

**Modality in disguise: A case study of Colloquial Singapore English *got*\***

Hiroki Nomoto	Nala Huiying Lee
University of Minnesota	National University of Singapore
nomot002@umn.edu	nala.lee@nus.edu.sg

**1. Introduction**

It has been noted that tense, aspect and modality are sometimes difficult to discern and it is not uncommon to mistakenly identify one phenomenon as another (Comrie 1985; Payne 1997).

Goals of the present study

- Provide a detailed description of the meanings of the word *got* in Colloquial Singapore English or Singlish.
- Propose a hypothesis about the relation among meanings related to temporal location, aspect and modality of *got*.

What is Singlish?

- Singlish is an English-based creole spoken in Singapore.
  - The languages spoken in Singapore include Mandarin Chinese and southern varieties of Chinese (e.g. Hokkien, Cantonese, etc.), Malay and Indian languages (e.g. Tamil). While we claim that the main substrate is southern varieties of Chinese, especially Hokkien (Lee, Ling and Nomoto 2007), some authors consider Malay as the main substrate (e.g. Gupta 1998; Low and Brown 2005).
  - Example:
- (1) The lau hiao my husband, now complain so much at home, I have to send him out of the flat everyday. I told him ah, you retire orredy also can go back to work again, now with booming economy and prices all going up. You expect us to eat kiam her png everyday ah, when other

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peepur got abalone porridge! Can go wash the foodcourt jamban and get paid mah, instead of whole life hanging out in Geylang Lorong 44 wasting money on the kway! Everything soon want 7% GST. Even the kway, I tell you.

‘The silly old man, my husband, complains so much at home. I have to send him out of the flat everyday. I told him, even though you have already retired, you can still go back to work, with the booming economy and rising prices. Do you expect us to eat salted fish rice everyday, when other people are getting abalone porridge? You can go clean the toilets in the foodcourt and get paid, instead of always hanging out in Geylang Lorong 44 wasting money on the cakes! Everything will soon incur the 7% Goods and Services Tax, even the cakes, I tell you.’

(TalkingCock.Com, <http://www.talkingcock.com/html/article.php?sid=2261>, accessed 07/09/2008.)

Meanings conveyed by *got*

*Got* conveys more meanings in Singlish than in standard varieties of English such as Standard British English (e.g. Platt and Weber 1980; Teo 1996; Bao 2005; Teh 2000; Lee, Ling and Nomoto 2007).

Lee, Ling and Nomoto (2007) identify the following meanings of *got*: possessive, existential, temporal location, aspect (habitual, experiential, completive), emphasis, challenge/disagreement (idiomatic), passive, ‘to receive/obtain’ and ‘to become’. See Appendix for examples.

The uses of *got* with which we are concerned in this paper are those which expresses temporal meanings as exemplified by (2) and (3) below.

- (2) Temporal location (non-future and definite future)

I *got* go Japan.

- (i) ‘I have been to Japan.’
- (ii) ‘I am going to Japan.’
- (iii) \*‘I will go to Japan.’

- (3) Aspect

a. Habitual

You *got* play tennis?

‘Do you play tennis regularly?’

- b. Experiential  
You *got* stay Ang Mo Kio before?  
'Have you ever lived in Ang Mo Kio?'
- c. Completive  
You *got* wash your hands?  
'Did you wash your hands just now?'

**Claim:<sup>1</sup>**

Although *got* conveys meanings related to temporal location and aspect, it is neither a temporal location marker (tense) nor an aspectual marker as such. Its primary role is actually to mark the realis modality. Meanings related to temporal location and aspect are not (fully) encoded in the lexical meaning of *got*, but are derived from the lexically-encoded meaning of modality. The possible interpretations of temporality are constrained by the realis modality

Structure of the talk

1. Introduction
2. Current status of knowledge about Singlish *got*
3. *Got* as a realis modality marker
4. Aspectual meanings of *got* and the realis modality
5. Conclusion

**2. Current status of knowledge about Singlish *got***

Although *got* is one of the words that are used very frequently in Singlish which distinguishes Singlish from other varieties of English, very little is known of its linguistic properties.

It is not mentioned at all in general studies on tense and aspect (Alsafoff 2001), and modality (Gupta 2006) in Singlish.

On temporal location of *got* sentences

Teh (2000) asserts that *got* as an auxiliary verb is a past tense marker and is not compatible with non-past.

