

# OUGHT TO in Middle English: A Semi-Grammaticalization?

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The aim of this paper is to give an explanation, on syntactic and semantic grounds, the grammaticalization of the semi-modal *ought to* in Old and Middle English, i.e. how this lexical item has become a functional one<sup>1</sup>, or so it seems.

## 1. Introduction

‘Ought’ (to) comes from the Old English (OE) verb *agan*, which means ‘possess’, but in Present Day English (PDE) it now means ‘owe, should’. *Agan* belongs to the class of preterite-present verbs: broadly speaking, they have a past form, but a present meaning (for example, see Campbell (1959) for further details). As for the ME form, it comes from the past form *ahte* in OE.

Yet, in Middle English (ME), it is to be noticed that, syntactically speaking, ‘ought’, combined with the particle ‘to’, has a different behaviour from the verbs belonging to the same class. Our purpose is then to illustrate that syntactic difference (both for ‘ought’ and ‘to’), so that we can explain why we consider that ‘ought to’ has semi-grammaticalized at that period.

Therefore, in Section 2, we shall deal with OE data, mainly focusing on the syntax of *agan*. In Section 3, ME data will be analyzed, and from those data, we shall draw a parallel with the results obtained in the preceding section. Finally, in Section 4, we shall focus on grammaticalization, going back and forth the OE and ME periods, with a final light shed on the PDE ‘ought to’.

## 2. *Agan* in Old English

### 2.1. The distribution of *agan*

When we searched the OE corpora (*The York-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Poetry* (Pintzuk & Leendert (2001)) and *The York-Toronto-Helsinki*

*Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose* (Taylor & al. (2003))), we found ‘*agan*’<sup>2</sup> in different kinds of structures.

It can function as a *lexical* verb and then it takes a Determiner Phrase (DP) object,

- (1) *Dryhten hælend, þu þe ahst*  
 Lord Christ, you-NOM who-NOM owns-IND.PRES  
*doma geweald.*  
 justice-GEN power-ACC.  
 ‘Lord Christ, who owns the power of justice.’ (cocynew<sup>3</sup>,86.723. 623)

It can be passivized<sup>4</sup>,

- (2) *þa cwæð se cyningc to his mannum siððan*  
 Then said-PRET the king-NOM to his-DAT men-DAT when  
*Apollonius agan wæs...*  
 Apollonius-NOM had-P.PART was-IND.PRET...  
 ‘Then the king said to his men when he had had control over Apollonius...’ (ApoIT,ApT:14.1.250)

or it can be an infinitive and follow another preterite-present verb,

- (3) *Ac se ðe þa ecan agan wille*  
 But the one-NOM the-ACC eternal-ACC obtain will-PRES  
*soðan gesælða.*  
 true-ACC blessing-ACC.  
 ‘But who will obtain the eternal true blessing.’ (comeboe,161.7.23. 52)

It can have the same structure as the auxiliary verb BEON/WESAN ‘be’<sup>5</sup>:

- (4) *In Antiochia þare ceastre wæs sum*  
 In Antioche-DAT this-DAT town-DAT was-IND.PRET some-NOM  
*cyningc Antiochus gehaten.*  
 king-NOM Antiochus-NOM called-P.PART.  
 ‘The town of Antiocha was called after some king Antiochus.’ (ApoIT, ApT:1.1.3)
- (5) *æfter þæs cyninges naman wæs seo*  
 after the-GEN king-GEN name was-IND.PRET the-NOM

*ceaster Antiochia geciged.*  
 town-NOM Antiocha named-P.PART.  
 ‘That was after the king’s name that the town was called Antiocha.’  
 (ApoIT,ApT:1.1.4);

it is then followed by a past participle,

- (6) ... *se þe ah lifes wyn gebiden*  
 ... who-ACC ought-IND.PRES life-GEN gain-ACC asked-P.PART  
*in burgum.*  
 in town-DAT.  
 ‘... who ought to ask in town the gain of life.’ (coexeter,144.27.133)
- (7) *hi agon on agenan hwilan mid*  
 they-NOM ought-IND.PRES during proper-DAT time-DAT by  
*earfedan gewunnen.*  
 suffering-DAT remained-P.PART.  
 ‘they ought to remain in suffering for their own time.’ (WHom,WHom\_20.  
 2:51.1425)

