A Framework-free Grammatical Analysis of English Sentence and Auxiliary Verb Patterns for use in ESL Education

Peter Foley

Q9621831

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Betty Adcock

Supervisor

Gavin Austin

Co-supervisor

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A framework-free grammatical analysis of English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns for use in ESL education

Full name of researcher

Peter Llewellyn Foley

Degree

Master of Learning and Development

Faculty

Faculty of Education, University of Southern Queensland

Supervisor

Betty Adcock

Co-supervisor

Gavin Austin

Student declaration

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Summary

This qualitative research arose out of my personal difficulties with understanding contemporary descriptions of Standard English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns and with explaining these descriptions to my ESL students. The research addressed the question: How can the knowledge that we possess about sentence and auxiliary verb patterns be presented more efficiently and simply for ESL students? The outcome of this research was the creation of a model that highlights the similarities and differences between syntactical sentence and auxiliary verb patterns and uses everyday language to explain the semantics of these patterns.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and statement of problem

1.1. Introduction

A casual look through a reference book on English grammar will tell you that there is a lot to learn. For a literate native speaker, gaining this knowledge is probably just a matter of being dedicated and spending the time to read. However, if you are not a native speaker, then reading these texts is likely to be a momentous task. Presumably, many non-native speakers would avoid this and would seek an alternative way. One way would be to travel to a foreign country, enrol in a language school and learn from native English speaking teachers. How much students learn from doing this is likely to depend in part on their current level of English and on their teacher's knowledge and ability to transmit it. In my case as an ESL teacher, my knowledge came from grammar books written by native speaking experts. I assumed that the knowledge was accurate and that once I had read about it and reflected upon it I would be able to deliver it confidently to my students. However, it was never this simple.

English grammar isn't a set of facts - English grammar is a description of what approximates a set of facts (Section 2.3.2) and as such there exists variation in grammatical description (Section 2.3.3). In the world of academia that is not a problem since the process of peer review will presumably weed out the less accurate descriptions from the more accurate. However, in the world of ESL learning and teaching I believe that it is. The number of factors involved and the technical jargon used in grammatical descriptions is bewildering (Sections 2.4 and 2.5). The number of factors cannot be helped, since English is what it is. However, the jargon used to describe it and the way that grammar is presented can. Technical jargon and complex language modelling are needed in order for academics to express their ideas, but their theoretical world is far beyond the reach of the humble ESL student and this ESL teacher. No one seems to have created a model specifically for ESL education - a model that shows students how all of the pieces of knowledge that we teach them about grammar, fit together. This research has been an attempt to create part of that picture. The part that it has been focused on is the interconnectedness between sentence and auxiliary verb patterns. The literature review has described contemporary understandings of the syntax and semantics of these patterns, while the data analysis has shown how these pieces fit together syntactically to create a system and how they can be described semantically in layperson's terms. It has resulted in the production of a model that can hopefully be of use as a tool in ESL education.

1.2. Statement of problem

There is no existing model available for ESL education that emphasises the interconnectedness of English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns with user-friendly terminology.

1.3. Assumptions

The main assumption behind this study is that there is no existing model. Through my research I have not been able to identify one, but there may be one that I did not find or one that has not been published. A second assumption is that a model can even be created. I can certainly make no claim to knowing all of English grammar, and there are most definitely experts who have studied it far more than I. If they have been unable to develop a model, it may be because they are aware of more factors than I am that prevent a model from being created. A third assumption is that a model is needed in ESL education. The descriptions of English grammar that currently exist may in fact be the best, most accurate and most simplified and it is only from my point of view and due to my experience, that an alternative is needed.

1.4. Plan of study

A thorough literature review was conducted in order to identify contemporary understandings of English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns. These patterns were then combined into different tables that highlighted their syntactical similarities and differences holistically. A further literature review was then conducted in order to identify user-friendly language that could replace the existing nomenclature used in many grammatical descriptions. Finally, conclusions and recommendations were given based on the analysis conducted.

This dissertation has been organised into six chapters summarised as follows.

Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter provides the overview for the dissertation.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter summarises literature for each of the key elements involved in descriptions of English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns.

Chapter 3 Conceptual or Theoretical Framework

This chapter provides the rationale behind the project.

Chapter 4 Methods and procedures

This chapter explains the methodology that provided the data for this research.

Chapter 5 Data analysis and interpretation

This chapter provides the analysed data and gives an overview of initial conclusions.

Chapter 6 Discussion, recommendations and conclusion

This chapter discusses the initial conclusions, draws links between that and the literature, provides a list of recommendations and summarises the achievements and outcomes of this research.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1.   Introduction

The aim of this literature review was to identify contemporary descriptions of English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns, and to highlight how these descriptions fail to adequately highlight the interconnectedness that exists between the patterns. It begins by identifying the paradigmatic environment within which English grammar is studied by discussing the concept of Standard English and by looking at the historical development of the study of English grammar. It then discusses the concept of a sentence by looking at a variety of ways that sentences are defined and described. The focus then moves to the variety of ways that verbs are described.

2.2.   Overview of terminology

2.2.1. Introduction

Discussing terminology related to sentence and auxiliary verb patterns is a major component of this study and because the majority of this terminology requires detailed discussion, it has been left for the literature review and data analysis sections.

2.2.2. The concept of a sentence

In an orthographic view of English, the term *sentence* generally refers to utterances that end in a full stop (Manser, 2011). Here however, the term *statement* has been used throughout for this concept, while the term *sentence* has been used to refer to both statements and questions.

2.2.3. ESL

ESL is an acronym that stands for English as a Second Language (Ravitch, 2007). Although technically, this term is only accurate if the language that a student is learning is in fact their second language, I use ESL in this paper to refer to any language that is being learned that is not a student's first language.

2.2.4. Non-modal verb

Throughout this paper the term non-modal verb refers to the auxiliary verbs *do, does, did, has, have, had, am, is, are, was* and *were.* However, when direct comparisons are made between non-modal verbs and modal verbs, the term non-modal also includes lexical verbs used in the present and past simple (see Section 2.5.2).

2.3. Grammatical perspectives

2.3.1 Introduction

Although English grammar is an area of study in its own right, it is situated in the broader context of linguistics (Baker & Hengeveld, 2012). Therefore, the topics which this section discusses relate more to the study of language as a whole, rather than to English alone. This section begins with a discussion of the concept of Standard English in order to highlight how language is not so much factual, but an approximation of an ever changing entity. Following that, a brief overview of the historical development of the study of grammar is given in order to highlight the paradigmatic environment within which this study is situated.

2.3.2 Standard English

Historical linguistics tells us that all languages evolve with time - what the grammar of English is today, is somehow different from what it will be tomorrow and from what it was the day before (Keller, 1994). Furthermore, what is considered grammatically correct in one native English speaking area may be considered grammatically incorrect in another (Henry, 1995). In addition, even within the same local community, differing opinions exist about what is and is not grammatically correct (Trudgill, 1999). This reality means that an all-encompassing grammatical description of English is virtually impossible, unless one could somehow instantly describe the changes in a language as they occurred and describe all of the perspectives that native speakers have about grammatical correctness. The way that grammarians have attempted to get around this fact is by defining a Standard English – that is, a set of norms that most native speakers adhere to in production (Watts, 1999). However, defining a Standard English is itself fraught with controversy because there is no single authority to say what the standard is (Milroy & Milroy, 2012). Despite this, according to Burridge & Kortmann (2008), there is great similarity between the major national standards in Anglophone countries such that it is at least practical to refer to a Standard English - two of the most notable being Received Pronunciation in the UK and American Standard English in North America (Milroy, 1999).

2.3.3 Approaches to studying English grammar

In the literature, there appear to be two different contemporary approaches to the description of Standard English grammar - traditional ones and linguistic ones. In Europe, until the 16th century, languages were studied traditionally, which is to say that they were studied in the same way as the ancient Greeks and Romans, who were concerned with such ideas as propositional meaning, poetry, etymology and parts of speech (Millet, 2012; Woods, 1985). From 1586 onwards, traditional English grammars were published (Linn, 2006) and in the early

18th century they developed into prescriptive grammars, which were concerned with describing how English language use ought to be rather than how it actually was (Watson, 2010).

Around the same time that traditional grammars began being published, a new way of studying languages, known as philology, was developed (Sampson, 1980). Because philology's main concern was with the identification of language families (Campbell, 2004), languages were studied diachronically, or in other words, how they changed through time. However, according to Mathews (2001), Ferdinand Saussure argued that studying languages diachronically said nothing about how a specific language was used at a single point in time and so developed a new approach to studying languages known as synchronic analysis (Meyer, 2005). This new approach to studying languages became known as structural linguistics (Sampson, 1980) and marked the commencement of linguistics as a field of inquiry (Bouissac, 2010). Structural linguistics dominated linguistic thought for the first half of the 20th century, but the second half of the 20th century saw it superseded by the development of Noam Chomsky's transformational grammar and the grammars that it spawned (Koster, 1996). In structural linguistics the majority of studies were focused on the phonology and morphology of languages, but beginning with the publishing of Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures* (1957) syntax became and has remained a major focus in linguistic research (Smith, 2007).

Chomsky's transformational grammar has been revised many times since its inception (Freidin, 2007), but his revised grammars and those connected to it belong to a much wider range of competing grammars collectively known as generative grammars (Carnie, 2011). Generative grammars seek to describe languages according to mathematical rules, such that if these rules are accurate, then perfectly grammatical sentences should be able to be produced by computers (Carnie, 2011). However, because these mathematical rules are only focused on syntactical accuracy, there is little emphasis on semantics (Carnie, 2011). Functional approaches to language analysis differ to generative ones by focusing on how semantics and syntax are connected as parts of a whole system and on how the parts are used as tools in communication (Chapman & Routledge, 2009). Cognitive approaches to grammar, while also focused on grammar usage, are more concerned with how grammar operates within the mind (Radden & Dirven, 2009).

Heine and Narrog's (2012) volume on linguistic analysis outlines a multitude of approaches to grammatical analysis, while acknowledging that there were many more which were omitted from their text. The purpose of this research is not to delve into any of these approaches deeply because the approach taken to grammatical analysis here has been framework-free (see Chapter 3) – meaning that I have analysed English grammar from my own perspective.

2.4   Sentences

2.4.1   Introduction

Sentence patterns are one of the main areas of focus in this research. This section begins by looking at problems with defining the concept of a sentence. It then discusses a variety of ways that sentences are defined and described and identifies the definition that I see as most suitable for ESL education.

