

Supplementation of Opposites in Simple Predicate Expansion¹

By YAO SHEN

The subject of this article is simple predicate expansion. It discusses observable grammatical word strings and grammatical formulas of three auxiliaries and two modals in the expansion of the English predicate in two relationships. One of these relationships is external; the other internal. The external relationship is that between the subject and the predicate. The feature under consideration is within the predicate; the subject, though a member of a sentence is, nevertheless, outside the predicate.² The internal relationship concerns the behavior among members within the predicate. It includes formations of continuous strings and discontinuous strings with auxiliaries and modals including the verb. The three

Expanded predicates are formed by the addition of auxiliaries and modals before the verb. The longer the expanded predicate is, the farther apart the subject and the verb are. The first member in an expanded predicate is either an auxiliary or a modal. It is the first auxiliary or modal that carries tense distinction; the verb does not. In the following pairs of sentences with both unexpanded and expanded predicates, a. indicates the present tense; b. the past tense.

	subject		verb
1a.	<u>They</u>		<u>do</u>
b.	<u>They</u>		<u>did</u>
2a.	<u>They</u>		<u>are done</u>
b.	<u>They</u>		<u>were done</u>
3a.	<u>They</u>		<u>are being done</u>
b.	<u>They</u>		<u>were being done</u>
4a.	<u>They</u>	<u>have been being done</u>	
b.	<u>They</u>	<u>had been being done</u>	
5a.	<u>They will</u>	<u>have been being done</u>	
b.	<u>They would</u>	<u>have been being done</u>	

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auxiliaries used are *be*, *have*, and *do*; and the two modals are *will*, and *can*. Details are also given regarding the behavior of *do*. The purpose here is to call attention to the supplementation of opposites between the observable and the operational. Examples are affirmative statements with simple expanded predicates that do not use words such as *and*, *or*, *not* and *here*, *now*, *immediately*. Unexpanded ones are included for contrast.

A feature which is independent of either relationship external or internal and yet must be taken up here is tense. Tense is the present/past distinction. It is a distinction in form. In English, it is indicated by the inflectional suffix of the first member in the predicate. The verb in the predicate occurs last. In an unexpanded predicate, tense is carried by the verb which is the first member and also is the last one.

present: They do
past: They did

Two sets (A and B) of twelve sentences each appear below. The present and past tenses are indicated by a. and b. Set A contains unexpanded predicates; set B has expanded predicates with *be*, *have* and *do* as auxiliaries and *will* and *can* as modals. Both sets have *go*, *be*, *have*, *do*, *will* and *can* as their lexical verbs.

1. This is the first of four installments. I am grateful to Robert A. Peters and Elizabeth Bowman, editor and associate editor of *Journal of English Linguistics*, Western Washington State College, and Janet Callender of the University of Hawaii for their detailed and constructive criticisms.

2. The terms **subject** and **predicate** are used for the purpose of explanatory convenience. No offense to or defense of Chomsky's deep grammar and Fillmore's deep grammar is intended here.

Set A.

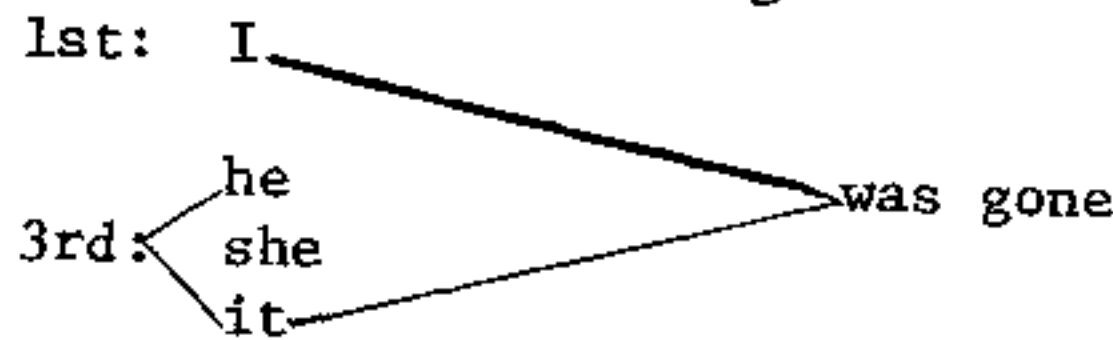
A1a.	<u>Mary goes to church</u>		verb
A2a.	<u>Mary is funny</u>		<u>go</u>
A3a.	<u>Mary has problems</u>		<u>be</u>
A4a.	<u>Mary does the dishes</u>		<u>have</u>
A5a.	<u>Mary wills her books to her school</u>		<u>do</u>
A6a.	<u>Mary cans tomatoes</u>		<u>will</u>
			<u>can</u>
A1b.	<u>Mary went to church</u>		<u>go</u>
A2b.	<u>Mary was funny</u>		<u>be</u>
A3b.	<u>Mary had problems</u>		<u>have</u>
A4b.	<u>Mary did the dishes</u>		<u>do</u>
A5b.	<u>Mary willed her books to her school</u>		<u>will</u>
A6b.	<u>Mary canned tomatoes</u>		<u>can</u>

