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Auxiliaries are one of the most complex areas of English syntax. Disagreement over both the principles and details of their grammar has been substantial. Anthony Warner here offers a new and detailed account of both their synchronic and diachronic properties. He first argues that lexical properties are central to their grammar, which is relatively nonabstract. He then traces in detail the history of processes of grammaticalization in their development, and claims most notably that we can identify a group of auxiliaries in English from an early period on formal, not just semantic, grounds.

This book meets the dual challenge of accounting for both the grammar and the history of the English auxiliary. It will be essential reading for all those interested in English syntax and its history.

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ENGLISH AUXILIARIES

Structure and history

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Contents

	<i>Preface</i>	page xi
	<i>List of abbreviations and references to primary texts</i>	xiii
1	Basic properties of English auxiliaries	1
1.1	Introduction	1
1.2	Traditional criteria for auxiliaries	3
1.3	Auxiliaries as a word class	9
1.4	The semantics of modals	13
1.5	Problems and historical context of analysis	19
2	The morphosyntactic independence of auxiliaries	33
2.1	Ordering and categorial availability	33
2.2	Morphosyntactic independence of auxiliaries	39
2.3	Inflected auxiliaries as ‘anaphoric islands’	49
2.4	Implications for modals of this account	58
2.5	Recent history	62
3	A formal interlude: the grammar of English auxiliaries	69
3.1	Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar	69
3.2	Morphosyntactic features	73
3.3	The lexical structuring of auxiliaries	78
3.4	Auxiliary constructions	82
3.5	Conclusion	91
4	Distinguishing auxiliaries and verbs in early English	92
4.1	Introduction	92
4.2	The ancestors of present-day auxiliaries	94
4.3	Verblike characteristics	97
4.4	Word classes	103

viii *Contents*

5	Identifying an ‘auxiliary group’ before Modern English: sentence-level syntax	110
5.1	Elliptical constructions	111
5.2	Transparency to impersonal constructions	122
5.3	Significance	132
6	Identifying an ‘auxiliary group’ before Modern English: further properties of ‘modals’	135
6.1	Subcategorization for the plain infinitive	136
6.2	Preterite-present morphology	140
6.3	Restriction to finite forms	144
6.4	The developing independence of preterite forms	148
6.5	Negative forms, and occurrence with <i>do</i>	150
6.6	Conclusion	152
7	The developing modal semantics of early English ‘modals’	156
7.1	Introduction	156
7.2	Verbs of group A and typically modal meanings in Old English	158
7.3	The modal group and typically modal meanings in Middle English	174
7.4	Modern English developments	180
7.5	Conclusion	182
8	The status of modals and auxiliaries before Modern English	184
8.1	The full range of properties	184
8.2	Notional correspondences: identifying the group	185
8.3	The special position of finiteness	189
8.4	A speculative historical sketch to the fifteenth century	192
8.5	Comments on grammaticalization	195
9	Auxiliaries in early Modern English and the rise of <i>do</i>	198
9.1	Apparent generalizations of earlier properties	198
9.2	New developments	206
9.3	A category-based account of early Modern English	209
9.4	Lightfoot revisited	218
9.5	Periphrastic <i>do</i>	219
9.6	Conclusions	234

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-10321-3 - English Auxiliaries: Structure and History
Anthony R. Warner
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

		<i>Contents</i>
10	Conclusions	236
	<i>Notes</i>	240
	<i>References</i>	268
	<i>Index of scholars cited</i>	284
	<i>General index</i>	287

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-10321-3 - English Auxiliaries: Structure and History
Anthony R. Warner
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

For Trish, Kate, David and Philip

Preface

Auxiliaries (words such as *must*, *shall*, *is*) are central to English grammar. They are also puzzlingly complex in their behaviour. So much so that disagreement about their nature has been radical, and they remain a major area of difficulty. The interest of this area is compounded by the possibility of working out its history in some detail, given the abundant data available for earlier periods of English. It is clear that the area was much less well defined in earlier times; indeed it has even been claimed that modals were not to be distinguished grammatically from straightforward verbs at the earliest periods for which we have substantial records. Thus change has apparently been considerable. This means that the process of change will itself be important and interesting, and that we may achieve some insights into the nature of the modern category from an understanding of its development. So there is a major twofold challenge: to provide an appropriate synchronic account of English auxiliaries, and to show how this area of grammar developed historically. These are the twin challenges taken up in this book.

