MORPHOLOGICAL AND SYNTACTIC COM
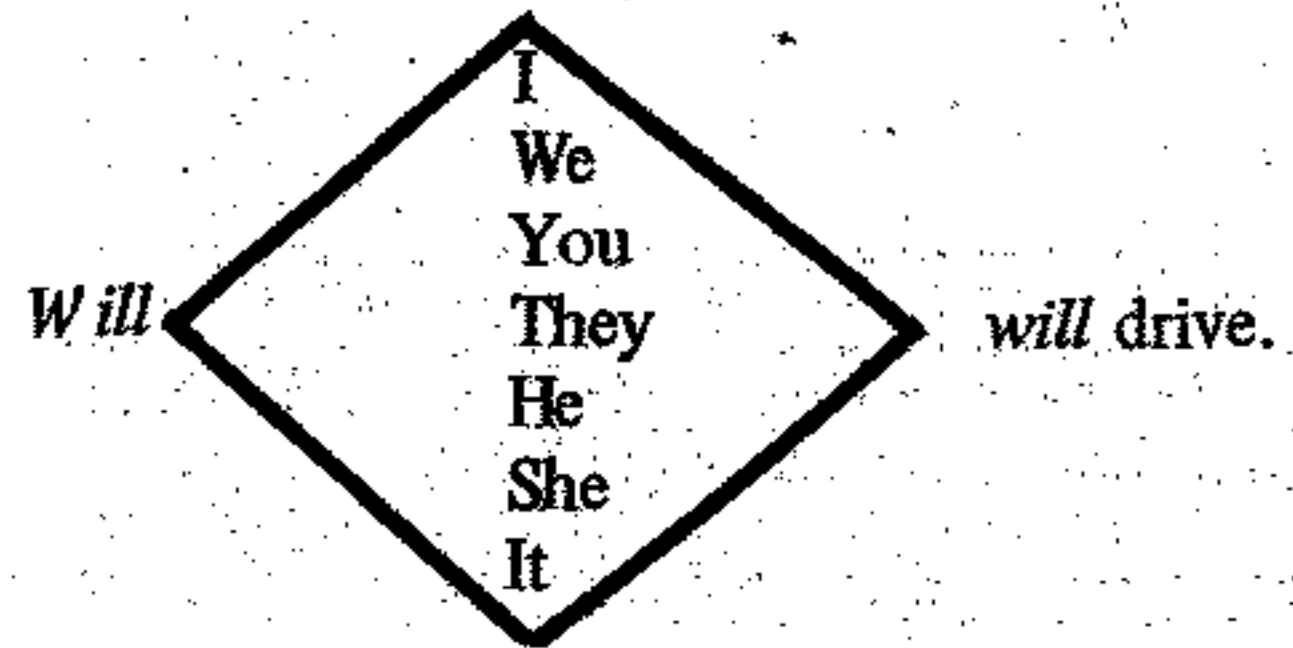