

## **A Framework for the Description and Analysis of Modality in Standard Arabic**

**MOHAMED-HABIB KAHLAOU**

Department of English, College of Arts & Social Sciences  
Sultan Qaboos University, Oman

### **Abstract**

Modality has so far received scant attention in theoretical and pedagogical grammars of Standard Arabic. The meager literature available on this grammatical operation often consists of unpublished dissertations alternating between a prevailing traditional grammar, which has reduced speaker visibility in language to emphatic markers and "the styles of corroboration", and contemporary approaches formulated from introspective and artificial data investigated in the light of current research on modality in European languages. This lacuna has induced cohorts of frustrated learners and translation trainees to automatically engage the metalanguage deployed and the analysis given to elucidate the working of foreign languages' modal markers in order to account for the working of the Arabic ones. The paper aims to reveal that modality is not only richly exteriorized at the surface of Arabic, but also describable in a systematic, teachable and learnable method. This richness is discernible in eight forms, morpho-grammatical and rhetorical, approached from an utterer-centered perspective and derived from naturally-occurring written discourse. Driven by a pressing pedagogical concern, the study calls for updating a prevailing pedagogical grammar of Arabic dating back to many centuries ago and still adhering to prescriptivism, taxonomy, semanticity and insensitivity to context.

**Key words:** modal value, processing strategy, metalinguistic status, utterer visibility

## 1. Introduction

Although modality assumes an essential function in the production, working, and reception of natural languages, it has so far remained under-researched in theoretical Arabic linguistics and has not received any significant attention in pedagogical grammar. In European languages, however, modality has spawned so vast a literature that the subject seems over-studied (Palmer 1974 and 1990, Perkins 1983, Coates 1983, Halliday 1970, Leech 1971, Lakoff 1972, Benveniste 1974, Adamczewski 1982, Culioli 1978 and 1990, etc.). The meager literature available on modality in Arabic has been unsystematic, reductionist and consequently of little help to language learners, teachers and translation trainees. This is confirmed by other researchers for whom this category is “almost an untrodden area of investigation” (Al-Karooni, 1996:76. Al-Hasan 1990). The fact that there has not been so far any agreed Arabic equivalent for *modality* or *modal* marker reflects the extent to which this operation has been omitted from grammatical research. It is only when Arabic is approached in the light of another language, such as in translation and learning/teaching, that the lacuna reveals detrimental pedagogical implications.

My aim in this paper is to investigate the modal resources of SA and provide a working framework for the description and analysis of how they function in discourse. The realizations, triggers, status, scope and values of Arabic modal markers are the main focus of the present study. I will try to reveal that Arabic is a highly modalizing language and that modality is a metalinguistic operation not only richly exteriorized at the surface of Arabic, but also describable in a systematic, learnable and teachable way. As pointed out above, a pedagogical concern informs the approach and governs its orientations. I have examined the subject having in mind cohorts of frustrated learners and translation trainees left with no other option than to retrieve the analyses offered for English or French modals in order to elucidate the working of the Arabic ones. It is hypothesized that modality is an operation inherent in human language and exteriorized in specific languages in various forms. In fact, no speaker of a natural language has been proved to have adopted only a detached non-intervenient attitude in using language for expression and communication. I begin with a selective exploration of the status of research on modality in SA.

## Modality in the Arabic grammatical tradition

Arabic traditional grammar (TG for short) cannot be reduced to one approach or school. The word "tradition" should be understood more as an episteme which has demarcated a stage in the development of linguistic thought in general than a homogeneous school in grammatical research, i.e. the pre-linguistics stage. The epistemic logic which informs this stage may be defined as prescriptive, semantic, taxonomic, atomistic, writing-oriented, and envisaging not language at work but language as an end-product (Kahlaoui, 1992). These salient features govern the way modality has been treated in TG, each feature bearing consequences not only for how modality has been envisaged, but also for such other major grammatical operations as negation, aspect, tense, mood and word order are treated. In this context, traditional research on speaker visibility has been reduced to one single aspect of modality referred to as التوكيد, i.e. corroboration.