Set B.

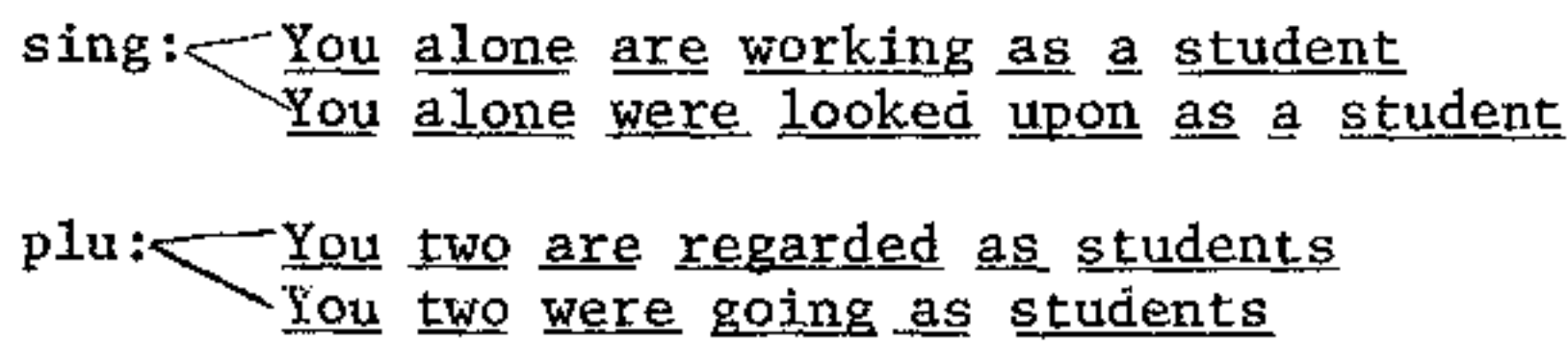
		modal	auxiliary	verb
B1a.	<u>Mary is gone</u>		<u>be</u>	<u>go</u>
B2a.	<u>Mary is being funny</u>		<u>be</u>	<u>be</u>
B3a.	<u>Mary has had problems</u>		<u>have</u>	<u>have</u>
B4a.	<u>Mary does do the dishes</u>		<u>do</u>	<u>do</u>
B5a.	<u>Mary will will her books to her school</u>	<u>will</u>		<u>will</u>
B6a.	<u>Mary can can tomatoes</u>	<u>can</u>		<u>can</u>
B1b.	<u>Mary was gone</u>		<u>be</u>	<u>go</u>
B2b.	<u>Mary was being funny</u>		<u>be</u>	<u>be</u>
B3b.	<u>Mary had had problems</u>		<u>have</u>	<u>have</u>
B4b.	<u>Mary did do the dishes</u>		<u>do</u>	<u>do</u>
B5b.	<u>Mary would will her books to her school</u>	<u>will</u>		<u>will</u>
B6b.	<u>Mary could can tomatoes</u>	<u>can</u>		<u>can</u>

The external relationship deals with the feature of subject agreement of *be*, *have*, *do*, *will*, and *can*.