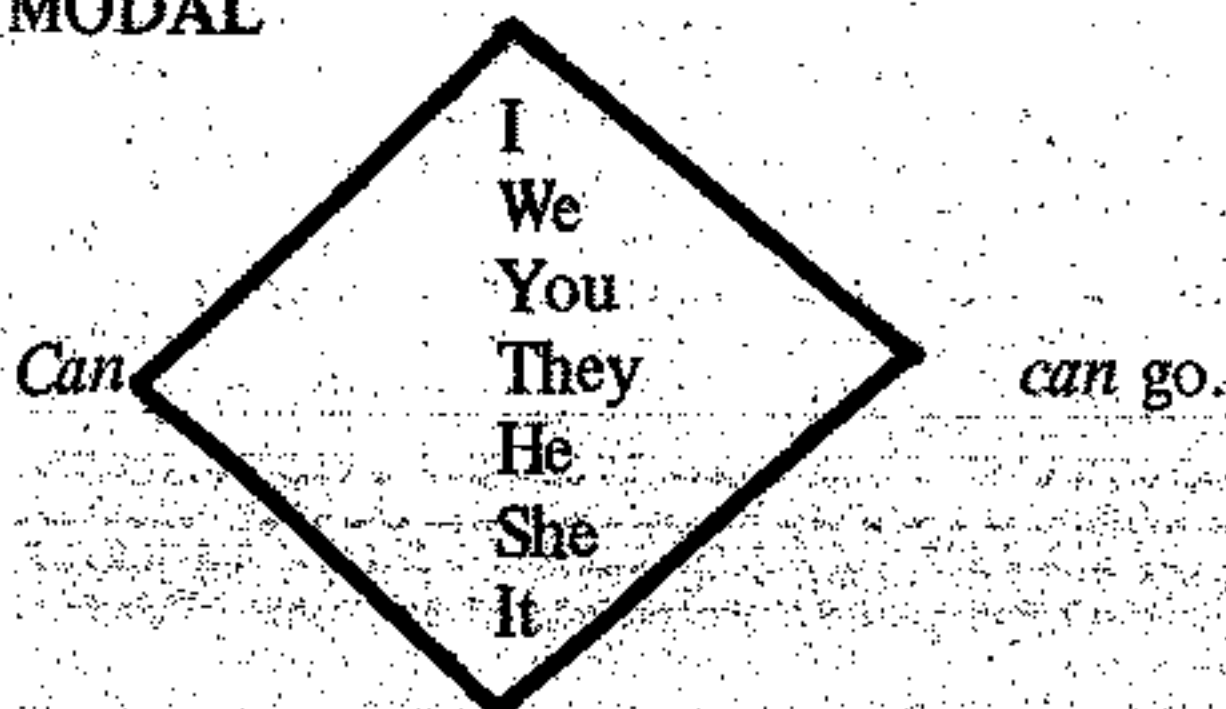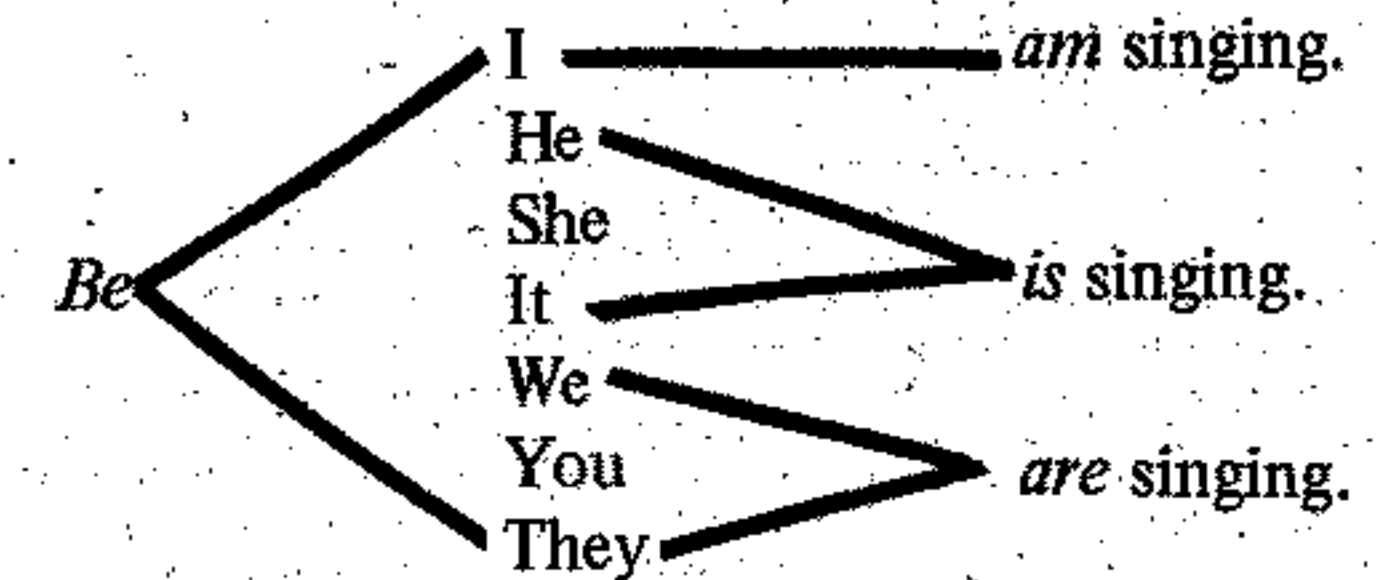