

Supplementation of Opposites in Simple Predicate Expansion¹

By YAO SHEN

A sentence with the same words in the same arrangement can have two different structures. One such structure occurring in English is *This is singing*.² The subject (S) of the sentence is *This*. The predicate is *is singing*. In one structure, *is* as one form of *be*, is the verb (V) of the sentence; *singing* is the noun (N). In the formula S + V + N, *singing* is similar to other nouns such as *Helen*, *education*, *work* forming sentences like

S	+ V	+ N
<u>This</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>singing</u>
<u>This</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>Helen</u>
<u>This</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>education</u>
<u>This</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>work</u>

In the other, *sing* and *-ing* are two separable parts. *Sing* alone is the verb. *-ing*, though attached to the verb (V-ing), is a component of a grammatical construction formed with *be* which precedes the verb making *be + -ing*. In a sentence having the formula S + *be* + V-ing, similar verbs such as *respond*, *rise*, and *work* may be substituted for V.

S	+ be	+ V-ing
<u>This</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>singing</u>
<u>This</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>responding</u>
<u>This</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>rising</u>
<u>This</u>	<u>is</u>	<u>working</u>

Be and V-ing occur successively. *Be + V-ing* is a continuous string. *Be* and *-ing* do not occur successively. *Be + -ing* is interrupted by the verb. It is a discontinuous string.³

A discontinuous string is formed with auxiliaries and modals as the preceding member and the inflectional ending of their respective immediately following member in each case including the verb. The verb in a continuous string occurs last. It does not form a discontinuous string with any immediately following member, since it terminates the continuous string. When it

occurs alone, there is neither a continuous nor discontinuous string in the predicate. A discontinuous string occurs when there is a continuous string of a minimum of two members.

Five conditions result in five different kinds of discontinuous strings. Four of the strings are discussed as a group first. They occur in the longest continuous string of modal + *have + be + be + V* in which *be*, *have*, and *will* occur. *Can* occurs in shorter strings that do not have *have*. (See second installment.) *Do* does not participate in continuous strings of more than two members. *Do* is considered separately.

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In a continuous string, the preceding member may be an auxiliary or a modal. If it is the auxiliary *be*, the inflected part of its immediately following member may be *-n*. The discontinuous string is *be + -n* (1)

1. This is the third 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 or Filmore's deep grammar is intended here.

3. For the grammatical meanings of the discontinuous strings, see Martin Joos, *The English Verb Form and Meanings*, Wisconsin: 1964, Chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6.

(1) be + -n

The letter is gone
The book is done

The inflected part of the immediately following member after the auxiliary *be* may also occur in *-ing* forming another discontinuous string *be + -ing* (2).

(2) be + -ing

Helen is driving to the airport

If the auxiliary is *have*, the immediately following member has *-n*, forming the discontinuous string *have + -n* (3).

(3) have + -n

Freeman has been to the airport

If the preceding member is the modal *will* or *can*, the immediately following member has *-0* (or is uninflected). The discontinuous string is *modal + -0* (4).

(4) modal + -0

Helen will be here
Freeman can drive to the airport

The four discontinuous strings in the expanded predicate taken up are (1) *be + -n*, (2) *be + -ing*, (3) *have + -n*, and (4) *modal + -0*.

Discontinuous strings expand the predicate in a chainlike manner with the specific grammatical word of each preceding member in the continuous string linked with the inflectional ending of its immediately following member. Every two contiguous discontinuous strings in the predicate function somewhat similarly to the way every two contiguous links do in a chain. Below are two sets with discontinuous strings in the expanded predicate with Set 1 and Set 2 distinguished from each other by *be + -n* in Set 1 and *be + -ing* in Set 2. Each set is first given with sentence examples in (X). These are followed by (Y) which contains the same sentence examples with discontinuous strings in the predicate marked. (Z) has the continuous strings in the predicate, the discontinuous strings marked, and conditions identifying each individual discontinuous string. The longest continuous string in each set is modal + aux + aux + V. The central point of reference in each predicate expansion is the verb.

Set 1 (X)

- 1A. Martin is driven
- 1B. Martin has driven
- 1C. Martin will drive
- 1D. Martin has been driven
- 1E. Martin will be driven
- 1F. Martin will have driven
- 1G. Martin will have been driven

Set 1 (Y)

- 1A. Martin is driven
- 1B. Martin has driven
- 1C. Martin will drive
- 1D. Martin has be-n driven
- 1E. Martin will be-0 driven
- 1F. Martin will have-0 driven
- 1F. Martin will have-0 be-n driven
- 1G. Martin will have-0 be-n driven

Set 1 (Z)

