

3: Modals and Adverbs

Sightreading

Ic for fram fæder and com on middaneard.

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Þa þæt se ealdormon hierde, þa adrencte he hiene selfne.

His *discipuli* woldon eac þæt folc fedan: ac hi næfdon mid hwam.

Hwæt secge ge þæt ic sy?

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<Hwæt> secge [ge] (þæt) [ic] sy?

Auxiliary Verbs

In a clause with two verbs, the auxiliary is the finite verb, which governs an infinitive or past participle. In MnE, it is also the first verb in the verb phrase.

- ▶ I **have** eaten.
- ▶ We **will** see.
- ▶ I hear that he **was** beaten.

In German, the same word order is typical of headclauses.

- ▶ Ich **habe** gegessen.
- ▶ Wir **werden** sehen.
- ▶ Ich habe gehört, dass er **geschlagen** wurde.

Modal Auxiliaries

Express “modality”, i.e. degrees of (un)certainty, permission, or obligation. The tenses have come to express further degrees of (un)certainty.

- ▶ I **can** dance.
- ▶ I **could** dance.
- ▶ I **will** visit.
- ▶ I **would** love to visit.
- ▶ She **may** succeed.
- ▶ She **might** succeed.

Modal Auxiliaries

MnE “present”	MnE “past”	OE origin	OE preterite
can	could	cunnan	cuðe
may	might	magan	mihte
must	—	mōtan	mōste
shall	should	sculan	scolde
will	would	willan	wolde

- ▶ OE preterites used for tense *or* to express greater uncertainty;
- ▶ Also used as lexical verbs (esp. *cunnan*, *willan*)
(Cf. “God **wills** it”, “we **must** away”);
- ▶ ! Sense may differ from that of the modern reflex.

Modal Auxiliaries: Sense

cunnan	know how to; be able, can; as independent verb: know, be familiar with
magan	be able (cf. <i>cunnan</i>); be allowed (cf. <i>mōtan</i>)
mōtan	be allowed to, may
sculan	obligation or necessity (must, ought); authoritative expectation (shall); reported claims (is supposed to)
willan	want, wish less commonly pure futurity (will, shall)

Modal Auxiliaries: Preterites-Present

Most OE modals are **preterite-present verbs**:

- ▶ Their presents were originally preterites;
- ▶ Their new preterites are weak.

Compare:

<i>crēopan</i> II preterite	<i>sculan</i> present	<i>sculan</i> preterite
ic crēap	ic sceal	ic scolde
þū crupe	þū scealt	þū scoldest
hēo crēap	hēo sceal	hēo scolde
wē crupon	wē sculon	wē scoldon

Modal Auxiliaries: Preterites-Present

cunnan	ic can, þū canst, hē can, wē cunnon ic cūðe, þū cūðest, hē cūðe, wē cūðon
magan	ic mæg, þū meahst, hē mæg, wē magon ic mihte, þū mihtest, hē mihte, wē mihton
mōtan	ic mōt, þū mōst, hē mōt, wē mōton ic mōste, þū mōstest, hē mōste, wē mōston
sculan	ic sceal, þū scealt, hē sceal, wē sculon ic sceolde, þū sceoldest, hē sceolde, wē sceoldon
willan	ic wille, þū wilt, hē wile, wē willað ic wolde, þū woldest, hē wolde, wē woldon

Modal Auxiliaries: Example Sentences

Of ælcum trēowe ðises orcerdes ðū **mōst** **etan**.

Hēo ne **mihte** þæt cild **gehȳran**.

Nān man hine ne **cūðe** **gecnāwan**.

Ælc cristen man **sceal** pater noster **cunnan**.

Wē **willað** ūs tō scype **gangan**.

Þū **scealt** grēot **etan** þīne lifdagas.

Ne **mihtest** ðū āne tīde **wacian**?

Lof **sceolde** hē drihtnes **wyrcean**.

Hwȳ ne **meaht** þū hit **ongītan**?

Ðū geherdest reccan þætte Iōb **sceolde** **bīon** se hēhsta god.

Modal Auxiliaries: Example Sentences

(Of ælcum trēowe ðises orcerdes) [ðū] mōst etan.

[Hēo] ne mihte <þæt cild> gehýran.

[Nān man] <hine> ne cūðe gecnāwan.

[Ælc cristen man] sceal <pater noster> cunnan.

[Wē] willað <ūs> (tō scype) gangan.

[þū] scealt <grēot> etan <þīne lifdagas>.

Ne mihtest [ðū] (āne tīde) wacian?

<Lof> sceolde [hē] <drihtnes> wyrcean.

(Hwý) ne meht [þū] <hit> ongītan?

[Ðū] geherdest reccan (þæt) [Iōb] sceolde bīon [se hēhsta god].

