Presences and Absences
Presences and Absences: 
 Transdisciplinary Essays

Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

NÓRA SÉLLEI

This volume addresses the question of presence and/or absence from a transdisciplinary perspective, and is the result of an international co-operation including both firmly established scholars and talented junior researchers from various disciplinary fields. The topic is undoubtedly a form of ambiguity, and thus continues the work of partly the same scholars whose work is published in another volume by CSP (Kathleen Dubs, Janka Kascakova, eds. Does It Really Mean That? Interpreting the Literary Ambiguous, 2011.). The current volume investigates a specific manifestation of ambiguity, while it also differs from the preceding volume in its intention to open up the horizon in the direction of providing insights into how a wide range of disciplines addresses this issue which has been in the centre of philosophical, theoretical and critical debates in the past decades. Paradoxically, however, the various disciplinary areas may not be aware of the multiplicity of possible approaches in contemporary research, thus the volume, offering to bring together linguists and visual studies experts, literary scholars and film studies researchers, poetry and theology, history and anthropology, myth studies and intertextuality, overarches gaps that often seem insurmountable.

As the essays in the volume prove, apparently diverse areas can have a lot in common and talk to each other in sometimes surprising ways and will hopefully make the reader aware of the possible links between the chapters and will, thus, establish multiple dialogues in between them without imposing closures and ultimate interpretations on the plethora of possible meanings emerging from the juxtaposition of these essays. The volume is aimed at readers who find pleasure in discovering the parallels and correspondences just as much as the differences between the subjects, approaches and the analytical conclusions of the chapters in the case of those who will read through the whole volume, whereas individual

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1 The production of the volume was generously supported by the grant Understanding Myths in Anglophone Literature (443.20102828/5), Faculty of Arts and Letters, Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Slovakia.
chapters can also stand in themselves and appeal to the readers by offering thorough and revelative close readings of texts, whether literary, journalistic or everyday, visual or cinematic.

While the volume aims at bringing together scholars from various fields, and thus at being transdisciplinary, it partly maintains a relatively traditional order, keeping disciplinary boundaries and chronology to a certain extent; partly, however, it also intends to reshuffle the taken-for-granted logic of disciplines and time. Starting off with linguistic analyses, the volume will address questions of presences and absences at the level of language, more specifically in the case of modals and pragmatic markers, making the readers aware of the fact of how language, the basic means of several texts analysed by the other chapters, in itself is inscribed by this specific linguistic ambiguity. Although the first two chapters in linguistics obviously cannot cover all aspects of language from the perspective of presence and absence, they offer an insight into the exploration of the topic from a linguistic perspective which, in turn, can also be applied to literary analyses. Using cognitive analysis, one of them discusses how elements absent in the overt grammatical form of modals are assumed to be present in their conceptual structure, while the other chapter analyses the semantics of pragmatic markers with the tools of discourse-pragmatic approach, and maps the multiple meanings of these hardly graspable linguistic elements.

The following article is a transition inasmuch as it addresses journalistic language from the double perspective of genre and linguistics, and argues that in news coverage the story is often transformed to serve ideological ends and to suit the expected readership. With its focus on implied politics as well, the article also prepares the way to the cultural readings of some historical and anthropological phenomena. The first of these is the analysis of the film called Australia, which is concerned with the indigenous Stolen Generations, and articulates their problematic presence in Australian mainstream culture. Perhaps not coincidentally, another article also discusses the central topic in the context of a marginalised group, that of African Americans in antebellum culture. This article, which applies methods of cultural anthropology, includes thematically two further manifestations of presence and absence as it discusses funeral sermons—and as such the question of death and afterlife—and how all these are embedded in the contemporary social context.

The consecutive articles carry on with the theme of the metaphysical, addressing the presence of directly either God or some transcendental presence in the poetry of Ann Bradstreet and Philip Larkin respectively.
The two topics are clearly rooted in two cultural contexts that differ widely from each other both in time and place, yet one can discover surprising absences in the religious Bradstreet, and just as surprising presences of the transcendental in Larkin, often considered an agnostic. In its approach, a third article on poetry completes this section: on Arthur Symons, which explores the metaphor of heliotropism as a linguistic means of capturing evanescent moments—and thus almost making them out as uncapturable as the transcendental.