2.4.2   Problems with defining a sentence

> Perhaps there is no other linguistic category whose nature is so controversial and is characterized by such a multitude of heterogeneous definitional attempts than the category sentence (Panther & Kopcke, 2008, p.83).

According to Panther and Kopcke (2008), the controversy surrounding the definition of sentences involves problems with defining categories in general. They state that the two main competing schools of thought on what a category is are the classical and prototype theories. According to Aarts (2006), in the classical school of thought, membership of a category is essentially binary in nature. That is, something either is or is not a member of the category. All members share all of the same features and there are no shades of grey. On the other hand, according to Taylor (1989), in the prototype school of thought, categories are not bounded in this way. Each category has a 'typical' member, known as a prototype, which has the most salient features of the category, but membership to the category is still allowable if a member has one or more of the features of the prototype. A category is therefore viewed as a continuum, with a prototype at the centre, and individual members varying in similarity, and hence distance, to the prototype. At the distant edges of the continuum, classification becomes 'fuzzy' where a member may be viewed as belonging to more than one category dependent on perspective.

2.4.3   Sentences viewed syntactically as clauses

Another approach to defining the sentence is to view it structurally. Since classical times, sentences have been viewed as structures that are made from building blocks called the parts of speech (Baker, 2003). According to (Eastwood, 1996), there are traditionally considered to be eight parts of speech: verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, determiners, pronouns and conjunctions. The parts of speech combine syntactically in different ways to form five types of phrase: verb phrase, noun phrase, adjective phrase, adverb phrase and

prepositional phrase. These phrases then combine to produce two main types of clauses: independent and dependent clauses. An independent clause makes sense on its own, whereas a dependent clause must be attached to an independent clause in order to make sense. For example, *Lyndal likes pasta* makes sense on its own. However, *but she does not like marinara,* only makes sense when attached to an independent clause such as *Lyndal likes pasta, but she does not like marinara*. According to (Eastwood, 1996) independent clauses are considered to be one type of sentence, while a combination of one independent and one dependent clause are another type of sentence. In addition to these two types of sentence, there are other types. When two or more independent clauses are combined using conjunctions, commas or both, they are called compound sentences e.g. *Michelle likes pasta and Michelle likes chicken*. There are also compound-complex sentences, which are a combination of the two types of sentence the name suggests e.g. *Michelle, who you met yesterday, likes pasta and she likes chicken*. At a minimum, all clauses and sentences contain a verb phrase and many of them contain noun phrases (Eastwood, 1996).

2.4.4   Sentences viewed syntactically with predicates

There are two ways that the term predicate is used in contemporary grammatical analysis: traditionally and linguistically (Carnie, 2011). According to Carnie (2011), in traditional grammar, a sentence is viewed as having two parts: a subject and a predicate. The subject is a noun phrase while the predicate is every other part of the sentence, but must include a verb phrase. In *My niece Lili found an old rusty coin on Sunday*, *My niece Lili* is the subject, while the remainder of the sentence is the predicate. In linguistics and particularly in a type of generative grammar known as a dependency grammar, sentences are viewed in a different way. In dependency grammars, the verb phrase alone is called the predicate, while all other elements of a sentence (including the subject) are known as arguments of the predicate (Carnie, 2011).

2.4.5   Sentences viewed by syntax and function

Aarts (2011) focuses on syntax in a different way. In Aart's (2011) grammar, there is a brief mention of the concept of a sentence (pp.82–83) but he acknowledges that since sentences can contain multiple clauses (see Section 2.4.3), his major focus is on phrases and clauses, not sentences. Aarts (2011) distinguishes between four types of clause based on variations in syntax and function: declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamative. In his analysis, declarative clauses are simply defined syntactically by having the word order, subject then verb. However, his definition of interrogative sentences is extremely complex.

Aarts (2011) defines interrogatives primarily according to function - they are all characteristically used to ask questions. Furthermore, Aarts (2011) categorises interrogatives

as either open or closed. Open interrogatives have three primary features: 1) they typically have an unlimited set of answers; 2) they contain a wh-phrase such as *who*, which is normally the first word in the clause and is connected to some missing information necessary to create a declarative clause; and 3) the wh-phrase within them can invert with an auxiliary verb. To illustrate these three features more clearly, consider the interrogative clause *What were they buying the other day?* An unlimited set of nouns can answer this question (Feature 1). It contains the wh-phrase *what* and the answer to this question would occupy the end of a declarative sentence e.g. *They were buying <u>some shoes</u>* (Feature 2). The subject *they* and the auxiliary verb *were* invert (switch places) in the question and declarative forms (Feature 3). Aarts (2011) defines closed interrogatives as having a restricted set of answers – typically *yes* or *no*. e.g. *Is that a guitar?* Like open interrogatives, in closed interrogatives the subject and auxiliary verb can also invert to create statements, but this is not their defining feature.

The remaining two types of clause are also defined by syntax and function. According to Aarts (2011), syntactically, imperatives are verb phrases usually used on their own without a subject, while functionally they are typically used to issue commands. In the imperative *Come here!* the verb phrase is first, no subject is present and the speaker is commanding someone to come closer. Exclamative clauses, as their name suggests, are used to make exclamatory statements (functional definition). They are defined syntactically as being normally incapable of subject-auxiliary inversion and as using either *how* or *what* as the first word e.g. *What a beautiful day*!

Besides being extremely complex, Aarts's (2011) way of distinguishing between clauses requires the use of words like *typically*, which means that in order to apply his definitions, further explanation is needed and exceptions need to be identified. One more perspective of sentences will be discussed that perhaps makes the task of distinguishing between sentences somewhat clearer.

2.4.6   Sentences viewed syntactically without predicates

According to Eastwood (1996), there are four types of basic sentence that can be distinguished from each other by syntax alone: *statements, subject questions, yes/no questions* and *object questions*. To illustrate, consider the following four sentences: *Jane is writing a letter* (statement); *Who is writing a letter?* (subject question); *Is Jane writing a letter?* (yes/no question); and *What is Jane writing?* (object question). The four types of sentence contain similar components but differ syntactically. The subject question is structurally identical to the statement except that the subject has been replaced by a wh-phrase; the yes/no question contains exactly the same words as the statement except that the subject and

first verb have inverted; and the object question is the same as the yes/no question with the addition of a question phrase.

Eastwood's (1996) description of sentence types is the one that I see of being of most benefit to ESL students. Firstly, it highlights that there are four types of sentence. Secondly, it allows the four sentence types to be compared to each other structurally by focusing on inversion and the presence or absence of a wh-phrase. Thirdly, it does not require words like *typically* in its definitions and so exceptions do not need to be studied. Finally, it does not require the concept of a predicate, which means that sentence types can be viewed as separate entities to verbs.

2.5   Verbs

2.5.1   Introduction
The ways that verbs are described and differentiated from each other is numerous and so the remainder of this chapter is dedicated to reviewing these perspectives.

2.5.2   Two main types of verb
According to Huddleston's (2002) analysis, verbs come in two main kinds: lexical and auxiliary. Lexical verbs are normal verbs like *run, play* and *jump*, while auxiliary verbs are those that add extra meaning to lexical verbs like <u>*was*</u> *running,* <u>*have*</u> *run* and <u>*did*</u> *run*. In Huddleston's (2002) analysis, lexical and auxiliary verbs are distinguished from each other according to four properties known by the acronym NICE: negation, inversion, code and emphasis. Each of these concepts is discussed in turn.

Mowarin (2009) identifies four ways that negation can be achieved in English: through affixation e.g. <u>*un*</u>*necessary*; through inclusion in a noun phrase e.g. *I have* <u>*no*</u> *friends*; lexically e.g. *I* <u>*refused*</u> *the offer*; and at the sentence level through the use of the word *not* or its contraction *n't* as part of the verb phrase e.g. *I do* <u>*not*</u> *like fighting* or *I do*<u>*n't*</u> *like fighting*. According to Huddleston (2002), it is the last of these that primarily distinguishes auxiliary verbs from lexical verbs - the word *not* and its contraction are only used with auxiliary verbs.

Inversion is another distinguishing feature between lexical and auxiliary verbs that was discussed in Section 2.4. Only auxiliary verbs are capable of inverting with the subject to form a question (Eastwood, 1996). For example, the auxiliary *is* inverts in the following sentences not *eat*: *Lucy* <u>*is*</u> *eating* and <u>*Is*</u> *Lucy eating*?

Huddleston (2002) does not define Code, but gives examples to illustrate the concept syntactically. In response to hearing a statement like *Anne has eaten her sandwich*, the following statement from the listener is allowed with auxiliary verbs, but not lexical verbs –

Charlie <u>has</u> too! (not *Charlie <u>eaten</u> too!)* Auxiliary verb usage here is seen to be some kind of code that is understood between the speaker and listener based on context.

The final distinguishing feature between lexical and auxiliary verbs is emphasis. Huddleston (2002) does not go into detail about this distinguishing feature, but merely states that heavy stress in pronunciation is placed on auxiliary verbs not lexical verbs. Although heavy stress CAN be placed on any word in a sentence, Aarts (2011) says that emphasis can only be placed on auxiliary verbs when we are trying to assert that something is most definitely true. For example, If someone said to you that you did not brush your teeth last night even though you know that you did, you would combat their incorrect assertion with emphasis on an auxiliary not a lexical verb e.g*. I <u>DID</u> brush my teeth!!!!* (not *I BRUSHED my teeth!!!)*.

Lexical verbs easily make up the majority of verbs in the English language and although there are only a small number of auxiliary verbs in English, the exact number is a matter of dispute (see Section 2.5.5). There are also a few verbs that belong to both categories (Huddleston, 2002) – *do, have, be, need, dare* and *will*.

2.5.3 Transitivity

In Huddleston's (2002) linguistic analysis, transitivity is a concept that relates to both lexical verbs and clauses, but the discussion here shall only focus on transitivity as it relates to lexical verbs. According to Huddleston (2002) transitivity is about whether a verb needs an object (a noun phrase) or not - transitive verbs require one, while intransitive verbs do not. Furthermore, some verbs are capable of belonging to both types and are known as dual-transitive. Transitive verbs can be further classified into monotransitive (requiring one object) and ditransitive (requiring two objects). To illustrate these concepts, consider the following. *I <u>fainted</u>* (always intransitive), *I <u>destroyed</u> the building* (always monotransitive), *I <u>gave</u> him the book* (always ditransitive), *I <u>ate</u>* (dual-transitive in intransitive form) and *I <u>ate</u> an apple* (dual-transitive in monotransitive form).