What is striking concerning this verb is that examples displaying the structure *agan + infinitive* (which can be found with all the other preterite-presents) have not been found in Pintzuk & Leendert (2001) and Taylor & al. (2003). Meanwhile we did find examples of the (PDE) structure *agan + to + infinitive*,

- (8) & *betæhte him æl þæt he ahte to*  
 & delivered-PRET him-DAT all that he-NOM ought-PRET to  
*bewitenne.*  
 keep-DAT.  
 ‘& delivered to him all that he ought to keep.’ (Heptateuch,Gen:39.4.  
 1564)

### 3. *Agen in Middle English*

In the ME period, it is commonly assumed that morphology gets poorer, i.e. a great number of flexions tend to be blurred, or dropped, leaving the words bare. Because of this morphological impoverishment, grammar (and syntax) has to readjust, entailing changes of parameters, hence the change of status of some items.

3.1. The distribution of *agen*

We now find two forms for ‘agen’: the present form **owe** and the past form **ahte**, both being used either as lexical or modal verbs.

As a lexical verb, ‘agen’ can be found as a transitive verb,

- (9) ... *þet hit er ahte.*  
 ... that it-OBJ already possessed-PRET.  
 ‘... that (he) already owned it.’ (CMLAMBX1,31.377)
- (10) ... *the love that men to hym owen.*  
 ... the love that men-SUBJ to him-OBJ owe-PRES.  
 ‘... the love that men owe him.’ (CMCTPARS,313.C2.1087)

As a modal verb, *agen* is found in two types of structures: modal + *infinitive* (unlike the OE *agan*) and modal + *to* + *infinitive*<sup>6</sup>.

All the examples displaying *ahte* date from the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> centuries, as for the examples using *owe*, they date from the 13<sup>th</sup> up to the 15<sup>th</sup> century: *owe* is the latest, yet it is to be supplanted by *ahte* (we assume this is due to the standardization of all the modal past forms during the middle and late period of ME: *ought*, *could*, *might*, *would*, *should* and *must* have a past form but a ‘present’ meaning).

- (11) ... *þt euch mon ahte hersumin & herien in eorðe.*  
 ... that each one-SUBJ ought obey & praise on earth.  
 ‘... that each one ought to obey & praise on earth.’ (CMKATH,23.75)
- (12) *þus ahte ech of us him seluen to cnowen.*  
 thus ought each of us-SUBJ him self-OBJ to know.  
 ‘thus, each of us ought to know himself.’ (CMTRINIT,123.1649)
- (13) (*Arthure*) **owen** *al þe worlde to deme.*  
 (Arthur-SUBJ) ought-PRES all the world-OBJ to deem.  
 ‘Arthur ought to deem all the world.’ (CMBRUT3,81.2468)
- (14) *first, we owen vndirstonde it bi the lettre.*  
 first, we-SUBJ ought understand it-OBJ by the letter.  
 ‘we first ought to understand it word by word.’ (CMPURVEY,I,52.2123)

Examples (12) and (13) are interesting: we can find noun phrases between *agen* and ‘to’. The question could be whether the distribution of noun phrases has any influence of the syntax of this verb.

According to Los (2005), among others, some examples such as,

- (15) *Her amidde wes this meiden iset forte all te-reden reowliche*  
 Here among was the maiden set for-to all asunder-rend cruelly  
 ‘Among this the maiden was placed to tear all asunder cruelly’ (Kathe, 44.408, Los (2005):211)

are to be considered as ‘split infinitives’ underlying the new status of ‘to’: it was a bound morpheme in OE, and is now reanalyzed as a free word from the ME period, that is to say it can be found separated from the infinitive. But what is also interesting with that kind of example is the presence of ‘forto’. At first, it was ‘for’ + Object + ‘to’ + Verb, where ‘for’ was considered as a Complementizer under C, and ‘to’ some non-finite modal particle under T. With the cliticization of ‘to’ onto ‘for’, that cluster came to be reanalyzed as a T morpheme (a ‘compound infinitival marker’), to reinforce the subjunctive status of the particle ‘to’, as well as its purposive status<sup>7</sup>.