The chapter on Symons, however, does not only conclude a section, but also opens up a new one in terms of literary history, preparing the way to a typical genre (or perhaps mode of speech) of the fin de siècle: the ghost story. Ghosts as such are manifestations of presence and absence, and the chapter will explore the spectrality of these haunting and uncanny presences and absences. In their functions and cultural positioning, ghost stories and contemporary horror films are not unrelated, and the next chapter explores similar issues when it raises the questions about the full presence of the human subject from the perspective of Lacanian psychoanalysis, and comes to the conclusion that the imaginary unified self is entangled in the de- and reconstruction of subjectivity. Not less is at stake in the chapter on a contemporary novel trilogy either, Pat Barker’s *Regeneration*, the analysis of which focuses on the post-WWI shell shock syndrome, and explores how discourses of patriotism, masculinity and madness are both overpowering presences and absences in the text, manifest in psychosomatic illnesses.

The early twentieth century and mid-war period, just as much as the fin-de-siècle, seem to be haunted by destabilising and ambiguous presences and absences, often articulated by women writers and at the end of the nineteenth century too. Katherine Mansfield is among writers whose texts are haunted by presence and absence, sometimes literally as in the case of the short story “How Pearl Button Was Kidnapped”. Whereas Pearl Button is kidnapped and disappears for a while, stability represented by fix presences is undermined in more abstract ways as well, as in the intertextual rewritings of the great tradition of English literature in the case of Virginia Woolf’s *The Years*, which can be read—not as a realist novel as it is often made out, but—as a text evoking the disturbed echoes of a whole range of novelistic genres, which, in turn, also function as cultural myths.

Cultural myths seem to be an informing presence in the case of both modernists and postmodernists: whereas the interpretation of Powys’s *A Glastonbury Romance* claims that the pageant as the evocation of a medieval mystery play has a central role in the imagined reunion of the
community while also exposing its cracks, the last two chapters on post-modern writers like Margaret Atwood and Sarah Waters investigate the presence of myths and narratives in ambiguous terms. Whereas in the first case the sacred aspects of myths and the Bible partly function as survival guides, partly are challenged from a gender and ecological perspective, in the latter case the narrative tradition and Victorian discourses in general are recreated only to be subverted to bring about a lesbian romance, destabilising male dominance.

The editors hope that this transdisciplinary volume written in an erudite but at the same time reader-friendly language, will address an academic readership that is open to how the notion of presence and/or absence, so central to and in contemporary theory, is approached in diverse disciplines. But the range of topics covered may also find its broader educated audience interested in how linguistic phenomena in general, cultural myths of all kinds, various cinematic, literary and journalistic genres from diverse periods can be approached and opened up to new readings and meanings from the perspective of presences and absences.
On the basis of a cognitive analysis of modal meanings, the paper discusses how elements absent in overt grammatical form but assumed to be present in conceptual structure (e.g. issuer of an obligation, the dual role of the “oblige”) determine the grammar of the English modals, and also how these factors serve as a basis for the metaphorical extension of the root (mainly deontic) modal meanings into the epistemic domain.

1. The background

One reason why modality is an intriguing subject to study within the framework of holistic cognitive grammar is that the conceptual content behind a modal meaning proves to be rather more complex than what the linguistic forms reveal at first sight.

This can be illustrated by the following examples:

(1)  a You must jump into the icy water.
    b The sergeant ordered his men to jump into the icy water.
    c The sergeant ordered his men into the icy water.
    d The sergeant marched his men into the icy water.

Examples of information that remains hidden: in (1a) the typical source of the obligation is the speaker, in (1b) the men may not have entered the water, but they probably did in (1c), and the probability increases in (1d) where the soldiers are no longer conceptualized as having a will of their own.