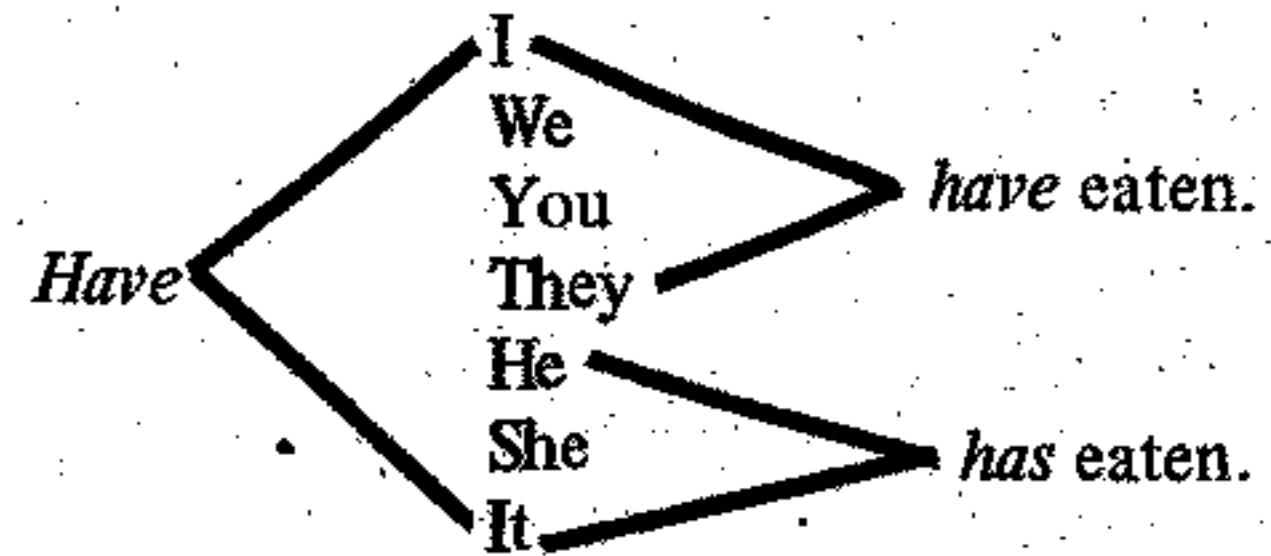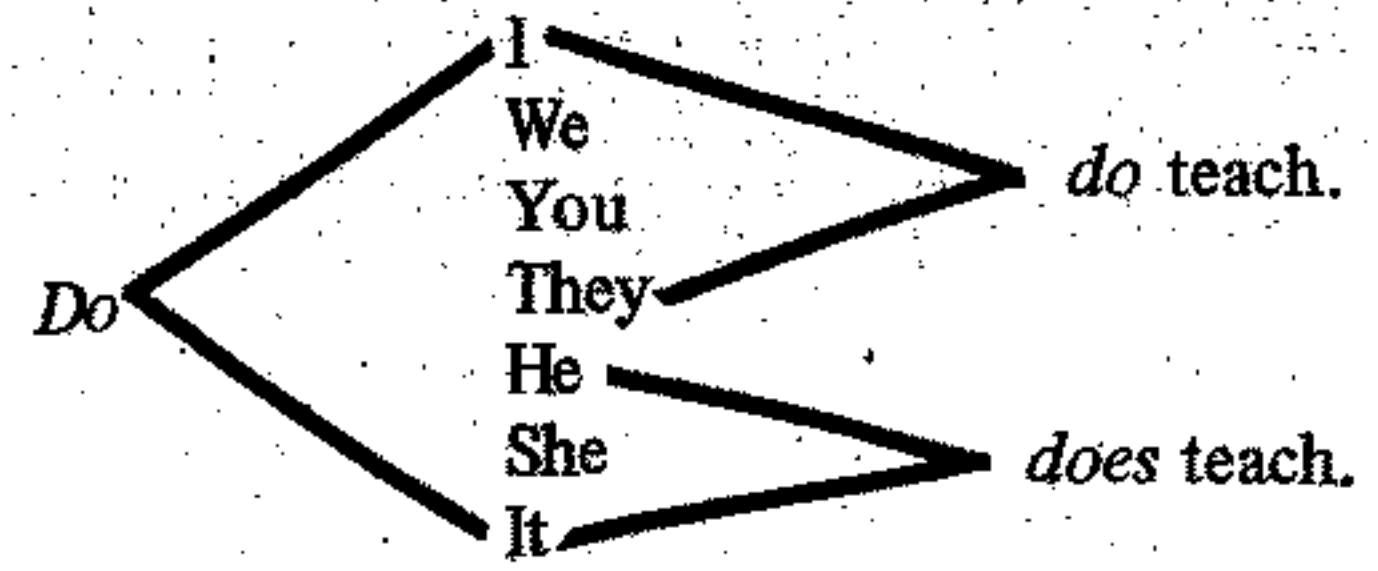# THREE AUXILIARIES