Yet, it does not explain the structures displayed in (12) and (13). Since we can find an object in between ‘ought’ and ‘to’ (which is very likely to be the object of the infinitive), we can first argue that the particle is inseparable from its infinitive, and then that ‘ought’ and ‘to’ have not aggregated yet.

Here, we give some more examples, to try and explain the syntactic status of ‘to’.

- (16) *he ne heþ mite to hit endi*  
 he not has power to it end  
 ‘he does not have the power to end it’ (AYENBI,I, 113.252)
- (17) *huanne he him yelt to him ouercome*  
 when he then yields to him overcome  
 ‘when he yields to them, to overcome him’ (AYENBI,I, 253.383)<sup>8</sup>
- (18) *Neomeð nu zeorne zeme Mine leoue sustren for hwi me ach*  
 Take now eagerly care my love sisters for why I have  
 him *luuen*.  
 him love.  
 ‘Take now great care, my dear sisters, of the reason why I have to love him.’ (CMANCRIW-2,II.284.643)
- (19) *Ge ancras achze þis laste lutle stuche reden to ower*  
 You anchoresses had this last little piece

*wimmen...*

read to your women...

'You, anchoresses, had that last small piece of text read to your sisters...' (CMANCRIW-2,II.284.643)

- (20) *hereð nu to wiche fihte we ozen þis strengðe notien.*  
 here now to which fight we have this strength enjoy;  
 hear now about the fight which strength we should enjoy;' (CMTRINIT, 189.2613)

In examples (16) and (17), we can clearly note that there is an object pronoun between the particle and the verb, yielding, as said before, that the particle 'to' tends to be reanalyzed as a 'free' word, now separable from its infinitive. For examples (18) to (20), does it mean that *agen* functions like its fellow modals, or can we consider that there is a covert particle? Depending on the analysis, the syntactic structures will be different: a raising structure for the first one, but a control one for the second. The syntactic structures of (16) and (17), according to our analysis in Roméro (2005), are control structures, with 'to' under C. For (18) to (20), we have the choice: either *agen* is a modal verb, or it is a lexical one. In those examples, we have *agen* + Object + Verb. Those structures look very much like their modal counterparts, but most of the examples we found in the corpora displaying the verb *agen* are with the particle 'to'. As a consequence, we consider those three examples as structures with a covert 'to', which, if they display the particle overtly, would be 'split infinitives'<sup>9</sup>, but a little different from example (15):

- (21) *Neomeð nu zeorne zeme Mine leoue sustren for hwi me ach (to) him;  
 luuen t<sub>i</sub>.*
- (22) *Ge ancres achze (to) [þis laste lutle stuche]<sub>i</sub> reden t<sub>i</sub> to ower wimmen...*
- (23) *hereð nu to wiche fihte we ozen (to) [þis strengðe]<sub>i</sub> notien t<sub>i</sub>.*<sup>10</sup>

Through these examples, we came to consider 'to' as an infinitival marker generated under C, then triggering a control structure with a PRO under Spec,CP, as we shall see in the next section.

#### 4. Syntax and grammaticalization

Let us now turn to the syntax of *agan/agen* in OE and ME. In all the examples we parsed, we have found two types of uses: a lexical and a modal one.

##### 4.1. Old English syntax of *agan*

In examples (9) to (11), *agan* is a lexical verb. It is then a V within a vP<sup>11</sup>; in (13), we assume it is a control verb. In Roméro (2005), we have shown that the syntax of the preterite-presents and the syntax of ‘to’ in infinitivals were quite similar.

