

Modality Adverbs : a Survey from Old to Early Modern English

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University of Thessaloniki, 06/05/07

1 Outline : Modality Adverbs

- ▶ Cinque's *hierarchy* (1999) for modality adverbs,
- ▶ *Syntax* of modality adverbs, from OE to EME,
- ▶ Parallel with the *grammaticalisation* of modal verbs, hence **scopal properties**.

2 Background

2.1 Different kinds of adverb :

→ S(entence)-adverbs,

(1) Presumably he will sing.

→ VP-adverbs.

(2) He will presumably sing.

4 Old English

modality adverbs : *aninga* "necessarily", *eað* "willingly", *lustlice* "willingly", *nede* "necessarily", *(un)willsumlice* "willingly".

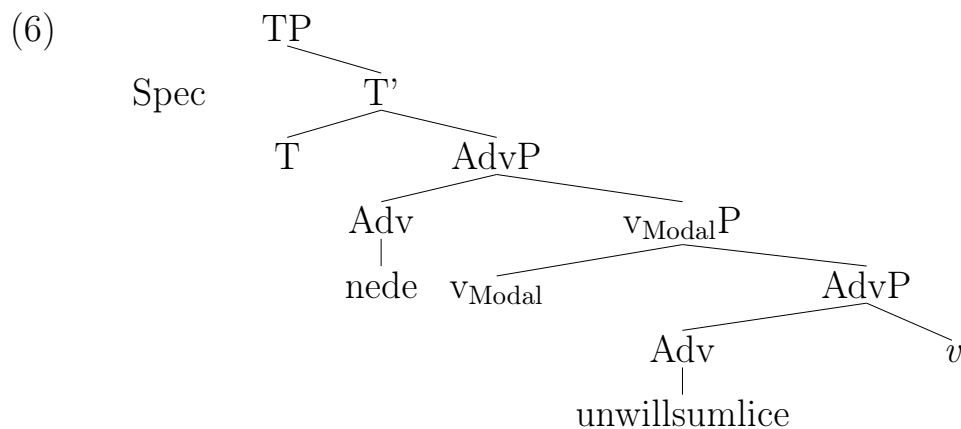
⇒ **root** modality adverbs, as far as syntax is concerned.

4.1 Example and structure

- (5) se **sceal** *nede* in helle duru *unwillsumlice*
 he-NOM shall-IND.PRES *necessarily* in hell-GEN gate-ACC *unwillingly*
 geniperad geladed beon.
 damned-P.PASSE-NOM led-P.PASSE be...

he will certainly be damned, and enter the gate of hell whether he will or no... (cobede, Bede_5 :15.442.21.4451)

We can illustrate this example with a structure :



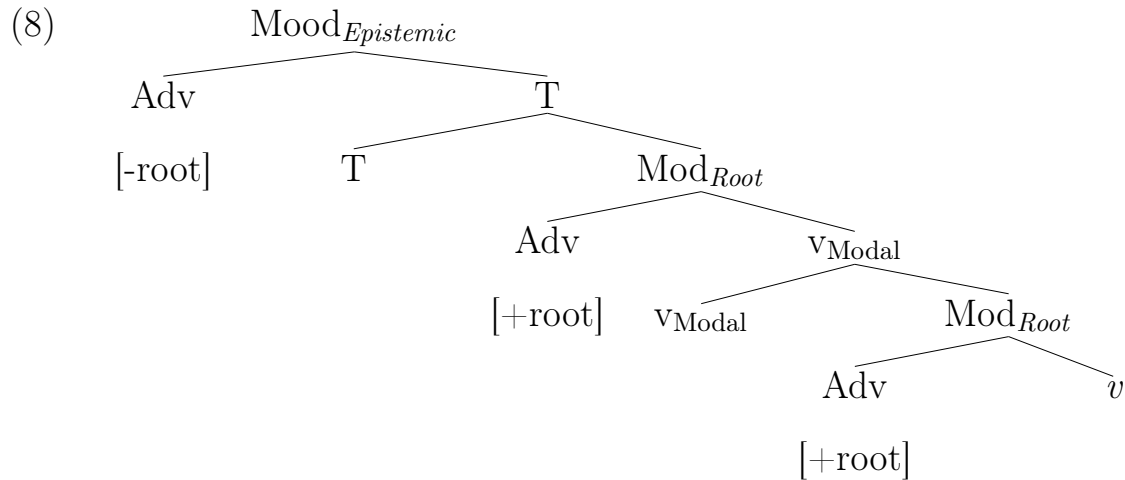
⇒ Moreover, till Late OE, mainly used with *strong and weak verbs*.