In defining the components intervening in sentence construction, traditional grammarians have distinguished between those that are predicative and non-predicative. The predicative components constitute the bare minimum of elements without which a sentence cannot stand as a meaningful construction, i.e. the subject (S) and the predicate (P). The non-predicative components, however, are referred to as dependents توابع. They serve to complexify the simple

construction by expanding a predicative component of the sentence. They are also assigned a dependent status as they manifest the same inflectional behavior as the nucleus element they depend on. Thus, modification النعت, coordination العطف, apposition البدل and corroboration التوكيد are identified as the four major satellite categories in Arabic. Modifiers, coordinators, appositives and corroborators depend on and manifest the same properties as the modified, the coordinated, the apposited and the corroborated, which are independent primary constituents in sentence construction.

Although corroboration has been effectively treated as external and annexable to the kernel structure {S-P}, Arab grammarians, however, have not provided an explicit definition of corroboration. They have been more explicit in defining two corroborative types:

a. Corroboration by intensifying pronouns: نفسه himself, عينه in person, كلّ all, جميع all, كلا both etc.: زاره المدير نفسه. / The Director himself called on him.

b. Semantic corroboration - which occurs by repeating an element used in the sentence whether a verb, a noun, a particle or a phrase: نعم نعم لقد قبلت العرض! / Yes, Yes, I have accepted the offer!

Reference to corroboration is also found in the treatment of different particles said to corroborate the verbal “action” or the nominal element in a sentence: إنّ, لقد, the subjective and predicative la:m لا, قد, أنّ, the emphatic nu:n, restriction particles ما...إلا... and “extra-particles” (za:’ida) such as ب and ك. But in the absence of a systematic investigation of corroboration, nothing has been said, for instance, about the difference between the corroborative value conveyed by لقد and that conveyed by إنّ when they work on the same surface:

إنّ وصل باكرا. / *inna* - He - arrived - early. vs. لقد وصل باكرا. / *laqad* - He - arrived - early.

The difference between (a) and (b) shows that a corroboration-based explanation is an umbrella which conceals more than reveals, as it simply suggests that the two “particles” work in free variation. The learner and translation trainee are thus induced to use them interchangeably. These examples will be investigated in section 2.4.2.

Research on modality in TG has thus been reduced to an unsystematic investigation of “the styles of corroboration” (‘asa:li:bu-t-tawki:d) in written Arabic covering various categories and constructions referred to as emphatics. Needless to say, *emphasis* is just one of many triggers of only one type of modality, i.e. the epistemic category, and cannot, therefore, be treated as the only trace of speaker visibility in discourse. Such reductionism is deplorably still dominating pedagogical grammar in primary, secondary and tertiary Arab educational institutions.

## 2. Anghlescu's classification of modal categories in Arabic

In her article *Modalities and Grammaticalization in Arabic* (1999), Anghlescu provides a framework for the study of modality in SA. She sketches a classification of modal categories based on that used by Resher (1968) and later by Perkins (1983). Her main claim is that Arabic “modalities come to impose themselves as the category of words known as al-nawa:sikh النواسخ”. The following table shows her description of six modal categories.

**Table 1. Anghlescu's classification of modal categories in Arabic**

	Modality	Modal Meaning	Examples from Arabic
1	epistemic	certainty	إنّ / oath markers /
		doubt	كاد / من المشكوك فيه

		anticipation	من المحتمل
2	deontic	obligation	يجب/ لا بدّ
		permission	يمكن
		interdiction	يمنع
3	evaluative	evaluation	يحسن/ نعم/ بنس
4	boulomaic	expressive	ليت/ من المؤسف
5	alethic	necessity	لا بدّ/ من الضّروري
		possibility	يماثلن/ من الممكن
6	temporal	time indicator	كان/ أصبح/ ما زال
		adverbial	طالما/ قلّما

The most obvious criticism that could be made of this model can be summarized in two points. First, it is hampered by a purely descriptive approach in which different modal categories are simply assigned different modal meanings. It does not account for how these modal categories work in Arabic, nor does it build on authentic utterances with real reference value. Modals, in fact, are far too complex to be approached outside their context of production and reception. The case of لا بدّ, in rows two and five of the table, which is assigned respectively a deontic and alethic function, is an example of a description insensitive to context, as one can see in the following examples:

- (a) لا بد له أن يستعمل القاموس. / He simply must consult a dictionary. (He can't get around it.)  
 (b) لا بد من استعمال القاموس. / Consulting a dictionary is a must.  
 (c) لا بد أن يستعمل القاموس. / He must consult a dictionary.  
 (d) لا بد أنه استعمل القاموس. / He must have consulted a dictionary.