The concept of transitivity has been included here simply because it is a feature of verbs that is often described in grammatical texts (see for example Huddleston & Pullum, 2002; Aarts, 2011; Eastwood, 1996; Ballard, 2001). In analyses that use the concept of a predicate (see Section 2.4.4) transitivity is especially important, since sentences cannot be considered complete without the object.

2.5.4 Lexical Aspect

Lexical aspect or Aktionsart is a way of describing a lexical verb's inherent meaning (Erteschik-Shir & Rapoport, 2005). Zeno Vendler (1957) developed the idea of lexical aspect by theorising that verbs could be grouped according to whether or not they permitted usage in

the continuous aspect (am/is/are/was/were/be/been + ing) or not (see section 2.5.6.3), or in other words, whether they had duration or not. Of the verbs that did, they could be further subdivided into being either an activity or an accomplishment. Two examples that Vendler used to show this distinction (p.145) were *Someone is running* and *Someone is running a mile*. The first is an activity with duration, but no implication of completion, while the second has duration as well as the implied meaning that the running will end once the mile is completed. For verbs that did not permit a continuous aspect, he found a similar binary distinction between achievements and states. For Vendler (1957), an achievement was something that occurred instantaneously, while a state lasted for a period of time. He used the examples (p.146) *[I] reach[ed] the top* and *[I] lov[ed] somebody* as examples respectively.

There were several problems with Vendler's (1957) concept of lexical aspect according to Murphy (2010). Firstly, in order to make his meaning distinction between activities and accomplishments for the verb *run*, he required the object *a mile* - this distinction therefore was one of transitivity (Section 2.5.3), not lexical aspect. Secondly, both of the examples he used for achievements and states could be used in the continuous aspect e.g. *She is reaching for the stars* and *I'm loving this holiday.* Nevertheless, Vendler's (1957) concepts still have life in contemporary linguistics.

In contemporary usage, Vendler's concepts have been developed into an alternative system of description (Murphy, 2010). According to Murphy (2010) while Vendler's categories were applied to inherent meanings of lexical verbs alone, the same concepts are now used to instead refer to situations. In other words, there are four types of situation that lexical verbs describe: *activities, accomplishments, achievements* and *states*. Furthermore, each situation can be further analysed according to three binary distinctions: *telic/atelic, punctual/durative* and *static/dynamic*. Firstly, Murphy (2010) argues that all lexical verbs either imply a natural end point (telic) or do not (atelic). For example, the verb *arrive* implies a natural end point – that is, we understand that it implies a conclusion to travel. On the other hand, the verb *sit* is deemed to have no such implied ending. Secondly, she argues that all lexical verbs either imply brevity (punctual) or do not (durative). For example, the verb *open* is not something that can generally take time. As soon as a person has made part of a door no longer touch its door frame, the action of open has occurred, more or less instantaneously. On the other hand, the verb *stare* implies some kind of duration. The static/dynamic distinction is about how a verb is perceived as occupying time. One argument given by Murphy (p.204) to show this distinction is that between *know* and *learn* in the sentences *Jack knew Swedish when he was young* and *Jack learned English when he was young*. She argues that at any given point while Jack was young it was true that Jack *knew, but not that he learned*. According to Lin (2005), although

the concept of lexical aspect is in dispute by many linguists, it is worthy of consideration because many grammatical studies have been based on it.

The concept of lexical aspect has been discussed here because in sections 5.3.6, I have argued that the features that have been assigned to lexical verbs are features that can be more accurately assigned to the grammatical aspects *perfect, not perfect, continuous* and *not continuous* (see sections 2.5.6.3 and 2.5.6.4). It is argued that lexical verbs do not have the inherent meanings as described by Murphy (2010), but they receive their meaning from grammatical aspects.

2.5.5 Auxiliary verbs

Just as verbs are distinguished into two types, so are auxiliary verbs. According to Huddleston (2002) auxiliary verbs come in two main types, non-modal and modal. In his analysis, the two types are distinguished from each other due to multiple syntactical differences. The first difference has to do with the fact that non-modals can be used in two different syntactical positions, while modals cannot. For example, the auxiliary verb *be* can be used in the following two ways: *I am walking* and *I expect to be walking*. That is, non-modals can be used in both primary and secondary positions, while modals cannot. The second reason has to do with the fact that there is no subject-verb agreement with modals, whereas there is with non-modals. For example, the auxiliaries change in the following two statements for the non-modal 'be': *He is running* and *They are running*. However, this change does not occur with modals – consider *He will run* and *They will run*. The third reason is that only one form of lexical verb may appear after a modal, while multiple forms are allowable for non-modals. For example, consider the lexical verb *teach* in the following examples: *I will teach* (after modal), *I am taught*, *I am to teach* and *I am teaching* (after non-modal). The fourth reason is that modal verbs are required in what are known as remote conditionals. For example, in *If it were raining right now, I would stay home,* a modal must be used while a non-modal cannot. Finally, modals can be used with an implied meaning of *if* without actually stating it. For example*, I would advise you to listen* can also be interpreted as *If I were you, I would advise you to listen*.

In Huddleston's (2002) analysis there are three non-modal auxiliaries (be, do, have) and eight modal auxiliaries (can, may, will, shall, must, ought, need, dare). In his analysis, all of the non-modal auxiliaries have a variety of forms: be (am, is, are, was, were, been); do (does, did); have (has, had). Similarly, four of the modal verbs have alternative forms: can (could); may (might); will (would); shall (should). Other authors categorise the auxiliary verbs somewhat differently.

In Berry's (2011) analysis, non-modal auxiliaries are classified the same as Huddleston (2002), but his modal categories are different: nine 'central' modal auxiliaries (will, would, shall, should, may, might, can, could, must), three marginal modals (need, dare, ought <u>to</u>) and eight semi-modals (be able to, used to, had better, be going to, have to, would rather, be allowed to, be supposed to). Berry (2011) considers the marginal modals to be a separate category because although they are capable of inversion and contracted negation (see Section 2.5.5) *dare* and *need* are only used as modals in negative sentences. He does not describe why *ought to* is included, but the semi-modals are considered to be a distinct category because they share similar meanings to modal verbs e.g. *must* is similar to *have to*.

There is no doubt that modal verbs and non-modal verbs have differences in their syntax, which justifies their separation. However, the fact that all auxiliaries have multiple key features in common is grounds to study them as two parts of a whole system. Both modal and non-modal auxiliary verbs (excluding semi-modals) operate the same syntactically in terms of: negation and inversion (see section 2.5.2), verb patterns (Section 2.5.6.1) and in the four sentence types identified by Eastwood (1996) in Section 2.4.6. They also operate semantically the same as non-modals in terms of grammatical aspect (Section 2.5.6.3 and Section 2.5.6.4). In other words, by viewing modal and non-modal verbs holistically, ESL students have the opportunity to see how they are similar and different and as a result can more accurately choose between them.

2.5.6   Auxiliary verb patterns, tense and grammatical aspect

2.5.6.1   Introduction

When auxiliary verbs are used together, they follow strict word orders. Huddleston (2002) states that only the following sixteen patterns with auxiliary verbs are possible in English when used in conjunction with a lexical verb:

1. eat
2. is eaten
3. is eating
4. is being eaten
5. has eaten
6. has been eaten
7. has been eating
8. has been being eaten
9. will eat
10. will be eaten

11. will be eating

12. will be being eaten

13. will have eaten

14. will have been eaten

15. will have been eating

16. will have been being eaten

If subjects (noun phrases) were placed at the front of each of the patterns above, 16 perfectly grammatical statements would be produced. However, in order to explain the differences and similarities between the 16 patterns, it is necessary to discuss the following interconnected concepts: *active* versus *passive*, *continuous aspect* versus *non-continuous aspect*, *perfect aspect* versus *non-perfect aspect*, and *modal auxiliary* versus *non-modal auxiliary*.

2.5.6.2   Active and passive

All of the even patterns from 2 to 16 are distinguished from the odd numbered patterns by what is known as voice. In summarizing Swan (2005), the concept of grammatical voice is about whether the subject of a sentence is the doer of the 'action' (active voice) or has the action done to it (passive voice). In English, this information is conveyed by the verb pattern that is used. The passive form requires the use of the auxiliary *be* and the past participle e.g. *eaten*, while the active voice is any construction using a lexical verb that does not follow this pattern. Furthermore, English speakers often use a form of *get* in place of *be* for many passive constructions (Swan, 2005).

2.5.6.3   Continuous versus non-continuous grammatical aspects

The patterns 3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16 are all distinguished from the remaining patterns by what is known as the continuous or progressive grammatical aspect. Syntactically, the continuous aspect is marked by the use of the auxiliary *be* and the *–ing* particle at the end of the lexical verb (Eastwood, 1996). To describe the semantics, consider the following three authors descriptions. In Huddleston's (2002) description of the difference between the continuous and non-continuous aspects he states (p.117)

> The progressive takes an internal view, looking at it from the inside, as it were, as something ongoing, in progress. The unmarked, non-progressive, version takes an external view; there is no explicit reference to any internal phase or to any feature of the temporal flow.

Aarts (2011, p.265) describes the continuous aspect somewhat differently and avoids mention of the non-continuous aspect, "The progressive construction…is used in English to present a dynamic situation, which is not necessarily complete, as being in progress over a limited period." In Berry's (2011, p.101) description, which also avoids mention of the non-continuous aspect, he states, "…what the progressive does is focus on a point…within a period of time. It says 'think about the action at a certain point in time, but don't forget the time before and after."

2.5.6.4   Perfect versus non-perfect grammatical aspects

The third concept involved in the 16 patterns in Section 2.5.6.1 is known as the perfect aspect. The perfect aspect is the syntactical use of the non-modal auxiliary verb *have* (Eastwood, 1996). There is a great variety amongst authors about how to describe the semantics of the perfect aspect. Borjars and Burridge (2010, p.144) describe the semantics of the perfect aspect as, "Perfect aspect is then a way of indicating the relation between the focus time and speech time." Aarts (2011) avoids defining the perfect at all, instead preferring to discuss the present perfect and past perfect as separate entities. He states (p.255) that, "…[the present perfect] refers to a situation that happened or began in the past, and has relevance at the present moment." Ballard's (2001) view differs dramatically by stating that (p.279), "[The perfect aspect is]…an aspect… denoting <u>completion</u> of the activity referred to by the lexical verb." Probably the greatest departure from the norm is Huddleston's (2002) analysis in which he states that the perfect is not an aspect at all, but a tense. To Huddleston (2002. p.116), "…tense applies to a system where the basic or characteristic meaning…is to locate the situation, or part of it, at some point or period of time."

