a follow/ a stay

From this it follows that the predicate type which can enter into a+V is limited to action.

Note that the process verb go can occur in a+V, as (40) shows:

(40) John had a go.

However, as Wierzbicka (1988:296) points out, this sentence does not mean that John went, but rather that John tried.⁹ Given this, the interpretation of John had a go is virtually synonymous with John had a try, in which try is an action verb. Thus, go in the have+a+V frame is understood as action.

As is discussed in section 1, Wierzbicka gives a condition that the action reported in the have+a+V frame continues for a limited period of time, providing (41), which is the relevant part of (11):

(41) *have an arrive/ a depart

According to Wierzbicka, arrive and depart do not meet this condition, since they denote an action momentarily carried out. It is clear from the discussion above, however, these verbs belong in process. Thus, Wierzbicka's condition can be reduced to our claim that process type verbs do not occur in a+V.

Not all the action-type verbs are guaranteed to occur in a+V however; verbs such as build and break are blocked from this form. Consider (42):¹⁰

(42) *have a break/ a build/ a kill/ a make/ a write

Therefore, which subtype of action, namely, affect, effect, or act, discussed

in section 4.1.2, agrees with a+V? As is clear from (43) and (44), the affect and the effect verbs fail to enter into this form:

(43) a. *John had a dig of the ground.

b. *John had a paint of the wall.

(44) a. *John had a dig of a hole.

b. *John had a paint of a picture.

Since dig in dig the ground and paint in paint the wall are both of affect, they are precluded from occurring in a+V, as (43) shows. Dig in dig a hole and paint in paint a picture in (44), on the other hand, are of effect, so that they too are ruled out. Consequently the subtype of predicate at issue is act. The exclusion of the affect and the effect verbs from a+V correctly accounts for the acceptability of the examples in (42) above. As the meanings of the verbs used indicate, break and kill are classified as affect; and make, build, and write as effect.

The conclusion that the affect and effect types of verbs are not allowed to occur in a+V can also explain the contrast between the two uses of the conative construction discussed in Ikegami (1985) and Tenny (1994:45-47). Verbs such as shoot and hit are classified as affect predicates which necessarily imply an action with an end-point, while shoot at and hit at are act predicates which do not have such implication. This difference is directly reflected in the behavior of these verbs (verb phrases) in a+V. Consider the contrast between (45) and (46):

(45) a. *John had a shoot of the target.

b. *John had a hit of the ball.

(46) a. John had a shoot at the target.

b. John had a hit at the ball.

(45) shows that the affect verbs shoot and hit cannot occur in a+V, while (46) demonstrates that the act verb phrases shoot at and hit at can.

There seem to be, however, some affect verbs which can enter into a+V; they would be counterexample to our claim above. The behavior of the affect verb kick in a+V seems to be a little complicated. Kick in, say, John kicked the ball can be categorized not only as affect but also as act. It follows that the sentence John kicked the ball can describe both an event with an end-point and that without an end-point. Such ambiguity is, however, removed by putting the sentence in different contexts. Consider (47) and (48):

- (47) a. John kicked the ball over the hedge.
 b. John kicked the ball around here.
- (48) a. *John had a kick of the ball over the hedge.
 b. John had a kick of the ball around here. (=16)

The sentences in (47) both involve the expression John kicked the ball, but they are different from each other with respect to end-point. (47a) is understood as meaning simply that John kicked the ball once and it went over the hedge; thus this action has an end-point. Kick in (47a) is therefore of affect; hence (48a) is not acceptable.

(47b), on the other hand, is understood to be carrying the implication that John repeatedly kicked the ball. What counts here is the repeated action which does not have an end-point. That is, though the ball itself underwent some change in position by John's kicking, it was always in some place and accessible to him. Given this understanding, we cannot say that the ball is still labelled as a PATIENT being affected by the ACTOR's action. I argue that this type of kick is reanalysed as an act verb and the ball as RANGE in the sense that John's kicking was carried out in the place where the ball was. Hence (48b) is acceptable.¹¹

The same explanation applies to the sentence in (17), repeated as (49):

- (49) a. Go on, you have a punch of the punch ball now.
 b. ??He had a punch of the pillow.

In (49a) it is very likely that the addressee is expected to punch the punch ball several times; hence the have+a+V sentence is acceptable. In contrast, in (49b) it is very likely that the subject did the punching once; hence the sentence is not acceptable. Thus, the actions which have no end-point can only occur in a+V.

So far we have seen that the affect predicate kick is ambiguous between affect and act when it causes the object to change its position. We will next consider a case in which kick causes the object to undergo some change in state. In this case the reanalysis witnessed in (47b), (48b), and (49a) does not occur; the verb is still treated as affect and the object as PATIENT. Consider (50):

- (50) a. John kicked some of the doors around here.
 b. *John had a kick of some of the doors around here.