4.2 Cinque's hierarchy for OE

Following Cinque, we obtain the following hierarchy in OE :

- (7) [sweotole/sweotollice *clearly, precisely*, fullice *perfectly, fully*, gewislicost *certainly, surely*, gerisenlice *honorably, conveniently*, huru *yet, certainly*, openlicor *obviously*, hlutturlice *sincerely, clearly*, rihtlice *right, well*, smeallice *precisely, subtly* **Mod**_{Evidential} [T [nede *necessarily*, aninga *willingly* **Mod**_{Necessity} [eað *willingly*, lustlice *willingly* **Mod**_{Volitional} [swa *thus, consequently* **Mod**_{Obligation} [v]]]]]]]]

⇒ To simplify, with less functional heads :



5 Middle English

► More modality adverbs, specially in Late ME (with modal and lexical verbs).

5.1 Examples (with modals) :

(9) ant forþi **mot** vh mon *neodeliche* ham holden.
 and therefore must each one-SUJET necessarily them-OBJET hold.
and that is why one must necessarily hold them. (CMANCRIW,I.46.60)
 ⇒ Root modality adverb, within *vP* domain.

(10) The first cause is this : truste wel that alle the
 The first cause-SUJET is-PRES this : trust-IMP well that all the
 conclusions that han be founde, or ellys *possibly* **might**
 conclusions that have-PRES been found-P.PASSE, or else possibly might
 be founde in so noble an instrument...
 be found in so noble an instrument...

*The first reason is the following : believe rightly that all the conclusions
 that have been found, or could have been found in such a noble instru-
 ment...* (CMASTRO,662.C1.9) ⇒ Epistemic modality adverb, within CP
 domain.

(11) And as *verrailly* **shalt** thou fynde upon thin est orisonte thin
 And as really shall you-SUJET find upon yours is horizon your
 ascent.
 ascent-OBJET.

and you shall certainly find your (own) ascent on the horizon. (CMAS-TRO,671.C2.292) \implies Epistemic modality adverb, within CP domain.

- (12) *and certes also mote we graunten that suffisaunce, power, and certainly also must we-SUJET grant that smugness, power, noblesse, reverence, and gladnesse be only diverse nobleness, reverence and joy-SUJET are-PRES only differentby by names... names-PL...*

and we obviously have to admit that smugness, power, nobleness, reverence and joy are only different in name... (CMBOETH,429.C2.50) \implies Epistemic modality adverb, within CP domain.

- (13) *It moot nedly ben so, quod I.*
It-SUJET must necessarily be so, said-PRET I-SUJET.

It should necessarily be so, said I. (CMBOETH,429.C2.53) \implies Root modality adverb, within *vP* domain.

6 Early Modern English

\implies More and more modality adverbs (root and epistemic), regardless the types of verbs.

\implies No change as far as the functional heads are concerned ; same scopal domains.

6.1 Examples

- (14) *for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* (AUTHOLD-E2-H,II,1G.156)
- (15) *And he said, I will certainly returne vnto thee according to the time of life ;* (AUTHOLD-E2-P1,XVIII,1G.622)
- (16) *I saye I can not certaynelye tell or thynke from whence any sorow maye happen to any such thyng.* (BOETHCO-E1-H,69.90) \implies negative sentence
- (17) *But I have rightly concluded that Good and Happiness are the chief Good : wherefore the highest Divinity must certainly be the highest Happiness.* (BOETHPR-E3-H,137.130)
- (18) *Then thou muste nedes graunt by lyke reason, that one and good, be all one thyng.* (BOETHCO-E1-H,78.451)

