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AN ANALYSIS OF A CAUSATIVE  
VERB HAVE FROM THE  
COGNITIVE LINGUISTIC AS WELL  
AS THE CONTRASTIVE  
LINGUISTICS PERSPECTIVE

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## **An Analysis of a Causative Verb *Have* from the Cognitive Linguistic as well as the Contrastive Linguistics Perspective**

A causative verb *have* has two peculiarities; (1) it has “lost” some of its original sense; the *have* in *I had the doctor look at my leg* does not have the sense of POSSESS; (2) although the original sense of *have / get* is close to passive, it can be used not only in passives but also in causatives, which is very opposite to their Japanese counterpart, i.e., a Japanese causative verb (*saseru*) can be used as passive as well, but never vice versa. By closely looking at causatives with *have* as well as comparing the English and Japanese causatives, we will shed a new light on the causative *have*.

### **0. Introduction**

Causative structures involve verbs such as *make*, *have*, *let* and *get*, and indicate that a person or a thing causes another person/ thing to do/be something. In the literature, many studies including Kuno and Takami (2005) and Imai (2010) argue that the differences of these causative verbs can be paraphrased as *make*: produce, *let*: allow, *have*: possess, and *get*: achieve, and hence the causative structures can be paraphrased as “produce / allow / possess / achieve the event indicated by the small clause”. For example, *I make him go*, can be paraphrased as “I PRODUCE the event that he goes.”

However, according to such an explanation, *He had the doctor look at his leg* must be paraphrased as “he POSSESSED the event that the doctor look at his leg”, which contradicts our understanding of the sentence. This suggests the need for a reanalysis to the causative HAVE.

Also, if we look at this phenomenon from the contrastive linguistic point of view, we can see that English and Japanese uses causative structures differently. In English, both of *He made the doctor look at his leg* and *He had / got the doctor (to) look at his leg* can mean that he forced the doctor to look at his leg; i.e., verbs that are prototypically used for causation (*make*) and those for passives (*have*, *get*) can both mean causation. On the other hand, in Japanese, passive verbs (*sareru*) can never mean causation, but causation verbs (*saseru*) can be used to indicate passiveness as in “*Ko-wo shinaSETA oya* (lit. *The parent who MADE the children die.*) and this sentence means

*The parent whose children died*'. (cf. Ikegami 1981)

In this paper, we will argue for a better explanation of the causative *have* in the following two-folds manner; In Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, we will closely look at the verb *have* and argue for a core meaning of *have* as well as the linguistic contextual cues that invite the interlocutors to interpret the sentence in certain ways; in Chapter 3, we will conduct a contrastive study, and strengthen the argument put forth in Chapter 1 and 2. Chapter 4 concludes our argument.

## 1. Causative HAVE

### 1.1 Previous Studies on Causative *Have* and Their Shortcomings

Just as many studies on any polysemous structure, we can categorize previous studies of causative *have* into two big types that are further categorized into four sub-types; (i) Feature-based explanation: explaining the phenomenon with a combination of features, (ii-a) semantic studies 1: listing usages, (ii-b) semantic studies 2: explaining the polysemous structure using a network structure based on family resemblance (cf. Wittgenstein (1953), Lakoff (1987)), and (ii-c) semantic studies 3: explaining the polysemous structure with one core meaning.

This chapter reviews each line of thought citing one previous study that is representative of each line. 1.1.1. reviews a feature-based study, 1.1.2. reviews a study that gives a list of the usages, 1.1.3. reviews a study that tries to explain the polysemous network of *have*, 1.1.4 reviews a study that tries to explain the core meaning of *have*. We will see that none of them are sufficient for understanding the meaning of *have*, and will argue for the need for an explanation based on the line of (ii-c) with the linguistic contextual cues that invite the interpretation of each usage.

#### 1.1.1 Feature-based Line of Thought: Wada and Tanaka (2011)

Wada and Tanaka (2011) can be cited as one example of the feature-based studies, i.e., trying to explain the phenomenon using features. They try to classify causative *have* by using the following four features;  $\pm$ Animacy of the Subject,  $\pm$ Controllability of the event by the Subject,  $\pm$ Animacy of the Agent, and  $\pm$ Controllability of the event by the Agent. As they also argue that if the subject is not a human, it is impossible to use *have* as a causative verb, and the subject should have the feature of +Animacy to be interpreted as a causative. Therefore, eliminating this feature in determining sentence types, there are four possibilities of combination as regards to Animacy of Agent and Controllability by the Agent; (+A and +C), (-A and +C), (+A and -C), and (-A and -C). From this, they claim that there are four usages of the causative constructions, and they differ in the combinations of these features as is shown in Table 1;

Type A: I'll have my secretary call him tomorrow.