<sup>1</sup> In fact, a similar claim has already been put forward in our recent study (Lee, Ling and Nomoto 2007). However, in that study, we did not provide sufficient amount of argument to support the claim for space restriction, and referred the readers to the present study.

- (4) [Why haven't you done your homework?]  
I *got do!* I *did* it yesterday!  
(Teh 2000: (19a))

She points out the following to be ungrammatical (the intended interpretations in the parentheses are provided by Teh):

- (5) a. \*Everyday, I *got* go to school. (present habitual)
- b. \*Next year, I *got* go to France for holiday. (future)  
(Teh 2000: (18a, c))

Problems:

- Sentences like (5a) and (5b) were judged to be acceptable (with the interpretations provided by Teh) by our informants.<sup>2</sup>
- Not all sentences that describe past situations contain *got*.<sup>3</sup>

On aspect of *got* sentences

Teo (1996) states that *got* can be used as an auxiliary to indicate the present habitual and past habitual.

- (6) a. You *got* play the piano everyday.  
'You play the piano everyday.'
- b. Last year, you *got* swim everyday?  
'Did you swim everyday last year?'  
(Teo 1996)

Bao (2005) mentions the 'emphatic-completive *got*' in an aspectual study of Singapore English.

- (7) a. I *got* wash my hand (already).  
'I have washed my hands.'

<sup>2</sup> If the sentences in (5) sound odd to a native speaker of Singlish, the reason would be the position of the adverbials *everyday* and *next year*. The sentences are more natural even for those speakers who find them acceptable if the adverbials are moved to the end of the sentence as in *I got go to schoo everyday* and *I got go to France for holiday next year*. The reason for this difference in acceptability due to the different positions of the temporal adverbials remains unclear and requires further study.

<sup>3</sup> This problem will disappear if one contend that the past tense markers in Singlish are optional. Teh (2000) does not make such a claim. We will claim in section 3.3 that Singlish does not have tense, assuming that *got* is not an optional element.

- b. Mr Chen got believe Miss Lin  
'Mr Chen did believe Miss Lin.'  
(Bao 2005: (29a-b))

Problem:

The *got* in (8) below does not convey the 'emphatic-completive' meaning.

- (8) a. You got play tennis?  
'Do you play tennis regularly?'  
b. You *got* stay Ang Mo Kio before?  
'Have you ever lived in Ang Mo Kio?'

Identifying *got* just solely as the 'emphatic-completive' is simplistic as it contributes other aspectual meanings such as the habitual and the experiential.

So far, Lee, Ling and Nomoto (2007) has been the only study that has provided a comprehensive description of the temporal meanings of *got*. The present study is intended to complement it.

#### Questions

- How can the temporal meanings of *got* be best described?
- It it a tense? Is it an aspect marker? Both? Or neither?

### 3. *Got* as a realis modality marker

#### Our answer

*Got* is a realis modality marker. The temporal meanings are not the encoded meanings of *got* but are derived from the lexically-encoded meaning of modality.

#### 3.1 Temporal meanings of *got* and their compatibility with the realis modality

In this section, we will give a description of the possible meanings of *got* (temporal ones only) and show that they are all compatible with the realis modality, which marks situations that the speaker believes to be factual<sup>4</sup>/highly

4 The choice of the term 'factual' rather than 'real' here is intentional. Narrog (2005) points out that the latter is only a part of the former and therefore that the semantic category of modality can be defined more adequately by means of the former. Our analysis of the future interpretation of *got* (cf. (10c)) lends support to her points. For with a more restrictive definition of modality in terms of 'real'ness, we will lose a unified analysis of the whole range of meanings of *got* as achieved in this paper; a separate account is needed for the future interpretation.

likely as opposed to hypothetical/unlikely.

- (9) Temporal meanings recognised by Lee, Ling and Nomoto (2007)
- |    |                    |                                |
|----|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| a. | Temporal location: | Non-future and definite future |
| b. | Aspect:            | (i) Habitual                   |
|    |                    | (ii) Experiential              |
|    |                    | (iii) Completive               |

#### 3.1.1 Temporal location

A sentence with *got* describes a situation in all temporal locations: the present, the past and the future. Locating adverbials for all three temporal relations are compatible with *got* as in (10).

