

Reviews

Juana I. Marín-Arrese, Marta Carretero, Jorge Arús Hita and Johan van der Auwera (eds.). *English Modality: Core, Periphery and Evidentiality*. Topics in English Linguistics 81. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Mouton, 2013, ix + 449 pp., € 99.95/ \$ 140.00.

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The last two decades have seen steady research output on the topic of English modality in its various attestations, both from a synchronic and a diachronic perspective and in different varieties of English, in the form of various papers, monographs (e.g. Krug 2000) and edited volumes (e.g. Auwera, Busuttil and Salkie 2009 for synchronic studies and Hart 2003 for diachronic studies). In 2013, yet another volume dedicated to the expression of modality in English was added to the long list. *English Modality: Core, Periphery and Evidentiality* is a collection of articles arising out of the *4th Modality in English Conference (ModE4)* held in Madrid in 2010, for which, according to the editors, modality in English serves as a “unifying thread” (iv). Accordingly, the volume is organised into four sections focussing on different aspects of modality, followed by a subject index.

Part I (3–115), with three articles, is dedicated to core modality. This section first features a contribution by Ronald Langacker (3–56), explaining modality from a cognitive point of view in terms of force dynamics. He applies the concept of the control cycle to the modal auxiliaries. Whereas the human impetus to strive for control underlies all aspects of life, it lends itself in particular to the description of linguistic interaction. Viewed in the light of this concept, utterances which are produced in order to achieve some kind of effect (e.g. a safety notice such as *protective clothing must be worn in this area*) can be categorised as striving for effective control, which in other theoretical frameworks is often referred to as deontic modality. Linguistic interactions aiming at gaining and assessing knowledge of the world can be described as the striving for epistemic control (cf. 9–10). Those two types of control are not entirely unrelated. Langacker points out that epistemic modality is inherent in effective modality as “what remains when all vestiges of effective control fade away” (16). The remaining two articles in the first section (Bowie, Wallis and Aarts, 57–94, and Leech, 95–115) explore the change in the use and frequency of core modal verbs in English on the basis of corpus studies.

The contributions in Part II, which has a focus on peripheral modality, are concerned with the so-called quasi-modals (van der Auwera, Noël and Van linden, 119–153, and Collins, 155–169), the impersonal verb *behove* (Loureiro-Porto, 171–200) as well as the modal uses of the progressive (Brisard and de Wit, 201–220). Whereas the above-mentioned papers fit well under the heading “Peripheral modality”, the inclusion of the remaining article in this section, Debra Ziegeler’s contribution on the generic origins of the modality of the core modal auxiliary *will*, is slightly surprising and not justified by the editors.

Part III places a focus on the interplay of evidentiality and modality with contributions by Simon-Vandenberg on a proposed semantic-pragmatic map of English adverbs (253–280), Usonienė and Šinkūnienė, who investigate the multifunctionality of the verb *seem* in comparison with Lithuanian (281–316), and Carretero and Zamorano-Mansilla, who report on an annotation system they developed for English adverbials (317–355).

The three articles in Part IV explore the role of evidentiality and modality in discourse. The texts forming the basis for the studies presented in this section are weblogs in Roberta Facchinetti’s article on the use of modal verbs in news-related blogs (359–377), interviews in Hidalgo Downing and Núñez Perucha’s investigation of personal pronouns and stance markers (379–410), and the transcripts of the Iraq War Inquiry in Marín-Arrese’s study of the stancetaking discursive patterns in Tony Blair’s and Gordon Brown’s statements (411–445).

The subject index (447–449) lists some of the terminology used in the contributions. It is, however, rather short and misses some key terms, such as e.g. *effective* as introduced and applied by Langacker (9, 10, 14, etc.) and referred to again in other articles, e.g. Marín-Arrese (411). Moreover, not all of the instances of the terms featured in the index are given. *Control*, for example, is used by Marín-Arrese on page 411, but the page range in the index refers the reader to Langacker’s article only.

The structure outlined above is certainly a straightforward way of ordering and presenting the papers in this volume. Nevertheless, the articles are linked in many respects other than being attributable to either core or peripheral modality or to the intersection between evidentiality and modality. Unfortunately, the structure given in the table of contents is the only guide assisting the reader to navigate through this volume, since the editors restrict their introductory remarks to a short paragraph in their acknowledgements. Further, I feel that, although the papers in this book are self-contained, in certain cases they would have benefitted from a theoretical introduction to the approaches towards the relevant research area that have been adopted so far. A case in point is the relationship between epistemic modality and evidentiality. So far, there is no scholarly consensus as to whether they are two separate categories or whether there is overlap between the

two. The different positions are reported in four of the papers in Parts III and IV, two of which, Hidalgo Downing and Núñez Perucha (385) and Marrín-Arrese (413) draw attention to the fact that Martin and White's Appraisal Theory (2005) accommodates both epistemic modality and evidentiality in the category *ENTERTAIN*, which allows dialogic expansion by preparing the ground for alternative positions. A balanced account of the different positions towards epistemic modality and evidentiality would provide useful introductory information for all of the papers in these two sections, in particular when read in isolation from one another.