Type B: \*Ralph had Sheila die.

Type C: The magician had the card disappear without lifting a finger.

Type D: \*The confusion had Iraqis leave the country.

Constituent	Subject	Agent	Type of Verb	Connotation
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Type						
A	+A	+C	+A	+C	Active Verb	Assignment
B	+A	-C	+A	-C	Unintentional Verb	Ungrammatical
C	+A	+C	-A	-C	No Limit	Ability of Subject
D	-A	-C	—	—	—	Ungrammatical

TABLE 1: Four Features Distinguishing Causatives According to Wada and Tanaka (2011)

It is true that they successfully categorize some causative sentences into some types, using a set of features. However, they do not explain how these features are concerned with causative structures. In other words, they merely designate causative sentences as a few types and there is no clear-cut explanation of causative *have* accompanied by the motivated basic meaning. In addition to this, they leave another causative structure, i.e., *have* + participle structure (e.g. *I had my bike stolen.*) aside. Thus, their explanation is not sufficient in terms of comprehensiveness of the explanation.

### 1.1.2 Semantic Line of Thought 1: Listing All the Usages; Ando (2005)

Ando (2005) is one of the most typical examples of listing method. He merely lists and categorizes the usages of causative *have* as follows;

#### (1) The Usages of *Have* According to Ando (2005)

##### (i) HAVE + Bare Infinitive

##### a. Make someone do something

- ① What would you have me do?
- ② I had John find me a house.

##### b. Allow someone do something

- ③ I won't have you criticize my wife.
- ④ I won't have you tell me what to do.

##### c. Undergo something

- ⑤ I have had many scholars visit me from time to time.
- ⑥ John had a man steal his wallet from him.

##### d. Keep someone/thing being the state

- ⑦ I am glad to have my place look its best.
- ⑧ I like having you trust me.

##### (ii) HAVE + Present Participle

##### a. Undergo NP doing

- ⑨ Soon we had [the mist coming down on us].
- ⑩ I looked up and found we had [water dripping through the ceiling].
- ⑪ It's lovely to have [children playing in the garden again].

##### b. Make NP doing something

- ⑫ He had [us all laughing].
- ⑬ I'll have [you speaking English in three months].

c. Do not let NP do [with can't, won't]

- ⑭ We can't have [them forcing their views on everyone else].
- ⑮ I won't have [you saying such things about my mother].
- ⑯ I won't have [you flying away from me into the hearts of storms].

(iii) HAVE + Past Participle

a. NP is made to be done

- ⑰ I had [the letters translated] and they were all love letters from Nikolai Obrajensky to my grandmother.
- ⑱ I could call my servants and have [you arrested].
- ⑲ I won't have [my house turned into a hotel].

b. Someone undergo NP being done (as a damage)

- ⑳ John had [his watch stolen].
- ㉑ He had [his leg broken] in the accident.
- ㉒ My sister has had [some money stolen].
- ㉓ I've had [this given me].

c. Someone undergo NP being done (as a consequence)

- ㉔ I had [two sketches finished].
- ㉕ He had [his plan made].

Though Ando (2005) describes the usages of causative *have* closely, he does not signify the difference between, for example, <POSSESSION> and <CAUSATION>. Also, teaching *have* according to the line of (ii-a) will force the students to memorize the usages, and will not be very helpful to the students; understanding the polysemous meanings as something related is much more effective than enumerating various meanings.

### 1.1.3 Studies on the Semantic Network of *Have*; Kuno and Takami (2005)

Kuno and Takami (2005) argues that in causative sentences, there are two types of interpretation. One is causation and the other is experience, and they are similar but different in one aspect, hence an explanation based on a semantic network.

- (2) a. The teacher had his students write two papers. (<CAUSATION>)
  - b. The coach had the players run for another hour. (<CAUSATION>)
  - (3) a. I had someone pick my pocket on a jam-packed train yesterday. (<EXPERIENCE>)
  - b. For the first time ever in my life, I had someone threaten to kill me tonight. (<EXPERIENCE>)
- (Kuno and Takami 2005:129)

Kuno and Takami (2005) explains that (2a) and (2b) can be construed as causations. That is, in (2a), the subject (“the teacher”) ordered *the students* to write two papers, and in (2b), the subject (“the coach”) ordered *the players* to run for another hour. In (3a), the subject (“I”) noticed that someone had picked the pocket on a jam-packed train the day before. In (3b), the subject (“I”) was threatened to be killed by someone in that night for the first time in his life unexpectedly.