- (10) a. I got go Japan before.  
'I have been to Japan before.'  
b. I got go Japan these days.  
'I go to Japan on a regular basis these days.'  
c. I got go Japan next week.  
'I am going to Japan next week.'  
but \*'I will go to Japan next week.'
- (11) a. I go Japan before.  
'I have been to Japan.'  
(Usage is less common than *I got go Japan before*.)  
b. \*I go Japan these days.<sup>5</sup>  
c. I go Japan next week.  
'I am going to Japan next week.'  
and 'I will go to Japan next week.'

Importantly, reference to the future situation with *got* is restricted to definite future. That is, the speaker must know that it is highly likely that the situation in question will happen because the schedule has been already established at the speech time, for example.

5 This sentence is ungrammatical not because sentences without *got* (*I go Japan*) do not describe a situation in the present but because they are often not compatible with the habitual meaning reinforced by the adverbial *these days*. For instance, *I have 10 dollars now* is a grammatical sentence referring to a situation in the present.

Evidence:

As reflected in the translation of (10c), native speakers' intuition is that the English sentence in (10c) corresponds to the futurate construction with *be ... -ing* rather than to the future sentences with *will* in the standard variety. According to Smith (1997:190), the futurate construction "requires some kind of schedule, plan, control, or pattern of events; the *will*-future is not so required." She also claims that the futurate construction differs from the future sentences with *will* in its reference time, that is, the reference time is the present in the former whilst it is the future in the latter (Smith 1997:190).

This restriction follows naturally from the realis modality.

### 3.1.2 Aspect

#### Habitual

(12) I got swim 10 laps.  
'I swim 10 laps regularly.'

(13) I swim 10 laps.  
'I swim 10 laps regularly.'  
'I have swum 10 laps.'

Both (12) and (13) describe habitual actions. In fact, the habitual interpretation is more salient in (13), which does not contain *got*. However, this does not mean that *got* weakens the habitual meaning. The reason why the habitual interpretation is less salient in a sentence with *got* compared with one without *got* is that in the former other readings such as the completive (see below) are also available whereas in the latter the habitual is the only possible interpretation.

When the other readings are suppressed by an adverbial that reinforces the habitual reading (e.g. *everyday*), the habitual interpretation becomes more salient in a sentence with *got* (14) compared with one without *got* (15).

(14) I got swim 10 laps everyday.  
'I swim 10 laps everyday.'

(15) I swim 10 laps everyday.  
'I swim 10 laps everyday.'  
(\*'I have swum 10 laps everyday.')

Thus, it can be safely concluded that the habitual is a meaning expressed by *got*.

The habitual depends on actual occurrences of events with a certain frequency (Smith 1991:41). Thus, it is compatible with the realis modality.

#### Experiential and completive

(16) You got ski?  
'Have you skied before?'  
('Do you ski regularly?')

(17) You ski?  
\*'Have you skied before?'  
'Do you ski?/Do you ski regularly?'

(18) You got wash your hands?  
'Have you finished washing your hands?'

(19) You wash your hands?  
\*'Have you finished washing your hands?'  
'Did you wash your hands?'

The experiential (16) and the completive (18) presume an actual occurrence of a situation.

#### A note on 'actual occurrences'

Ongoing situations are not considered to have 'actually occurred' because the state of affairs of the later stages are unknown.

Ongoing telic situations may not reach the final endpoint.

(20) I am writing a letter.

[I write a letter] is not considered to be true if the speaker does not complete the writing of the letter.

Ongoing atelic situations may cease to hold.

(21) I am running along the Mississippi River.

[I run along the Mississippi River] is not considered to be true if the speaker stops running.

This explains why *got* does not mean the progressive.

- (22) [The speaker is reading the newspapers seriously, when his friend disturbs him.]  
#I got read the paper now!  
(This sentence does not mean \*‘I am reading the newspapers now’. It only means ‘I read the newspapers regularly now.’)

### Summary

- All the temporal meanings of *got* are compatible with the realis modality.
- Meanings that are incompatible with the realis modality are not conveyed by *got*. Indefinite future (i.e. *will*-future) and the progressive are the cases in point.

### **3.2 Evidence for *got* as a realis modality marker**

In section 3.1, it was revealed that the temporal meanings of *got* are constrained in such a way that they are compatible with the realis modality. This counts as evidence for our claim that *got* is a realis modality marker. This section provides further evidence.

Evidence 1: *Got* cannot be negated.

In some languages, all negative clauses are treated as irrealis (Payne1997:245).

- (23) I did/can/\*got not eat raw fish.<sup>6</sup>  
‘I did/can not eat raw fish.’

