Depraetere, Ilse & Susan Reed (2006): "Mood and Modality in English". In: Bas Aarts & April Mc Mahon. *The Handbook of English Linguistics*. Malden, MA *et al.*: Blackwell, 269–290.

Mood & Modality

· Modality ⱥ many-to-many form-function fit

  • Semantic: obligation, volition, possibility,…

  Lack of factuality ([±truth]): "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" (p. 269)

  , Formal: auxiliaries (*can, could*), inflection (*subjunctive*), particles (Germ. *etwa*), adverbs (*possibly, maybe*)

· **Inflectional modality** = (verbal) **mood**

  Imperative: Æ-morpheme (*obligation*)

  Subjunctive: Æ-morpheme (*virtual-hypothetical, 'possible world'*)

        • Productive in conditionnal clauses (*If…*[subjunctive]…*, then…*)

        , Productive (in AE) after certain verbs/adjectives of obligation: *I demand that he <u>leave</u>*

        𝑓 Idioms: *Long live France!* (*Vive la France, Es lebe Frankreich*)

  Indicative: Æ-morpheme (*fact*)

· **Modal auxiliaries**

  Central modals: NICE-properties

  • <u>N</u>egation: *can't vs. *haven't to*

  , <u>I</u>nversion: *Can I t_{can} go? vs. *Have I t_{have} to go?*

  𝑓 '<u>C</u>ode' (usable as pro-form): *She can help, and so <u>can</u> I. vs. *She likes horses, and so like I.*

  „ <u>E</u>mphatic: *She CAN help (but doesn't wanna). vs. *She LIKES horses (but doesn't love 'em).*

  [… Central modals (incl. the semi-modals *dare* and *ought*) don't inflect for agreement (person, number; i.e. basically <*–s*>), and cannot appear as infinitives]

  Past: central modals have special past forms (*will–would, can–could, shall–should, may–might*), which rarely express past time reference (E=R > S)

· **Categorisation of modal meaning**

  Diametric organisation

          Possibility
  Epistemic |*vs.*| **non-epistemic (root)**
          Necessity

Epistemic (propositional): necessity/possibility of [±truth] of a proposition (P) ⓐ Speaker's judgement of the likelihood that P is true ("the speaker's attitude to the truth-value or factual status of the proposition", p. 278)

Root (agent-oriented, event): necessity/possibility of the actualisation of situations ⓐ Speaker's judgement about factors influencing the actualisation of the situation referred to

Deontic modality: "the necessity or possibility of acts performed by morally responsible agents" (p. 274) ⓐ authority/deontic source ⓐ **external**

Dynamic modality: comes from the individual concerned (and expressed) ⓐ **internal**

· **Polysemy *vs.* monosemy**

"Two questions follow from these observations: (a) Do modals have a core meaning which is present in all their uses (the monosemy analysis) or are the different meanings sufficiently (semantically) independent to allow us to say that a modal is polysemous? (b) For each of the modal meanings communicated by a particular modal, what are its necessary and/or prototypical characteristics?" (p. 283) ⓐ **multiple homonymous lexical items *vs.* one item whose meaning is shifted by context**

Monosemist: "each modal has a core meaning, and […] it is the contexts in which it is used that determine how it is interpreted, i.e. each modal has one invariant meaning with different contextual uses"

· **Negation**

Scope: the portion of a sentence a functional element X (*not, only,…*) influences is referred to as the 'scope' of X.

If we compose a proposition P with a modal meaning M, we get (M(P)); composing with Neg (*not*) yields ambiguous scope:

    (1) *You <u>may</u> <u>not</u> ve right about that.*

        a. (Neg(M(P))): It is not possible [P that you're right].

        b. (M(Neg(P))): It is possible [P that you're not right].