Let us have a look at the following examples, where  $\emptyset$  indicates an ellipsis of the verb:

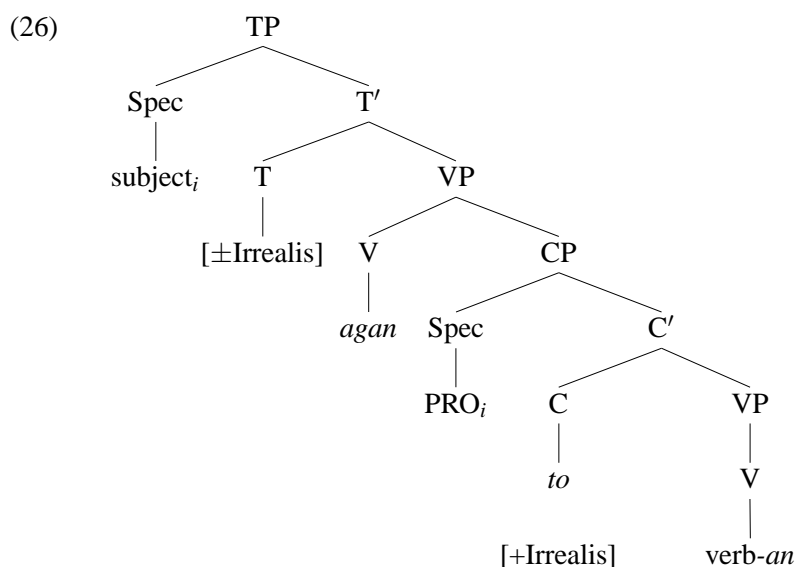
- (24) *Ure æghwylc sceal ende gebidan worolde*  
 Us-GEN every-NOM must-PRES end-ACC wait world-GEN  
*lifes; se þe mote domes ær*  
 life-GEN; who-NOM that has to-PRES judgment-GEN before  
*deape*  $\emptyset$ .  
 death-DAT  $\emptyset$ .  
 ‘Everyone of us must wait for the end of life of the world, and before death, one has to wait for the judgment.’ (cobeowul,43.1386.1148)
- (25) *willað þæt gewrecan gif we magon, þeah*  
 will-FUT that-ACC avenge if we-NOM can-PRES, yet  
*we beotiaþ TO*  $\emptyset$ .  
 we-NOM pride ourselves-PRES to  $\emptyset$ .  
 ‘(we) will avenge it if we can, yet we pride ourselves on doing it.’  
 (BIHom,HomS\_10\_[BIHom\_3]:127.446)

According to those examples (two among many others), the preterite-present verb *mote* (‘must, have to’) and ‘to’ seem to have the same behaviour concerning ellipsis. *Mote* (i.e. a special kind of *v*) heads a TP, and *to* (i.e. a C) heads a TP.

But, in that respect, *agan* does not behave like the other preterite presents: it is the only one to be structured with ‘to’.

This leads us to question the syntactical status of *agan* in OE. From examples (9) to (11), *agan* is a lexical verb. But the structure of (13) is interesting

since *agan* is followed by ‘to’: here we assume it is a control verb, hence the following structure,



We also assume that when *agan* is followed by a bare infinitive, it has a different grammatical status: it has become a semi-lexical verb (what we called  $v_{Modal}$  in Roméro (2005)), which example (24) seems to indicate for preterite present verbs.

So, in OE, we can find *agan* either as V followed by a TP, or as a control verb when used with ‘to’, i.e. followed by CP. Let us now have a look at the ME syntax of *agen*.

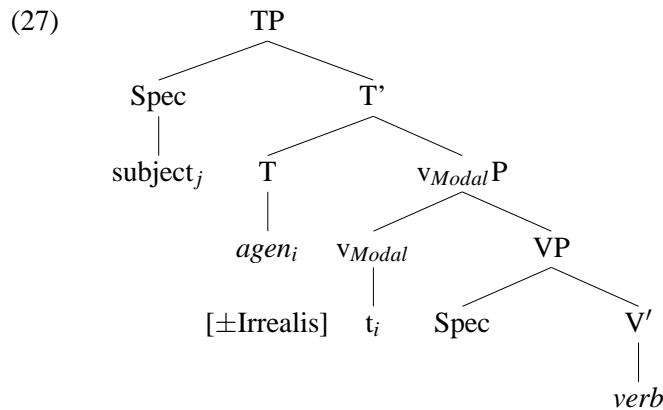
#### 4.2. Middle English syntax of *agen*