Most if not all of this content must remain unrecognized in generative grammar, a syntax-centred theory with the (by now considerably
weakened but never fully abandoned) background assumption that all relevant semantic information is present at the level of Deep Structure and anything that does not appear at the surface has been deleted by the transformational component. Since deletion is subject to the requirement of full recoverability, the theory precludes the existence of most of the content in question at DS level, since it is not recoverable (e.g. the source obligation in (1a)). As a result, no linguistically significant relationships hold between the sentences in (1) according to generative grammar.

In contrast to this, cognitive grammar is non-transformational. It is psychologically based and holds the view that language is a human product and bears every mark of it. As a result, different grammatical forms are the result of different conceptualizations, linguistic structures are motivated rather than fully compositional in the formal sense, and psychological factors, most importantly, construal play a crucial role in the linguistic formulation of conceptual content (Langacker 1987, 1991, 2004). The basic differences relevant for our discussion are summarized in Figure 1.

![Generative grammar vs. Cognitive grammar diagram](image)

**Fig. 1. Generative and cognitive grammar**

The most important tools available in cognitive grammar to handle the hidden content of the sentences in (1) are scope, prominence and perspective. Scope (overall, immediate scope and profile) mark the language user’s selection of what may be relevant and what is essential for
the conceptualization of a relationship. Hidden elements may be seen as remaining out of immediate scope but still playing a role in the formulation of conceptual content. Prominence marks directed attention: this is responsible for the figure–ground relationship in the first place and then, within the figure, for the trajector–landmark distinction. The latter is the basis in cognitive grammar for subject and object selection. Perspective comprises the objective and the subjective viewing arrangement. The latter is an essential ingredient of epistemic modality.

2. Some traditional paradoxes of deontic and epistemic modality

In formal semantics it is customary to identify the modal notions of natural language with the modal operators of formal logic. The most important modalities in natural language are the deontic and epistemic systems (owing to the fact that they are speaker-oriented).\(^1\)

Of the paradoxes related to deontic modality the one directly relevant to us is the absence of implication observable in the sentences in (2):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(2) a } & \text{ You must clean your shoes } \Rightarrow \text{ You will clean your shoes.} \\
\text{b } & \text{ You must never see that young lout again! } \Rightarrow \text{ You will never see him again.} \\
\text{c } & \text{ You may wash the dishes again tonight } \Rightarrow \text{ You will wash the dishes …}
\end{align*}
\]

Intuitively, it is felt that the factor intervening between obligation/permission and an actually performed act is related to human intentions but this factor cannot be expressed with the tools of a formal modal system.

A similar paradox is present in the epistemic system as well: a statement modalized with MUST, the generally recognized equivalent of the necessity/certainty operator in logic (true in all possible worlds) actually makes the statement weaker than its unmodalized counterpart, as in (3):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(3) a } & \text{ John must be working late again } \text{ is weaker than} \\
\text{b } & \text{ John is working late again.}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^1\) Less significant are the (subject-oriented) bouletic and dynamic systems.
These examples strongly suggest that systems of formal logic may not be the best tools to describe modality as it actually works in natural language.

3. The cognitive alternative

Ever since Metaphors We Live By (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) cognitive grammar has had a strong tendency to describe language in terms of metaphorical extension. Although this began at the level of non-compositional phrases in the general lexicon (e.g. Kövecses’s analysis of anger in Lakoff (1987, 380–415), it was soon extended to grammatical categories (cf. the analysis of over and existential there in the same volume).

In the analysis of modality, the first steps were taken by Eve Sweetser (1990), who claims that

- the epistemic senses of the modals are metaphorical extensions from their deontic (root) counterparts, and that
- modals are force dynamic in the sense of Talmy (1988).²

These observations have remained valid in the cognitive analysis of modality to the present day (cf. Langacker 1999, Pelyvás 2011, among others), but the details of the analysis have changed considerably, mainly because Sweetser’s first attempt has proved unsatisfactory in a number of ways, many of the problems arising directly from Sweetser’s disregard for the hidden elements that are at the centre of our attention in this paper.

3.1. Sweetser’s version of the extension

In the tradition of force dynamics, Sweetser describes modality in terms of forces and barriers.

