

POSSIBILITY AND NECESSITY

CONCEPTS AND EXPRESSIONS OF MODALITY

In Honour of Paul Larreya

International conference – 17-19 October 2019, Université de Pau & des Pays de l'Adour

Research Centres ALTER, UPPA (EA 7504) et CLIMAS, UBM (EA 4196)

Organized by Université de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour (ALTER) and Université Bordeaux Montaigne (CLIMAS), with the financial support of the following research centres and associations: ALAES (Association des Linguistes Anglicistes de l'Enseignement Supérieur), ALTER (EA 7504, UPPA), CeLiSo (EA 7332, Sorbonne Université), CLIMAS (EA 4196, UBM), Pléiade (EA 7338, Université Paris 13), PRISMES (EA 4398, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle).

Discourse may be conceived as a space where subjects act and interact. We propose the study of this interaction between subjects from the perspective of modality, a notion which, in one of its most frequent definitions, corresponds to the fields of possibility and necessity. Linked with the work of the research group "Subjects, representations and societies" affiliated to the ALTER research laboratory (Art/Languages: Transitions and Relationships), questions will be addressed concerning the sharing, structuring, conception and representation of this space through the expression of modality, which covers various notions such as possibility, impossibility, necessity, contingency, certainty, probability and plausibility.

Looking in detail at the concepts of possibility and necessity will enable the study of diverse types of modality including the traditional distinction made between root modality and epistemic modality. Larreya has proposed to divide epistemic modality, sometimes known as "the modality of knowledge", into two sub-categories: inferential modality (epistemic modality *per se*) and implicative modality, which may be considered as "a sort of semantic link between epistemic modality and deontic modality" (Larreya 1984: 173). This raises the questions, amongst others, of the division of the semantic domain of modality, of the relations between evaluative modality, on the one hand, and possibility and necessity, on the other hand, and of the links between epistemic modality, evidentiality and mirativity.

Modality may also be defined as a category that comments on the "reality of the process", a reality that is first and foremost an idea. Modality enables us to question what is true and what is false, the convergence with or divergence from reality, the good and the bad, the notions of evaluation and judgement etc. In other words, modality is sometimes equated with the expression of the speaker's attitude towards the propositional content, even if it cannot be reduced to just that.

Studies could describe the specific use of (different types) of markers in expressions of possibility and necessity, as well as the diversity of these markers. One may consider, in particular, modal auxiliaries, modal expressions and idioms, lexical modals, but also other parts of speech and constructions that contribute to the expression of a modal stance.

Several approaches may be considered, although the list is not exhaustive:

- epistemological approach: definition of the concepts of possibility and necessity in linguistics, which may be linked with fields from other disciplines;
- historical dimension: the emergence of modal markers, the loss of certain forms of modalization (subjunctive);
- similarities and differences between various types of markers used for the expression of possibility and necessity;
- specialized or non-specialized forms and constructions used in the expression of one of the two fields;
- prosodic approach to modality: interaction between markers of modality and prosodic markers;
- structuring the area of modality: on one side, the relationships between epistemic, root, inferential and implicational modalities and on the other, the link between these modalities and other

concepts (evidentiality, mirativity, etc.); impervious or porous borders between the different fields;

- distinction or linking between different language attitudes that cover the notions of possibility and necessity (e.g. judgement, assessment, engagement, etc.);
- utterer attitude/stance and the pragmatic dimension;
- distinction between modality and modalization;
- modality and reported speech;
- dialectal approach: modality and grammaticalization in creole languages;
- types of markers and textual genres: the expression of modality in different genres – specialized discourse (judicial, medical, commerce and trade, etc.), autobiography, political discourse, discussions on forums and blogs, etc.;
- modality and teaching : expression of possibility and necessity in learning situations and second language acquisition;
- multimodal analysis and the expression of possibility and necessity by non-verbal means.

The aim of this conference is to enable interaction between specialists from different branches of linguistics – English, Spanish and French especially (psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, morpho-syntax, phonology, etc.). Contributions from specialists in other fields (psychology and philosophy in particular) will also be welcome.

(Reference: Larreya, Paul (1984). *Le possible et le nécessaire. Modalités et auxiliaires modaux en anglais britannique*. Paris: Nathan Recherche.)

Guest speakers

Pierre Cotte, Sorbonne Université

Patrick Dendale, University of Antwerp

Scientific committee

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Johan van der Auwera, University of Antwerp

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Jean-Marie Merle, Université Nice Sofia-Antipolis

Juana Marín-Arrese, Complutense Madrid University

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Johanna Miecznikowski, University of Lugano

Élise Mignot, Sorbonne Université

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Calendar

- Due date for submissions : 30 March 2019
- Replies from scientific committee : 15 May 2019

Talks may be given in English or French

Publication project: written contributions chosen by the scientific committee will be included in a publication

Please send your submissions (500 words), with a short bio-bibliography, for 30 March 2019: Jean.Albrespit@u-bordeaux-montaigne.fr; christelle.lacassain-lagoin@univ-pau.fr; tracey.simpson@univ-pau.fr. Please indicate the title and the name(s) of the author(s) in your email and attach the abstract in text or .pdf formats giving the title only, and not the name(s) of the author(s).



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