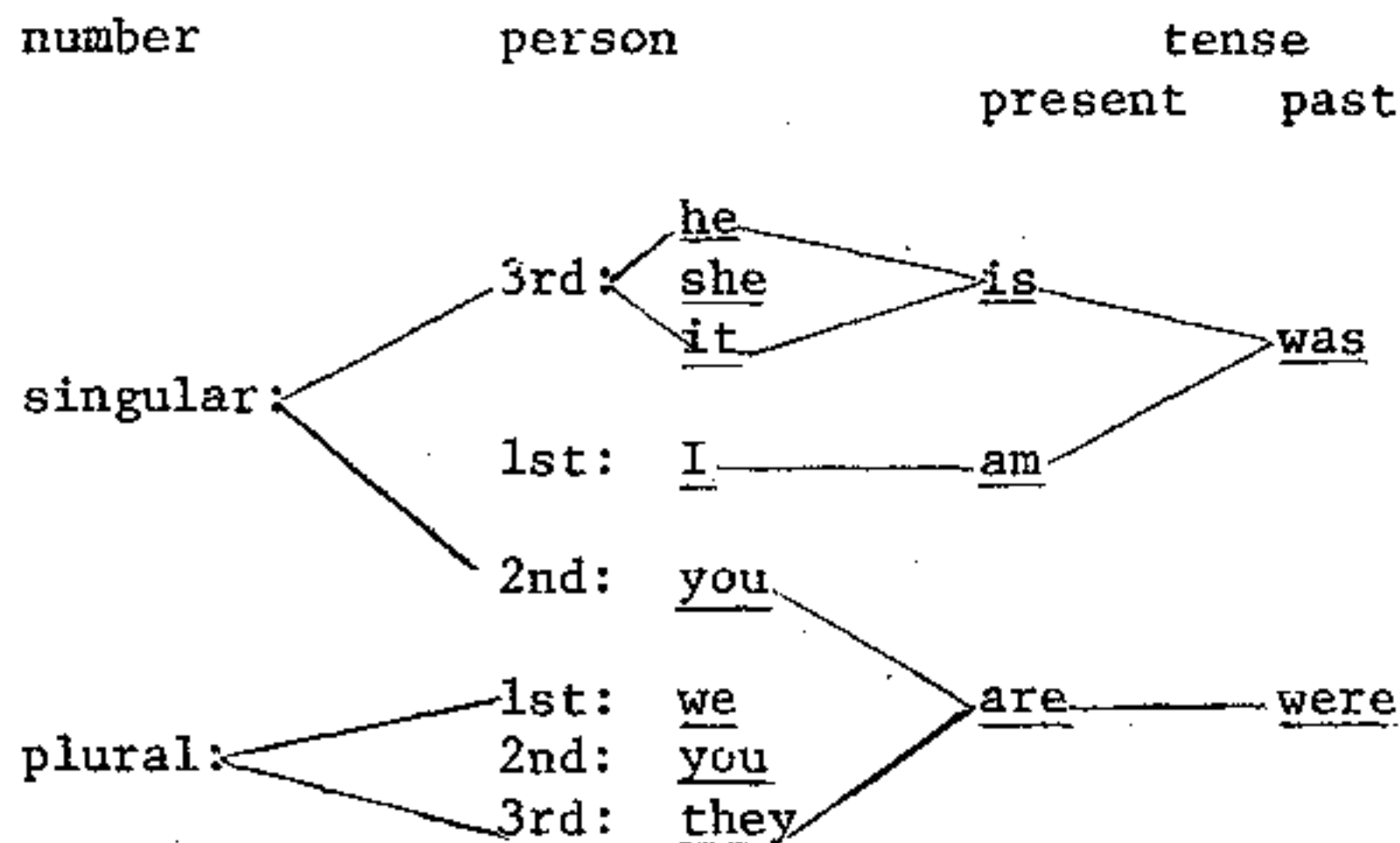
Subject agreement is most observable in *be*. *Was* agrees with both the first person singular and the third person singular.