First, then, I have established a new account of the working of the modern auxiliary system. Its distinctive claim is that although auxiliaries carry apparently verbal categories such as 'finite' or 'infinitive' these are not inflectional in auxiliaries but are lexically specified, so that forms such as *should* or *been* behave in some respects like independent items. This leads to a simple, new and nonabstract account of a range of the properties of auxiliaries in terms of their distinctness from verbs, and to a fundamentally 'lexical' account of major properties of this 'grammatical' area. Secondly, I have investigated the historical development of this system. This has meant both justifying appropriate analyses for earlier stages of the language, and providing a historical interpretation. So I give a detailed review (and reinterpretation) of relevant data in the history of auxiliaries, and add to that some more speculative comments on changes in their categoriality and the rationale for such changes. My most striking historical claim is that we can identify a group of 'auxiliaries' in English from an early period on formal (not just semantic) grounds. So I disagree with Lightfoot's (1979) seminal claim that the category of modals was

xii *Preface*

established *de novo* rather suddenly in the sixteenth century, while finding more evidence for a shift in the nature of their categoryhood at this period. My account reconciles two puzzling aspects of the development of this class: that it is apparently a gradual, long-term matter, but that there is a clustering of changes focussed on the sixteenth century. And *en route* there is something to say on such matters as the development of 'periphrastic' *do* and of the *double-ing* constraint.

I am grateful to those who have helped to improve the book: to David Lightfoot and Frank Palmer, who read the whole book and gave me very useful comments; to Roger Lass, who gave me some specific and valuable advice; to Bob Borsley, Gerald Gazdar, Carl Pollard for their very helpful comments on particular sections of the book; to my colleagues Patrick Griffiths and Steve Harlow for a variety of discussions over the years; and to Robert E. Lewis, editor-in-chief of the *Middle English Dictionary*, for kindly supplying me with information from the *MED*'s files. Needless to say I have not taken all the advice offered me, and whatever you think is cranky, muddle-headed or plain wrong is my fault.

I am grateful to my colleagues at York for teaching-free terms in 1986 (Chapters 5 and much of 6), 1989 (Chapters 2 and much of 9) and 1991 (when I finally finished the first draft of the whole). Thank you also to Suzie Roberts (who typed Chapter 7), to Elizabeth McKeown, who helped with the tedious task of transferring the manuscript from one word-processing system to another, and to David Newton for preparing the indexes. Much of Chapter 5 appeared in print as Warner (1992a): I am grateful to John Donald of Edinburgh for permission to republish this material. Finally, thank you to Cambridge University Press for their willingness to tolerate an author who took so much longer than he said he would. I can only plead the novelist's commonplace, that the characters are prone to highjack the plot. The modals, *be* and *have* were simply intolerant of my initial attempts at a swiftly written history. They insisted on having things their way, and our developing relationship took time.

This book is for Trish, who shares my life, which has included more auxiliaries than one human should ask of another, and for Kate, David and Philip, who have allowed me to steal time that should really have been theirs, and who have tolerated an abstracted dad who seemed to care more about *can't* and *won't* than about building a tree house. But the tree house was, after all, completed before the book.

Abbreviations and references to primary texts

General abbreviations

ASW	Akmajian, Steele and Wasow (1979)
BT	<i>An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Based on the Manuscript Collections of the Late Joseph Bosworth</i> , edited and enlarged by T. Northcote Toller. London: Oxford University Press. 1898
BTS	<i>An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Based on the Manuscript Collections of the Late Joseph Bosworth. Supplement</i> , edited by T. Northcote Toller. London: Oxford University Press. 1921, and <i>Enlarged Addenda and Corrigenda to the Supplement</i> , edited by A. Campbell, Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1972
e	early (as in eME: early Middle English)
EDD	<i>The English Dialect Dictionary</i> edited by Joseph Wright. 6 vols. Oxford University Press, 1896–1905
EETS (OS)	Publications of the Early English Texts Society, Ordinary Series
EETS ES	Publications of the Early English Texts Society, Extra Series
EETS SS	Publications of the Early English Texts Society, Supplementary Series
GB	Government–Binding
GPS	Gazdar, Pullum and Sag (1982)
GPSG	Generalized Phrase Structure Grammar
HPSG	Head-driven Phrase Structure Grammar
l	late (as in lME: late Middle English)
M§234	Mitchell (1985: §234)
ME	Middle English (twelfth to fifteenth century)
MED	<i>Middle English Dictionary</i> , ed. by Hans Kurath, Sherman M. Kuhn, Robert E. Lewis and John Reidy. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press (1954–)
ModE	Modern English (sixteenth century to the present)
NE	New English = Modern English (sixteenth century to the present)

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 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

xiv *List of abbreviations*

OE	Old English (records mainly from the ninth to eleventh century)
OED	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i> , ed. by J. A. H. Murray, H. Bradley, W. A. Craigie, and C. T. Onions. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1933
PE	Present-day English
V§345	Visser (1963–73: §345)