2.5.6.5   Tense

In Huddleston's (2002) view, English has two tense 'systems'. The first system, known as the primary tense system, locates situations in time via morphological changes to verbs i.e. from present to past. The other system, known as the secondary tense system, is the use of the perfect. The perfect locates a situation in time relative to another situation (basically the same as Borjar and Burridge's (2010) description of the perfect aspect in Section 2.5.6.4). For many authors (see Ballard, 2001; Berry, 2011; Aarts, 2011; Borjars and Burridge, 2010; Eastwood, 1996; Swan, 2005) there is only one tense system in English, which Michaelis (2006) states is observed when verbs morphologically change from present to past.

Another concept involved in the 16 patterns above is the difference between the modal auxiliary verbs and the non-modal auxiliary verbs. The differences between these two types of verbs were discussed in Section 2.5.5, but what is relevant here is the concept of tense. The first 8 patterns are all capable of morphological change from present to past tense, while the remaining 8 patterns are not capable of this change. This is why English is commonly

referred to as a two tense system and why modal verbs are not considered to form tenses (Aarts, 2011).

2.5.7 Nomenclature

2.5.7.1 Introduction

This research is focused on highlighting syntactical similarities between sentence and auxiliary verb patterns, but it is also focused on finding alternative names for the contemporary nomenclature that describes these patterns. This section aims to highlight why I believe an alternative system of nomenclature is needed for ESL education.

2.5.7.2 Pattern names

The 16 patterns listed in Section 2.5.6.1 have labels associated with them, but as shall be seen, these labels have shortcomings in relation to consistency and ambiguity. In order to highlight this consider the following list:

WORD ORDER	PATTERN NAME
1. eat	Present Simple
2. is eaten	
3. is eating	Present Continuous
4. is being eaten	
5. has eaten	Present Perfect
6. has been eaten	
7. has been eating	Present Perfect Continuous
8. has been being eaten	
9. will eat	No name or Future Simple
10. will be eaten	
11. will be eating	No name or Future Continuous
12. will be being eaten	
13. will have eaten	No name or Future Perfect
14. will have been eaten	
15. will have been eating	No name or Future Perfect Continuous
16. will have been being eaten	

The first thing evident on this list is that 50% of the patterns do not have labels. In numerous grammatical texts, when discussing the 16 verb patterns, only eight of them receive specific sub-headings (see Eastwood, 1996; Aarts, 2011; Borjars & Burridge, 2010; Ballard, 2001) and

sometimes no headings are given at all (Berry, 2011). The reason for this appears to be that in discussion of verb patterns, active verb patterns are regarded as the most important. The eight patterns without labels are discussed in the literature, but they are either discussed in a passive section (see Eastwood, 1996) or relatively little mention is made of them (see for example Aarts, 2011; Borjars & Burridge, 2010; Ballard, 2001).

I believe that students need more transparency than this. Technically, every second pattern on the list above should share the label with the pattern directly above it and these two patterns should be clearly differentiated by including the labels active and passive. E.g. Pattern 1 – Present Simple Active and Pattern 2 – Present Simple Passive. In doing so, the patterns can be shown to be similar in relation to the qualities of present and simple and different in relation to voice.

2.5.7.3   Simple

One of the problems with using the labels that I have suggested has to do with the label *simple*. Unlike the labels continuous and perfect, which reflect grammatical aspect, simple is used as a label to reflect the shortness of the verb patterns themselves (Borjars & Burridge, 2010) i.e. Pattern 1 is the most 'simple' of patterns when compared to the remaining 15 because it is shorter. This is inconsistent with the naming system, which labels all other patterns according to aspect.

A further problem with the use of the label *simple* is that the patterns that it describes are easily the most 'complex' syntactically. All of the patterns 2 to 15, never change. In other words, regardless of whether a statement or one of the various types of questions is constructed, the same words are always used (Eastwood, 1996). With the present simple and the past simple this is not so. The present simple and past simple use a lexical verb without an auxiliary in two cases: positive non-emphatic statements and subject questions. Unfortunately, I cannot find an author who makes this same statement, but I can prove it with examples. Consider the following:

1. Present Simple Positive <u>non-emphatic</u> statement: *Farron loves food.*
2. Present Simple Positive <u>emphatic</u> statement: *Farron does love food.*
3. Present Simple Positive <u>non-emphatic</u> subject question: *Who loves food?*
4. Present Simple Positive <u>emphatic</u> subject question: *Who does love food?*
5. Present Simple Positive <u>non-emphatic</u> yes/no question: *Does Farron love food?*
6. Present Simple Positive <u>emphatic</u> yes/no question: ***Does** Farron love food?*
7. Present Simple Positive <u>non-emphatic</u> object question: *What does Farron love?*
8. Present Simple Positive <u>emphatic</u> object question: *What **does** Farron love?*

The same holds true for the past simple. To realise this, replace *love/s* with *loved* when *does* is not used and replace *does* with *did* when it is used. Furthermore, if the negative *not* is used in any of the examples, *does* or *did* <u>must</u> be used. Explaining this to ESL students is NOT SIMPLE and an alternative name that describes the semantics of the syntax and uses grammatical aspects as labels needs to be found. The most obvious and accurate candidate is to use both non-continuous and non-perfect in labelling patterns normally described as simple.

2.5.7.4   Markedness

In the list of 16 patterns in Section 2.5.7.2, the non-continuous and non-perfect aspects are not included in the labels. One of the reasons for this seems to be related to the concepts of marked and unmarked, or basically markedness. Unmarked is essentially synonymous with the word default, while marked is synonymous with morphological change (Haspelmath, 2006). For example, in comparing the two sentences *Leonie is studying* and *Leonie was studying*, the word *is* would be considered to be unmarked, while the word *was* would be considered to be marked. In terms of grammatical aspect, both perfect and continuous are considered to be marked, while their absence is considered to be unmarked (Huddleston, 2002). It seems that when a grammatical aspect is unmarked it is omitted from the label and hence, neither non-perfect nor non-continuous are mentioned in the labels above. I believe that this needs to be rectified for ESL students.

When the concepts of non-continuous and non-perfect are omitted from the labels, they cannot be discussed. It is like they do not exist. However, they do exist. The eight patterns without a continuous aspect are non-continuous, and the patterns without a perfect aspect are non-perfect. By making these labels salient, we can discuss with our students specifics about these aspects and we can make comparisons between them.

2.5.7.5   Other labels

Another shortcoming of the labelling system is the labels themselves. Perfect, continuous, non-perfect, non-continuous, active, passive, modal auxiliary, non-modal auxiliary and simple, are all labels that do not saliently express the features that they describe. The problems with the term simple have been explained, but nothing is perfect about the perfect aspect. The label perfect comes from the Latin word *perfectus*, meaning *before* (Binnick, 1991), but the label itself does not reflect this. The other words are equally ambiguous, especially the use of the prefix *non-*. Saying what something is not, does not say what it is. If we used *up* and *non-up* as descriptors of direction, in addition to meaning *down*, non-up could include such meanings as sideways, horizontally and diagonally. I believe that positive descriptors need to be found and they need to be in a user-friendly form, where they describe what they purport to describe.

One final shortcoming worth mentioning is in regards to patterns 9 to 16. Some authors give labels to these patterns according to common nomenclature usage (see Swan, 2005; Eastwood, 1996), while others prefer to discuss these patterns in subsections of their texts (see Aarts, 2011; Huddleston, 2002). The reason for this difference in labelling, seems to be that modal auxiliaries do not undergo morphological change (see Section 2.5.6.5)

2.6 Conclusion

This literature review began by highlighting how the grammatical description of English is at best an approximation, known as Standard English. It then briefly overviewed the historical development in approaches to grammatical analysis in order to position this study within the field of linguistics. Following that, various definitions of what a sentence is were described in order to show the lack of consensus that exists, and to identify the definition that I prefer. The remainder of the literature review was focused on verbs and on the variety of ways that they are described and on highlighting problems with the contemporary nomenclature system. Throughout the discussion, it has been emphasised how there is a lack of consensus in many areas of verb description, how breaking verb descriptions into components reduces the opportunities to compare similarities and differences between verb patterns and how the nomenclature used to describe these patterns suffers from inconsistency and ambiguity. Hopefully it is clear from the literature review, that an alternative system of description is needed for ESL education – one that places sentence and verb patterns side-by-side according to syntax and one that has a user-friendly system of nomenclature capable of illustrating the semantics.

Chapter 3: Conceptual or theoretical framework

3.1. Introduction

According to Somekh and Lewin (2011), it is important for researchers to understand their own ontological and epistemological position, or the paradigm under which they are operating, because our philosophies affect the types of research that we do and the types of knowledge that we seek. The third definition on the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (2013) states that a paradigm is a "philosophical and theoretical framework of a scientific school or discipline within which theories, laws and generalizations and the experiments performed in support of them are formulated." This research lies in the field of theoretical linguistics and within the subfields of syntax and semantics in particular (Aarts & McMahon, 2006). Within the field of theoretical linguistics there are numerous theoretical frameworks within which grammatical descriptions are embedded (Heine & Narrog, 2012), but the description which this research has created, does not seem to resonate clearly with any of them. However, according to Haspelmath (2012) this should be of no concern because the grammar of a language should be studied framework-free.

3.2. Framework-free grammatical theory

The theoretical stance of studying the grammar of a language without a theoretical framework has in Haspelmath's (2012, p.342) words, "not been articulated in detail before." In Haspelmath's (2012) opinion, when the grammar of a language is studied from within a framework, the researcher is compelled to use the metalanguage within the framework and by consequence, the concepts that the metalanguage represents. According to Haspelmath (2012), this is a form of prejudice that prevents the researcher from being objective, creative and open-minded because there is no certainty that the concepts within a framework correspond exactly to the system being described. Throughout this paper, I have argued against the use of the nomenclature or metalanguage of contemporary grammatical descriptions of English for ESL students. My main argument has been that the nomenclature is relevant only within academic theoretical linguistics and that the comprehension of these frameworks is not what ESL students go to an ESL classroom to learn. However, as long as we use this metalanguage in ESL texts and in classrooms, we are forcing them to learn the theoretical framework from which it comes. My focus is on freeing students from having to learn metalanguage, by replacing the existing nomenclature with descriptors that come from everyday language. I am trying to show how both syntax and semantics can be better understood when their interconnectedness is highlighted holistically as opposed to segmentally.