MAY is seen as a potential but unimposed barrier, with the following basis for the extension (Fig. 2):

² Talmy (1988) observes that situations are often best construed in terms of (potentially) interacting forces. The first phenomenon to which he applied the analysis was causation. Since then the notion has been extended, besides modality, to a number of phenomena in cognitive linguistics. A recent example is Langacker’s (1999) canonical event model for the transitive clause, to be analyzed in detail in Section 4.1.
1. In both the sociophysical and the epistemic worlds, *nothing prevents* the occurrence of whatever is modally marked with MAY; the chain of events is not obstructed.
2. In both the sociophysical and epistemic worlds, there is some background understanding that if things were different, something *could* obstruct the chain of events. (Sweetser 1990, 60)

This may be an adequate description of an unmodalized statement: true but not necessarily true (true in some possible world, but not all possible worlds), but there is nothing in it to account for the potentiality or lack of implication referred to above. Further comments do not improve the situation by revealing that Sweetser’s account does not observe the Invariance principle of metaphorical extension, which states, in addition to compatibility requirements between the source and the target domain, that the image-schematic structure of the source must be preserved in the target:

In ‘John may go’ *John is not barred by (my or some other) authority (in the sociophysical world) from going.*
In ‘John may be there’. *I am not barred by my premises from the conclusion that John is there.* (Sweetser 1990, 61)

With John changing places with the speaker in the extension, this hardly appears to be the case here.\(^3\)

Similar problems arise with MUST, analysed by Sweetser either as a set of imposed barriers, with only one left open (a), or as a compelling

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\(^3\) Further problems with this analysis of MAY: the notion of a single potential barrier cannot be extended to the epistemic sense because of the change in the scope of negation occurring in the extension. In addition, deontic MAY cannot be a direct source of its epistemic counterpart because the former developed later than the latter (Traugott 1989). These are discussed in detail in Pelyvás (2000, 233–36).
force driving the act towards its conclusion (b). The main problem again is that there is nothing to prevent the action from taking place, so the lack of implication in the deontic sense or the relative weakness of the epistemic sense referred to in Section 2 are left unaccounted for (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3. Proposed schemas for deontic MUST in Sweetser (1990). (The solid blocks in (a) mark imposed barriers, the dotted rectangle is a lifted barrier. The dotted arrows mark potential (?) action, the solid arrow in (b) stands for Sweetser’s assumed compelling force. The dot in (b) stands for the doer.)

In summary we can say that, to begin with, Sweetser’s analyses do not seem to describe the root domain properly, with the natural conclusion that the proposals for extending these to cover the epistemic meanings must also remain unsuccessful.

3.2. Pelyvás’s alternative proposal

3.2.1. The deontic scene

To avoid the rigidity imposed on the system by the barriers, Pelyvás (1996, 2000) proposes to replace them with forces that can be matched against the forces supporting the action. In addition to making the system far more flexible (to account for the lack of implication in the deontic senses), this approach naturally leads to the assumption that all the forces can (or must) be identified with participants in the situation in compliance with the rules of forming an Idealized Cognitive Model (ICM)\(^4\). These

\(^4\) A situation: its participants and the relationships holding among them—as construed by the conceptualizer (Lakoff 1987, 68ff).
changes lead to the inclusion of substantially more conceptual content in the conceptual structure. This content is both present and absent in the sense that it will affect the meaning (often in crucial ways) and also the possible uses of the modals in question, but will not necessarily appear in the grammatical form of the expression.

Consider the conceptual structure of MUST as proposed in Pelyvás (2000, 245—Fig. 4):

Fig. 4. Deontic MUST: scopes, grounding added. The arrows represent forces, the dotted lines stand for correspondence. The shaded areas mark potential points of interest.

