

**Interacting domains of variation:  
The negation and contraction of possessive *HAVE (GOT)***

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This paper concerns the alternation between HAVE and HAVE GOT for the expression of stative possession in English, as shown in (1).

(1) He *has / has got* a car

Previous quantitative studies of stative possessive variation have typically focused on affirmative contexts of the type in (1) (Tagliamonte 2003; Fehringer & Corrigan 2015; Tagliamonte *et al.* 2010). Much less attention has been paid to how this variation is affected by negation. In some cases, this is because the dialects chosen for investigation show extensive variation between HAVE and HAVE GOT in affirmative contexts but exhibit very little variability under negation. For example, Tagliamonte *et al.* (2010) and D’Arcy (2015) find that Canadian English overwhelmingly employs HAVE in negative stative contexts, whereas HAVE GOT is hardly used at all. Furthermore, they observe that HAVE behaves as a lexical verb: it is predominantly negated with *do*-support (*I don’t have (any) money*) or, less frequently, *no*-negation (*I have no money*). British English, on the other hand, is said to be more variable in this regard. HAVE GOT is used more often and HAVE can function either as a lexical verb – whereby it resists contraction and is negated with *do*-support – or as an auxiliary that allows contraction and negative-marking on the verb (Denison 1998).

This paper presents a quantitative investigation of stative HAVE (GOT) variation in negative contexts within British English. The analysis proceeds using a 2.5-million-word sample of dyadic conversational speech from the newly-released British National Corpus 2014 (McEnery *et al.* 2017). Following standard variationist procedure (Labov 1972), I extract all tokens of stative HAVE (GOT) with negation where both variants are possible and semantically equivalent, which yields over 1,000 tokens for quantitative analysis. Under the traditional variationist approach, linguistic factors are considered as independent variables that might affect the variation. However, I expand this approach to analyse such factors not in isolation, but in terms of how they intersect with each other. Specifically, I investigate how the type of negation used and the potential for auxiliary-/*not*-contraction interacts with the stative HAVE (GOT) alternation in negative contexts. These domains have traditionally been studied as separate variables or independent constraints on syntactic phenomena but, as shown in the table below, together they constrain the possibilities in the grammar.

		<b>Construction</b>
<b>Negation with <i>not</i></b>	<b>Aux-contraction</b>	*I’ve not any money / the time I’ve not got any money / the time
	<b><i>Not</i>-contraction</b>	I haven’t (got) any money / the time
	<b>Full form</b>	*I have not any money / the time I have not got any money / the time
	<b>DO-support</b>	I don’t have any money / the time *I don’t have got any money / the time
<b>Negation with post-verbal indefinite <i>no</i></b>	<b>Aux-contraction</b>	I’ve (got) no money
	<b><i>Not</i>-contraction</b>	N/A
	<b>Full form</b>	I have (got) no money
	<b>DO-support</b>	N/A

I argue that some constraints previously identified for the HAVE (GOT) alternation in affirmative sentences correlate with constraints on HAVE-contraction that have been reported independently. Firstly, let us consider the subject-type constraint on contraction, according to which HAVE is contracted less often with NP subjects compared to pronouns (McElhinny 1993). This is most likely due to the impossibility of *have*-contraction with NP subjects (2) and the impossibility of *has*-contraction with sibilant-final subjects (3) (Mackenzie 2013), as illustrated below. Indeed, note that none of the prototypical personal pronouns (e.g. *I, he, she, they*) have final sibilants. In the (b) environments below, contraction is prohibited and only intermediate forms, i.e. [əv] and [əz], would be licensed (Mackenzie 2013).

#### *Have*

- (2a) Pronominal subject: I[v] no idea  
 (2b) NP subject: The boys \*[v] no idea

#### *Has*

- (3a) Non-sibilant-final subject: The bank[z] no idea  
 (3b) Sibilant-final subject: The class \*[z] no idea

This constraint is reminiscent of another subject-type effect for HAVE, according to which HAVE is most likely to be used (over HAVE GOT) with NP as opposed to pronominal subjects (Tagliamonte 2003; Tagliamonte *et al.* 2010). If HAVE has the properties of a lexical verb, this second subject-type constraint for HAVE may actually reflect the fact that it resists contraction. Bringing these two subject-type constraints together, we can say that HAVE is preferred over HAVE GOT in the environment in which contraction is phonotactically the most restricted (i.e. with NP subjects). In contexts where contraction can occur less restrictively, HAVE GOT is expected to be used more frequently because of its auxiliary-like syntax which allows it to be contracted more readily.

Examining this in my British English data corroborates the above observations and shows that HAVE strongly exhibits the syntactic behaviour of a lexical verb, whereas HAVE GOT functions as an auxiliary + lexical verb construction. While HAVE GOT is frequently contracted (both auxiliary- and *not*-contraction), the same cannot be said for HAVE. In the few cases where HAVE is auxiliary-contracted, there is a negative indefinite in the predicate (e.g. *I've no idea*), which is semantically equivalent to *not + any* but involves DP-internal negation (Childs 2017). If negated *any* is used instead, *do*-support is the strategy used for negation (e.g. *I don't have any*), rather than viable alternatives in which HAVE functions as an auxiliary, e.g. *I've not any idea / I haven't any idea*. Although this could be explained with appeal to a proposed adjacency restriction on *not* and *any* 'closely following each other' (Poldauf 1964: 371), the lack of *V + n't + any* in the data is captured more straightforwardly under the proposed account in which HAVE functions as a lexical verb and therefore resists contraction.

The present study demonstrates that although a British English speaker has many options in their linguistic repertoire for expressing a lack of stative possession, the variation is restricted by both categorical and non-categorical constraints. While HAVE can potentially function as an auxiliary or lexical verb, my analysis provides evidence that it tends strongly towards the latter. HAVE in the HAVE GOT construction, on the other hand, exhibits auxiliary-like syntax and functions like *do*-support (Lorenz 2016). More broadly, the investigation demonstrates how variationist insights gained from separate analyses of single variables (e.g. stative possession, negation, and contraction) can be reconciled to uncover overlapping domains of variability and understand how constraints interact within the grammar.