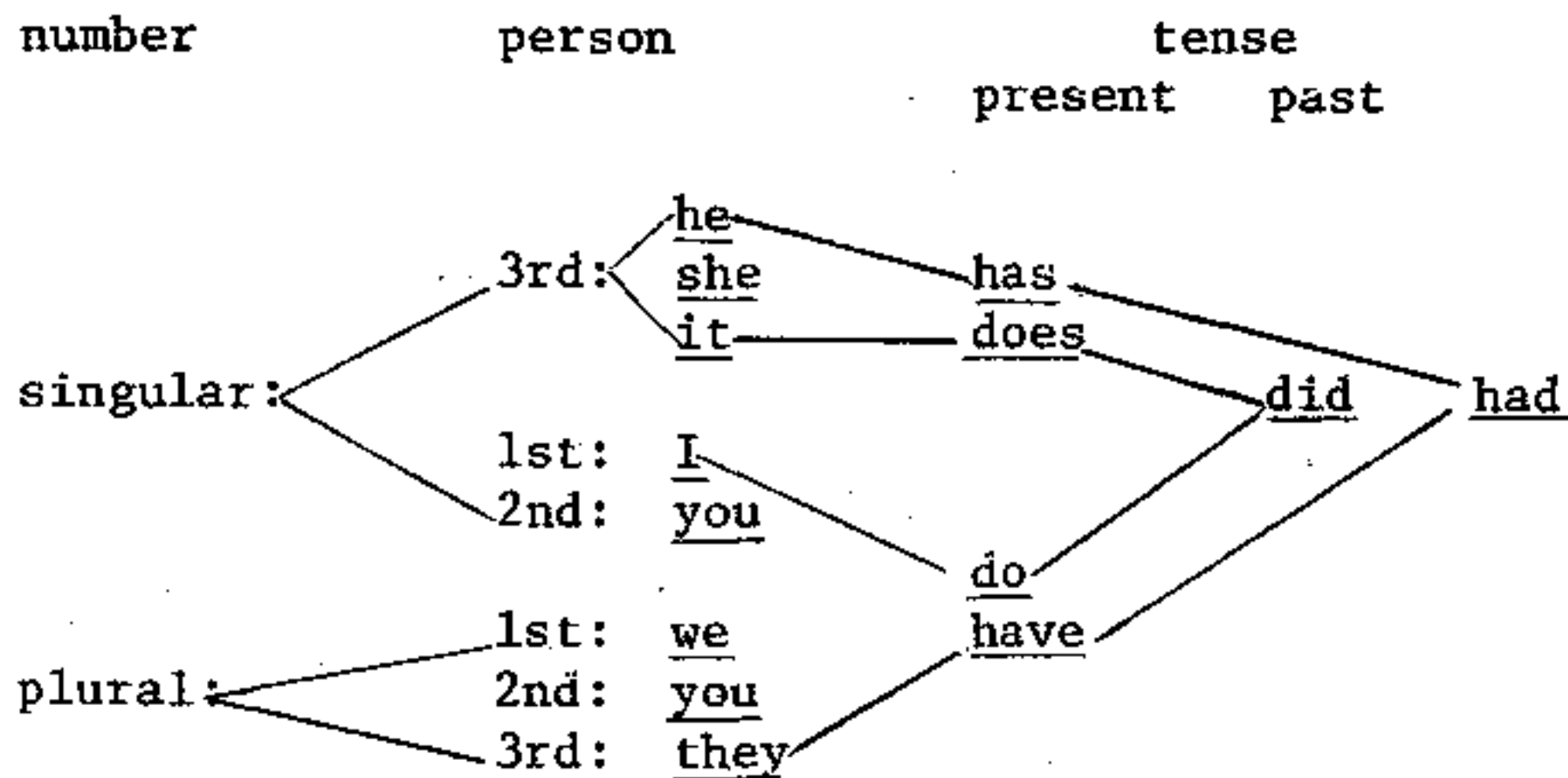
Are and *were* agree with the second person in both the singular and the plural.



Subject agreement occurs in both tenses. Present tense *is* agrees with *he*, *she*, *it*; present tense *am* agrees with *I*. Past tense *was* agrees with *he*, *she*, *it* as well as with *I*. The distribution in subject agreement with *be* is as follows.



Subject agreement distributions between *have* and *do* are the same. They are not as extensive as those with *be*.



Whether *be*, *have*, and *do* are the auxiliaries in expanded predicates (auxiliary + verb) or whether they are the verbs in unexpanded predicates (auxiliary = verb), the feature of subject agreement remains.

expanded

unexpanded

<u>Mary is doing her work</u>	(<u>Is Mary doing her work?</u>	<u>Yes,</u>) <u>she is</u>
<u>They are done with their work</u>	(<u>Are they done with their work?</u>	<u>Yes,</u>) <u>they are</u>
<u>Mary has done her work</u>	(<u>Has Mary done her work?</u>	<u>Yes,</u>) <u>she has</u>
<u>Mary does do her work</u>	(<u>Does Mary do her work?</u>	<u>Yes,</u>) <u>she does</u>
<u>Mary was doing her work</u>	(<u>Was Mary doing her work?</u>	<u>Yes,</u>) <u>she was</u>
<u>They were done with their work</u>	(<u>Were they done with their work?</u>	<u>Yes,</u>) <u>they were</u>
<u>Mary had done her work</u>	(<u>Had Mary done her work?</u>	<u>Yes,</u>) <u>she had</u>
<u>Mary did do her work</u>	(<u>Did Mary do her work?</u>	<u>Yes,</u>) <u>she did</u>