The reason why the kick which causes a change of state on the part of the

object does not undergo reanalysis is associated with a property this type of change has; the original state cannot be recovered. To conclude, a+V allows only act-subtype verbs (or reanalysed as such) to occur in it.

Note that Wierzbicka's third criterion, as discussed in section 1, i.e., that the action reported in the have+a+V construction must be seen as repeatable, seems to conform with the action denoted by act-type predicates.

4.3 Homogeneity

We are now in a position to account for the difference in behavior between eat and drink with respect to the form a+V. These verbs behave alike distributionally in terms of telicity, as we have seen in (12) and (14) (repeated as (51) and (52)). However, while sentences with eat are all rejected in this form without exception, those with drink are admitted under certain conditions, as observed in (13) and (15) (repeated as (53) and (54)).

- (51) a. John drank water *in/ for a few minutes.
 b. John drank a glass of water in/*for a few minutes.
- (52) a. Bill ate custard *in/ for an hour.
 b. Bill ate the apple in/*for an hour.
- (53) a. John had a drink of water.
 b. *John had a drink of a glass of water.
- (54) a. *John had an eat of custard.
 b. *John had an eat of an apple.

To account for this distributional difference, the action denoted by the act predicates should be further divided into two kinds: one is a homogeneous action and the other a heterogeneous action. A homogeneous action is defined as follows. If this type of action could be cut at any point of the time line, its representative slice would be always the same. Take running for instance. As this action goes along a line of time, it could represent the same action of running anywhere on it. Such an action will be henceforth referred to as a homogeneous action.

To clarify the notion of heterogeneous action, let us first examine the act verb watch by way of example. Nakau (1994:344) states that the verb is characterized by the two parameters "contact" and "intentionality," as contrasted with the same subtype verbs look and stare, both of which are characterized by the latter alone.

This will be a clue to the present discussion. The parameter contact

plays an important role in preventing watch from occurring in a+V. Consider the following contrast:

- (55) a. *John had a watch of a baseball game on TV.
 b. John had a look/a stare at the picture.

Based on this observation, I claim that the action of watching can be decomposed into two subactions, which are different from each other: One's looking at something and his eyes' continuous contact with it. Thus, instead of merging these subactions together, it can be said that the former subaction is flavored with the parameter intentionality and the latter with the parameter contact. It is then the parameter contact that is crucial in making (55a) unacceptable. Such an action, namely, an action which is composed of different subactions, will be hereafter called a heterogeneous action.

Let us return to the case of eat. The notion of heterogeneity will account for its apparently problematic behavior seen in (54). This verb also denotes an action composed of several subactions: Taking food into one's mouth, chewing it, and swallowing it. Eating thus refers to a sequence of these subactions, but not part of it; put differently, it is supercategorized into subactions. Therefore this action is classified as heterogeneous; hence the sentences in (54) are unacceptable.

This then brings us to expect that the subactions of eating are homogeneous. Our expectation is borne out:

- (56) have a chew/ a swallow

The fact that the subactions of eating is homogeneous can be confirmed by relevant Japanese data. As (57) shows, while taberu 'eat' does not fill the hito+V form, its subactions can.

- (57) a. *hito tabe 'an eat'
 b. hito kami 'a chew', hito nomi 'a swallow'

In this connection, one might think that drinking is heterogeneous as well as eating, since it comprises at least two subactions, taking liquid into one's mouth and swallowing it. This being the case, drink could not occur in a+V, as eat is. However, as we have seen in (53a), this is actually not the case.¹² I can say nothing about this problem now except that there is at least a possibility that what is conceived, or conceptualized, in our cognitive world is partly different from what is perceived in the real world. To put it more specifically, drinking is perceived to be decomposed into multiple subactions

in the real world, as eating is, whereas in our cognitive world it is conceptualized in the same way that running is: The same action is recognized at any point during the course of drinking or a succession of repeated actions along the line of time. I will, however, leave the possibility of such a distinction for future research.

4.4 Telicity

We will turn to (29ii) presented at the outset of this section:

- (29) (ii) The sentence whose main verb abides by (i)(=(29i)) must describe an atelic event.

As we have discussed in section 2.1, with drink there are two types of events in terms of telicity and only a sentence describing an atelic event can have a have+a+V frame. Strictly speaking, only such sentences can be converted into the a+V form. Consider again (51) and (53), repeated here as (58) and (59):

- (58) a. John drank water *in/ for a few minutes.
 b. John drank a glass of water in/*for a few minutes.
 (59) a. John had a drink of water.
 b. *John had a drink of a glass of water.