- (19) I can not imagine, how to such a man any sorow can happen, wherfore *necessarily* it must be confest, that he is full of Joye, if the forenamed remayne. (BOETHEL-E2-H,58.30) \Rightarrow S-adverb
- (20) If he knows it, he must *necessarily* be afraid lest he should lose that which he knows is easily to be lost ; (BOETHPR-E3-P1,63.402)
- (21) You will *probably* be the less dispos'd to believe, That Electrical Attractions must proceed from the Substantial Forms of the Attrahents, ... (BOYLE-E3-H,31E.106)
- (22) for so they would *indeede* prove golden verses, and make undoubtedly golden times ; (BRINSLEY-E2-H,43.157)
- (23) *perhaps* the thought of thine heart may be forgiuen thee (AUTHNEW-E2-P2,VIII,20A. 262) \Rightarrow S-adverb
- (24) For the business of the Fall of Man, and other things of which we can not *perhaps* give our selves a perfect account : We who can not fathome the Secrets of the Council of God, (BURNETROC-E3-P2,85.12) \Rightarrow negative sentence
- (25) *possibly* some of these Stones may not come up till the second spring after they are set, (LANGF-E3-P1,8.68) \Rightarrow S-adverb
- (26) Nor can I *possibly* believe any man to be so absolutely infallible, as not to call his infallibility into question, if he determines any thing contrary to what is plain and evident to all mankind. (TILLOTS-B-E3-P1,443.177) \Rightarrow V2 sentence

Questions :

- Is there more than meets the (CP/*v*P) domain's eye?
- Is the (root/epistemic) reading the same for both adverbs and modals?

7 Scope, semantics and syntax

► Adverbs = adjuncts, adjoined to an XP.

► Modality adverbs = bundles of semantic, syntactic and (morphological) features.

► *vP* domain = deontic reading, and CP domain = epistemic reading.

► Epistemic modality = indicating **factual necessity, probability, possibility**, etc

► Root modality = expressing the presence or absence of an **obligation, recommendation, prohibition**, etc.

7.1 S-(modality) adverbs vs *vP*-(modality) adverbs

7.1.1 S-adverbs

(27) *perhaps* the thought of thine heart may be forgiuen thee (AUTHNEW-E2-P2,VIII,20A. 262)

(28) I can not imagine, how to such a man any sorow can happen, wherfore *necessarily* it must be confest, that he is full of Joye, if the forenamed remayne. (BOETHEL-E2-H,58.30)

(29) *possibly* some of these Stones may not come up till the second spring after they are set, (LANGF-E3-P1,8.68)

⇒ *perhaps, necessarily, possibly* = (semantically and syntactically) epistemic adverbs, [-root] feature (below T).

- *perhaps* ↔ may [-root]
- *necessarily* ↔ must [-root]
- *possibly* ↔ may [-root]

7.1.2 *vP*-adverbs

(30) For the business of the Fall of Man, and other things of which we can not *perhaps* give our selves a perfect account : We who can not fathome the Secrets of the Council of God, (BURNETROC-E3-P2,85.12)

(31) Then thou muste *nedes* graunt by lyke reason, that one and good, be all one thyng. (BOETHCO-E1-H,78.451)

(32) If he knows it, he must *necessarily* be afraid lest he should lose that which he knows is easily to be lost ; (BOETHPR-E3-P1,63.402)

(33) You will *probably* be the less dispos'd to believe, That Electrical Attractions must proceed from the Substantial Forms of the Attrahents, ... (BOYLE-E3-H,31E.106)

⇒ *perhaps, nedes, necessarily probably* = (syntactically) root adverbs [+root] (beneath T).

Problem : (semantically) root adverbs? OK, for *nedes* and *necessarily*,

– *nedes* ↔ must [+root]

– *necessarily* ↔ must [+root]

But *perhaps* and *probably* : syntax [+root] ≠ semantics [-root]?

Two possible answers :

1. syntax-colouring of the semantics [-root] adverb, when the adverb is adjoined to the CP domain (just before the subject is merged under Spec,TP),
2. same as modals : functional head Mood (within the CP domain) governs the position of the [-root] adverb.

8 Conclusion

- ▶ More and more modality adverbs from OE to EME.
- ▶ Epistemic modality adverbs seem to have appeared at the same period as epistemic modals.
- ▶ Scope of modality adverbs depends both on syntax and semantics.

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