There are two sets of *be*, *have*, and *do* as verbs in the unexpanded predicates. They are the lexical = verb set and the auxiliary = verb set. Both sets observe subject agreement, and both sets have the same past forms. (See sentences A2a-A4a, A2b-A4b; B2a-B4b above.)

lexical = verb

auxiliary = verb

Mary is (funny)
They are (students)
Mary has (problems)
Mary does (the dishes)

Mary is (doing her work)
They are (done with their work)
Mary has (done her work)
Mary did (do her work)

Mary was (funny)
They were (students)
Mary had (problems)
Mary did (the dishes)

Mary was (doing her work)
They were (done with their work)
Mary had (done her work)
Mary did (do her work)

The modals *will* and *can* lack the overt -s form as the present third person singular marker.

*He wills come to see you
 *He cans come to see you

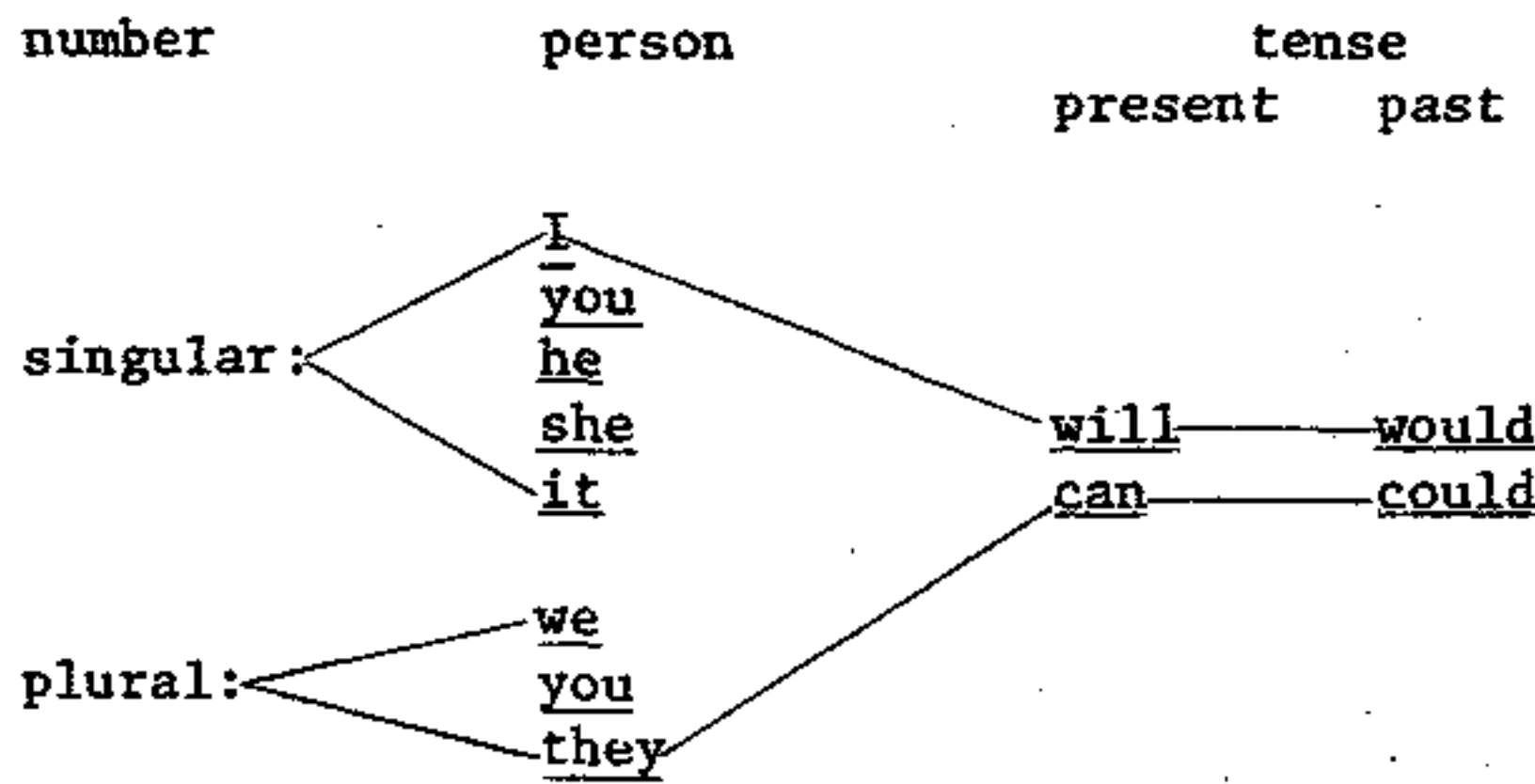
Modals *will* and *can* may be said to have no subject agreement. This feature can be observed in expanded predicates (modal + verb).