Further evidence to support (29ii) is provided by the contrast between play a sonata and play the piano; in these examples a sonata and the piano function as RANGE. Consider:

- (60) a. Mary played a sonata in/*for an hour. (cf. Tenny (1994))
 b. Mary played the piano *in/ for an hour.
 (61) a. *Mary had a play of a sonata.
 b. Mary had a play of the piano.

Thus the sentence whose main verb belongs in act and also denotes a homogeneous action must describe an atelic event when converted into a+V.

5. Constructional Constraints

So far I have argued that the a+V form has restrictions of its own. In this section I will present three constructional constraints. Since the condition of a+V and that of the construction operate independently, the type of verb which meets both conditions is the only one that can occur in this construction.

The first and second conditions are summarized as follows: (i) The subject must be human; and (ii) this frame must be used colloquially. The relevant

data are observed in (4) and (9), repeated as (62) and (63):

(62) *That stone had a roll down the grassy bank.

- (63) a. have a pee/*urinate
 b. have a think/*contemplate
 c. have a chat/*converse

The third condition is associated with Wierzbicka's second criterion, as discussed in section 2.1, that is, that the action reported in the have+a+V frame cannot have an external goal. As Wierzbicka claims, there are two types of external goals: One is included in verbs; and the other is included in expressions attached to the frame. First consider the former case:

(64) *have a work/ a study/ an exercise (=28)

In (64) the verbs are all eligible for a+V, but they are excluded from the have+a+V frame in virtue of external goals. When one works/studies/exercises, he wants something else to be realized; one works for the purpose of, for example, supporting his family or buying a house, but one does not do so for nothing. The same explanation applies to the other verbs in (64).

Next consider the case in which external goals are attached to the have+a+V frame:

- (65) a. ?John had a walk to the post office to post a letter. (Wierzbicka 1988:326; the judgement is hers)
 b. *John had a swim to win a swimming race.
 c. *Mary had a run to catch the train.

In (65a) the external goal to post a letter is attached to the have+a+V frame. The reason why I speak of this adverbial phrase as an external goal is that John's walking to the post office does not make it possible for him to post a letter; to achieve this goal, John must do additional actions including the action of posting the letter.¹³ The same explanation applies to (65b) and (65c). To sum up the discussion above, the have+a+V frame cannot co-occur with the expression which designates an external goal.

Note that there are cases in which to-infinitives designating a purpose can co-occur with this frame, as shown in (66). However the semantic relation between the frame and the to-infinitive here is different from that in (65):

- (66) a. I had a swim to cool down. (OALD⁵)
 b. John had a walk to calm down.
 c. John had a run to lose some weight.

In (66) the purpose represented can be achieved when the event described in the frame is finished. Take (66a), for example. The event of my cooling down happens in the course of nature as the result of my having a swim; I need not do any extra actions for cooling down. The former event is thus regarded as a second product of the latter event. The same semantic relation between the frame and the to-infinitive holds for (66b) and (66c). This type of goal is thus not called the external goal; rather it may be called the internal goal. Thus, it is the external goal, whether designated by verbs or by adverbial phrases, that is contradictory to the have+a+V frame.

6. Concluding Remarks

In this paper I have examined the have+a+V construction used in British English, focusing on specifying the type of verb occurring in this frame. For this task I have proposed a dual approach which is a synthesis of a compositional approach and a constructional approach. It claims that both the form a+V and the frame as a whole have their respective constraints: The former has the right to select appropriate verbs; and the latter imposes constructional constraints on the verbs eligible for the former. I have claimed that the present approach is supported by the observation that a+V seems to be shared by other English constructions and also embodied in Japanese.

I have argued that the condition on a+V is composed of two parts: (i) Verbs (verb phrases) must belong in Nakau's act and also denote a homogeneous action; and (ii) the sentence involving a verb which meets (i) must describe an atelic event. I have also argued that the have+a+V frame imposes three constructional conditions (including one constraint) on the verbs which meet the a+V condition: (i) The subject must be human; (ii) the frame must be used colloquially; (iii) it must not have an external goal. The present approach predicts that the condition of a+V would be workable in other constructions including this form, but I leave this matter for future research.

I believe that the dual approach proposed in this paper will shed light on the analysis of other linguistic phenomena, especially those which are not fully accounted for by a composite approach or an exclusively constructional approach.

NOTES

* I would like to express my gratitude to Minoru Nakau, Yukio Hirose, Takashi Yoshida, Akiko Miyata, Joe Morita, Kyoko Oyama, and Shoichi Yamada for their variable comments on earlier drafts of this paper. My thanks also go to Gerard White, who patiently acted as informant, and to Simone Marshall, who suggested stylistic improvements. Remaining inadequacies are of course my own.