Unlike OE, ME *agen* can be found both in **agen** + *bare infinitive* and in **agen** + *to* + *infinitive* structures, and strikingly enough, we find more examples of **owen** + *to* + *infinitive* than **ahte** + *to* + *infinitive*. If we just follow our analysis, *agen* is a control verb in the structure *agen* + *to* + *infinitive*, and semi-lexical in *agen* + *bare infinitive*<sup>12</sup>.

So (12) and (13) still display control verbs, but not (11) and (14). The changing point lies in (14): in OE *agen* was not found with bare infinitives, it was only a control verb. We assume this is due to the grammaticalization

of *agen* (and generally speaking of all the preterite presents class), as well as to the reanalysis of ‘to’<sup>13</sup> (and what Dekeyser calls the ‘HABERE/DEBERE interface’).

Syntactically, we thus have in ME, two competing structures for *agen*: the ‘control’ structure, which is identical with (26), and a ‘grammaticalized’ one, which is as follows,



#### 4.3. What about grammaticalization?

Grammaticalization is the process in which a lexical item becomes a grammatical (or functional) one. With respect to *agen*, this is, as Dekeyser (1998) says, a ‘braintwister’: in PDE, *ought* does not have a past meaning anymore, but more an irrealis one (a conditional), and it is considered as a ‘semi-modal’ (or also named ‘quasi-modal’): grammaticalization seems not to have been completed. And we must add that it always functions with ‘to’, which was reanalyzed because of the loss of the infinitive morphology<sup>14</sup>. Strikingly enough, we have not found examples of *dare* + *to* + *infinitive*, nor *þurven* ‘need’ + *to* + *infinitive* for the same period<sup>15</sup>.

Moreover, we have two forms of *agen*: present *owe(n)* and past *ahte*<sup>16</sup>. In our corpus (Kroch & Taylor (2000)), we have found 20 examples of *owe(n)* + *to* + *infinitive*, but only 7 with *ahte*. Yet, only the latter became a grammatical item. We shall see in the next section that the choice of *ahte* over *owe* seems to be due to the meaning of the morphological form<sup>17</sup>. On semantic grounds, by the end of the ME period, *owe* ‘own, possess’ is to be used more as a lexical

verb, and *ahte* ‘ought, obligation’ as a modal one (see Dekeyser (1998) for more details).

So we have two processes at work for what was to become the modal periphrasis *ought to*: the reanalysis of ‘to’ into a ‘to’<sub>(Irrealis)</sub> (now followed by a bare infinitive) and of *ahte* as an irrealis item, with an obligation meaning.

#### 4.4. Grammaticalization and tense

In the following examples, we give illustrations of ‘past’ forms of modals which have conditional meanings. Some are already grammaticalized (examples (28) and (29)), some on their way to grammaticalization (examples (30) and (31)).

- (28) *‘Though I wiste that neither God ne  
 ‘Though I-SUBJ know-PRES that neither God-SUBJ nor  
 man ne **sholde** nevere knowe it, yet **wolde** I  
 man-SUBJ not should never know it-OBJ, yet would I-SUBJ  
 have desdayn for to do synne.  
 have disdain to do sin-OBJ’.*  
 ‘‘Though I am aware that neither man or God should never know it,  
 yet I would scorn sin.’’ (CMCTPARS,290.C2.94)
- (29) *The yeer of oure Lord 1391, the 12 day of March at midday,  
 The year-SUBJ of our Lord 1391, the 12 day of March at midday,  
 I **wolde** knowe the degre of the sonne.  
 I-SUBJ would know the degree-OBJ of the sun.  
 ‘On March 12th in the year of our Lord 1391, I would know the  
 degree of the sun.’ (CMASTRO,669.C1.189)*
- (30) *but, certes, he **sholde** suffren it in pacience as wel as  
 but, certainly, he-SUBJ should suffer it-OBJ in patience as well as  
 he abideth the deeth of his owene propre persone.  
 he-SUBJ awaits-PRES the death-OBJ of his own proper person.  
 ‘But he should certainly endure it with patience, as well as he awaits  
 his very own death.’ (CMCTMELI,217.C1b.20)*