sing: I will enroll as a student
She will enroll as a student
You alone will enroll as a student

plu: You two will enroll as students

The lack of subject agreement is the same with *will* and *can*.

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When the modals function as the verb (modal=verb) in unexpanded predicates, this absence of subject agreement remains.

- | | |
|---|------------------------|
| (<u>Will Mary finish her work?</u>) | Yes,) <u>she will</u> |
| (<u>Can Mary read the newspaper?</u>) | Yes,) <u>she can</u> |
| (<u>Would Mary do the shopping?</u>) | Yes,) <u>she would</u> |
| (<u>Could Mary go home?</u>) | Yes,) <u>she could</u> |

There are two sets of *will* and *can* functioning as verbs in unexpanded predicates. They are the lexical = verb set and the modal = verb set. The lexical = verb set observes subject agreement; the modal = verb set does not. The past forms of the two sets are different also. (See sentences A5a, A6a; A5b, A6b; and B5a, B6a; B5b, B6b above.)

lexical = verb

- Mary wills (her books to her school)
Mary cans (tomatoes)
- Mary willed (her books to her school)
Mary canned (tomatoes)

modal = verb

- Mary will (finish her work)
Mary can (read the newspaper)
- Mary would (do the shopping)
Mary could (go home)

Be, have, do, will, and can occurring in either the expanded predicate (auxiliary + verb, modal + verb) or the unexpanded predicate (auxiliary = verb, modal = verb) can be classified according to whether they observe subject agreement or not. Auxiliaries observe subject agreement; modals do not.

auxiliary + verb

- Mary is doing her work
They are done with their work
Mary has done her work
Mary does do her work

- Mary was doing her work
They were done with their work
Mary had done her work
Mary did do her work

auxiliary = verb

- Mary is (doing her work)
They are (done with their work)
Mary has (done her work)
Mary does (do her work)

- Mary was (doing her work)
They were (done with their work)
Mary had (done her work)
Mary did (do her work)

modal + verb

- Mary will do her work
They will do their work
Mary can do her work
They can do their work

- Mary would do her work
They would do their work
Mary could do her work
They could do their work

modal = verb

- Mary will (do her work)
They will (do their work)
Mary can (do her work)
They can (do their work)

- Mary would (do her work)
They would (do their work)
Mary could (do her work)
They could (do their work)

The following sentences exemplify *be*, *have*, *do*, *will* and *can* in the external relationship. \emptyset is used after the modal to show a lack of subject agreement.

	Subject	Predicate	
<u>be</u> :	<u>He</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>going</u>
	<u>He</u>	<u>was</u>	<u>gone</u>
<u>have</u> :	<u>He</u>	<u>has</u>	<u>gone</u>
<u>do</u> :	<u>He</u>	<u>does</u>	<u>go</u>
<u>will</u> :	<u>He</u>	<u>will-\emptyset</u>	<u>go</u>
<u>can</u> :	<u>He</u>	<u>can-\emptyset</u>	<u>go</u>

(continued on next page)

In the external relationship, *do* observes subject agreement in the way *be* and *have* do. Its behavior differs from that of *will* and *can* which do not observe subject agreement. The external relationship of *be*, *have*, *do*, *will*, and *can* is given below with plus (+) and minus (-) indicating the presence and absence of subject agreement.

relationship:	<u>can</u>	<u>will</u>	<u>do</u>	<u>have</u>	<u>be</u>
external:	-	-	+	+	+

Auxiliaries (+) and modals (-) are distinctive in their external relationship.