Kuno and Takami (2005) explains this phenomenon as follows (4).

- (4) If the subject of a sentence “has” the event “intentionally”, then the sentence is interpreted as a causation and if not (i.e. “unintentionally”), then the sentence is interpreted as <experience> . (ibid: 129)

However, Kuno and Takami (2005) is not clear enough in what they mean by “having the events intentionally”. That is, they do not specify where the intentionality comes from. The following sentences are good illustrations of their insufficiency of the argument. The sentences (5) and (6) require some contexts to distinguish whether the sentences denote intentionality or not.

(5) I had my bicycle stolen in the park. (Watanuki *et al.* 2000: 516)

(6) John had half the students walk out of John’s lecture. (Ritter and Rosen 1993: 525)

Namely, whether an event is a <CAUSATION> or an <EXPERIENCE> is not expressed grammatically in English. Ando (2005) says that native speakers of English distinguish causations and experiences by putting an accent on “have” or “past participle.” In Japanese, on the other hand, being a causation or an experience requires linguistic forms as in “~*saseru* (causation)”, “~*sareru* (experience)”, or “~*shitemorau* (a polite expression of causation).” Though Kuno and Takami (2005) tries to divide the causation into two types and shows how they are related to each other, the differences rely heavily on the context, and it may be the case that the Japanese seem to regard them as different because of their Japanese translations, but they are not so different to the English speaking people because English speakers can distinguish them from the contextual information.

Moreover, this analysis lacks the explanation of how the <CAUSATION> and <EXPERIENCE> is related to simple possession. According to the notion of “iconicity” (Bolinger 1977) there must be some relation between those meanings of *have*.

In this paper, we strongly claim the need of an explanation that will coherently explain all the usages of *have*, i.e., <POSSESSION>, <CAUSATION>, and <EXPERIENCE> to list some few. That is, picking up and explaining just possession or causation is not sufficient for a whole account of *have*. We will present a strongly motivated account for *have* comprehending the whole part of the phenomena.

#### 1.1.4 Studies Arguing for a Core Meaning; Imai (2010)

(7) Four Usages of causatives according to Imai (2010)

- a. I don't have [my change back] yet.
- b. I'll have [him call you back].
- c. I have [a friend waiting outside]
- d. I had [my bike stolen].

(Imai 2010:107)

In (7a), the subject ("I") does not yet POSSESS the situation that "you have returned my change to me". This sentence can be paraphrased as "I haven't got my change from you yet." In (7b), the subject ("I") will POSSESS the situation that "He calls you back," and can be interpreted as "I'll order him to call you back." In (7c), the subject ("I") POSSESSES the state that "A friend is waiting outside." In the same way, this can be paraphrased as "I keep a friend waiting outside." Likewise, (7d) can be read as the subject ("I") POSSESSing the event that "My bike was stolen."

From the argument above, Imai (2010) defines the core meaning of *have* as (8).

(8) The Core meaning of *have* According to Imai (2010)

have = POSSESS

However, Imai (2010) does not mention what linguistic device generates causative meanings. And he does not explain what motivates the interlocutors to understand the sentence as <causatives> or <experiences>. In other words, we can say that his study, too, falls short in the comprehensiveness of the analysis.

### 1.1.5. Summary of the Review of Previous Studies

To sum up, these previous studies fall short in the following two respects; (1) they lack a comprehensive explanation of *have*. None of the previous studies reviewed here, except the fourth line, try to give an explanation that could account for the causative *have* as well as the simple possession *have*. Also, we can say that those previous studies are not inclusive in that, in the line of feature-based study, it is not clear how the features are related to the phenomenon, and it leaves one usage of causative *have* aside. In line of listing, learners are compelled to memorize all of the usages and this kind of method is not helpful for beginners and it is far from being comprehensive; and (2) they do not give an account that pays good attention to the linguistic context that motivates the online interpretation. For example, in the third line, i.e., semantic network, some researchers give accounts on why the meanings derive from the intentionality. However, in this explanation, we cannot exclude the vacillation between causative and experience. That is, the vacillation deeply relies on linguistic context. The fourth line is the closest to our analysis in giving the explanation why each usage derives by arguing for a core meaning of *have*. However, a closer look is needed at the linguistic contextual cues that motivate the interlocutors to interpret the sentence in a certain way.

From the following chapter, we will try to give a comprehensive analysis of *have*, including not



- (11) *have* + NP (dynamic) <DYNAMIC>  
 They had a long fight. (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 751)
- (12) *have* + clause (static) <EXPERIENCE>  
 I had my bike stolen. (Imai 2010: 107)
- (13) *have* + clause (dynamic) <CAUSATION>  
 I'll have him call you back. (ibid.: 107)

(10) is the simplest POSSESSION; *Two sisters* exist in the range of the subject, *I*. Also the state (having two sisters) is uncontrollable, which can be checked by the fact that it cannot co-occur with “deliberately,” as in (10') \*I have two sisters deliberately.

