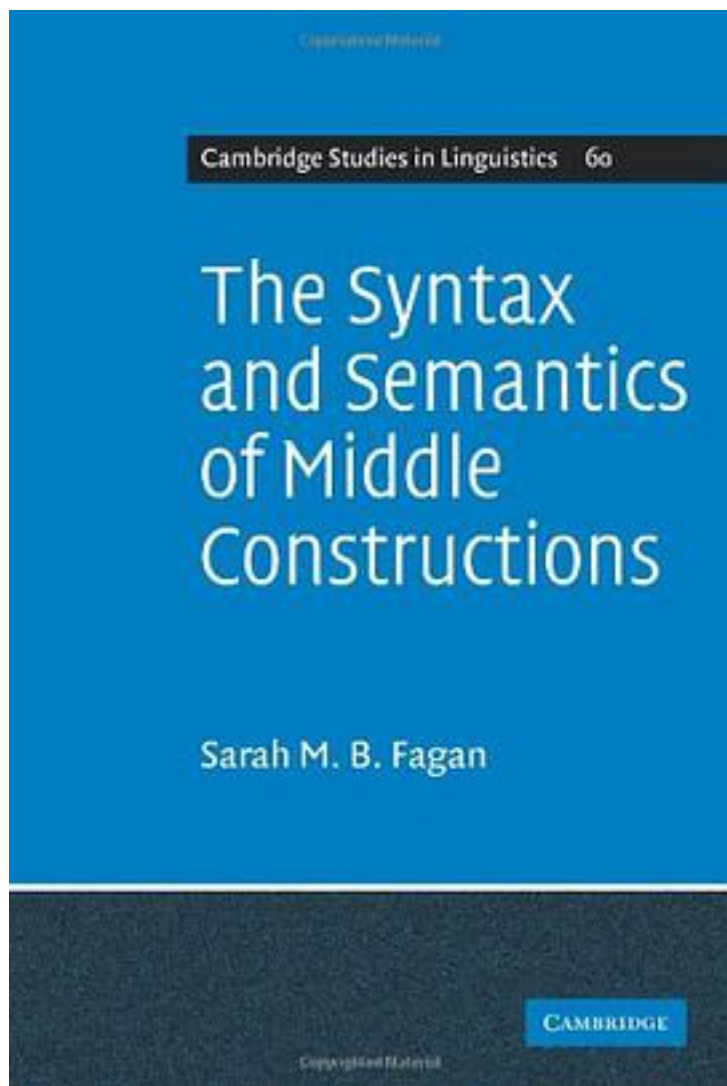


# The Syntax and Semantics of Middle Constructions



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This study provides a comprehensive description and analysis of the syntax and semantics of middle constructions in German, including those formed by using the auxiliary lassen 'let'. English and French middles are also treated in depth for comparative purposes. Sarah Fagan argues that middle constructions are not to be accounted for in the syntax, but rather in a bipartite lexicon consisting of Static and Dynamic components. This division of the lexicon helps to clarify the analysis in a number of ways. The author also considers middles in the context of recent work on generics, and examines Vendler's typology of aspectual verb classes in the light of middle formation in German and English. The study addresses a number of issues in the syntax of modern German relevant to our understanding of universal grammar: 1. the appearance of ergative predicates in German: 2. the implications of impersonal clauses in German: and 3. the use of reflexives in argument positions. The value of this study is greatly enhanced by the wealth of language data and descriptive detail given.

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