Four patterns are discernible here: لا بد (ل/ من/ أن/ أنّ). A context-sensitive reading shows that these patterns are amenable to two, each conveying a different modal value - لا بد أن and لا بد أنّ - where the first three sentences are deontic and the last one epistemic. The English translation sheds light on the working of the two لا بد and the different strategies engaged by the utterer. The difference between the two realizations of لا بد is already announced at the surface of the sentences by أن in (c) and أنّ in (d). The English solution, as we have seen, is a deontic must+infinitive, on the one hand, and an epistemic must+present perfect, on the other.

Then, Anghlescu's main claim that the modal categories "impose themselves" as التّواسخ is not only too reductionist to account for the complexity of modality in Arabic, but further confuses two of the least explored grammatical operations in TG, i.e. modality and aspect. This is exemplified by the inclusion of the aspectual metaverbs كان/ ما زال and ظلّ etc. in her model of Arabic modalities. Contrastively, this amounts to classifying the English *become*, *was*, *still* and *remain* as modal markers, a claim refutable by language at work:

- (e) كان أوّل الواصلين. / He was the first to arrive.  
 (f) إنّه كان أوّل الواصلين. / He was the first to arrive, indeed.

(e) works to address an informational deficit (Who was the first to arrive?) where كان locates the event in the past. In (f), however, the emergence of the operator إنّ is indicative of an intervenient strategy by an utterer endorsing the predicative relation *R* and presenting it as a matter of fact, i.e. validating *R* in the past. A possible context for (f) is when the utterer is refuting a claim. Therefore, كان does not convey an attitude of the speaker towards a

propositional content or a grammatical subject; rather, it marks the neutral validation of *R* in the past. It is only with the emergence of such operators as *لقد/ لعل/ إن* and *كان* that the filter of the utterer is required to decode the meaning of the sentence. The same analysis is applicable to other aspectuals like *صار/ ما زال/ أصبح* etc. which are imprecisely defined as modal categories. It goes without saying that such confusion has detrimental implications for learning and translating. These two points will be further developed as the paper progresses.

## 2. Modality in Standard Arabic: an utterer-centered approach

### 2.1. Modality: a metalinguistic status

Speakers engage different strategies of visibility in the language they use for communication and expression. These vary from a zero degree of intervention in language to a high degree of visibility. When the linguistic (language) is used to codify an utterer's processing strategy<sup>1</sup> and not to refer to the extralinguistic (the world), language works metalinguistically. Modality (*M*) is an example of a processing strategy which involves an utterer (referred to as the linguistic subject and symbolized by *L<sub>s</sub>*), a co-utterer, and a context of utterance governing language use. When the utterer (*U*) chooses to intervene in language by marking his/her attitude towards a propositional content or a grammatical subject (*G<sub>s</sub>*), the intervention is encoded on the surface in visible traces, called modal markers. Modality, therefore, has a metalinguistic status and not a semantic one as defined by Palmer (1990:1) for instance. It involves a reflexive orientation which implies that the encoded utterance cannot be decoded successfully unless it is envisaged from a subjective angle of vision. A zero degree of visibility is recorded when the utterer chooses to state a fact in positive, negative or interrogative terms, in other words by validating what s/he says as true or false, or by allowing the co-utterer to take the decision if *U* is not in a position to decide:

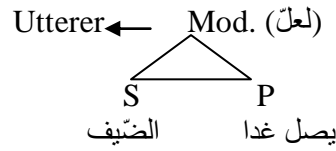
- (a) Arabic is a Semitic language.
- (b) Arabic is not a Semitic language.
- (c) Is Arabic a Semitic language?