By Dr. Yao Shen

The subject of this short article is the two modals: *can* and *will*, and the three auxiliaries: *do, have,* and *be.* Their string formation and occurrence in sentences have been treated in detail in two previous series of articles in this journal. (See Yao Shen, "Supplementation of Opposites in Simple Predicate Expansion," Vol. 4, Nos. 1-4 (1970-71), and Alice C. Pack, "The Functions of Be, Have, Do, Can and Will," Vol. 7, Nos. 1-3 (1973-74). The present article attempts to demonstrate the morphological and syntactic complementation of these five words as modals and auxiliaries, Their morphological forms are of two major categories: 1) the occurrence and non-occurrence of subject-agreement forms that distinguish modals and auxiliaries, and 2) the occurrence and non-occurrence of participle forms as the second member in a two-member string in which the first member is a modal or an auxiliary. The syntactic arrangements are those of the five words in verb strings. The purpose of this short article is to call attention to the individual characteristics of these five words in sentences.

Morphologically modals and auxiliaries are distinguished from each other by the fact that the former does not have subject-agreement, the latter does.

MODAL

Can — I / We / You / They / He / She / It — can go.

Will — I / We / You / They / He / She / It — will drive.

AUXILIARY

Do — I / We / You / They / He / She / It — do teach. / does teach.

Have — I / We / You / They / He / She / It — have eaten. / has eaten.

Be — I / He / She / It / We / You / They — am singing. / is singing. / are singing.

The occurrence (+) and non-occurrence (-) of subject-agreement (S-a) that distinguish modals and auxiliaries can be represented in the following way.

	S-a
Modal	—
Auxiliary	+

PLEMENTATION OF TWO MODALS AND

Modals and auxiliaries occur in two-member strings.

When the first member in a two-member string is a modal, the following member is in the base form, having no suffix, -∅. Modal + -∅. The base form of a word must be distinguished from its infinitive. An infinitive is marked by *to*: *to go*; a base form is not: *go*.

> *can + -∅*: John can go-∅.
> *will + -∅*: John will go-∅.

When the first member in a two-member string is an auxiliary, the suffix of the following member is -∅, -n, or -ing: Auxiliary + -∅, Auxiliary + -n, or Auxiliary + -ing.

The suffix of the member following auxiliary *do* is -∅. (The word is in the base form.)

> *do + -∅*: John does go-∅.

The suffix of the member following auxiliary *have* is -n (the past participle form).

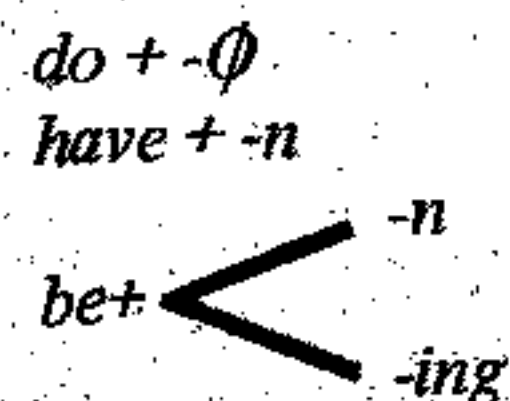> *have + -n*: John has go-ne.