References to primary texts

I have often used abbreviations in references to Old English texts: for the major prose texts those of Mitchell (1985 vol. I: xxxiv ff., vol. II: xlv ff.); for minor prose texts those of Healey and Venezky (1980). These are expanded below, as are abbreviated references to the poetry. Citations from later texts are preceded by their date. For Middle English texts I give the dates assigned by the *Middle English Dictionary*. This gives the date of the manuscript without parentheses or the date of composition in parentheses or both. If the presumed or conjectured date of composition is at least twenty-five years earlier than the date of the manuscript, then (for the dictionary's preferred manuscripts) the date of the manuscript is followed in parentheses by the date of composition. But where the date of composition is well established and is less than twenty-five years earlier than the date of the manuscript, only the date of composition is given (in parentheses). Citations from Chaucer and Shakespeare are from the following editions:

The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, ed. F. N. Robinson, 2nd edn, London: Oxford University Press. 1957

William Shakespeare: the Complete Works, ed. Peter Alexander, London and Glasgow: Collins. 1951

For other citations I have given bibliographical information, or have referred the reader to a source such as Visser (1963–73) or *The Oxford English Dictionary*, which contains the citation.

Abbreviations of Old English texts

ÆAdmon 1	Admonitio ad filium spiritualement. <i>The Anglo-Saxon Version of the Hexameron of St. Basil ...</i> , ed. H. W. Norman, London 1848, 32–56
ÆCHom i	<i>The Sermones Catholici or Homilies of Ælfric</i> , vol I, ed. B. Thorpe, London: Ælfric Society. 1844

List of abbreviations xv

ÆCHom ii	<i>Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: the Second Series</i> , ed. M. Godden, EETS SS 5, London 1979
ÆColl	<i>Ælfric's Colloquy</i> , ed. G. N. Garmonsway (Methuen Old English Library) 2nd edn. London: Methuen. 1947
ÆGram	<i>Ælfrics Grammatik und Glossar</i> , ed. J. Zupitza (Sammlung englischer Denkmäler I) Berlin 1880
ÆLS	<i>Ælfric's Lives of Saints</i> , ed. W. W. Skeat, EETS 76, 82, 94, 114, London 1881–1900
ÆTemp	<i>Ælfric's De Temporibus Anni</i> , ed. H. Henel, EETS 213, London 1942
ASPR I	<i>The Junius Manuscript</i> (The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records I), ed. G. P. Krapp, New York: Columbia University Press. 1931
ASPR III	<i>The Exeter Book</i> (The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records III), ed. G. P. Krapp and E. V. K. Dobbie, New York: Columbia University Press. 1936
ASPR IV	<i>Beowulf and Judith</i> (The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records IV), ed. E. V. K. Dobbie, New York: Columbia University Press. 1953
ASPR V	<i>The Paris Psalter and The Meters of Boethius</i> (The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records V), ed. G. P. Krapp, New York: Columbia University Press. 1932
ASPR VI	<i>The Anglo-Saxon Minor Poems</i> (The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records VI), ed. E. V. K. Dobbie, New York: Columbia University Press. 1942
Bede	<i>The Old English Version of Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> , ed. T. Miller, EETS 95, 96, 110, 111. London 1890–8
BIHom	<i>The Blickling Homilies</i> , ed R. Morris, EETS 58, 63, 73. London 1874–80
Bo	<i>King Ælfred's Old English Version of Boethius' De Consolatione Philosophiae</i> , ed. W. J. Sedgefield, Oxford 1899
ChronA	<i>Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel</i> , ed. C. Plummer, Oxford, Clarendon Press 1892–9. The Parker MS: Corpus Christi College, Cambridge 173
ChronE	<i>Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel</i> , ed. C. Plummer, Oxford, Clarendon Press 1892–9. The Laud MS: Bodley Laud Misc. 636

xvi *List of abbreviations*

CP	<i>King Ælfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's Pastoral Care</i> , ed. H. Sweet, EETS 45, 50, London 1871
GD	<i>Bischof Waferths von Worcester Uebersetzung der Dialoge Gregors des Grossen</i> (Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Prosa 5), ed. H. Hecht, Leipzig and Hamburg 1900–7
HomS 34 (Peterson VercHom 19)	Sermon for Monday in Rogationtide. The Unpublished Homilies of the Vercelli Book, ed. P. W. Peterson, New York dissertation 1951, 43–51
LawGer	<i>Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen</i> , ed. F. Liebermann, Halle. 1903–16, 453–5
LawICn	<i>Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen</i> , ed. F. Liebermann, Halle. 1903–16, 278–306
Or	<i>King Ælfred's Orosius</i> , ed. H. Sweet, EETS 79. London 1883
WHom	<i>The Homilies of Wulfstan</i> , ed. D. Bethurum, Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1957