This assertive strategy enables the utterer to take a detached position and consequently to minimize his/her visibility to a very low degree. However, if the utterer chooses to endorse what s/he says by adopting an attitude towards the propositional content or towards the grammatical subject, whether a co-utterer or not, the traces of visibility emerge in discourse to announce that *U* is manipulating either *R* or *G<sub>s</sub>* or the addressee(s) to whom s/he is speaking. These traces take different forms in languages: a modal auxiliary, a verb, a noun, an adjective, an adverb, a suprasegmental feature or the manipulation of word order. In writing, graphic devices such as punctuation, bold font and underlining are orthographic markers of this enunciative strategy.

### 2.2. Modality: scope and orientation

As explained above, modality is a metalinguistic operation which signals a manipulative intervenient strategy on the part of the utterer in discourse. This strategy has three main realizations (Culioli, 1990):

- a. The utterer uses language to manipulate the propositional content of the utterance, i.e. the predicative relation  $\{S - P\}$ . The modal marker codifies the utterer's intervention and works outside *R*:



(a) لعل الضيف يصل غدا. / (a') The guest may arrive tomorrow.

The scope of the modal marker (لعل) is the entire predicative relation, not only S or P which become *objects of discourse*, i.e. U says something about S and P (Adamczewski, 1982). Compared to English, Arabic is metalinguistically more transparent, as the intervention of the linguistic subject affects the status of the grammatical subject (الضيف/ The guest<sup>+accusative</sup>) which becomes in the accusative, a marker of grammatical objects in SA. In detached utterances, grammatical subjects work always in the nominative /u/, which is a marker of agentivity:

(b) الضيف يصل غدا. / (b') The guest<sup>+nominative</sup> arrives tomorrow.

In (b), the utterance is oriented to the right<sup>ii</sup>, i.e. to the adverb (غدا/tomorrow) which is the basic information in the sentence (When does he arrive? - Tomorrow): S - V - Adv.

The utterer's intervention in (a) has a disempowering effect on the grammatical subject which becomes an object of estimation. In this case, U estimates the probability of R's occurrence. Consequently, in (a) the utterance is oriented to the left, i.e. to a non-autonomous grammatical subject attributed a property by U. The utterer endorses R and quantifies the probability of its occurrence.

A last point about (a) and (b) is that in (b) the utterance displays a ternary structure {S-V-O}, whereas (a), a speaker-governed utterance, manifests a binary structure {S-P}, where R is the scope of the modal operator. In this context, it is interesting to note that many other Arabic modal markers, إن / أن / لكن / ليت and the emphatic لا:م التوكيد serve as triggers of the accusative case as well. They scope on R, disagentivate the grammatical subject and announce a speaker-dependent utterance. This is in fact an instance of what Adamczewski (2002:71) calls the metalinguistic generosity of natural languages, i.e. when the surface of one language tells more about one linguistic operation than that of another language.

**b.** Another realization of Arabic modal operators as external to the predicative relation is when the utterer intervenes not to validate the propositional content this time but rather to pass judgment on R or on one of its components - whether it is normal or abnormal, effective or ineffective, good or bad etc. Here, the modal marker works to codify the utterer's commentary. This corresponds to Culioli's (1978, 1990) qualitative modality (type three) as opposed to the epistemic modality (type 2) where the utterer quantifies the probabilities of R's occurrence. Typical modal markers of this category include verbal nouns such as نعم / بنس; oath markers رب / و / ب / ت; modal verbs, adverbs and adjectives; the absolute object المفعول المطلق and word order with which the utterer intervenes to judge, testify, maximize, intensify, minimize, amplify etc. This is a domain of expressivity where Arabic manifests a rich modalizing potential. Here are a few examples:

- Modalization by absolute objects:  
(C<sub>1</sub>) محو آثارها محوا / He wiped out her traces unreservedly.
- Modalization by a modal adjective:  
(C<sub>2</sub>) لقد كانت زيارة مشؤومة / It was indeed an inauspicious visit.
- Modalization by a verbal noun  
(C<sub>3</sub>) رب عذر أقيح من ذنب! / Many an excuse is worse than a misdeed!
- Modalization by a phrase:  
(C<sub>4</sub>) مع الأسف! كان يتعامل مع العدو. / Unfortunately, he was dealing with the enemy.