3.3. Ontological and Epistemological philosophy

Ontologically, English exists because I use it, understand it and think in it. However, I do not know what form this existence takes. From a scientific realist perspective, English would exist physically within the brain as some combination of atoms (Gregory, Johnston, Pratt, Watts & Whatmore, 2009), while from an idealist perspective it would take no physical form but belong to some kind of mental world (Dunham, Grant & Watson, 2011). Epistemologically, there are certain things I can confidently claim to know about English and others that I can less confidently claim to know. I know that English has syntactical patterns that I and other native speakers use with each other, and whose semantics I am able to interpret and transmit confidently because I have been doing it all of my life. However, I also know that variation exists between Englishes of the world and that there are native English speaking places I can go where my syntactical knowledge differs from other people's (see Section 2.3.2).

Essentially then, my epistemology in regards to English is a subjective one, but with varying degrees of subjectivity. The syntactical patterns described in this research are the least subjective since they are so common in the Englishes of the world. The most subjective aspect of this research is the new labels that I have assigned for the semantic components of the syntactical patterns. Since I am not operating under an accepted theoretical framework, I am as yet unaware of how accurate other linguists and English native speakers would find the semantics that I have proposed. Subjective positions such as mine can be seen in many existing philosophical paradigms. In Fallibilism, there is a central tenet that we can only accept knowledge until it is proven wrong (Fantl & McGrath, 2009). In contextualism, there is the stance that knowledge has truth in some contexts, but not in others (DeRose, 2009), while in interpretivism, there is a requirement to acknowledge context and have an understanding of unique individual perspectives (Feigl, 2012). Such subjective positions imply a need to use qualitative research methodologies (Somekh & Lewin, 2011).

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Chapter 4: Methods and procedures

4.1. Introduction

The literature review has attempted to identify all of the elements involved in describing English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns and also to highlight that the presentation of these patterns in ESL education can be improved if patterns are compared side-by-side and the technical nomenclature is replaced with user-friendly terms. This research is aimed at developing such a system of description.

4.2. Ethical considerations

Due to the fact that the proposed research is a description of the English language, there are no ethical or political concerns of consequence (NHMRC, 2013).

4.3.   Formulation of research questions

The purpose of this study was to develop a description of English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns that not only described all of the elements involved, but did so in a way that was more user-friendly for ESL students than what currently exists. The specific research questions that were addressed in order to achieve this were:

1. How can sentence and auxiliary verb patterns be viewed syntactically as parts of a whole system?
2. What common English expressions can be used to describe the semantics of the sentence and auxiliary verb system?

4.4. Instruments

In order to answer the first research question, it was necessary to find a tool that was capable of producing a visual model of the syntactical sentence and auxiliary verb patterns. The instrument that was chosen for this purpose was the spreadsheet program Microsoft Excel. Spreadsheets are typically used for statistical modelling and the presentation of numerical data (Keller, 2008), but they can also be used with alphabetic data. By entering the syntactical patterns into cells and by using features such as cell merging, centering and shading, I was able to create models that allowed for both syntactical comparison and visual appeal. In addition to using Excel, it was necessary to use the Paint application that is a standard feature of Microsoft's operating systems. The Paint program was used to draw pictures that represent the semantics of the syntactical patterns.

4.5. Syntactical comparison

The initial literature review highlighted the syntactical components that were the object of this study, but in order to highlight the similarities and differences between the components it was necessary to compare them side-by-side in tables. There were three main areas of syntactical focus: sentence patterns, auxiliary verb patterns and subject verb agreement patterns. The sentence patterns were compared according to word order and sentence type. The auxiliary verb patterns were compared according to the four grammatical aspects perfect, non-perfect, continuous and non-continuous, as well as according to voice and pattern type. The subject-verb agreement patterns were compared according to type and grammatical number. Many of the initial tables produced contained a lot of repeated data, and so wherever possible this redundant information was removed in order to create more visually appealing tables. When the tables had been simplified, they were presented together to allow for comparison between the three interconnected syntactical systems.

4.6. Dictionaries and literature review

Once the syntactical components under focus had been organised into tables, it was necessary to answer the second research question. Choosing which of the linguistic nomenclature was in need of replacement was a subjective exercise, informed by the initial literature review (see Section 2.5.7), my teaching experience and my knowledge of English as a native speaker. I felt that some of the labels were in such common usage and accurately reflected what they purported to describe, that no change was necessary. For other labels, I felt that there may be more common or more expressive words that could describe the semantics more clearly and in such cases reviewing synonyms and antonyms in dictionaries was sufficient for finding alternative labels. However, there were some labels that described extremely complex concepts and so it was necessary to conduct a further literature review. In such cases, I needed to be extremely careful that the alternative labels I supported, were capable of capturing the wide range of semantic variation that existed in the literature.

4.7. Reflection

I believe that being a native speaker of English qualifies me as an expert on syntactical and semantic correctness within the context of the world of English that I exist in (see Section 2.3.2 on Standard English). This expertise has been used throughout this research in the form of reflection, especially in identifying alternative labels for grammatical nomenclature.

4.8. Choice of qualitative approach

According to Greene, Kreider & Mayer (2011), the use of more than one research method is commonly known as mixed methods research and is considered to be beneficial for many reasons such as providing a corroboration of findings and a broader understanding of the research subject. Although I agree that multiple perspectives are beneficial in research, I cannot classify this research as quantifiable since there is no collection or analysis of numerical data (Somekh & Lewin, 2011). This research is describing part of the grammar of English without using an acknowledged theoretical framework and by using reflection as a major component of the methodology and such a subjective approach is qualitative in nature (Neuman, 2006).

4.9 Validity and reliability

According to Neuman (2006) perfect reliability and validity never exist but are instead something people strive for. In Somekh and Lewin's (2011, p.328) view, "Reliability is the term used to mean that the truth of the findings has been established by ensuring that they are supported by sufficient and compelling evidence," while "Validity is the term used to claim that the research has investigated and demonstrated what it set out to investigate (p.330)." In terms of syntax, I believe that this research has a high reliability because all of the syntactical patterns addressed are acknowledged in the literature. In terms of semantics, the degree of reliability is more difficult to ascertain. In my opinion the reliability is high because I have based my conclusions upon the literature, but I believe that true reliability can only be determined by expert linguists who are familiar with the content. I also believe that the validity of this research is high because I have answered the questions that I set out to investigate. I identified a holistic way to present sentence and auxiliary verb patterns based on syntax and I replaced the existing nomenclature for this syntax with labels that I feel are more user-friendly.

Chapter 5: Data analysis

5.1   Introduction

The data analysis chapter is organised in relation to the research questions. Section 5.2 outlines the analysis of data taken in answering the first research question: *How can sentence and auxiliary verb patterns be viewed syntactically as parts of a whole system?* Sections 5.3 and 5.4 outline the analysis of data taken in answering the second research question: *What common English expressions can be used to describe the semantics of the sentence and auxiliary verb system?*

5.2   Comparison of sentence and auxiliary verb syntax

5.2.1   Comparison between sentence patterns

As was highlighted in Section 2.4, sentences can be described as prototypes, as clauses, as a subject and predicate, by syntax and function or by syntax without a predicate. Since no consensus exists, it seems that the description one uses becomes a matter of preference and for me that choice is syntax without a predicate. In the description given by Eastwood (1996) there are four sentence types: statements, subject questions, yes/no questions and object questions. These four sentence types can be distinguished from each other according to subject-auxiliary inversion and the presence or absence of a wh-phrase. To enable comparison between these four types, I presented them together in Table 1 according to word order and type.

	WORD ORDER			
	1	2	3	4
STATEMENTS	SUBJECT	INF/PS		
	SUBJECT	AUX	(n't / not)	
SUBJECT QUESTIONS	QUESTION PHRASE	INF/PS		
	QUESTION PHRASE	AUX	(n't / not)	
YES / NO QUESTIONS	AUX	(n't)	SUBJECT	
	AUX	SUBJECT	(not)	
OBJECT QUESTIONS	QUESTION PHRASE	AUX	(n't)	SUBJECT
	QUESTION PHRASE	AUX	SUBJECT	(not)

INF = infinitive   PS = past simple   AUX = first auxiliary verb

() = optional   / = or

TABLE 1: Sentence types without a predicate compared by word order

Besides the primary distinguishing features of inversion and wh-phrases, Table 1 highlights other important structures of sentence syntax. The first is the syntax of the word *not* and its contraction *n't*. Table 1 shows that for statements and subject questions, *not* in both forms, is in the same position, whereas for yes/no questions and object questions, they hold different positions. The other feature that Table 1 shows is that the present simple and past simple are unique in terms of sentence syntax. For the 16 auxiliary verb patterns discussed in Section 2.5.6.1, only pattern 1 can be used without an auxiliary verb. Furthermore, as was also mentioned in Section 2.5.7.3, this only occurs for positive non-emphatic statements and subject questions – in all other cases the auxiliary *do* is used for present and past simple sentences.

The main benefit of using Table 1 in ESL education that I perceive is that it holds true regardless of the auxiliary verb patterns being studied in the classroom. Once students have become familiar with using Table 1 for one auxiliary verb pattern, they can use it again for every other auxiliary verb pattern they encounter just by focusing on the first auxiliary of the verb pattern. By the time they have studied all of the auxiliary verb patterns, they will have used Table 1 at least sixteen times and should have developed some degree of comfort with forming sentences in English.

5.2.2   Comparison between auxiliary verb patterns

In Section 2.5.6.1, it was established that there are 16 auxiliary verb patterns in English and that these verb patterns are syntactically determined by the presence of four of the following eight features: active, passive, perfect, non-perfect, continuous, non-continuous, modal and non-modal. It was also mentioned in Section 5.2.1 how the present and past simple have two verb patterns – one with an auxiliary and one without. To allow for comparison, the 16 patterns and the two forms of the present simple were placed into Table 2 in order to highlight which of the eight features determines the auxiliary verb patterns.

		NON-PERFECT		PERFECT	
		NON-CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS	NON-CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS
ACTIVE	NON-MODAL	eat do eat	is eating	has eaten	has been eating
	MODAL	will eat	will be eating	will have eaten	will have been eating
PASSIVE	NON-MODAL	is eaten	is being eaten	has been eaten	has been being eaten
	MODAL	will be eaten	will be being eaten	will have been eaten	will have been being eaten

TABLE 2: Comparison of auxiliary verb patterns according to the presence or absence of eight features

The perceived benefit of using Table 2 in ESL education is that students can be shown that the 16 patterns have syntactical similarities and differences determined by the eight features and that together they form a system. One shortcoming of Table 2 is that the semantic similarities and differences are obscured by the terminology used to describe the features. Overcoming this shortcoming is the focus of the second research question and is taken up in Section 5.3.