As in (11), if an “eventive object” (Quirk *et al.* 1985) follows *have* in a sentence, then we perceive that the event is not static but dynamic; In (11), the subject, *they*, fought against each other, doing various activities (Dynamic elements) such as kicking, punching, hitting, tackling and so on.

In (12), the subject, *I*, cannot change the situation which happened to him. Hence, the event is static.

*Have* in (13) is followed by a small clause which has a bare infinitive (*call*, i.e., dynamic). In such a situation, the sentence can be interpreted as a causative.

We strongly argue that there is a remarkable parallelism between *have* + NP and *have* + clause structure, which has been ignored in the literature of linguistics. We claim that *have* itself merely has the meaning that Y is in the range of X, i.e., Figure 1, and the linguistic context that follows *have* is crucial for understanding the meaning of sentences.

From the argument above, we have come to the conclusion that all the sentences that contains *have* can be schematized as Figure 2, which should be a great help for learners of English. With this flowchart, learners can better grasp the whole landscape of *have*.

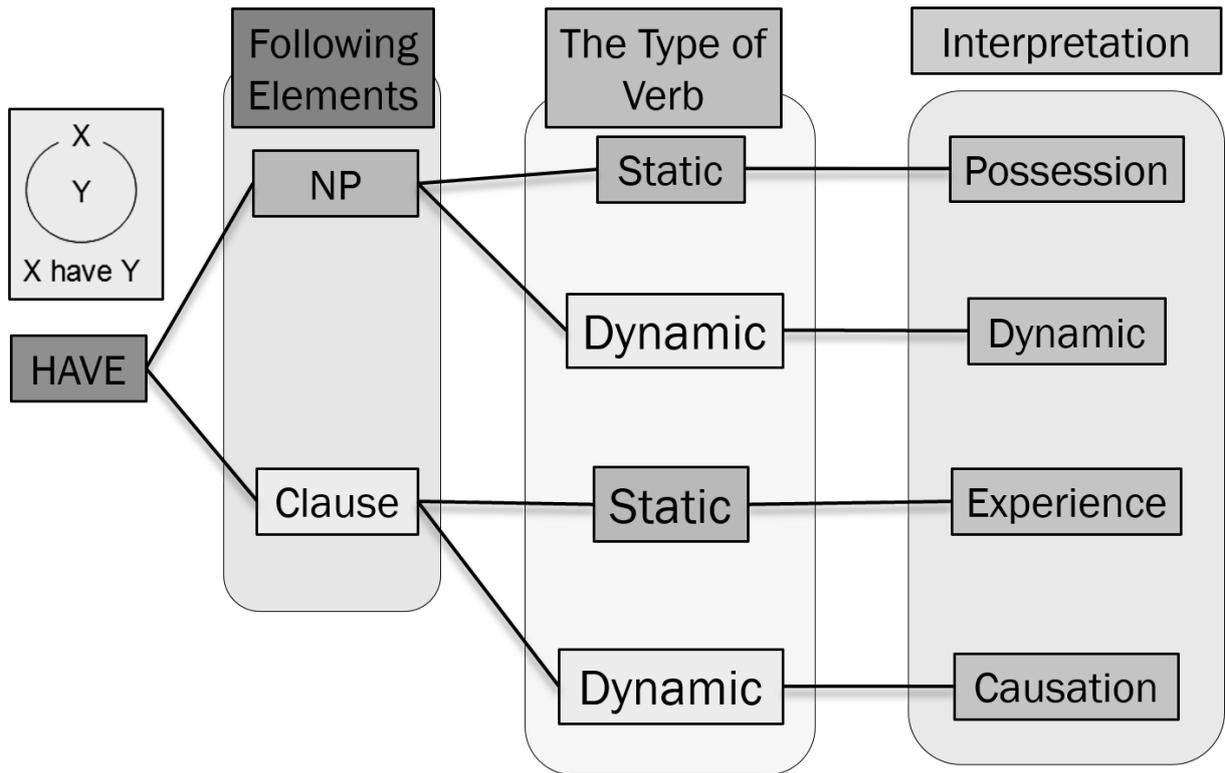


Figure 2 The Schema of the Sentences with *Have*

## 2.2 Explaining Each Usage with Figure 2

To validate our hypothesis, we will check sentences including *have* one by one.