- | | Subject | Predicate | condition |
|-----|---------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| | | modal + auxiliary + auxiliary + verb | |
| | | <u>have</u> <u>be</u> | |
| 1A. | | <u>be</u> V-n | (1) |
| 1B. | | <u>have</u> V-n | (3) |
| 1C. | modal | V-0 | (4) |
| 1D. | | <u>have</u> <u>be-n</u> V-p | (3) (1) |
| 1E. | modal | <u>be-0</u> V-n | (4) (1) |
| 1F. | modal | <u>have-0</u> V-p | (4) (3) |
| 1G. | modal | <u>have-0</u> <u>be-n</u> V-n | (4) (3) (1) |

Set 2 (X)

- 2A. Jenny Mae is drawing
- 2B. Jenny Mae has drawn
- 2C. Jenny Mae will draw
- 2D. Jenny Mae has been drawing
- 2E. Jenny Mae will be drawing
- 2F. Jenny Mae will have drawn
- 2G. Jenny Mae will have been drawing

Set 2 (Y)

- 2A. Jenny Mae is draw-ing
- 2B. Jenny Mae has draw-n
- 2C. Jenny Mae will draw-0
- 2D. Jenny Mae has be-n draw-ing
- 2E. Jenny Mae will be-0 draw-ing
- 2F. Jenny Mae will have-0 draw-n
- 2G. Jenny Mae will have-0 be-n draw-ing

Set 2 (Z)

	Subject	Predicate			condition	
		modal + auxiliary + auxiliary + verb				
		<u>have</u>	<u>be</u>			
2A.			<u>be</u>	<u>V-ing</u>	(2)	
2B.		<u>have</u>		<u>V-n</u>	(3)	
2C.		<u>modal</u>		<u>V-p</u>	(4)	
2D.		<u>have</u>	<u>be-n</u>	<u>V-ing</u>	(3) (2)	
2E.		<u>modal</u>	<u>be-p</u>	<u>V-ing</u>	(4) (2)	
2F.		<u>modal</u>	<u>have-p</u>	<u>V-n</u>	(4) (3)	
2G.		<u>modal</u>	<u>have-p</u>	<u>be-n</u>	<u>V-ing</u>	(4) (3) (2)

Set 1 and Set 2 coincide in sentences B, C, and F in the matter of *have* + -n, modal + -0, and modal + *have* -0 + -n respectively. They are distinguished from each other in sentences A, D, E, and G with Set 1 consisting of *be* + -n and Set 2 consisting of *be* + -ing.

The last example of contiguous discontinuous strings is in successive continuous strings with the expanded predicate modal + aux + aux + aux + V (Set 3) which consists of Set 1 and Set 2. The sentence example is *The star will have been being seen*.

being seen. Set 3 is distinguished from both of the other two sets by the occurrence of *be* + *be*. Two details in connection with *be* + *be* are that (1) the verb following the second *be* is V-n, and (2) the second *be* is *be-ing*. *Be* + V-n (1) in Set 3 is similar to *be* + V-ing in Set 2; both have the discontinuous string *be* + -ing. Discontinuous strings *be* + -n (1) and *be* + -ing (2) are in complementary distribution in Set 1 and Set 2 with *be* + -n in Set 1 and *be* + -ing in Set 2. They are in supplementary relationship in Set 3 with (1) being nearer the verb than (2) is.

- Set 1: The chicken is eaten (1)
- Set 2: The chicken is eating (2)
- Set 3: The chicken is being eaten (2) (1)

Set 3 (X)

- 3A. The team is being beaten
- 3D. The movie has been being shown
- 3E. The plan will be being drawn
- 3G. The star will have been being seen

Set 3 (Y)

- 3A. The team is be-ing beat-n
- 3D. The movie has be-n be-ing show-n
- 3E. The plan will be-p be-ing draw-n
- 3G. The star will have-p be-n be-ing see-n

Set 3 (Z)

	Subject	Predicate			condition		
		modal + auxiliary + auxiliary + auxiliary + verb					
		<u>have</u>	<u>be</u>	<u>be</u>			
3A			<u>be</u>	<u>be-ing</u>	<u>V-n</u>	(2) (1)	
3D		<u>have</u>	<u>be-n</u>	<u>be-ing</u>	<u>V-n</u>	(3) (2) (1)	
3E		<u>modal</u>	<u>be-p</u>	<u>be-ing</u>	<u>V-n</u>	(4) (2) (1)	
3G		<u>modal</u>	<u>have-p</u>	<u>be-n</u>	<u>be-ing</u>	<u>V-p</u>	(4) (3) (2) (1)

It has been mentioned above that the continuous string *be* + *be* + V occurs in the language; sentence examples containing *be* + *be* + V as part of their predicate expansion, nevertheless, are not by any means frequent. (See first installment.) Similarly are those that have continuous strings *have* + *be* + *be* + V, modal + *be* + *be* + V, and modal + *have* +

be + *be* + V. This infrequency also applies to discontinuous strings *bes*, + *be-ing* + V-n (3E), and modal + *have*-o + *be*-n + *be-ing* + V-n (3G).