Adverb Formation in Modern English

adjective + *-ly*: *easy* > *easily*
scarce > *scarcely*
recent > *recently*

noun + *-wise*: *length* > *lengthwise*
clock > *clockwise*

unmarked: *fast*
hard
yesterday
there
also

Adverb Formation in Old English

- adjective + *e*:
lang (long) > *lange* (for a long time)
gearu (ready) > *gearwe* (readily)
nīwe (new) > *nīwe* (newly, recently)
īeþe (easy) > *ēaþe* (easily)
- word + *-lice*:
heard (hard) > *heardlice* (severely)
ār (honour) > *ārlīce* (honourably)
ēar (early) > *ēarlīce* (early)
- word + *-inga/unga*:
ealle (all) > *eallunga* (entirely)
ierre (anger) > *ierringa* (angrily)
- simple stems:
oft (often)
wel (well)
ēac (also, *auch*)

Adverb Formation in Old English

- word in acc.: *efen* (equal) > *efen* (equally)
āwiht (anything) > *āwiht* (at all)
- adjective in gen.: *ealle* (all) > *ealles* (entirely)
- word in dat. sg.: *nīed* (necessity) > *nīede* (necessarily)
- word in dat. pl.: *hwīl* (a while) > *hwīlum* (sometimes)
- with prep.: *tōmiddes* (prep. + gen., amidst)
tōgædere (prep. + adv., together)
wiþūtan (prep. + adv., outside)
ymbūtan (prep. + adv., around)
begeondan (prep. + adv., beyond)

Adverb or Adjective?

Due to the *-lic*, *-lice* endings, adjectives and adverbs may coincide in form:

- ▶ Adverb *missenlice* ‘variously’
- ▶ Adjective *missenlic* ‘various’:
 - ▶ Strong ismn *missenlice*
 - ▶ Strong napmf *missenlice*
 - ▶ Strong asf *missenlice*
 - ▶ Weak nasn *missenlice*
 - ▶ Weak nsf *missenlice*

→ Rely on context!

- ▶ Weak adjectives are preceded by a pronoun or modifier
- ▶ All adjectives modify a noun, whether or not implied
- ▶ NB the textbook marks long vowels;
thus *missenlice* adverb, *missenlice* adjective

Adverb or Adjective?

An adjective typically occurs close to a noun:

- ▶ Immediately preceding a noun:

Se tila cyning

- ▶ Closely following a noun:

Crist nāmode Ābel rihtwisne

Waldend þone gōdan

Adverb or Adjective?

Adverbs will often appear adjacent to the verb or adjective they modify, but especially when modifying verbs they can move more freely, e.g.:

- ▶ Adjacent to the verb that is modified:

hē hearde fēoll

- ▶ Adjacent to subject/object, modifying a clause-final verb:

hīe brædlīce for mægenlēaste swulton

Numeral Declension

Cardinals

Only *ān*, *twēgen*, *þrīe* are typically declined. They decline as strong or weak adjectives, depending on context. When *ān* is weak, it is an adverb meaning “alone” rather than “one”.

Hīe sind *ān* god, on *ānre* godcundnesse and on *ānum* gecynde.

Hē hæfde *twēgene* sunu, Ermenrēd and Ercenberht.

Her cōm Port on Brytene and his *twēgan* sunan.

Nis nā gedafenlic þæt þes man *āna* bēo.

Ordinals

Always decline as weak adjectives, except *ōðer*, which is always strong.

On þām *fiftēoþan* geare cōm Godes word ofer Iōhannem.

Ordinal Formation

An ordinal is formed by adding *-ta* or *-ða* to the cardinal stem. Beyond twelve, that stem usually ends in *-o*, either because the *-n* of the ‘teen’-morpheme is dropped or because an *o* is added to the ‘ty’-element. *Ān*, *twēgen*, *þrīe* have slightly different ordinals.

#	Cardinal	Ordinal
1	ān	forma, fyrsta
2	twēgen	æfterra, ðper
3	þrīe	þridda
4	fēower	fēorþa
11	endleofan	endlyfta
12	twelf	twelfta
13	þrēotīne	þrēotēoþa
30	þrītīg	þrītigoþa

Example Sentences

Be þissum ðinge gē habbað oft gehȳred.

Unriht weaxeð ealles tō wīde.

Neron cwæþ, “Gang mē nēar hider, and sege mē hwæt þū þence.”

Iōhannes fulluht ðwōh þone mannan wiðūtan, and nān ðing wiðinnan.

Hwīlum Brettas, hwīlum eft Seaxan sige geslōgon.

On þam twelftan dæge cristes acennednyse comon þa þry tungelwitegan.

Stephanus wæs se fyrmesta; oðer Philippus; þridda Procorus.

He ða fæste feowertig daga 7 feowertig nihta.