- (14) a. I have two sisters.  
b. *have* + NP (Static) <POSSESSION>
- (15) \*I have two sisters deliberately. (=10')
- (16) a. They had a long fight.  
b. *have* + NP (Dynamic) <DYNAMIC>
- (17) a. I had my bike stolen.  
b. *have* + Clause (Static) <EXPERIENCE>
- (18) a. Soon we had the mist coming down on us. (Ando 2005:239)  
b. *have* + Clause (Static) <EXPERIENCE>
- (19) a. I had John find me a house.  
b. *have* + Clause (Dynamic) <CAUSATION>
- (20) a. John deliberately had Mary drop her books. (Talmy 1975:62)  
b. *have* + Clause (Dynamic) <CAUSATION>
- (21) a. We're having our car repaired. (Ando 2005:834)  
b. *have* + Clause (Dynamic) <CAUSATION>
- (22) a. Can I have this delivered? ("have" in *Genius*)  
b. *have* + Clause (Dynamic) <CAUSATION>

## 3. Contrastive Studies

It is well known in the literature, that causative constructions sometimes express a passive sense, as in *John had his watch stolen* and that this is a “highly general phenomenon cross-linguistically, being observed not only in English and French, but also in Korean, Mongolian, and Japanese”. (Washio 1993: 45) Washio (1993) argues that “what is interesting about human beings ... is the fact that they sometimes express the passive and causative senses by one and the same construction.” (ibid.: 46) For example, in English, the above sentence, *John had his watch stolen by Mary*, can be interpreted, at least in some context, as having two senses. One is the causative reading. That is, John had Mary steal the watch. The other is the passive reading. Namely, John's watch was stolen by Mary.

Among the many studies arguing for this universal tendency, much focus is given to show the universal-ness across languages, less on how each language differ in this universal trait. If we look at English and Japanese causatives/ passives more closely, two strikingly different points can be pointed out and the second point is particularly interesting as we will show later. That is, they differ in what this “one and the same construction” is.

As the first point, Washio (1993) points out that Japanese can freely use ‘indirect passive’, which is usually difficult to translate in English as can be seen in (23);



English verbs have changed to focus more on the power of the Agents, so that verbs that originally merely described that the Agent possesses something in a rather “passive” way, such as *have* and *get*, have gained the focus on the power of the Agent, and they are now used to mean not only their original meanings of possessing something in their domain, but also the causative meaning. On the other hand, Japanese verbs have lost the focus on the Agentive power, so that those that were originally used as causatives (*saseru*) are now used as passives as in (25) and (26).

Discussing the soundness of this explanation is beyond the scope of this paper but the fact that the original meaning *possessing* of *have* changed into causative lends support to our arguments.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Through the arguments in chapter 1, 2, and 3, we have revealed the following three points. (1) *Have* has the core meaning that can be depicted as Figure 1, and with this, we can give a comprehensive explanation to all the usages of *have* including not only the causative *have* but also the simple possession *have*; the core meaning of *have* is just POSSESSION; (2) We have identified the linguistic contextual cues that motivate the interpretation of each usage. We have seen that (i) whether the element that follows *have* is an NP or a clause, and (ii) whether the content described in those NP/Clause is dynamic or static motivates the interpretation of the sentences. With these cues, we succeeded in showing that there is a parallelism in causative *have* and the simple possession *have*. In other words, Figure 2 explains all the sentences with *have*; and (3) we have seen that English and Japanese causatives differ in what construction is used as causative, which supports our arguments above. While English uses passive construction to express causation, Japanese uses causative construction to express passiveness. This might be attributable to the fact that English tries to depict the environment in an Objective manner (a la Langacker) / D-mode (Nakamura 2004, 2013), and the Japanese tend to depict the environment in a Subjective manner /the I-mode, but this is to be left open for future studies.

#### **5. Afterword - Benefit to English learning**

We claim that the efficiency of the Schema of the Sentence with *have* (Figure 2) benefits learners of English. In a teaching method which does not have a schema like ours, learners are taught the usages of *have* separately. That is, in the early stage of learning, learners are taught <POSSESSION>, then *have* + eventive object follows. After that, they learn auxiliary *have* in the instruction of the present (past) perfect. And finally, the causative *have* is taught in the later stage of the English learning. In other words, while the three usages are taught relatively in the early stage, causative *have* is taught in much later stage of learning. Therefore, learners could be confused by the complex usages of *have* in the English learning and some learners have difficulty in memorizing the usages. However, if learners are taught the usages of *have* with the Schema of the Sentence with *have* (Figure 2), they can grasp the whole picture of *have* more easily and thoroughly understand all the phenomena even more efficiently.

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