

Lexical and auxiliary verbs

Certain special properties, the '**NICE**' properties, distinguish lexical from auxiliary verbs:

- N** Special **N**egation syntax, preceding clause-negating *not* (*He is not in*), and special **N**egation morphology with the *·n't* suffix (*He isn't in*).
- I** Takes **I**nitial ('Inverted') position in **I**ndependent polar **I**nterrogatives (etc.): *Do you love me?*
- C** Special '**C**ode' interpretation of **C**omplement omission: taken to be ellipsis (*Yes, you are* [—])
- E** Special **E**mphasis phonology — heavy stress signals **E**mphasized polarity (*But you **cán** help!*)

Lexical and auxiliary verbs

NON-CORE AUXILIARIES

The NICE properties are found with certain **non-core** uses of auxiliaries. Illustrating just with inversion:

Is *he* [_{PP} *in?*]

Have *you* [_{NP} *any idea?*]

Would *you rather not?*

The underlined verb is not ‘helping’ any main-clause lexical verb!

These items invert, but take PP or NP or full tensed Clause complements (bracketed).

If the underlined words are in ‘Aux’, what is head of VP?

The Dependent-Auxiliary analysis

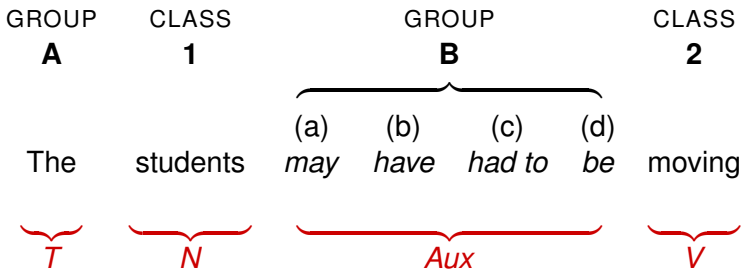
Numerous works have treated auxiliaries not as verbs, but as non-verbal dependents — little dingle-dangles found in clauses preceding the verb.

This analysis cannot be motivated by the **NICE** properties.

Where did it come from?

The Dependent-Auxiliary analysis

It seems to go back at least to Charles C. Fries, *The Structure of English* (1952). Fries gives this analysis of auxiliary order:



Auxiliaries are not treated as verbs ('Class 2'), but as nonverb dependents ('GROUP B'), function words associated with verbs.

(N.B.: including *have to* in this class is simply a mistake.)

The Dependent-Auxiliary analysis

Fries's analysis can be compared with the famous phrase structure rule from Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures*:

Aux → *C(M)(have + en)(be + ing)(be + en)*

The Dependent-Auxiliary analysis

Fries's analysis can be compared with the famous phrase structure rule from Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures*:

Aux → *C(M)(have + en)(be + ing)(be + en)*

This largely agrees with Fries (but corrects the error of including the non-auxiliary sequence *have to*)

Why is it an error to put *have to* in among the auxiliaries?

The *have to* construction

Why is it an error to put *have to* in among the auxiliaries?

First we try the 'inversion' test: can this *have* begin a clause?

We have to get this done by tonight.

(%)* *Have we to get this done by tonight?*

Do we have to get this done by tonight?

Conclusion: looks like a non-auxiliary for almost anyone who isn't (i) British, (ii) from the upper classes, and (iii) over 70.

The *have to* construction

Next we test with the syntax of negation: Can *not* follow the *have*, or do we need to add auxiliary *do*?

We have to get this done by tonight.

**We have not to get this done by tonight.*

We don't have to get this done by tonight.

Conclusion: definitely non-auxiliary behavior.

The *have to* construction

We might as well also test with the morphology of negation:
Can *have* take the *n't* suffix?

We have to get this done by tonight.

(%)* *We haven't to get this done by tonight.*

Conclusion: definitely non-auxiliary behavior.

(Google reveals occasional cases of things like *we haven't to forget* apparently meaning “we mustn't forget” — but they are mostly on sites in places like India and Somalia, not in Britain or the USA.)

The *have to* construction

As for the ‘Code’ interpretation of leaving out the complement clause, as in

We’ll get this done by tonight; we have to ____.

Doesn’t tell us much: It could be that *to* is an auxiliary, but we don’t know about *have*.

Similarly, emphasis does not tell us much; but heavy stress on *We **háve** to get this done by tonight* seems to emphasize which verb to pick, rather than what the polarity is, and that is non-auxiliary behavior.

The *have to* construction

Why is assuming that *have to* is an auxiliary even worse than taking the *have* part to be an auxiliary?

There may be a few older speakers who accept these:

% *Have we to get this done by tonight?*

% *We haven't to get this done by tonight.*

But there are absolutely none who accept these:

* *Have to we get this done by tonight?*

* *We have ton't get this done by tonight.*

There can be absolutely no doubt about the fact that *have to* is not a lexical unit; it is two distinct words.

More on the different senses of *have*

Notice the contrasting data for *have* in its different senses:

CAUSATIVITY

They had it repaired.

