

Understanding English Grammar: A Linguistic Introduction

Additional Exercises for Chapter 11: Auxiliaries

1. Functions of *do*, *have* and *be*

The following examples contain lexical and/or auxiliary uses of *do*, *have* and *be*. Circle each lexical use of these forms, and underline each non-modal auxiliary use. For each auxiliary usage, indicate its function (dummy, emphatic, pro-verb, perfect aspect, progressive aspect, passive voice, or copula).

- a. Don't let the beard fool you.
- b. You are deemed unfit and I hereby relieve you of your command.
- c. We'll be the ones to settle it.
- d. Other people are being kind of optimistic.
- e. It is a haunted game, in which every player is measured against the ghosts of all who have gone before.
- f. I don't feel like parting with it.
- g. I have no gate key.
- h. It's not a subtle thing that you're doing.
- i. A shadow and a threat have been growing in my mind.
- j. Is he going to die?
- k. Has it got any sports in it?
- l. That does put a damper on our relationship.
- m. Do be a good boy when we are visiting Aunt Rose.
- n. Do you hear that Fezzik?
- o. My grandmother has more attitude than you do!
- p. You haven't done the dishes yet.

2. Identifying plain modal, non-modal and semi-auxiliaries

Find a coherent English paragraph of 200 words or more on the internet. Print it out double-spaced, then circle all the plain modal auxiliaries, underline the non-modal auxiliaries and draw rectangles around the semi-auxiliaries. Be careful not to underline lexical usages of *be*, *do* and *have*.

3. To be or not to be an auxiliary

The following sentences illustrate a few syntactic characteristics of auxiliaries not mentioned in Chapter 11. Along with the NICE properties discussed in section 11.3, these additional characteristics also distinguish auxiliaries from full lexical verbs. Identify the characteristics in question, and test "copular *be*" to see if it possesses them or not. What is your conclusion?

- a. I can so see the mountains. *I (can) see so the mountains.
- b. He did so give us his word. *He gave so us his word.
- c. She'll leave tomorrow. *She'ves tomorrow (trying to say "She leaves tomorrow").
- d. He'd better leave tomorrow. *He'd a new car (trying to mean "He had a new car.")
- e. We've got to get back to the garden. *We't back to the garden (trying to say "We got back . . .").

4. Box diagrams and trees

Draw full box diagrams (or tree diagrams, if your professor prefers) of the following examples from Chapter 11:

- a. I can see clearly now.
- b. May I help you?
- c. You're sure to meet a fiendish surprise.
- d. She didn't tell me anything.
- e. Have you guys tried it yet?
- f. We are breaking new ground here.
- g. By then the bill will have been being considered.
- h. I shouldn't ought to of let no stranger shoot my dog.
- i. She might have been there.
- j. She is a doctor.
- k. He just be's himself.
- l. I already did the dishes.

5. Invent your own sentences

Try to think of novel, grammatical, and understandable sentences (different from those mentioned in your class, in other exercises, or in the textbook) that meet the following criteria:

- a. A copular sentence with three auxiliaries.
- b. A sentence with three plain modal auxiliaries (Hint: This requires combining clauses).
- c. A one-clause sentence with both lexical and auxiliary *be* in it.
- d. A one-clause sentence with both lexical and auxiliary *do* in it.
- e. A one-clause sentence with both lexical and auxiliary *have* in it.
- f. A sentence with *be*, *do* and *have* in it.
- g. A sentence that describes a "future in the past" situation.

Extra credit: Compose a coherent paragraph that uses *all* the modal, non-modal and semi-auxiliaries mentioned in Chapter 11.