Do does not occur in a continuous string of more than two members, and does occur only in aux + V. In the formation of a discontinuous string with *do*, the inflected

part of its immediately following member is -0. The discontinuous string is *do + -0* (do).

Mary does go

(Y)

Mary does go-0

(Z)

Subject Predicate condition
 auxiliary + verb
 do
 do + V-0 (do)

Predicate expansion with discontinuous strings may be stated as the operation of 2-member units. Minimal expansion is auxiliary or modal + the inflectional suffix of the immediately following member. Longer expansions in which *do* does not participate are contiguous, complementary, and supplementary formations of the four formulas

- (1) be + -n
- (2) be + -ing
- (3) have + -n
- (4) modal + -0

in a specific positional arrangement, with (1) being the nearest to the verb and (4) the farthest away from it. Nevertheless, predicate expansion with discontinuous strings must also account for *do + -0*. There are now five discontinuous strings.

- (1) be + -n
- (2) be + -ing
- (3) have + -n
- (4) modal + -0
- (5) do + -0

Three redundancies occur among these five discontinuous strings. First, *be* is redundant in *He is gone* and *He is going*

He is gone be + -n
He is going be + -ing

Be + -n and *be + -ing* can be simplified to

be + 

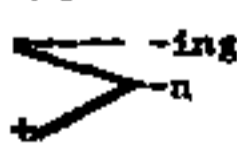
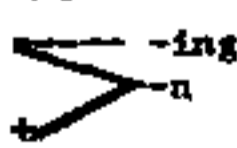
Second, -n is redundant in *He is gone* and *He has gone*.

He is gone be + -n
He has gone have + -n

Be + -n and *have + -n* can be simplified to

be + 
have + 



The two simplified schemes can be further reduced to

be + 
have + 

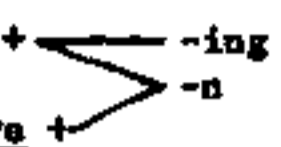
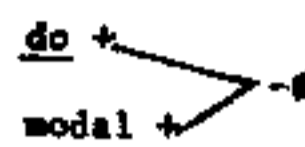
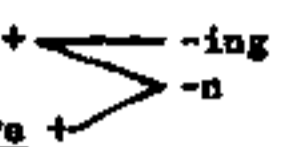
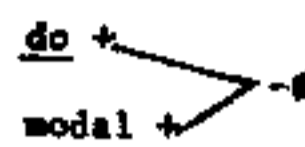
Third, -0 is redundant in *He does go*, *He will go*, and *He can go*.

He does go do + -0
He will go modal + -0
He can go modal + -0

Do + -0 and modal + -0 can be simplified to

do + 
modal + 

The formation of the five discontinuous strings using *be*, *have*, *do*, *will* and *can* is combined into

be +  do + 
have +  modal + 

Auxiliaries *be*, *have*, and *do* and modals *will* and *can* as preceding members, and -ing, -n, and -0 as following members in discontinuous strings are tabulated below.

preceding following	<u>can</u>	<u>will</u>	<u>do</u>	<u>have</u>	<u>be</u>
-ing	-	-	-	-	+
-n	-	-	-	+	+
-0	+	+	+	-	-

-ing and -n are both nasals. They can be represented by -N. When *be* is the preceding member, -N is either -ing or -n; when *have* is the preceding member, -N is -n. The tabulation above can be reduced to

preceding following	<u>can</u>	<u>will</u>	<u>do</u>	<u>have</u>	<u>be</u>
-N	-	-	-	+	+
-0	+	+	+	-	-

There are two complementary redundancies in the above information. One is that Fries included these five words among his function words, Group B. The five words can be represented by B. The other is that the immediately following member of *be* and *have* is -N, and that of *do*, *will*, and *can* is -0. (+) can be the occurrence of -N, and (-) can be the non-occurrences of -N. (-) -N is (+) -0.

For tabulation purpose to detail occurrences and non-occurrences of -N, specific words are called for. -0 can be deleted.

preceding following	<u>can</u>	<u>will</u>	<u>do</u>	<u>have</u>	<u>be</u>
-N	-	-	-	+	+

For simplicity, in grammatical formulation, grouping the five words under B takes precedence over (3) and (-) for occurrences and on-occurrences of -N. Both -N and -0 are represented.

preceding following	B
-N	+
-0	+

When -N occurs, B is *be* or *have*; when -0 occurs, B is *do*, *will*, or *can*. The two formulas are B + -N and B + -0. B is redundant in the two formulas. The revised formula for discontinuous strings is

B + 

(continued on page 12)

Supplementation

(continued from page 10)

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