* *They hadn't it repaired.* [cf.: *They didn't have it repaired.*]

* *Had they it repaired?* [cf.: *Did they have it repaired?*]

SEXUAL CONQUEST

That night Rex had her again.

* *That night Rex hadn't her at all.* [cf.: *Rex didn't have her.*]

* *Had Rex her that night?* [cf.: *Did Rex have her that night?*]

INFECTION

My dog has rabies.

* *My dog hasn't rabies.* [cf.: *My dog doesn't have rabies.*]

* *Has my dog rabies?* [cf.: *Does my dog have rabies?*]

More on the different senses of *have*

CONCRETE POSSESSION

Present tense:

He has a Saab.

* *He hasn't a Saab.* [cf.: *He doesn't have a Saab.*

* *Has he a Saab?* [cf.: *Does he have a Saab?*

Preterite tense:

He had a Saab.

* *He hadn't a Saab.* [cf.: *He didn't have a Saab.*

* *Had he a Saab?* [cf.: *Did he have a Saab?*

However, things seem a little different in one case...

More on the different senses of *have*

ABSTRACT POSSESSION

You have a real chance.

You haven't a chance. ~ *You don't have a chance.*

Have you a chance? ~ *Do you have a chance?*

Surely you have some idea.

I haven't any idea. ~ *I don't have any idea.*

Have you any idea? ~ *Do you have any idea?*

Nonetheless, it's not so clear in the preterite:

Surely you had some idea.

? *I hadn't any idea.* ~ *I didn't have any idea.*

? *Had you any idea?* ~ *Did you have any idea?*

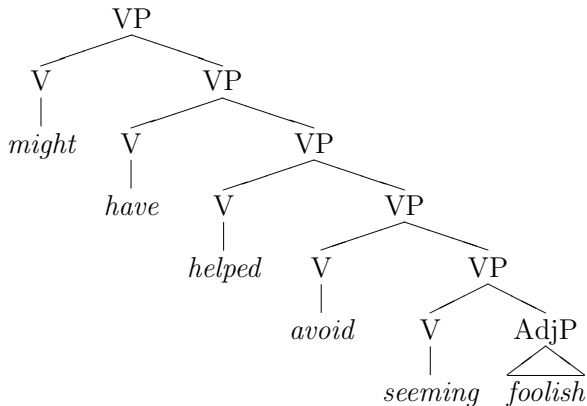
More on the different senses of *have*

In 1954, during the infamous witch hunts against communists by Senator Joseph McCarthy, US Army attorney Joseph Welch (defending a young man in his Boston law office who had once belonged to the National Lawyers Guild, allegedly “the legal mouthpiece of the Communist Party”), said this:

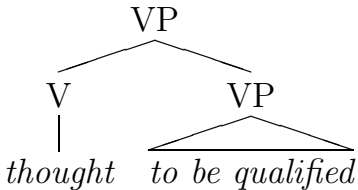
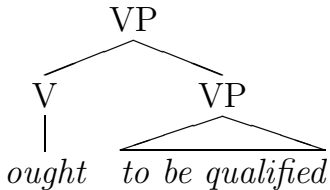
*Until this moment, Senator, I think I never really gauged your cruelty or your recklessness. Let us not assassinate this lad further, Senator. You've done enough. **Have you no sense of decency, sir?** At long last, have you left no sense of decency?*

What does this show about English over the last half-century?

The Catenative-Auxiliary analysis



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The Catenative-Auxiliary analysis

Some auxiliary verbs take a **bare infinitival**, a couple take a **to-infinitival**. Some auxiliary verbs take a **bare infinitival**, many take a **to-infinitival**.

	taking bare infinitival	taking <i>to</i> -infinitival
lexical	<i>have</i> ; <i>hear</i> ; <i>help</i> ; <i>let</i> ; <i>make</i> ; <i>see</i> ...	<i>dare</i> ; <i>hope</i> ; <i>like</i> ; <i>need</i> ; <i>seem</i> ; <i>try</i> ; <i>want</i> ...
auxiliary	<i>can</i> ; <i>dare</i> ; <i>do</i> ; <i>may</i> ; <i>must</i> ; <i>need</i> ; <i>shall</i> ; <i>will</i>	<i>is</i> (modal use); <i>ought</i>

Note also these idiomatic combinations:

be + *going* and BrE *have* + *got*: *to*-infinitival

had + *better* and *would* + *rather* / *sooner* / *as soon*: bare infinitival

The Catenative-Auxiliary analysis

The catenative-auxiliary analysis claims the auxiliaries are all verbs and there is **one clause per verb**.

A powerful argument from negation supports this: Each clause can be separately negated.

I have always taken bribes. (no negation)

I have not always taken bribes. (*have* negated)

I have always not taken bribes. (*takenegated*)

I have not always not taken bribes. (both negated)

Totally different senses!

The Catenative-Auxiliary analysis

The dependent-auxiliary analysis has no explanation for negation facts such as those just illustrated with the bribery examples.

Nor can it account for various other facts to do with temporal specification and constituent structure.

(On this topic, read *CGEL*, pp. 1214–1220.)