When the scope of the evaluator extends to *R* as a whole, such as in (C<sub>4</sub>), the evaluator which works outside *R* behaves as what Quirk calls a superordinate category (1993:309). In Arabic some verbs assume the same modal function:

(C<sub>5</sub>) أعجب لامرئ يتجسس على نفسه! / It amazes me that someone spies on himself!

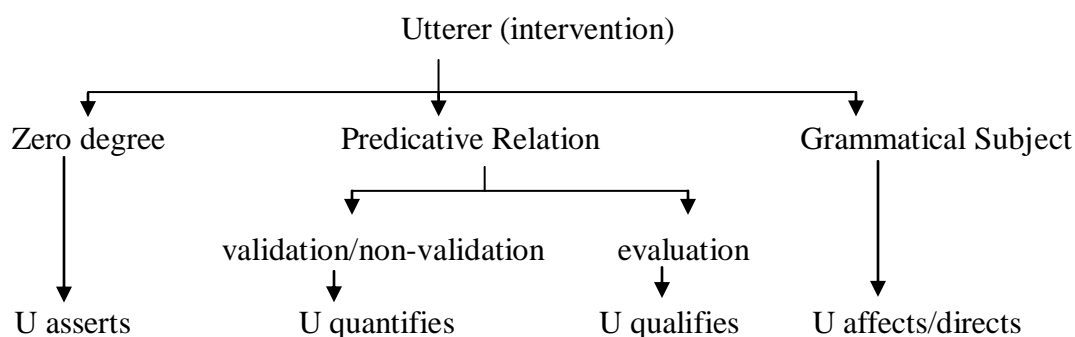
c. The third realization of modality as an intervenient strategy differs from the previous ones in orientation, scope and value in that it does not express the degree of the utterer's commitment to what s/he says. It builds on a different logic. Let's start from the following example:

(d) يجب أن تحكم غلق البوابة. / (d') You must lock the gate (firmly).

First, the modal verb *وجب* which is the trace of the utterer's intervention, cannot be extracted from *R* as is the case with the previous types of modality. This inherence is more explicit in the following gloss: (d') غلق البوابة واجب / Shutting the gate is a must.

(d) is oriented to the right and the scope of the utterer's intervention is the grammatical subject, not *R*. The modal operator works to announce a predicative relation governed by the utterer. It is interesting to note that the grammatical subject coincides with the co-utterer you/أنت. This should not however lead us to generalize that the scope of the modal marker is always the co-U, as the grammatical subject may be independent of the co-U (they /he / we/ I).

Second, this type of modality in Arabic often engages the formal marker *أن* which is generally translated into the English *to*: (يستحسن it is commendable/ ينبغي should/ يمكن may/ يفصل it is preferable etc.) *أن* (S-P). The operator *أن* has a metalinguistic status as it works to trigger the construction of the predicative relation announced by the modal verb. The visualization of (d) shows that the modal is embedded in the propositional content. The scope of *يجب* is the grammatical subject (ت/you) and the orientation of the utterance is to the right: (( غلق البوابة يجب (أن) تحكم البوابة). *أن* is another marker which triggers the accusative case whenever it emerges in discourse. It collocates with types of verbs which carry a subjective load: أحب/ love; أراد/ want; ودد/ would like; تمنى/ wish; رجا/hope; حبذ/approve of, etc. These indicators confirm the manipulative nature and metalinguistic status of modality. In other contexts, where the linguistic parameter does not take the lead over the extralinguistic one and works only to refer to it without any manipulative intervention of U, the verb retrieves its initial nominative case أنا أستيقظ باكرا /I wake up early). The following configuration recapitulates what has been said so far:



### 2.3. Modality: Triggers and Values

Triggers of modality depend on the situation of discourse as generator of strategies adopted by the utterer. Three main strategies are engaged when the utterer chooses to intervene in language:

(a) The assertive strategy

(b) The expressive strategy

(c) The pragmatic strategy

(a) and (b) are at work when *R* is validatable or assessable, whereas (c) is engaged when a property is attributable to the grammatical subject.

