

LINGUISTIC STUDIES ON MODALITY

The book provides a description of issues related to an issue with a long tradition in Polish linguistics - grammatical modality. This has been the subject of numerous studies of academic value, which provide a guide for further analysis. Apart from press texts representing the general Polish language, the material analysed here consists mainly of contemporary normative acts in the form of acts of law. Due to this fact, the concept of legal modality, which has emerged in the legal sciences, is discussed in this article. For about thirty years, the Polish language of law has been one of the most interesting areas of syntactic research, and I write about this in more detail in the text entitled *Modality - foundations, research areas, continuations, revisions, new perspectives*. Modality, like specialisation and performativity, has been the subject of numerous studies, for example, describing its formal exponents, illustrating the scope of their use and their meaning in contemporary and historical normative documents. Remarks and reflections formulated on modality constantly highlight the existence of new motifs and issues, which often require re-examination. My academic interests are inscribed in such a field of research, which in previous years were subordinated exclusively to recognizing the syntactic properties of non-specialist texts, but now concentrate on documents in legal language.

The research was conducted entirely from a linguistic angle that is syntactic in its nature. This is based on a syntactic model with a semantic basis, or more precisely, on the assumptions of semantic syntax founded on Noam Chomsky's distinction of two planes of language: deep and surface.

Linguistic Studies on Modality is a collection of texts documenting my research on modality since the mid-1990s. Although thematically diverse, all the essays form a coherent whole. This is due to the syntactic perspective of description adopted here and the use of a methodological concept correlated with it. What the studies also have in common is that they concentrate on the class of modal exponents consisting of basic units in the form of verbs and predicatives, expanded in the case of normative acts by several other modal deontic expressions characteristic for legal language.

The publication consists of two parts. The first, which is more extensive in volume, includes newly written texts, opening with a cross-sectional review of the achievements in the field of modality in Polish linguistics. The theses and postulates of various specialists, woven into the line of reasoning, serve only to compare research positions. The aim of this discussion is to highlight the most important issues recurring in linguistic descriptions of modality, as well as to illustrate the continuity of scientific thought related to it. The findings formulated by other scholars are supplemented by my own observations conducted over a 20-year period, which concern modal issues in the Polish press. I also take into account conclusions drawn from descriptions of modality in legal documents. Considering the areas of current research on modality at present, I present the current state of research documenting the analysis of this category in contemporary Polish legal language.

The second text refers to the comments on modality I made in my monograph *Legal language in the light of linguistic analysis. Selected syntactic issues* (2015). In this, I sort out and add to issues concerning the semantics of modal predicates. The comparative background that is introduced, i.e. juxtaposing conclusions drawn from an analysis of laws with the findings derived from an examination of general Polish texts makes it possible to indicate more clearly the peculiarities of the semantic structure of modal predicate expressions. The analysis also reflects once again the functionality of the semantic syntax model, which turns out to be independent of the type of linguistic variety represented by the utterances with the described exponents of modality.

In a study on the suprasentential context in research on the semantics of modality exponents in statutes, I explain the reasons for expanding its boundaries. So far, it has usually taken the form of a sentence constituted by a verb or predicate. A strictly syntactic analysis, enriched by the assumptions of text grammar related to constructing a coherent linguistic message, makes it possible to trace the relations between syntactic constructions based on *verbum* and *nomen*. Moreover, it provides an opportunity to emphasise their important role from the point of view of the communicative and stylistic strategy of text production.

The final text discusses the basic legislative document of the Catholic Church of the Latin liturgical rites - *the Code of Canon Law*, and is a review of syntactic constructions that signal content justifying the legislative decision. This research is a harbinger of further in-depth work on the *Code*, as well as on other official texts of contemporary religious language, which are little recognised from the linguistic point of view.

The second part of the book, which is less extensive, brings together several reprints of earlier articles, which illustrate the development of my academic research path and act as a point of reference for contemporary research endeavours. The first three texts deal with selected modal expressions; in the first publication it is *móc*, in the second *móc*, and in the third *musieć* and *należy*. These articles

relate their syntactic and semantic characteristics to press material. The next text daels with the specificity of modal exponents as a means of conveying truthful meanings. The last article looks at modal verbs and predicates in the homilies and speeches of Pope John Paul II.

Translated by Rob Pagett