The internal relationship deals with expansion phenomena inside the predicate. The expansions are examined with the verb as the point of reference. The verb occurs last in an expanded predicate.

The predicate of an affirmative statement frequently has an observable verb. The verb can be the sole member in the predicate such as *They do* and *They did*. A predicate can be expanded by the addition of words, part of a word, or both. Words added can be auxiliaries and modals.

1. They go
2. They do go
3. They will go

Words added can be neither auxiliaries nor modals.

1. They travel
2. They often travel
3. They often travel extensively

Part of a word can be added to the predicate.

1. The sheep look happy
2. The sheep look-s happy
3. The sheep look-ed happy

This kind of expansion, though it is within the predicate and also with reference to the verb, is tense distinction and subject agreement. Tense distinction is independent of either relationship. Subject agreement is external relationship. A predicate can also be expanded by the addition of a word and part of a word.

1. They go
2. They are go-ing
3. They will be-Ø go-n

Predicate expansion examined here is of the last kind. It includes strings that begin with the auxiliary or the modal which has (+) or (-) subject agreement and end with the verb including all the inflectional suffixes other than those of subject agreement, which is external relationship. A string must have a minimum of two members, and strings can be continuous or discontinuous.

Continuous strings have members that occur successively, and they can be as short as two members to as long as five members, the longest string treated here.

A continuous string can have two members with the preceding one being an auxiliary (aux) and the following being the verb (V). Example sentences are

	aux	V
<u>My heart</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>smiling</u>
<u>All worries</u>	<u>are</u>	<u>gone</u>
<u>Silence</u>	<u>has</u>	<u>fallen</u>
<u>Such moments</u>	<u>do</u>	<u>happen</u>

The formula for a 2-member continuous string is *aux + V*.

In a continuous string of *aux + V* *be*, *have*, and *do* all participate forming

<u>be</u>	+ V
<u>have</u>	+ V
<u>do</u>	+ V

The following (+) indicates the occurrence of *be*, *have*, and *do* as the preceding member, and the verb as the following member.

preceding	<u>do</u>	<u>have</u>	<u>be</u>
following			
	V	+	+
			+

A continuous string of three members can have *aux + aux* before the verb.

	aux	aux	V
<u>The curtains</u>	<u>are</u>	<u>being</u>	<u>drawn</u>
<u>The dishes</u>	<u>have</u>	<u>been</u>	<u>done</u>
<u>The light</u>	<u>has</u>	<u>been</u>	<u>shining</u>

The formula for a 3-member continuous string is *aux + aux + V*.

In a continuous string of three members with *aux + aux* before the verb, the only occurrences are

<u>be</u>	+ <u>be</u>
<u>have</u>	+ <u>be</u>

Other than these two strings, *be*, *have*, and *do* do not form any continuous strings in *aux + aux* before the verb. The distribution below gives their occurrences (+) and non-occurrences (-) in *aux + aux + V*.

preceding following	<u>do</u>	<u>have</u>	<u>be</u>
<u>do</u>	-	-	-
<u>have</u>	-	-	-
<u>be</u>	-	+	+

Be + be (a1) and *have + be* (a2) are the two basic 2-member strings in forming longer continuous strings.

It must be remembered that though continuous string *be + be + V* occurs as *aux + aux + V* in the language, sentence examples with *be + be + V* as part of their predicate are by no means frequent. A speculative explanation could be that *be + be + V* is a recent development of Late Modern English and is now undergoing the survival test of time.³ The same reason is perhaps also responsible for the low frequency of occurrence of sentences in the three subsequent longer formulas containing *be + be + V*. (They appear here and in the next installment.)

A continuous string can have four members with *aux + aux + aux* before the verb.

aux aux aux V

The music has been being written

The formula for a 4-member continuous string is *aux + aux + aux + V*.

Aux + aux + aux is the additive occurrence of basic *be + be* (a1) and basic *have + be* (a2) with the deletion of redundancy in preceding *be* in *be + be* and *be* in *have + be* forming *have + be + be*.

	<u>be</u> + <u>be</u> (a1)
<u>have</u> + <u>be</u>	(a2)
<u>have</u> + <u>be</u> + <u>be</u>	

Do does not participate in *aux + aux + aux + V*.

(To be continued)

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3. See Yao Shen, "Vocabulary Participation and Grammatical Formula Shift," *TESL Reporter*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1969), 6-7 and 10-11.