The assertive strategy, as shown previously, entails a zero degree of modality. The utterer neither assesses the probabilities of occurrence of *R* nor evaluates its content. *R* is simply defined as being true or false: when the utterer is not in a position to validate, the co-utterer is asked to decide (interrogation).

Expressivity is the reservoir of modality in natural languages; the utterer chooses to intervene in what s/he says to express doubt, belief, prediction, (un)certainly or a point of view. *R* is validatable from the perspective of an utterer who filters the whole utterance. This is the case when the modal works to establish a relationship between U and *R*. The epistemic value is therefore foregrounded. The expressive strategy is also at work when the utterer intervenes to evaluate or comment on *R*. The modal marker is used to stand for an utterer expressing a commentary on the propositional content. Here, too, *R* is validatable from a subjective perspective.

The pragmatic strategy is engaged not to express an attitude but to affect the grammatical subject. The modal stands for a linguistic subject who allows, orders, imposes or removes a constraint, suggests and reproaches, etc. The grammatical subject is foreshadowed and reduced to an object of discourse. I should note here that the utterer is not always the origin of the value attributed to the grammatical subject, obligation for instance. The U simply says that the grammatical subject is not in a position to decide what s/he will or will not do:

(x) لابدّ له أن يقبل هديّة الملك. / He must accept the present of the king.

The origin of obligation is not necessarily the utterer. In a different context the U is the origin of permission; we are in the presence of an utterer who allows:

(y) الآن يمكن لك أن تستعمل القاموس. / You may use the dictionary now.

Lastly, much of the literature available on modality has envisaged modals as meaningful units of language. For Palmer 1979, Leech 1971, Perkins 1983, Quirk et al. 1993 and many others, obligation, permission, necessity, etc. are meanings conveyed respectively by *must*, *may* and *need*. This, I think, should be reconsidered as it involves direct assignment of meaning to meaningless metalinguistic entities. As I have shown, modal markers have a metalinguistic status: they are surface traces of a sublinguistic operation and do not stand for an extralinguistic referent. Rather, they codify a processing strategy of the utterer. It is true that many modal constructions, such as *الراجح أنّ* *probably*, *في الحقيقة* *to tell the truth* and *أخشى أنّ* *I fear* or *I am afraid*, are derived from lexical units which carry a semantic load of their own, but the fact that they behave to codify a strategy implies that we deal with metalinguistic devices working to convey a grammatical value rather than a meaning. Semantic effects, therefore, should not be retained as grammatical values. This is what justifies my preference for modal values over modal meanings. Above all, many modals are formal markers undefinable in dictionaries - what are *لقد*, *إنّ*, *لعلّ*, *عسى*, *ought*, *may*, or *shall* out of context?

#### 2.4. Modality: Realizations in Arabic

Standard Arabic has a rich modalizing potential whose expression is detectable not only in the whole system of categories and structures, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, particles, phrases, word order, rhetorical devices etc., but also in other grammatical operations, such as negation, interrogation and the imperative. To take just one example, the working of



negation, as we shall see below, cannot be elucidated unless we understand the role of modality in negating (Kahlaoui, 1992 and 2012). The fact that modality is inherent in negation in SA explains why this universal operation is exteriorized in at least six formal negators in Arabic and only one in English and French for example.

In defining modality, we said that it is a metalinguistic operation far too complex to be reduced to modal auxiliaries or to the values they convey, especially when taking an extended view of modality that covers the various manifestations of the utterer's visibility in discourse, and includes, in addition to modal auxiliaries, many other categories - lexical, morpho-grammatical and rhetorical. Any charged piece of writing in SA - a novel, an electoral speech, a sermon, a diary or a poem - feeds into a modalizing reservoir which empowers the speaker to diversify the forms of intervention and visibility in language to an extent that even academic discourse, conventionally defined as rigorous and objective, cannot, apparently, work without displaying a self in ceremony (Kahlaoui, 2010). This metalinguistic richness, though not easy to track, is describable in a systematic and learnable way. Modal devices take eight different forms at the surface of SA: formal markers, lexical categories, morphological templates, syntactic structures, grammatical operations, rhetorical structures and phonological and orthographic features. The following figure illustrates the richness of SA's modalizing potential:

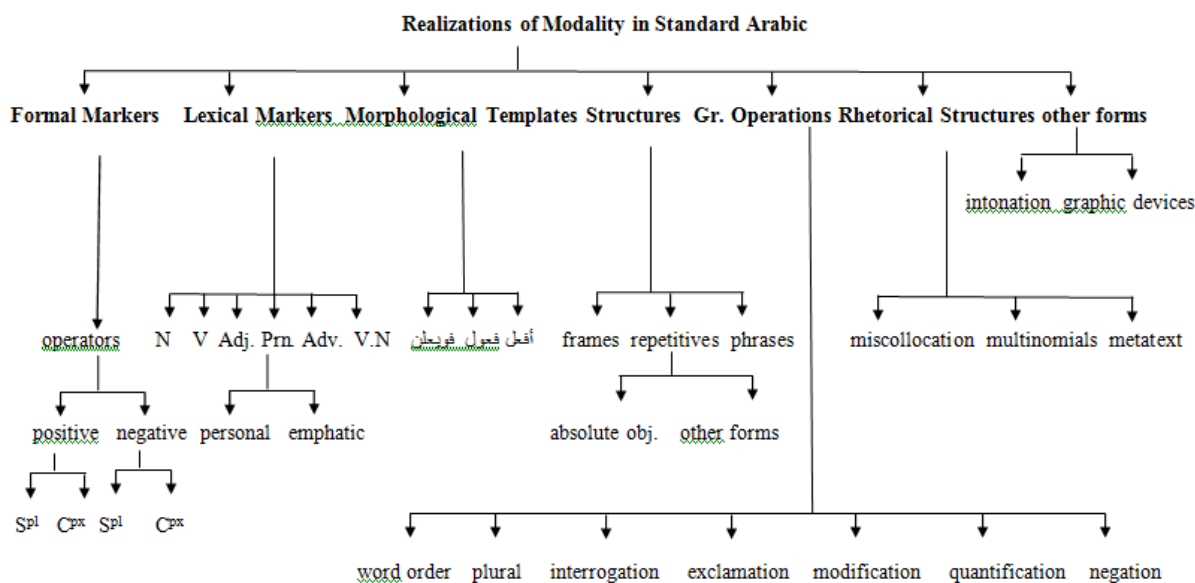


Fig. 1. The Modal Resources of Standard Arabic

It would be unrealistic to cover all these realizations of modality in a paper whose scope is to offer a framework for the description and analysis of modal markers in SA. In fact, my initial aims have been defined in three points: to direct attention to the richness of modal resources in SA, a domain still under-researched; to put an end to the traditional semantic and atomistic treatment of modal markers which has induced language learners and translation trainees to mis-analysis, confusion and negative transfer from L2 to L1 (Kahlaoui, 2009), and third to rehabilitate the utterer, the co-utterer and the context of

production in Arabic grammatical research and pedagogy. This context justifies why I have opted for a selective analysis which covers the most representative and the ill-defined operators and markers in each of the eight classes. I will start with defining these exponents.

#### 2.4.1 Definitions

The dichotomy formal vs. lexical markers has been used to distinguish meaningless from semantically loaded devices. Unlike lexical categories, formal operators constitute a closed set of modal markers with no reference value in the extralinguistic domain, such as the affirmative *إِنَّ*, *قد*, *لقد*, *لكنّ*, *سوف* and the negative *ما*, *لن* and *كلاً*. They convey different modal values according to the processing strategy engaged by U in a specific context of production. These formal markers are subdivided semantically into positive and negative and morphologically into simple and complex. Complexity involves the presence of two markers in the structure of the modal, as in *...إنّ...لكم*, *لسوف*, etc. Lexical markers are categories which carry a semantic load of their own. They are classified into modal verbs, adverbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives and verbal nouns. Morphologically, they are simple, like *وجب*, *الحقّ*, *أبداً* etc., and complex, like *لاعجب*, and *لشّدماً*.