It is not impossible to see this arrangement as a more elaborate variety of Sweetser’s version (b) in Figure 3. According to Pelyvás (2000, 2011), the factors that make it substantially different are as follows:

- The imposer of the obligation is prototypically (but not invariably) identified with the speaker. One kind of evidence is the tendency for deontic MUST and MAY to give way in the spirit of “political correctness” to periphrastic forms: be supposed, expected, (not) permitted, be to, can(not), as opposed to e.g. should/ought.
As Figure 4 suggests, this is correspondence (a participant appearing in an additional capacity) rather than inclusion of the speaker directly in her role as conceptualizer. Evidence that this is optional in the deontic meaning but essential in the epistemic sense (subjectification) can be found in Dutch (Sanders–Spooren 1997, 97):

(4)  

a  Jan moet van Klaas thuisblijven.
   ‘Jan must [by order of Klaas] stay at home’

b  Jan moet (*van Klaas) thuisblijven zijn.
   ‘Jan must [*by judgement of Klaas] have stayed at home’

The deontic sense permits an alternative source of obligation, but the epistemic sense does not permit an alternative conceptualizer.

Hungarian deontic KELL only differs from its English counterpart in that the speaker–imposer correspondence is not relevant. But it will again become essential in the epistemic sense of the auxiliary.

● The doer (the subject in the “visible” grammatical structure) appears in two different roles in this conceptual structure. One is the anticipated agent-like role of potential performer in an imposed action, but the other is a subordinate role: that of “oblige” in the relationship of obligation.

● A counterforce (sometimes negligibly small) is associated with the doer/obligee in this second capacity, which we can identify with his/her reluctance to perform the act. It is indeed unusual, if not totally invalid, to oblige somebody to do something that they will do willingly (a pragmatic factor), or what they are doing already: a grammatical factor, since “John must be working late again” cannot be given a deontic interpretation.

● The action must remain potential rather than actual (cf. the unacceptability of progressive or perfect forms in the deontic sense, see above).

● The potential action must be imposed: “John must find himself in trouble soon” can hardly be interpreted as deontic obligation.

3.2.2. Extension into the epistemic domain

Since the main ground for forces absent in the sense that they do not appear in the actual grammatical form but present in that they impose constraints both on the grammar and on conditions of use, we will only

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5 Impersonal or passive constructions, where this is not the case, are seen by many as the first step in the direction of metaphorical extension into the epistemic domain (cf. Traugott 1989).
say as much about the epistemic sense as is necessary for the understanding of the “anomalies” in subject case marking to be discussed in the next section. The extension is in essence a combination of two operations.

- Restriction of immediate scope (called Objective Scene in modality) to exclude the forces and participant roles that were responsible for posteriority, potentiality and the imposed character of the action: forces of the sociophysical world are not compatible with the epistemic domain. (This is the other requirement of the Invariance principle referred to in Section 3.1.)

- Extension of overall scope to directly include the speaker/conceptualizer (in that capacity) as a reference point (subjectification). The result is a grounding predication, which locates the situation with respect to time, place, and most importantly from our point of view, speaker–hearer knowledge. The conceptual structure attributed to epistemic MUST is given in Figure 5.

![Fig. 5. Extension of MUST into the epistemic domain (1): restriction of OS—no](image-url)

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6 For a detailed analysis, see Pelyvás (2000, 2011).

7 The result is called a ‘wide scope’ sense because of the operator scope relationships postulated in a formal semantic analysis of such structures, cf. Nordlinger and Traugott (1997).
difference left between MUST and KELL. (2): Subjectification (extension of overall scope to include the conceptualizer). (3): The speaker’s epistemic commitment qualified by forces of unknown reality.

4. Case marking on the subject

4.1. Theoretical options

In this section I would like to show how options in the case marking on the subject of sentences containing the modals MUST, KELL, and their counterparts in some other languages is motivated by the hidden participants and relationships analyzed in 3.2.

Langacker (1999, 24) introduces the canonical event model (or billiard-ball model) for transitive clauses. The prototypical transitive clause describes an action chain of energetic interaction between two participants: an active, agent-like initiator and a passive (theme-like) participant undergoing change. The model consists of two portions: the one describing the change (of state, location, etc.) is conceptualized as autonomous while the other, associated with the agent-like participant is conceptualized as non-autonomous.