The suffix of the member following auxiliary *be* is either -n (the past participle form or -ing (the present participle form).

> *be + -n*: John is go-ne.
> *be + -ing*: John is go-ing.

The complementation of the suffixes of the members following their respective auxiliaries is as follows:

> *do + -∅*
> *have + -n*
> be+ < -n / -ing

The above information is summarized below according to the occurrence (+) or non-occurrence (-) of -n or -ing (the participle forms) in the second member following *do*, *have*, and *be* as the first member.

1st member	2nd member -n	-ing
do	-	-
have	+	-
be	+	+

The complementation of the morphological behavior in both subject-agreement (S-a) that distinguishes modals and auxiliaries,

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and that of the participle forms -n, and -ing in the members following a modal or an auxiliary: *do*, *have*, or *be* are summarized below.

	S-a	-n	-ing
Modal	-	-	-
do	+	-	-
have	+	+	-
be	+	+	+

Syntactically a verb string begins with a modal or an auxiliary carrying tense, and ends with the verb. The following are some examples.

	Tense		Verb
John	does		go.
John	has		gone.
John	is		gone.
John	was		going.
John	can	be	going.
John	had	been	going.
John	would have	been	gone.

Modals do not succeed each other, that is, there is no occurrence (-) of modals in a successive sequence.

2nd member .   can   will
1st·member
  can   -   ·
  will   -   -

Auxiliaries (Aux) may or may not succeed another auxiliary.

Auxiliary *do* does not occur with another auxiliary in a sequence.

	Aux	Verb	
May	does	do	the dishes.
They	did	have	some money.
(You)	do	be	careful.

Auxiliary *have* does not succeed itself.

	Aux	Verb	
The woman	has	had	money.

Auxiliary *be* can succeed itself.

	Aux	Aux	Verb
The·paper	was	being	typed.

When auxiliaries *have* and *be* both occur, *have* precedes *be*.

	Aux	Aux	Verb
The papers	have	been	done.
John	has	been	having fun.
The girls	had	been	being earnest.

The following summarizes the occurrence (+) and non-occurrence (-) of successive sequences of the three auxiliaries: *do, have,* and *be*.

2nd member	do	have	be
1st member			
do	-	-	-
have	-	-	+
be	-	-	+

In a verb string in which a modal and an auxiliary both occur, the modal begins the string; the auxiliary follows. However, the auxiliary is either *have* or *be*, but not *do*. The first sentence below with * is an example indicating this characteristic of *do*.

	Modal	Aux	Verb
*John	will	do	go.
John	can	be	going.
John	will	be	going.
John	could	be	gone.
John	would	have	gone.

The following summarizes the occurrence (+) and non-occurrence (-) of a modal *can* or *will*, followed by an auxiliary: *do, have* or *be*.

2nd member	do	have	be
1st member			
Modal		+	+

A possible long verb string in Present Day English that begins with a modal indicating tense, followed by a string of three auxiliaries, and ends with the verb is as follows.

Tense					Verb
The paper	will	have	been	being	typed.
John	could	have	been	being	driven.

Between modal *can* and modal *will* there is also a complementation when they occur before auxiliaries *have* and *be*. Present tense form of *can* normally does not occur before auxiliary *have*. The first sentence below with * is an example indicating this characteristic of *can*. However, the past tense of *can*, and both the present tense and the past tense of *will* all occur before auxiliary *have*.

Present tense
  * John can   have driven it.
    John will   have driven it.
Past tense
    John could have driven it.
    John would have driven it.

This exception in the present tense form of *can* preceding auxiliary *have*, nevertheless, does not apply to auxiliary *be*.

Present tense
    John can   be driving it.
    John will   be driving it.
Past tense
    John could be driving it.
    John would be driving it.

The following shows the occurrence (+) and non-occurrence (-) of the two tense forms of *can* and *will* preceding auxiliaries *have* and *be*.

2nd member	have	be
1st member		
can	-	+
will	+	+
could	+	+
would	+	+

Morphological and. . .

Words in sentences occur in strings. However, it is important to remember that among words there can be morphological and syntactic complementations or both. It is therefore hoped that this article has demonstrated this point. The examples used are two modals and three auxiliaries as they occur in sentences.