Evidence 2: *Got* cannot be used to make imperatives.

Imperatives often involves the irrealis in languages with realis/irrealis distinction (Payne 1997:245).

- (24) a. (\*Got) drink soya bean every morning!<sup>7</sup>  
‘Drink soy milk every morning!’  
b. Make sure you (\*got) drink soya bean every morning.  
‘Make sure you drink soy milk every morning!’

Evidence 3: *Got* cannot appear in a complement of verbs expressing wishes and hopes like *wish*.

Optatives often involve the irrealis in languages with realis/irrealis distinction (Payne 1997:245).

- (25) \*I wish/hope I got finish homework earlier.  
‘I wish/hope I had finished my homework earlier.’

Evidence 4: The realis modality meaning of *got* cannot be gotten rid of.

- (26) #I got meet Taufik Batisah. But the fact is I didn’t meet him.  
‘I have met Taufik Batisah. But the fact is I didn’t meet him.’

### Problematic facts

*Got* can occur in both simple and counterfactual conditional clauses (27)-(28).

- (27) Simple conditional  
If you got go Japan, can help me buy present?  
‘If you are going to Japan, can you buy a present for me?’

There is a very subtle sense of difference between (27) and its counterpart without *got* (*If you go Japan, can help me buy present?*). In the former, the speaker knows that there is a high possibility that the interlocutor will be going to Japan whereas in the latter, the speaker may not know that there is this high possibility. It just means that ‘Can you buy a present for me if you go to Japan any time in the future?’.

- (28) Counterfactual conditional  
If you got study in UK or Australia, nobody would say you so Singlish.  
‘If you had studied in UK or Australia, nobody would say you speak with a strong Singlish accent.’

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6 To express the meaning that *got not* is supposed to convey, Singlish uses the word *never* as in *I never eat raw fish*. Note that this Singlish sentence means ‘I have not eaten raw fish’, but not ‘I will never eat raw fish’.

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7 This sentence shows that *got* behaves like modal auxiliaries such as *can* and *will* (\**Can answer these questions before the exam!*) rather than the auxiliary *do* (*Do write your name!*).

Although *got* can occur in counterfactual clauses, it is almost redundant in these sentences.

### 3.3 Singlish is tense-free

If our analysis of *got* is correct, temporal location of Singlish can be treated as a symmetrical system. That is, temporal location is basically expressed by means of modality rather than grammatical tense.

	Past	Present (and definite future)	Indefinite future
Singlish	Modality ( <i>got</i> )		Modality ( <i>will</i> )
Standard varieties	Tense (past)	Tense (non-past)	Modality ( <i>will</i> )

**Figure 1.** Symmetrical system of temporal location expression in Singlish

Q: Does Singlish lack tense totally?

People do use the past tense marker *-ed* and irregular past verbal forms like *ate* alongside their uninflected counterparts. Therefore, previous studies have described tense as though it is optional (e.g. Ho and Platt 1993; Deterding 2007).

The symmetrical system made possible by the claim that *got* is a realis modality enables a new way of explaining the co-existence of tensed forms and uninflected forms.

- (29) The Singlish as a tense-free language hypothesis<sup>8</sup>  
 Singlish in its pure form lacks tense. All tensed verbal forms found in people's speech are the result of code-mixing and code-switching with the acrolectal variety, namely Standard Singapore English, which has tense.

<sup>8</sup> A similar strategy of excluding a certain grammatical category from one variety of a language as mixed elements from another variety is also used by Cole, Hermon and Tjung (2006) and Nomoto and Shoho (2007) for the bare passive in Jakarta Indonesian and Colloquial Malay. In both their cases and ours, it is the acrolectal variety that intrudes into the basilectal variety.

### Reasoning

- Since (i) temporal relation is not expressed by tense and (ii) modality is independent of time, it is possible to not include any grammatical signal of temporal location to describe situations at any temporal location.<sup>9</sup>
  - Nearly all native Singlish speakers know Standard Singapore English as well.
- (30) a. Past with no grammatical signal  
 I go school yesterday.  
 'I went to school yesterday.'
- b. Present with no grammatical signal  
 I go school these days.  
 'I go to school these days.'
- c. Future with no grammatical signal  
 I go school tomorrow.  
 'I will go to school tomorrow.'

The view that the past tense marker is optional in Singlish does not explain why it is so.