Consider the sentence in (5):

(5) John opened the door,

in which “the door opening” can be conceptualized as an autonomous process, while “John’s action of opening” can only be conceptualized as non-autonomous and often as agentive or causal, as illustrated in Figure 6.

![Fig. 6. Langacker’s canonical event model](image)
Speakers of the language have the option to profile either the full action chain or only one portion of it (prototypically but not exclusively, the autonomous one). Position within the profiled part of the model determines case marking in nominative languages: the participant at the head of the profiled portion of the action chain gets nominative case, and the participant at the tail end will get accusative.8

As we have seen in 3.2.1, the conceptual structure attributed to deontic MUST or KELL shows superficial similarities with this model. We can argue, however, that the differences may be more relevant in this case. At the interface of the two portions of the “action chain” we have a participant with two different roles, neither of which resembles a prototypical theme role:

- it functions in an agent-like role as potential performer of an imposed action in the second portion of the chain—this role is normally given the nominative case;
- it also appears at the tail end of the first portion, but unlike a passive theme argument, this participant has been endowed with the capacity of resisting the force of the obligation. Nevertheless it is still construed as to some extent non-autonomous. This appears to be an experiencer-like role (with perhaps traces of agentivity). The best fit for this role is the dative case.

![Fig.7. Profiling options in the deontic domain](image)

In Figure 7 we take a more comprehensive view: it summarizes the profiling options available in deonticity with the aim of accounting for the

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8 Ergative languages are more sensitive to the conceptualization of the profiled portion. If it is conceptualized as autonomous, its head will be given the absolutive case and if it is seen as non-autonomous, its head will take the ergative case. Tails of both kinds of portions will get the absolutive case (Langacker 1999, 38).
profiling options of the sentences in (1) as well, repeated here with a small modification as (6).

(6)  
   a  You must jump into the icy water.  
   b  The sergeant ordered his men to jump into the water *(but they only laughed at him).*  
   c  The sergeant ordered his men into the icy water *(but they only laughed at him).*  
   d  The sergeant marched his men into the icy water.

As (6a) suggests, an English deontic modal tends to profile only the second (potential action) part of the action chain, backgrounding the source of obligation or any possible reluctance on the part of the doer. (6b) (c) and (d) are identical in naming the source, (6b) and (6c) profiling the force representing obligation. What these two differ in is the extent to which the doer’s options to offer resistance are profiled. This is borne out clearly if we add the parenthesized part. In (6b) the addition implies that the men refused to jump, but in (6b) the laugh will probably come from the water, expressing the fact that the men’s spirit was not broken in spite of the punishment. (6d) is closest to Langacker’s canonical event model. The men are almost seen as having no will of their own, as true patients in the situation.9

To return to modals: on the basis of these findings, our prediction is that the subject of deontic modal auxiliaries can take the nominative or the dative case, depending on which of the two roles of the doer that are active in their conceptual structure is given grammatical expression.

4.2. Actual case marking

**English**

As the examples in (7) suggest, English only takes the option of grammaticalizing the agent-like “performer of potential imposed action” role of the doer, in the form of a nominative:

(7)  
   a  He must clean his shoes.  
   b  *Him must clean his shoes.

9 That this is nevertheless a factitive rather than a true transitive construction is evidenced by the factitive morphology required in Hungarian *(belemasirozTATta)*, and also perhaps by the fact that *march* is essentially an intransitive verb in English.
This strong preference seems to be a relatively recent phenomenon, cf. *it likes me not, this fears me, methinks* as late as Early Modern English.

**Hungarian**

In Hungarian both options are grammaticalized. In (8a) the dative case grammaticalizes the doer’s subordinate role in the “action chain”. Although marked with the dative, this is a true subject because it has optional concord with the non-finite predicate.\(^\text{10}\) (8a) is the standard variety but (8b) with a nominative subject is also frequent in conversation. This is a highly complex structure with elements of two clauses intertwining and with a finite predicate in the subjunctive.

\[(8)\ a. \text{Neked} \text{ ki kell tisztitani/(od) a cipődet.}\\
\text{You-DAT (out) must clean-INF-(2^{nd}\text{sing})the shoes-ACC.-2^{nd}.sing.POSS.ACC}\\
\]

b. \text{Te ki kell hogy tisztítsd a cipődet.}\\
\text{You-NOM (out) must that clean-2^{nd}.sing.SUBJ the shoes-2^{nd}.sing.POSS.ACC}\\

‘You must clean your shoes.’