5.2.3 Additional patterns determined by the eight features

5.2.3.1 Introduction

As was discussed in Section 2.5.7.2., there is a tendency for grammatical texts to focus only on how lexical verbs are affected by the eight features, particularly in the active syntax. However, there are other patterns, known as complements that are also influenced by the eight features that are not included in Table 2.

5.2.3.2 Complements

English has three types of complement that use exactly the same syntactical patterns as the passive: adjective subject complements, noun subject complements and prepositional complements. Every lexical verb in the passive in Table 2 can be replaced with either an adjective or noun subject complement without any alteration of syntax. Furthermore, prepositional complements can replace every passive lexical verb in every non-continuous pattern without any change in syntax. This syntactical similarity can be seen in Table 3.

	NON-PERFECT		PERFECT	
	NON-CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS	NON-CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS
NON-MODAL	is eaten is happy is a doctor is in NY	is being eaten is being happy is being a doctor	has been eaten has been happy has been a doctor has been in NY	has been being eaten has been being happy has been being a doctor
MODAL	will be eaten will be happy will be a doctor will be in NY	will be being eaten will be being happy will be being a doctor	will have been eaten will have been happy will have been a doctor will have been in NY	will have been being eaten will have been being happy will have been being a doctor

TABLE 3: Comparison of identical syntax for passive and complements

It is likely that the reader may be similar to myself in finding the modal perfect continuous patterns somewhat ungrammatical, but it should be remembered that at this stage in the data analysis, I am dealing only with syntax and not semantics and examples of this type, although

rare, have been attested in the English language (Aarts, 2011). Furthermore, in most cases, the *being* component is replaced with the word *getting* and then the ungrammaticality disappears (Swan, 2005).

Unfortunately, the fact that complements use exactly the same patterns as the passive is not a salient feature in any of the grammatical texts I have encountered. The reason for this seems to be that there is no requirement for complements to use the auxiliary verb *be*. In Huddleston (2002) for example, it is stated that there are some lexical verbs that can be used for both types of subject complement. For example in a statement with an adjective subject complement like *He is happy*, the auxiliary verb *is* can be replaced with the lexical verb *seem* to give *He seems happy*. That such words as *seem* can be used in this way is indeed true, but such an analysis neglects to point out that such usage is only possible in the present and past simple. If I were to replace the auxiliary verb *is* with the lexical verb *seem* in the present continuous statement *He is being happy,* I would get *He seems being happy.* To a native speaker this is obviously ungrammatical. To make it grammatical would require the addition of *to be* in order to give *He seems to be being happy*. However, complements make no such alteration to verb pattern structure and therefore are treated the same as passive verbs syntactically in the analysis here.

5.2.4 Holistic view of auxiliary verb patterns

Tables 2 and 3 highlight a variety of verb patterns that are influenced by the features: active, passive, continuous, non-continuous, perfect, non-perfect, modal and non-modal. In order to draw all of this information together, Tables 2 and 3 have been combined to create Table 4.

		NON-PERFECT		PERFECT	
		NON-CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS	NON-CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS
Active	Non-modal	eat do eat	is eating	has eaten	has been eating
	Modal	will eat	will be eating	will have eaten	will have been eating
Passive & Complement	Non-modal	is eaten is happy is a doctor is in NY	is being eaten is being happy is being a doctor	has been eaten has been happy has been a doctor has been in NY	has been being eaten has been being happy has been being a doctor
	Modal	will be eaten will be happy will be a doctor will be in NY	will be being eaten will be being happy will be being a doctor	will have been eaten will have been happy will have been a doctor will have been in NY	will have been being eaten will have been being happy will have been being a doctor

TABLE 4: All verb patterns compared

If Table 4 was presented to ESL students, it would allow them to compare a whole range of verb patterns based on syntactical similarities and differences and serve as a reminder for patterns they have studied.

To make Table 4 more accessible to ESL students, I further simplified it by removing repeated information, using a coordinate system and using codes for the lexical data. All of these simplifications have been shown in Table 5. I believe that if confronted with Table 5, students would initially be overwhelmed by the coding and the number of patterns, so I do necessarily support presenting it to them in its entirety. However, I believe that students could be given a blank table initially and as they learned each individual verb pattern, they could slowly build the table and eventually see how the pieces fit together syntactically.

			NON-PERFECT		PERFECT	
			NON-CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS	NON-CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS
			1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Active	Non-modal	**A**	INF do INF	is INF ing	has PP	has been INF ing
Active	Modal	**B**	MOD INF	MOD be INF ing	MOD have PP	MOD have been INF ing
Passive & Complement	Non-modal	**C**	is PPANP	is being PPAN	has been PPANP	has been being PPAN
Passive & Complement	Modal	**D**	MOD be PPANP	MOD be being PPAN	MOD have been PPANP	MOD have been being PPAN

INF = infinitive
PP = past participle

MOD = modal auxiliary
PPANP = past participle, adjective, noun, preposition

PPAN = past participle, adjective, noun
ANP = adjective, noun, preposition

TABLE 5: All verb patterns simplified

5.2.5 Subject-verb agreement

Table 1 allowed comparisons to be made between different sentence patterns, while Table 5 allowed comparisons to be made between different verb patterns. What neither of these tables was able to show was subject-verb agreement. As a general rule singular subjects use a singular verb, while plural subjects use a plural verb (Swan, 2005). Notable exceptions to this rule occur when the subject is one of the following: I, you, uncountable nouns and pair nouns (Eastwood, 1996). In addition to this, some verbs are the same regardless of what the subject is. The general rules in regards to subject-verb agreement have been shown in Table 6, while the exceptions are further discussed in Section 5.2.6. In Table 6, all verbs besides modal auxiliary verbs have been labelled as either present or past. Modal verbs have complex semantics and so further discussion of them in relation to tense is treated in Section 5.3.

		NO AUXILIARY VERB		AUXILIARY VERBS								
				NON-MODAL						MODAL		
		INF (Present)	PS (Past)	Present	Past	Present	Past	Present	Past			
SUBJECT	Singular & Uncountable	eats		does		is	was	has		must ought to dare need	can will shall may	could would should might
	Plural, Pair & You	eat	ate	do	did	are	were	have	had			
	I					am	was					

TABLE 6: Subject-verb agreement

5.2.6   Holistic view of sentence and auxiliary verb patterns

Throughout this paper I have argued for the presentation of sentence and verb pattern syntax to be presented to ESL students holistically to allow them the opportunity to compare similarities and differences. The patterns that I have determined to be of importance have been presented in Table 1, Table 5 and Table 6. When viewed together I believe that they can be used as a tool in ESL education to highlight how essential pieces of syntax fit together as a system. This system is shown in Figure 1. In addition to the information found in Tables 1, 5 and 7, Figure 1 shows details of all of the codes used and lists notable exceptions or points under the table labelled *Points to Remember*. It should be noted that although present and past have been used to label modal verbs, the reasons for this are discussed in Section 5.3.

VERB PATTERNS

VERB PATTERNS			NON-PERFECT		PERFECT	
			NON-CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS	NON-CONTINUOUS	CONTINUOUS
			1	2	3	4
ACTIVE	NON-MODAL	A	INF / do INF	am INF ing	has PP	has been INF ing
	MODAL	B	MOD INF	MOD be INF ing	MOD have PP	MOD have been INF ing
PASSIVE & COMPLEMENT	NON-MODAL	C	is PPANP	is being PPAN	has been PPANP	has been being PPAN
	MODAL	D	MOD be PPANP	MOD be being PPAN	MOD have been PPANP	MOD have been being PPAN

SENTENCE PATTERNS

		1	2	3	4
ST	SUBJECT	INF/PS (A1)			
		AUX	(n't / not)		
SQ	QUESTION PHRASE	INF/PS (A1)			
		AUX	(n't / not)		
YNQ	AUX	(n't)	SUBJECT		
		SUBJECT	(not)		
OQ	QUESTION PHRASE	AUX	(n't)	SUBJECT	
			SUBJECT	(not)	

SUBJECT-VERB-TENSE PATTERNS

	NO AUXILIARY VERB (A1)		AUXILIARY VERBS										
			NON-MODAL								MODAL		
	INF Present	PS Past	Present	Past	Present	Past	Present	Past	PRESENT - modal		PAST - modal + have		
Singular	eats		does		is	was	has		must ought to dare need	can will shall may	could would should might		
Plural & you	eat	ate	do	did	are	were	have	had					
I					am	was							

CODES

INF - infinitive
PP - past participle
PS - past simple

PPANP - past participle, adjective, noun, preposition
PPAN - past participle, adjective, noun
AUX - auxiliary verb

ST - statement
SQ - subject question
YNQ - yes/no question

OQ - object question
MOD - modal
/ = or

() = optional

POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. I uses aren't in negative YNQ and OQ
2. I uses was or were with if
3. Uncount nouns use singular verbs
4. Pair nouns use plural verbs
5. do, have, will, need and dare are both auxiliary and normal verbs
6. Only the first verb is used with sentence patterns
7. could & would without have can refer to the past
8. n't and not are optional

FIGURE 1: Holistic presentation of essential features of English syntax

5.3   Identification of alternative nomenclature

5.3.1   Introduction

Identifying similarities and differences between syntactical patterns is rather straightforward because in a way we are dealing with concrete entities. Spoken English can be heard and the syntactical patterns can be recognised and recorded. However, doing the same with semantics is much more difficult because we are dealing with cognitive processes such as interpretation and understanding. Identifying alternative nomenclature was a cycle of looking at the semantics in the literature and comparing each of the patterns within my mind as a native speaker in the search for labels that could describe my understanding. This section begins by presenting the alternative nomenclature that I have identified. It then provides evidence from the literature to support the labels. The discussion has been presented in a linear order, but often it was necessary to refer to multiple concepts at one time.

5.3.2   Presentation of alternative nomenclature

Figure 2 illustrates the alternative nomenclature for the syntactical patterns under focus. It can be seen in Figure 2 that all of the contemporary nomenclature has been replaced with everyday language labels and other descriptors and pictures have been added to explain the semantics. The remainder of this chapter is focused on explaining and providing evidence for the nomenclature presented in Figure 2. It should be noted that the thin lines in the pictures in Figure 2 are a result of transferring an Excel picture into Word and are not part of the concept depicted.