Our hypothesis predicts the actual situation where the past tense marker appears to be optional. In our model, the apparent optionality arises as a result of interactions of systems without optionality

### 3.4 Summary

- *Got* is a realis modality marker.
- The realis modality constrains the possible temporal meanings of *got*. That is, only temporal meanings which are compatible with the realis modality but not others are conveyed by *got*.
- Singlish does not have tense. Temporal location is derived from modality.

Q: Is aspect derived from modality too?

### 4. Aspectual meanings of *got* and the realis modality

Although possible aspectual meanings of *got* are constrained by the realis

<sup>9</sup> The same reasoning explains why in standard varieties of English it is possible to express future events without *will* in some cases (e.g. *When do you go to Japan?---I go to Japan next week.*), but situations in the past cannot be expressed without past tense verbal forms (except for marked phenomena such as historical present).

modality, it is not completely clear to us whether or how the three aspectual meanings (i.e. habitual, experiential and completive) are derived from the realis modality. In this section, we present a sketch of one probable story whereby aspect partially derives from modality.

Theoretical background

Smith's (1997) two-component theory of aspect

- Situation aspect (= lexical aspect, Aktionsart) e.g. state, activity, accomplishment, achievement
- Viewpoint aspect (= grammatical aspect) e.g. perfective, imperfective
- Interaction between the two

Common feature to the three aspectual meanings

According to Smith's (1997:33-34, 50-51, 189), habitual sentences and the perfect construction, whose meanings include the experiential and the completive, both involve derived-level statives.<sup>10</sup>

- (31) Basic-level  
Mary walked down the beach. Activity
- (32) Derived-level  
a. Mary walked down the beach. (ingressive) Achievement(Activity)  
b. Mary walked down the beach every day. (habitual) State(Activity)
- (33) a. States  
VP: (I)————(F)  
got VP: (I)————[(I)————(F)]————(F)<sup>11</sup>

10 Kamp and Reyle (1993:558-559, 566) analyse the perfect as involving shift from a basic situation type to stative. They, along with Vlach (1981), state that the progressive also has the same characteristic as the perfect, namely deriving/shifting the basic situation type to stative. However, Smith (2003:72) argues against them. We follow Smith because the fact that Singlish *got* does not mean the progressive can be given a (partial) answer if the progressive is not derived stative unlike the perfect (the experiential and the completive) and the habitual. See also the relevant discussion in section 3.1.2.

11 This diagram implies that the endpoints of a basic-level State may become 'visible' when embedded in a derived-level State because of the embedding (indicated by [ ] in the diagram). Then, *got* sentences whose basic-level situation is State should sound

- b. Events  
VP: I.....F  
got VP: (I)————[I.....F]————(F)  
(I: Initial endpoint; F: Final endpoint; —: no internal structure, i.e. homogeneous; ...: internal structure, i.e. heterogeneous)

Supporting fact:

*Got* does not mean the progressive (cf. section 3.1.2). This makes sense if the situation type of sentences with *got* is State, for it is generally known that the progressive viewpoint aspect is restricted in sentences describing states (Vendler 1967:104; Dowty 1979; Smith 1983).

- (34) a. \*John is knowing the answer.  
b. \*I am owning a car.

Connection with the realis modality

Is this aspectual shift caused by the realis modality?

→ Possibly, yes. The realis modality requires a state in which another situation is embedded. Embedding of a situation in this way amounts to the factual status of that situation.

But why not the other way around, namely the aspectual shift creates an embedding structure and this in turn leads to the realis modality? According to Smith (1997:33), generic predication also involves derived statives.

- (35) a. Tigers eat meat.  
b. The beaver builds dams.

However, the corresponding Singlish sentences with *got* may not be generic predication.

- (36) a. Tigers got eat meat.  
'Tigers have eaten meat.'  
but not \*'Tigers in general eat meat.'

more eventive than the corresponding sentences without *got*. This is indeed the case. For example, *I got love him* sounds more eventive than *I love him* to a native Singlish speaker. The same is expected to hold with habitual sentences and the perfect construction in standard varieties of English too.

- b. The beaver got build dams.  
 ‘The beaver built dams just now.’  
 but not \*‘Beavers in general build dams.’

Thus, it is not the case that the aspectual shift gives rise to the realis modality.