- (31) *for ase ofte ase 3e þrefter breken eni of*  
 for as often as you-SUBJ thereafter break-PRES any of  
*ham, hit walde to swiðe hurten ower heorte ant*  
 them-OBJ, it-SUBJ would too greatly hurt your heart-OBJ and  
*maken ou swa offered þet 3e muhten*  
 make you-SUBJ so offered-P.PART that you-SUBJ might  
*sone, as God forbeode, fallen i desesperance...*  
 soon, as God-SUBJ forbade-PRET, fall in despair...  
 ‘for, as often as you break any of them this way, it would too greatly  
 hurt your heart and make you so offered that you might soon be  
 desperate, which God forbade...’ (CMANCRIW,I.46.65)

Let us now turn to *agen*. The situation is somewhat different: there are more examples with *owe* ‘(for)to’ (morphological present form) than with *ahte* ‘to’ (morphological past subjunctive form).

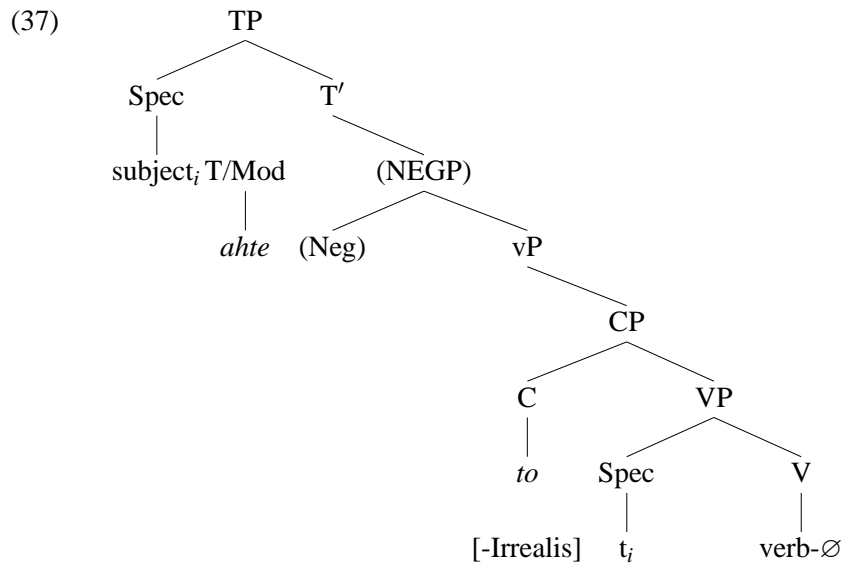
- (32) *þogh 3e mow wyth glosyng wordys desayve me*  
 although you-SUBJ may with glosing words deceive me-OBJ  
*and say 3e ben yn full charyte as 3e owen*  
 and say you-SUBJ are-PRES in full charity as you-SUBJ ought  
 forto *be, ...*  
 to be, ...  
 ‘although you may deceive me with glosing words and say you are  
 indulgent as you ought to/should be, ...’ (CMMIRK,130.3483)
- (33) *and heruth God seruyce as cristen men owen forto*  
 and hear-IMP God service-OBJ as christian men-SUBJ ought to  
*do;*  
 do;  
 ‘and hear God service as Christian men ought to;’ (CMMIRK,138.3674)
- (34) *& [þe eorl] benam him al ðat he ahte to*  
 & [the earl-SUBJ] took-PRET him-OBJ all that he-SUBJ ought to  
*hauen.*  
 have.  
 ‘The earl took from him all that he should have had.’ (CMPETERB,58.  
 529)