**Russian**

Apart from passive constructions, Russian only grammaticalizes the dative option.

\[(9) \text{Ему надо прочитать эту книгу.}\\
\text{He-DAT must read-INF this-ACC book-ACC}\\
\]

No concord is possible between the dative subject and the non-finite predicate.

**Romanian**

Romanian, as described in Pelyvás (2002, 107), appears to be the most fascinating case of all, since, along with the standard nominative option it also permits an alternative conversational dative construction, but only with human subjects:

\(^{10}\) This is an exceptional phenomenon in Hungarian grammar, occurring almost exclusively in clauses of this type.
In our terms this means that the tail of the non-autonomous portion of the action chain can only motivate grammatical structure in Romanian when it is elaborated by a participant that is really affected: can be permitted or compelled to perform actions and is capable of exerting a potential counterforce. This option is not available in the epistemic sense where the distinction would remain unmotivated, cf. 3.2.2. If so, these properties make Romanian the most sensitive of the languages discussed here to the hidden conceptual content of the deontic scene and, as we shall see in the next section, to the changes in this content as a result of extension into the epistemic domain.

5. Extension into the epistemic domain. Motivation and a paradox

As we have seen in 3.2.1, Dutch grammar appears sensitive to at least one conceptual change occurring in the extension of the root meaning into the epistemic domain, since direct inclusion of the conceptualizer into overall scope precludes the insertion of an alternative conceptualizer.

Romanian, discussed in the previous section, appears in the deontic sense to be sensitive to a semantic property (+human) of the participant in the doer role of our proposed analysis. It also appears to be sensitive to the root → epistemic extension, but in a way different from Dutch: since the restriction of the objective scene pushes the non-autonomous part of the action chain out of profile, the relationships originally present there will no longer be seen as relevant for grammatical form.

These changes appear to be so well motivated in the conceptual system proposed here that they look almost predictable. But this is not always the case. Hungarian retains the dative option in the epistemic sense as well, even though this is no longer motivated for the same reason that it is not motivated in Romanian.

    John-DAT here must be-INF-(3rd.sing.) somewhere

b. Spoken Hungarian
    János itt kell hogy legyen valahol.
    John-NOM here must that be-3rd.sing.IMP somewhere.
It is only possible to make “educated” guesses why the no longer motivated structure is retained. Some are given in detail in Pelyvás (2011, 186–7).

- There seems to be a tendency in metaphorical extension to preserve in the target domain grammatical structures associated with the source unless they are clearly incompatible with the target.
- There may be a time and frequency factor in operation: the epistemic senses of the modals may be too recent for clear linguistic differentiation to have taken place. In addition, the system of epistemic modals is not very well developed in Hungarian. Although I do not have reliable data in this respect, my intuition is that the nominative version given in (11b), although still conversational, is closer to being fully accepted in the epistemic sense than in the deontic one. This would mean that the no longer motivated form is slowly giving way in the epistemic sense to the fully motivated one.
- As Langacker (1999) notes, we may have a case of attenuation (rather than total loss) of subject control (restriction of OS) in the epistemic sense. If this is the case, then the dative may still mark the end of some sort of chain.

6. Conclusion

The aim of this paper has been to explore how elements (participants and relationships) postulated as present in the conceptual structures proposed for deontic modality can motivate the grammatical form of a sentence in spite of the fact that they remain hidden in that form. As a first step, it was necessary to introduce an analysis substantially richer in participants and relationships than the cognitive accounts offered before (illustrated by English MUST and its Hungarian counterpart KELL), and to show why this analysis accounts for some basic facts of English grammar better than its predecessor.