			SINGLE FOCUS		DUAL FOCUS	
			STILL FOCUS	MOVING FOCUS	STILL FOCUS	MOVING FOCUS
EVENT			Change	Constant	Change	Constant
STATE			Constant	Change	Constant	Change
			1	**2**	**3**	**4**
SUBJECT ACTION	REAL	A	INF do INF	am INF ing	has PP	has been INF ing
	POSSIBLE	B	MOD INF	MOD be INF ing	MOD have PP	MOD have been INF ing
SUBJECT TRAIT	REAL	C	is PPANP	is being PPAN	has been PPANP	has been being PPAN
	POSSIBLE	D	MOD be PPANP	MOD be being PPAN	MOD have been PPANP	MOD have been being PPAN

CODES	INF - infinitive	PPANP - past participle, adjective, noun, preposition	MOD - modal
	PP - past participle	PPAN - past participle, adjective, noun	
	PS - past simple		

NOMENCLATURE TRANSLATION	Non-perfect = Single Focus	Active = Subject Action	Dynamic Situation = Event
	Perfect = Dual Focus	Passive & Complement = Subject Trait	Static Situation = State
	Non-continuous = Still Focus		
	Continuous = Moving Focus	Non-modal = Real	
		Modal = Possible	

FIGURE 2: Alternative nomenclature to describe semantics of auxiliary verb patterns

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5.3.3 Subject Action instead of active

Grammatically, the word *active* refers to syntactical patterns containing lexical verbs that are understood to mean that the subject is the doer of the lexical verb (Eastwood, 1996). However, the word *active* alone makes no reference to the subject or to the fact that a verb is required. Finding an alternative label therefore was a matter of overcoming these two shortcomings. Overcoming the first shortcoming was a matter of including the word *subject* in the new label, while overcoming the second was a matter of finding a word that was synonymous with *verb*. Through a process of looking at synonyms in the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (2013) the word that I identified was *action*. The new label chosen to replace *active* was therefore *Subject Action*.

5.3.4 Subject Trait instead of passive and complements

The fact that discussions of the passive and complements are treated separately in grammatical reference sources (see section 2.5.6.2.) means that there were no descriptions in the literature that I could utilise to find a suitable label. What I was seeking was not only a descriptor that showed what the statements *She is taught* (passive), *She is happy* (adjective complement), *She is a doctor* (noun complement) and *She is in her room* (prepositional complement) have in common, but also a descriptor that could show how this group of statements is somehow in opposition to an active statement such as *She teaches*.

Having chosen Subject Action as the descriptor to replace *active*, I looked for antonyms on Dictionary.com (2013) for meanings opposite to the word *action*. However, this turned out to be unfruitful, with the majority of descriptors using negative prefixes to give such words as *inaction, inertia, immobility, inactivity* and *inactiveness*. Words that didn't have negative prefixes included such ideas as *quiet, cessation, rest, idleness, relaxation, quiet* and *suspension*. However, in my opinion, none of these descriptors suitably described the patterns under focus. Next, I tried to reflect about what words I thought might describe the patterns and then look for suitable synonyms in a dictionary. The candidates I identified as suitable were: *property, trait, characteristic* and *attribute*. Firstly, they are all positive. That is, they don't use negative suffixes and so are capable of describing concepts in their own right. Secondly, they have no implication of action and so could be contrasted with the Subject Action patterns. Thirdly, they seemed capable of describing passives, adjective subject complements, noun subject complements and prepositional complements as a whole. Finally, each of these words was not ambiguous in the way that such terms as passive and complement were. The label that I finally chose to describe the patterns and contrast with Subject Action was Subject Trait. I chose *trait* over *property* and *attribute* because they both have alternative definitions and I chose *trait* over *characteristic* simply because it was shorter and therefore more visually pleasing to me.

5.3.5 Single focus and dual focus

In Figure 2 the labels non-perfect and perfect have been replaced with the labels Single Focus and Dual Focus respectively. Using Dual Focus as a label for perfect is in agreement with Aarts (2011) and Swan (2005), who describe the present perfect as an event that happened in the past (Time 1) but has relevance at the present moment (Time 2). They also describe the past perfect as referring to a situation in the past (Time 1) before a reference point in the past (Time 2). Furthermore, they state that the future perfect (in Swan, 2005) or modal perfect (in Aarts, 2011) is used to describe an event (Time 1) that will be completed before a future time (Time 2). The label Dual Time Focus also agrees with Huddleston (2002, p.140) who states that, "When we combine the perfect with a primary tense, marked by inflection on *have*, we have a compound tense expressing two temporal relations."

Using Single Focus as a label for non-perfect is also supported in the literature. Huddleston's (2002) explanation of how the present perfect differs from the past simple is that, "…the former is a compound tense combining present and past, whereas the latter is a simple tense, just past." Single Focus is also supported by Borjars' and Burridge (2010, p.144) who state that, "..when the event time precedes the focus time, perfect aspect is used; when the two coincide we do not get perfect aspect."

5.3.6 Still Focus, Moving Focus, Events and States

5.3.6.1 Introduction

In Figure 2, the labels non-continuous and continuous have been replaced with the labels Still Focus and Moving Focus respectively. In order to explain the reasons for choosing these alternative labels, it is necessary to elaborate on four more labels that have been included in Figure 2: Event, State, Change and Constant. In my interpretation of English auxiliary verb patterns, each pattern is used to refer to either an event or a state at a particular point in time and depending on which is referred to there is also a focus on a constant or a change. To explain this clearly, it is necessary to look closer at the auxiliary verb patterns. Firstly, I will look at the non-modal patterns and then I will look at the modal patterns.

5.3.6.2 Explanation of alternative nomenclature

The Pattern A1 in Figure 2 corresponds with what is generally known in the literature as present and past simple (see Section 2.5.7.3). The literature describes many uses of the present and past simple, but in my analysis these uses can be subsumed under labels given in Figure 2. In my analysis, the uses can be viewed as either events with a still focus or states

with a still focus. By still focus I am referring to a focus at a point in time only, without any focus on how the event or state is progressing, or unfolding in time.

To further explore the idea of non-perfect referring to either single focal event or single focal state, I decided to explore the uses of the present simple. I divided the uses taken from Huddleston (2002) and Eastwood (1996) into the categories events and states with examples:

Events with a still focus

Instant actions

He runs, steps, shoots, scores!!

To tell stories as if happening now

Yesterday, I walk into this bar and I say to the bartender…

Verbs of reporting

Mum says you have to come home.

Performative verbs

I promise to meet you tomorrow.

Synopses

In the latest Sherlock Holmes movie, Holmes receives a letter, that invites him,….

Stage directions

Dr. Frankenstein: It's alive!!! [He throws head back and stretches out arms].

Hot news

Man dies in fire

Conditionals

If it rains tonight, I will stay home.

States with a still focus

States

I live in London.

Repeated actions that are seen as permanent

Jill plays tennis every Friday

Permanent facts

The sun rises in the east.

The future as part of a timetable

My plane leaves at 5 tomorrow.

Differentiating between events and states is supported by Huddleston (2002). In his analysis for the present (p.127) and the past (p.137), he begins by saying that there is a need to distinguish between occurrences (which I have called events) and states. However, while Huddleston (2002) says that occurrences involve change and states do not, I believe that both are capable of referring to either changes or constants.

In the examples listed above, the events refer to changes, while the states refer to constants and in this respect my analysis agrees with Huddleston's (2002). However, it is in discussing the present and past continuous that we differ. To illustrate this difference consider the word *run*. This word can be used to refer to a change of event in the present or past e.g. *The player runs, steps and kicks the ball!; Yesterday I woke up, ran 5 km and then went to work.* It can be used for a constant state at this point or at a point in the past e.g. *Joe runs every day; When I first met you I ran every day*. Similarly this occurs for the continuous, but the roles of constant and change reverse. The word *run* can be used to refer to a constant event in the present and past e.g. *Right now, I'm running; Yesterday, I was running when….* It can also be used for changes of state in the present and past e.g. *I'm running this week; I was running every day last week.* The difference between the non-continuous and the continuous is that the focus is at a point in time, more or less equivalent to a photograph for the former, while the focus is moving through time like a video for the latter. These concepts have been represented in the pictures in Figure 2.

These same concepts can also be used to describe the perfect aspect, but with a dual focus instead of a single one. The word *run* can be used to refer to a change of event (focus 1) some time before a present point or a past point (focus 2) e.g. *I have run before; I had run before that.* It can also be used to refer to a constant state at a particular point in the present or past (focus 2) that started before that point (focus 1) e.g. *I have run every day for 10 years; I had run every day for 10 years before that*. In the continuous aspect we can refer to a constant event (focus 1) before a present or past point (focus 2) e.g. *I have just been running; I had been running before that*. We can also use *run* to refer to a state whose length is changing at a point in the present or past (focus 2) since it started (focus 1) e.g. *I have been running for two hours; At that point, I had been running for 2 hours*. These concepts have also been represented pictorially in Figure 2.

The meanings of the elements of the pictures in Figure 2 are as follows: circle = event; line = state; large arrow = main focus; small arrow = secondary focus; downward arrow = still focus; right pointing arrow = moving focus.

5.3.6.3   Real and Possible instead of non-modal and modal

Section 2.5.5 discussed reasons why modal and non-modal auxiliary verbs were differentiated from each other syntactically, but very little was said about their semantics. According to Depraetere and Reed (2006, p.269):

> All modal utterances are non-factual, in that they do not assert that the situations
>
> they describe are facts, and all involve the speaker's comment on the necessity
>
> or possibility of the truth of a proposition or the actualization of a situation.

Figure 2 shows that I have adopted Depraetere and Reed's (2006) perspective - I have called non-modal auxiliary verbs and modal auxiliary verbs *Real* and *Possible* respectively. Other authors however, do not make such a clear distinction.

In reference to modal verbs, Swan (2005) differentiates between two kinds of semantics: degrees of certainty and obligations. Similarly, Berry (2011) differentiates between events referring to the factual nature of events and those referring to human control. Huddleston (2002) differentiates between three kinds of modal semantics: strength, kind and degree. Firstly, strength refers to the strength of commitment that what is being said is factual or actual. For example, I might study tomorrow (weak commitment) versus I will study tomorrow (strong commitment). Secondly, kind is differentiated into three types: epistemic, deontic and dynamic. Epistemic modality refers to the truth of what is said, while deontic refers to obligation or permission. For example, if *You must study hard* is said as a kind of command it is deontic because there is an obligation upon the listener to perform the action. However, if it was said in the following way, *Wow. You got straight A's. You must study hard*, it is epistemic because the use of *must* is based on reasoning by the speaker.

Huddleston's (2002) description of dynamic modality is much harder to ascertain since he only uses the modal *can* as an example, but he says that it concerns properties of people. In the sentence *You can go to the party, can* is considered deontic because it equates to a form of permission, while in *She can beat everyone* it is considered dynamic because it is describing a property.