- (35) *When ye wyl aske any þing at a ryche man in ertht,*  
 When you-SUBJ will aske any thing-OBJ to a rich man on earth,  
*ye aske ful mekelike yure erande wyd mekil*  
 you-SUBJ ask-PRES full much your request-OBJ with lot  
*mare deuociun ahte ye þanne at pray to god, of whaim*  
 more devotion ought you-SUBJ then to pray to God, of whom  
*þat al zude cumis.*  
 that all good-OBJ comes-PRES.  
 When you ask anything to a rich man, you will fully ask your request  
 with much more devotion, should you then pray to God, from whom  
 all good comes.' (CMBENRUL,19.667)

When *owe* is used, 'to' has been reanalyzed (examples (32), (33) and (35)), whereas when it is *ahte*, 'to' has not yet but the modal has in (34).

What does this syntactically mean? The modal is no more generated in V, but in Mod/T: it no more has a past meaning, nor is it a lexical item since it functions as a [+irrealis] head, i.e. a subjunctive, and it weakens so that it cannot move to T anymore<sup>18</sup>. Hence it is no longer a control verb, but a raising one. By the end of the ME period, the syntax of *agen* would thus be,

- (36) [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>Spec</sub> Subject<sub>i</sub> [<sub>T</sub> *ahte* [(Neg) [<sub>TP</sub> [<sub>T</sub> *to* [<sub>VP</sub> [<sub>Spec</sub> *t<sub>i</sub>* [<sub>V</sub> *verb*]]]]]]]]],  
 that is,



which is different from (26).

## 5. Some facts in Present Day English

Unlike the other preterite present verbs, *ought* has not grammaticalized entirely since it needs *to* to function (there is no lexical counterpart, as for *need* or *dare*). In other words, both items grammaticalized, but this time the parallel did not cross<sup>19</sup>.

What are the clues that allow us to suggest that? In PDE, we have got very interesting facts as far as this quasi-modal is concerned. We can find the following examples, which are mainly found in American dialectal English:

- (38) You oughta know more about that than me.
- (39) A man oughtta do what a man oughtta do.
- (40) He didn't ought to have gone.
- (41) He hadn't ought to have gone.
- (42) George had ought to pay you back for the loan.
- (43) I might could be able to visit later on.

(44) She shouldn't ought to be here.

In examples (38) and (39), we have a *to*-contraction (see Pullum (1997) for more details about this phenomenon). As for the other examples, they display what is called a 'double modal' structure (those double modal structures can also be found with modals other than *ought* as the 'head' modal).

We can argue that the first two examples are the continuation of the grammaticalization process the modals and 'to' have been experiencing so far: by cliticising onto *ought*, 'to' is once again reanalyzed as a bound morpheme, and then, just as a phonological ending ([ɔ:t (t)ʊ:] to [ɔ:tə]), with perhaps a small gemination in example (39). And as a consequence, *oughta* has become what could be called a 'real' modal (in a syntactic way) in American English.

As for the double modal structure, it seems that the first modal scopes over the second one, which is then to be considered as the 'head' modal, with a *to*-infinitive structure (interestingly enough, we have not found examples of a double modal with a *to*-contraction: \*'he didn't oughta have gone', \*'George had oughta pay you back for the loan').

Yet, among those structures, we can make a classification: modal + *ought to*/modal (examples (42) and (44)) and auxiliary + *ought to* (examples (40), (41) and (43)). We shall not analyze these examples here, but we can perhaps talk about *de-grammaticalization*, since an auxiliary and a modal are always followed by a lexical verb (whether finite or non finite).

## 6. Conclusion

With the loss of the infinitive morphology, we showed that the reanalysis of TO went along that of *agen* and specially *ahte*. We also underlined that the meaning shift of *ahte*, from 'past' to 'conditional', or broadly speaking to *irrealis*, was partly responsible for its grammaticalization. Semantically, *agan/agen* no longer means 'possess' but 'obligation'. As for syntax, *ought*, a control verb in OE, turned into a raising verb generated under T and taking a TO-complement (like 'seem' or 'appear') by the end of the ME period.