After a brief detour into the epistemic domain to discuss the changes in conceptual structure resulting from the extension of the modal meanings, we turned to a theoretical discussion of the subject case marking options motivated by the deontic system: nominative or dative, since the doer, the participant that becomes the subject of the clause is either grammaticalized as the agent-like performer of the potential imposed action profiled by the clause, or as an experiencer at the tail of the normally unprofiled “obligation” part of the action chain.

In the concluding part of the paper we examined how our predictions based on the proposed conceptual structures are borne out in a few
languages. The final result is that with varying consistency these languages utilize one or both of the options postulated. No significant discrepancies have been observed, although Romanian can be stated to be especially sensitive to the semantic options inherent in the conceptual structures. Hungarian, although permitting both options, appears to be less sensitive in that it retains the dative option in the epistemic sense, where it is no longer motivated.

**Works Cited**


THE PRESENCE AND ABSENCE OF PRAGMATIC MARKERS IN NATURALLY-OCcurring, SCRIPTED AND NON-NATIVE DISCOURSE

BÁLINT PéTER FURKÓ

Introduction

Pragmatic Markers (henceforth PMs) comprise a functional class of linguistic items that do not change the basic meaning of utterances but are essential for the organization and structuring of discourse and for marking the speaker’s attitudes to the proposition being expressed as well as the processes of pragmatic inferences i.e. the hearer’s efforts to find out what is not explicitly stated but is implied by a given utterance. By way of illustrating the presence and absence of PMs, let me start with a few examples. Consider the difference between examples A and B below:

example 1A
A: Are you a football fan?
B: I like it, I wouldn’t say I was a fan.

example 1B
A: Are you a football fan?
B: Well, I like it; I wouldn’t actually say I was a fan, you know.

example 2A
A: I’ll take care of these.
B: That’s everything.
A: See you next week.
B: That was a very useful meeting.

example 2B
A: I’ll take care of these.
B: Right, that’s everything.
A: Fine, so see you next week.
B: Sure. That was a very useful meeting.
example 3A
A: What do you mean ‘cold’?
B: She’s not friendly, very distant. Last week I gave her a jolly smile and she ... scowled at me.
A: What do you expect? I’ve seen the way you smile at people, it puts them off.

example 3B
A: What do you mean ‘cold’?
B: Well, she’s not friendly, very distant, so to speak. I mean, last week I gave her a jolly smile and she...like...scowled at me.
A: Well what do you expect? I mean, I’ve seen the way you smile at people, it sort of puts them off.

(examples are adapted from McCarthy and O’Dell)

Since PMs, for the most part, lack conceptual meaning,\(^1\) and two of their most basic properties are extreme multifunctionality and context-dependence, there are a variety of ways in which we can interpret the difference between conversational exchanges where the speakers use PMs (examples type B) and those where speakers do without them (type A). One could argue that examples type A lack the “bite” (i.e. the very naturalness) of everyday conversations: they are, for example, from a badly scripted Hollywood movie or from a novel by Jeffrey Archer. The difference can also be captured along various social and functional dimensions such as the solidarity / social distance or affective / referential scales (cf. Holmes, 2008) as well as along the lines of the spoken / written, planned / unplanned continua. It is also plausible to presume that exchanges of type B, in particular contexts, sound more polite, more facilitative, less assertive, etc. Finally, in TESL and TEFL contexts, we might want to encourage our students to use utterances such as the ones in type B rather than type A exchanges, that is, if they want to make their English sound more fluent and native-like.

Accordingly, in my paper I am going to approach the presence and the absence of Pragmatic Markers from three different perspectives. After a brief look at the perception of PMs by laypeople I will consider the treatment of PMs in linguistic theory and see why, from humble beginnings, PM research has become a “growth industry” and a “spearhead discipline” (cf. e.g. Hansen). Next, I will illustrate how the presence of PMs can affect speaker meaning and utterance interpretation by looking at the functional spectra of *I mean* and *of course*, both of which

\(^1\) In other words, they are semantically bleached.