¹ Examples (1) and (2) are acceptable in American English as well as in British English. As Wierzbicka (1988:297) notes, however, there are verbs such as read whose distribution in the have+a+V frame is radically different between the two dialects. For detailed discussion, see Wierzbicka (1988:297).

² Some of my informants do not accept the expression have a use.

³ For other syntactic characteristics concerning this frame, see Palmer (1988:162-164).

⁴ As Jackendoff (1996:306,fn.2) points out, the sentence *Bill ate the apple for an hour in (13a) turns out to be acceptable in a context where the subject was eating such a big apple that he could not finish eating it in the hour. In this interpretation, the event involved is understood as atelic.

⁵ The present paper does not intend to say that the dual approach can entirely replace constructional approaches (Fillmore, Kay, and O'Connor (1988), and Goldberg (1995), among many), in explaining the linguistic phenomena which are dealt with by these studies.

⁶ The take+a+V construction is discussed in Norvig and Lakoff (1987), Wierzbicka (1989), and Dixon (1991), and the give+NP+a+V construction in Dixon (1991) and Kearns (1990).

⁷ Nakau (pp.346-362) gives five distributional criteria which distinguish state from process and action.

⁸ PATIENT and RESULTANT may be compared with "affectum" and "effectum" discussed in Fillmore (1968).

⁹ There is a little difference in meaning between the have+a+V sentence, as in John had a walk, and the sentence in which V is a main verb, as in John walked. Dixon (1991:346) states that "the have+a+V construction emphasizes the activity, and the fact that the subject indulges in it for a certain period."

¹⁰ As the meaning of have a break suggests, this expression is not an example of the have+a+V frame.

¹¹ More strictly, RANGE in (48a) refers to the whole place around here where the ball is or is moved by John's kicking.

¹² A drink in have a drink is also used as a noun phrase. The present paper does not concern itself with this use.

¹³ Some of my informants do not accept (63b) even if the to-infinitive is deleted. This may be, as Dixon (p.346) notes, due to some semantic mismatch between the have+a+V and the prepositional phrase designating a goal.

REFERENCES

- Cattell, Ray (1984) Syntax and Semantics 17: Composite Predicates in English, Academic Press, New York.
- Dixon, Robert M.W. (1991) A New Approach to English Grammar on Semantic Principles, Cambridge University Press, Oxford.
- Fillmore, Charles J. (1968) "The Case for Case," Universal in Linguistic Theory, eds. by Emmon Bach and Robert T. Harms, 1-88, Holt, Reinhart & Winston, New York.
- Fillmore, Charles J., Paul Kay, and Mary Catherine O'Connor (1988) "Regularity and Idiomaticity in Grammatical Constructions: The Case of Let Alone," Language 64, 501-538.
- Goldberg, Adele E. (1995) Constructions: A Construction Grammar Approach to Argument Structure, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Ikegami, Yoshihiko (1985) "'Activity'-'Accomplishment'-'Achievement'—A language that can't say 'I burned it, but it didn't burn' and one that can," Linguistics and Philosophy, eds. by Adam Makkai and Alan K. Melby, 265-304, John Benjamins, Amsterdam.
- Jackendoff, Ray (1996) "The Proper Treatment of Measuring Out, Telicity, and Perhaps Even Qualification," Natural Language and Linguistic Theory 14, 305-354.
- Jespersen, Otto (1956) A Modern English Grammar IV, George Allen & Unwin, London.
- Kageyama, Taro (1996) Doshi Imiron (Semantics of Verbs), Kurosio, Tokyo.
- Kearns, Kate (1990) "Predicate Nominals in Complex Predicates," MIT Working Papers in Linguistics 11, 123-234.

- Levin, Beth and Malka Rappaport Hovav (1995) Unaccusativity: At the Syntax-Lexical Semantic Interface, The MIT Press, Cambridge.
- Nakau, Minoru (1994) Ninchi Imiron no Genri (Principles of Cognitive Semantics), Taishukan, Tokyo.
- Norvig, Peter and George Lakoff (1987) "Taking: A Study in Lexical Network Theory," BLS 13, 123-134.
- Palmer, F.R. (1988) The English Verb, Longman, London.
- Tenny, Carol L. (1994) Aspectual Roles and the Syntax-Semantics Interface, Kluwer, Dordrecht.
- Vendler, Zeno (1967) Linguistics in Philosophy, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York.
- Wierzbicka, Anna (1982) "Why Can You Have a Drink When You Can't *Have an Eat?," Language 58, 753-799.
- Wierzbicka, Anna (1988) The Semantics of Grammar, John Benjamins, Amsterdam.

Doctoral Program in Literature and Linguistics
University of Tsukuba