In the remainder of this review I would like to point towards some of the connections between the various contributions to this volume other than their focus on particular types of modality.

The cognitive approach to modality introduced by Langacker in Part I is embraced by several contributions. Marrín-Arrese's paper on stancetaking in the Iraq Inquiry, for instance, is theoretically grounded in the 'striving for control' model. Against this cognitive background, she identifies both effective and epistemic stance. Whereas the former is concerned with the position that a speaker/writer takes regarding the realisation of events, the latter appertains to their position in regard to knowledge about these events. The underlying hypothesis informing the paper is that the legitimising strategies adopted by Gordon Brown and Tony Blair will be evidenced in the epistemic stance strategies chosen by them. The results of the study highlight the differences in the approaches taken by Brown and Blair. Brown makes little use of epistemic stance markers, which testifies to a higher degree of commitment to the truth in his statement. Blair, by comparison, employs a higher number of ignorative stance markers such as *I don't know*, thereby trying to underline his lack of knowledge of particular facts or decisions concerning the case for war in Iraq. Brisard and de Wit, too, place their paper on the modal uses of the present progressive within a cognitive framework, which allows them to derive the different temporal and modal uses of the present progressive from a basic epistemic modal meaning indicating "contingency in immediate reality" (205).

While cognitive grammar provides the theoretical foundation for Brisard and de Wit's contribution, the data underlying their outline are taken from the *Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English*. The majority of the articles in this volume present corpus-based studies, thus demonstrating both which corpora are particularly suited to the study of modality and what kind of studies can be conducted using these corpora. Two studies with an interest in spoken English use the *Diachronic Corpus of Present-Day Spoken English* (DCPSE), a parsed corpus of nearly 850,000 words of spoken British English. Bowie, Wallis and Aarts selected this corpus for their investigation of change in the use of modal auxili-

iaries in contemporary spoken British English because of its division into parsing units which are grammatically analysed and allowed them to design a suitable research query while eliminating irrelevant forms. Leech, too, extracts data from DCPSE in an extension of his previous quantitative studies (Leech 2003, 2011), reporting the decline of the core modal verbs in both British and American English. Leech's 2003 and 2011 studies were based on corpora of the BROWN family with the former covering the years 1961 and 1991 and the latter adding the data points 1901, 1931 and 2006. The present study investigates further data, in particular also the spoken data from DCPSE mentioned above. It finds that both the decrease of the core modal auxiliaries and the rise of emergent modals are more pronounced in the spoken data than in corresponding written corpora of British English (LOB and FLOB). The material contained in some of the well-known corpora of English such as the *British National Corpus* (BNC) and the *Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA) likewise lends itself to modality-related analyses. Carretero and Zamorano, for instance, extracted the adverbials that they are developing an annotation scheme for from the BNC, which is also the source for the British data of van der Auwera, Noël and Van linden's study of the quasi-modal constructions *had better*, *'d better* and *better*. For comparative studies of modality in British and American English as opposed to the new Englishes the ICE-corpora with their strictly parallel design are a particularly well-suited tool, as evidenced by Collin's study of the correlation between the speakers' level of tolerance of colloquialisms and the distribution of the quasi-modals *have to*, *have got to*, *want to* and *going to* in four inner circle varieties and five outer circle varieties of English.

Apart from Collins, several other papers approach their topics from a comparative viewpoint. Not only do they research modal expressions in different varieties of English, like e.g. van der Auwera, Noël and Van linden, Collins, and also Ziegeler, but they also compare different languages, e.g. Usonianè and Šinkūnienè, who use English-Lithuanian and Lithuanian-English translation corpora to investigate the reflection of the multi-functionality of the verb *seem* in its Lithuanian correspondences.

Loureiro-Porto, who examines the semantic-pragmatic relationship between the Galician verb *compré* and the English verbs *need* and *behave*, does not only compare those two languages but takes the historical development of *need* and *behave* into account from personal verbs into a personal and an impersonal verb respectively. A few other papers consider diachronic aspects, too, notably Bowie, Wallis and Aarts, Ziegeler, and also van der Auwera, Noël and Van linden, who aim to document the development of the *had better* construction from the point it was grammaticalised as a modal construction. They find that the respective frequencies of *had better*, *'d better* and *better* from the eighteenth to the beginning

of the twentieth century confirm Denison and Cort's (2010) assumption that the grammaticalisation process of the construction follows the cline *had better* > *'d better* > *better*, which is also reflected in their frequencies in Present-Day British English, where *'d better* is favoured, and American English, where *better* is the preferred variant.

All in all, this book on English modality contains a number of contributions that extend recent research in the field and provide new insights into and fresh perspectives on various aspects of modality. However, as pointed out above, the volume would have benefitted greatly from a longer, focussed introduction offering both a balanced account of theoretical frameworks used in the contributions and some guidance to help the reader navigate through this collection of articles.

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