#### Toward a formal implementation of the hypothesis

How tense and aspect should be dealt with within formal theories of meaning (e.g. DRT) has been discussed in some details (Kamp and Reyle 1993; Smith 1997, 2003; Reyle, Rossdeutscher and Kamp 2007). However, modality and its relation to tense and aspect have not been explored very much.<sup>12</sup> A formal theory of modality must be built in such a manner that enables to capture the restrictions that modality impose on temporal relation and aspect. We are not in a position to offer such a theory here.

### 5. Conclusion

#### Summary

Our study is the first to provide a comprehensive description of the temporal meanings of *got*, pointing out the significant role played by modality in determining temporal meanings.

- *Got* in Singlish marks the realis modality.
- Its meanings related to temporal location (non-past and definite future) and aspect (habitual, experiential, completive) are derived from the realis modality.
- Singlish is tense-free.

#### Implications

There are other languages to which our modality-based theory of temporality is likely to apply.

- (i) Past
- Hokkien *u* (Cheng 1985)<sup>13</sup>

12 Jaszczolt (2005: chapter 6) attempts to formalise the mechanism where the future interpretation of English *will* is derived from the modal meaning of *will*. However, as Jaszczolt herself acknowledges, the attempt is still in its inception stage and is not so refined as to make it possible to describe the mechanism where both temporal location and aspect is derived from modality, as in the case of Singlish *got*. A similar attempt can be found in Hatav (1997) too.

13 This supports Lee, Ling and Nomoto’s (2007) claim that the main substrate of Singlish is not Malay but southern varieties of Chinese, especially Hokkien. Scott

- Thai *day* (Jaszczolt and Srioutai, forthcoming)
- Hawaii Creole English *wen* (?) (Velupillai 2003; but see Siegel 2004)<sup>14</sup>

Expression of the future by modality has been reported in many languages including standard varieties of English (see below). However, few languages have been reported that express other temporal locations by modality, Singlish being one of them.

- (ii) Future
- English *will* (Jespersen 1924; Smith 1978; Enç 1996)
  - Turkish *-(y)EcEk* (Yavaş 1982)
  - Lakhota *ka* (Chung and Timberlake 1985:206)
- (iii) Viewpoint aspect
- Tagalog (Schachter 1987; Himmelman 2005)<sup>15</sup>  
*mag-* (imperfective) = *m-* (irrealis) + *pag-* (V-stem creating prefix)  
*nag-* (perfective) = *n-* (realis) + *pag-* (V-stem creating prefix)

#### **Appendix Examples of different meanings of *got***

##### **A. Meanings of *got* which are particular to Singlish**

##### **A-1. Grammatical meanings**

- (1) Possessive  
 I *got* two brothers, one sister.  
 ‘I have two brothers and a sister.’
- (2) Existential  
*Got* two pictures on the wall.  
 ‘There are two pictures on the wall.’

Paauw (p.c.) told us that while *ada* ‘to be/have’ in Malay, which is one of the candidates of the source of various special uses of Singlish *got*, is used as a realis marker in six out of the seven varieties of Malay in Eastern Indonesia that he studied (e.g. Manado Malay), a similar use of *ada* is not attested in western varieties of Malay in which the variety of Malay spoken in Singapore is included.

14 We thank Jeanette Gundel for bringing the case of Hawaii Creole English *wen* to our attention.

15 We owe this information to Naonori Nagaya (p.c.).



(3) Temporal location (non-future)

I *got* go Japan.

(i) 'I have been to Japan.'

(ii) 'I am going to Japan.'

(iii) \*'I will go to Japan.'

(4) Aspect

a. Habitual

You *got* play tennis?

'Do you play tennis regularly?'

b. Experiential

You *got* stay Ang Mo Kio before?

'Have you ever lived in Ang Mo Kio?'

c. Completive

You *got* wash your hands?

'Did you wash your hands just now?'

(5) Emphasis

I *got* taller than him.

'I am taller than him.'

**A-2. Lexical meanings**

(6) Challenge/disagreement (idiomatic)

A: This dress very red.

'This dress is very red.'

B: Where *got*?

'Is it? I don't think so.'

**B. Meanings of *got* which Singlish shares with standard varieties of English**

**B-1. Grammatical meanings**

(7) Passive

I *got* scolded by teacher.

'I was scolded by the teacher.'

**B-2. Lexical meanings**

(8) To receive/obtain

I *got* flowers.

'I bought/received flowers.'

(9) To become

The white skirt *got* dirty.

'The white skirt has become dirty.'

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