Huddleston's (2002) concept of degree refers to how easy it is to differentiate between the meanings of sentences with and without modals. If it is easy, then there is a high degree, if it is not then there is a low degree. For example, the difference in meaning between *I know her* and *I may know* her are quite easy for native speakers to differentiate between and therefore have a high degree of modality. However, the difference between *I see you* and *I can see you* is much harder to distinguish and so they have a low degree of modality.

In my analysis, differences between modal verb semantics can be more clearly understood when compared with non-modal verb semantics. Modal verbs refer to present events in similar ways to non-modal verbs. For example, present events such as *He runs, steps, shoots and scores* and *He is running right now*, have modal counterparts e.g. *He might run. He might step*; *He might be running right now.* They also operate similarly with present states. For example, present states such as *He runs every day* and *He is running this week*, have modal counterparts e.g. *He might run every day; He might be running every day this week.* Because modal verbs refer to what is possible in my analysis, there are always degrees of certainty or strength, as the authors above identified. If for example the modal verb *might* in the above examples is exchanged with the modal *must* then the speaker is much more confident that the possibility is a reality. Furthermore, this similarity exists for present perfect usage. Compare the non-continuous events *She has travelled before* and *She might have travelled before* or *She must have travelled before*, and the continuous events *She has been travelling* and *She might have been travelling* or *She must have been travelling*. Also compare the usage with the non-continuous states *She has played piano for years* and *She might have played piano for years* or *She must have played piano for years*, and the continuous *She has been writing for an hour* and *She might have been running for an hour* or *She must have been running for an hour.*

Modal verb usage differs significantly from non-modal usage in reference to the past. All lexical verbs have present and past forms (see Section 2.5.6.5.), but only the modals *can* and *will* seem to have past forms in this way. Compare the events *I can see you* versus *Yesterday, I could see you; I will go to the party* versus *Yesterday, I decided that I would go to the party*. Also compare the states *I can play tennis* versus *I could play tennis when I was young* and *He will walk every day when he has the chance* versus *He would walk every day when he had the chance.* However, whenever we want to refer to the past with other modal verbs we need to use the perfect form (Aarts, 2011; Swan, 2005; Huddleston, 2002). To see this, compare the events *She studied yesterday* and *She might have studied yesterday*, and the states *She studied when she was young* and *She might have studied when she was young*.

When referring to the present or to the past, modal verb usage appears to be a kind of guess with degrees of confidence about how possible or likely the guess matches reality. However, when referring to the future, modal verb usage seems to be concerned with obligation. Furthermore, I believe that this change in semantics can be compared with non-modal usage.

For events, we can use non-modals to refer to decisions in the present that refer to the future e.g. *We march tonight* and *That tree is going to fall*. Non-modals can also refer to decisions at the present moment e.g. *You must leave tonight* and *That tree must be going to fall*. With
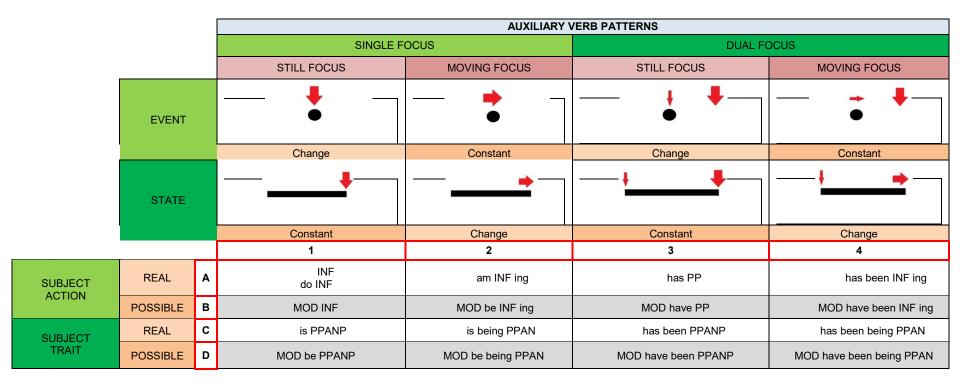
both non-modal and modal reference to the future, obligation or strength of commitment seems to be a more prevalent meaning as opposed to a guess or a description of a present reality. With modal verb usage in reference to the future, I believe there are also degrees of commitment e.g. *You should leave tonight* and *That tree should be going to fall.* My analysis of modal verb usage therefore, does not contrast degrees of certainty against obligations. I see degrees of certainty existing in all modal verb usage and I see the interpretation of modals in reference to the present as guesses and as obligations in reference to the future.

State usage also seems to have these similarities. We use non-continuous non-modals to refer to the future when they are part of a routine or timetable (Eastwood, 1996) e.g. *My plane leaves at 5 tomorrow*, and we use continuous ones when they are different from our routine (normal state) e.g. *I am meeting Sue tomorrow*. In modal usage for states the sentence *Passengers must arrive one hour before the flight*, can be interpreted as a guess when referring to the present or as an obligation in regards to a specific future flight.

Modal verbs used with the perfect also seem to have this difference between a guess and an obligation. The event statement *She must have finished by now* refers to a guess, while in *She must have finished by 5 tomorrow*, it becomes an obligation. Similarly, for a state the sentence *She will have been studying for 5 hours by now* is a guess, while *She will have been studying for 5 hours at 3 pm* is a kind of inescapable truth as long as *she* studies until 3 pm.

5.4   Holistic presentation of sentence and auxiliary verb patterns

The data analysis in Section 5.2 resulted in the creation of Figure 1, which was a holistic view of English sentence and auxiliary verb syntax. The data analysis in Section 5.3 resulted in the creation of Figure 2, which was an alternative nomenclature system to describe the semantics of the syntax. The information from Figures 1 and 2 was then combined to create Figure 3. Figure 3 represents a model of English sentence and auxiliary verb syntax that I believe can be of benefit in ESL education. It should be noted again that the model was created in Excel and that some formatting issues occurred in transferring the model to Word. In Excel, the model is much neater and comfortably fits onto an A4 page.

AUXILIARY VERB PATTERNS

			SINGLE FOCUS		DUAL FOCUS	
			STILL FOCUS	MOVING FOCUS	STILL FOCUS	MOVING FOCUS
EVENT			Change	Constant	Change	Constant
STATE			Constant	Change	Constant	Change
			1	**2**	**3**	**4**
SUBJECT ACTION	REAL	A	INF do INF	am INF ing	has PP	has been INF ing
	POSSIBLE	B	MOD INF	MOD be INF ing	MOD have PP	MOD have been INF ing
SUBJECT TRAIT	REAL	C	is PPANP	is being PPAN	has been PPANP	has been being PPAN
	POSSIBLE	D	MOD be PPANP	MOD be being PPAN	MOD have been PPANP	MOD have been being PPAN

SENTENCE PATTERNS

		1	2	3	4
ST	SUBJECT	INF/PS (A1)			
		AUX	(n't / not)		
SQ	QUESTION PHRASE	INF/PS (A1)			
		AUX	(n't / not)		
YNQ	AUX	(n't)	SUBJECT		
		SUBJECT	(not)		
OQ	QUESTION PHRASE	AUX	(n't)	SUBJECT	
			SUBJECT	(not)	

SUBJECT-VERB-TENSE PATTERNS

	NO AUX (A1)	AUXILIARY VERBS										
		REAL								POSSIBLE		
	INF Present	PS Past	Present	Past	Present	Past	Present	Past	PRESENT - modal PAST - modal + have		
Singular	eats		does		is	was	has		must ought to dare need	can will shall may	could would should might
Plural & you	eat	ate	do	did	are	were	have	had			
I					am	was					

CODES

CODES	INF - infinitive PP - past participle PS - past simple	PPANP - past participle, adjective, noun, preposition PPAN - past participle, adjective, noun AUX - auxiliary verb	ST – statement SQ - subject question YNQ - yes/no question	OQ - object question MOD - modal / = or	() = optional

POINTS TO REMEMBER	1. I uses aren't in negative YNQ and OQ	4. Pair nouns use plural verbs	7. could & would without have can refer to the past
	2. I uses was or were with if	5. Only the first verb is used with sentence patterns	8. n't and not are optional
	3. Uncount nouns use singular verbs	6. do, have, will, need and dare are both auxiliary and normal verbs	

FIGURE 3: Holistic presentation of English syntax and semantic

Chapter 6: Discussion, recommendations and conclusion

6.1. Discussion

This research project developed out of the difficulties that I have experienced in understanding and explaining contemporary descriptions of English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns. The literature review sought to identify contemporary perspectives of the focal patterns and to highlight how the combination of language change, different theoretical perspectives, multiple interconnected concepts and ambiguous terminology has been the cause of these difficulties. In order to develop a system of explanation that I could use in my own ESL teaching, it was necessary to analyse sentence and auxiliary verb patterns free from an existing theoretical framework. In doing this I needed to acknowledge that my methodology was subjective and qualitative in nature. The methods that I used to analyse the data were visual comparison of syntactic structures, literature review and reflection of meaning using my ability as a native speaker of English. The reliability of the data analysis was achieved by supporting it with the literature, while the validity was achieved by answering the research questions. The data analysis resulted in the production of a model of English sentence and auxiliary verb patterns viewed holistically, with the use of an alternative system of nomenclature that used positive, everyday language descriptors.

6.2   Recommendations

The final outcome of this research was the production of the model seen in Figure 3. At this stage, the model is purely theoretical and is a description of only part of the whole system of English syntax and semantics. In order to further determine the reliability of the model, it would be necessary to conduct further research by analysing how effective both ESL students and teachers find using it in comparison to methods that already exist. If the results of such research found the model to be both reliable and useful then the complexities of English syntax and semantics could become more accessible to the ESL community.

6.3   Conclusion

Analysing the grammar of a language is extremely complex and is something that is generally left to academic linguists. However, the variety of theoretical frameworks and the technical jargon used in English grammar has the ability the exclude the non-expert from understanding the grammar. Despite this, academic descriptions of English grammar are used in language classrooms and texts, which can make the difficult task of learning a language even more difficult. It may surprise the reader to learn at this point that I am actually against the use of grammar as a method of learning and teaching second languages. However, every language

school that I have worked at believes that it is important and so I teach it. Therefore, the reason for doing this project is the belief that, if we have to teach grammar to ESL students, then let's make what is extremely complex as simple and user-friendly as possible. The model that I have created may not have the ability to explain every single aspect of sentence and auxiliary verb grammar that the academic community is aware of. However, I believe that it can be used to develop a thorough understanding of sentence and auxiliary verb patterns more efficiently and effectively than what currently exists.

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