Yet, dealing with the grammaticalization of such a verb is not that easy since the very process is still obscure, and Present Day English displays the two 'layers' of *agan*: the lexical verb 'own/owe' and the semi-modal 'ought to'<sup>20</sup>. For reasons of space, we did not investigate the root/epistemic interface, but we shall in a forthcoming article.

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1. Thanks to Johan van der Auwera, Jean-Louis Duchet and my supervisor Jacqueline Guéron for their useful comments and help, and to Christoph Eyrych for solving my  $\LaTeX$  problems.
2. The full paradigm for *agan* is: Ind.Pres 1,3 Sg *ag*, *ah*, 2 Sg *ahst*, Pl. *agon*; Subjunctive Sg *age*; Imperative *age*; Pret *ahte*; P.Part. *agen/agan*.
3. The sources of the quotations are the following; for OE: ApolT *Apollonius of Tyra*, Bl-Hom *The Blinking Homilies*, cobeowul *Beowulf*, cocynew *The Fate of the Apostles*, coexeter *The Wanderer*, comeboe *The Meters of Boethius*, Heptateuch *The Heptateuch*, WHom *Wulfstan's Homilies*; for ME: CMANCRIW *Ancrene Riwe*, CMASTRO *A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, CMBENRUL *The Northern Prose Rule of St Benet*, CMBRUT *The Brut or The Chronicle of England*, CMCTMELI *The Tale of Melibee*, CMCTPARS *The Parson's Tale*, CMKATH *St Katherine*, CMLAMBX1 *The Lambeth Homilies*, CM-MIRK *Mirk's Festial*, CMPETERB *The Peterborough Chronicle*, CMPURVEY *Purvey's General Prologue to the Bible*, CMTRINIT *Trinity Homilies*.
4. The form of the past participle can be identical with the infinitive.
5. We give examples of the same structure with WESAN.
6. It is noteworthy that out of 30 examples of the verb *agen*, we only found 9 occurrences of *ahte*, which was to become the one used in Present Day English, and only six of them displayed the structure *ahte + to + infinitive* (two with no *-en* ending, and four with the *-en* ending of infinitive forms). So, we have mainly found examples of *owe(n) + to + infinitive*, *owe* meaning 'ought'.
7. 'The introduction of 'for' is usually interpreted as a reinforcer of the original purposive meaning, and it clearly shows that *to* was not felt purposive enough. The fact that *for* subsequently disappeared from the (standard) language has been taken by Fischer as an indication that *to* was regaining some of its original meaning.' Los (2005): 229.
8. Both examples are taken from Los (2005): 217.
9. Given the fact that 'to' has been reanalyzed as a free word.
10. ME has become a VO language, hence the trace of the moved element here.
11. Our theoretical framework is minimalism and the theory of phases, Chomsky (1995, 1999).
12. We have encountered examples where we could find constituents in between *agen* and the bare infinitive, but no examples with the second infinitive structure.
13. Roberts and Roussou (2003) argued that 'to' changes meaning from purposive/directional prepositional content to a 'bleached' meaning as an *irrealis marker* (our emphasis).
14. The *-an/-en* endings in OE and ME mean that infinitives are subjunctive-marked.
15. However, from the middle of the ME period, examples of the lexical verb *neden* 'need' have been found, in which *neden* replaced the preterite present *þurven*. For the same

structure, there are two verbs *agen* and *neden* which both semi-grammaticalized.

16. More precisely, it is a past subjunctive form.
17. All the Present Day English modals come from ME past subjunctive forms.
18. In the late ME period, English is not a V2 language anymore (except for a small number of sentences).
19. Unlike the other preterite present verbs, the process of grammaticalization of 'ought' and 'to' followed their own paths without interfering each other.
20. We shall find the same process with 'need' and 'dare'. And, as we have just seen in the preceding section, we can find double modal structures, as well as *to*-contractions in American/(British) English, which illustrates the fact that the language is still morphologically, semantically and syntactically changing.

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22 *Notes*

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