Modal markers are also detectable in morphological templates, like those of the diminutive *فويعلن*, the intensive *فعلن* and the superlative *أفعل*. A fourth class is expressed in structures, including phrases like *مع الأسف*, frames {*v-'an*, *v-law*, *preposition-'anna*, *conditional-'inna* etc.} and repetitives such as *المفعول المطلق* and expressions like *العجب العجب*, *الحقّ الحقّ*, *جهد جهيد*, *العجاب* etc. The fifth realization is in grammatical operations, such as negation, interrogation, quantification and the plural. These are abstract universal grammatical operations differently exteriorized in natural languages and encoded in one or more operators. Rhetorical structures are distinguished from morpho-grammatical structures in that they refer to numerous strategies engaged by speakers/writers in constructing meaning, such as the use of bi- and multinomials, miscollocation, word order and metatext. This is a domain where Arabic discourse abounds in indicators of speaker visibility. Finally, by phonological and orthographic features. I essentially refer to the role of suprasegmental markers like intonation and the significance of graphic devices, such as bold font, in attracting attention to the presence of the speaker or the writer, especially in charged discourse.

#### 2.4.2 Analysis: a selection of utterances

##### 2.4.2.1 Corpus (1)

- (1) والله إنّ سفّ التراب والمشي على الجمر أهون لنا من هذا!
- (2) لقد كانت تستعدّ لامتحان التّهائي وقتها.
- (3) سوف يرحل مهما كانت الظروف.
- (4) ولا تمش في الأرض مرحاً إنّك لن تحرق الأرض ولن تبلغ الجبال طولا.
- (5) وما قتلوه وما صلبوه ولكن شبه لهم.
- (5') وما قتلوه يقينا.

قال فبِعزَّتِكَ لأغويئهم أجمعين. (6)

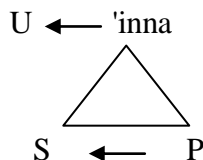
The modal categories involved in these utterances are formal markers with no reference value extralinguistically. They are simple, complex, positive and negative. The list includes the operators *إنّ*, *لَقَدْ*, *لِ*, *ما*, *لن*, *سوف*, *لَوْ*, *لَ* and the emphatic *نَون*, but it is not exhaustive as it may include other markers like *قد*, *س*, *عسى*, *لعلّ*, *ليت*, *لكِنَّ*, *كأنّ*, and oath markers such as *و*, *ت* and *ب*. The modal value conveyed by each marker is context-dependent.

(1) والله إنّ سفّ التراب والمشى على الجمر أهون لنا من هذا.

By God, swallowing earth and walking on hot coal are indeed more endurable to us than this.

*إنّ* has been approached in TG as an emphatic particle which corroborates S. Ibn Faris lexicalizes *إنّ* as "it has been proved to me *عندي*" (1964:130). Its inflectional behavior of putting S in the accusative and P in the nominative has been defined as its major function, even though nothing has been said about the reason why it requires a subject in the accusative and not in the nominative. These defining features are discussed below in the light of (1).

In this example, *إنّ* codifies a processing strategy of U who assigns a property to S. It works outside the propositional content and scopes over R and not S, as advocated in TG. The trigger of *إنّ* is the initial oath taken by U (والله) which already announces a subjective perspective and a high degree of U-visibility. Thus, it assumes an over-modalizing function. A metalinguistic operator, *إنّ* is the surface trace of a modalizing strategy by which U endorses R and quantifies the probabilities of its occurrence. Its emergence on the surface affects the agentive status of G<sub>s</sub>, which becomes in the accusative - the Arabic mode of objects. Given that U is saying something about S and P, the whole sentence works as an object of discourse. This is why S loses its syntactic autonomy, the marker of which is the nominative case. It is worth noting that *إنّ* collocates with the verb *قال*/say in all its forms - *قال*, *قيل*, *قائل*, *قائل*, *قائل* - which confirms that *إنّ* utterances belong to the domain of *saying* not that of *doing/events*, and explains why the sentence is left-oriented, i.e. the attribution of a property is to a non-autonomous grammatical subject by a linguistic subject (U):



The following table recapitulates the main properties of *إنّ* in (1):

**Table 2. The intrinsic properties of 'inna**

<b>'inna</b>	status	metalinguistic
	trigger	oath <sup>III</sup> taken by U
	scope	predicative relation R
	processing strategy	modalizing
	modal value	epistemic
	sentence orientation	left-oriented S ← P

	sentence structure	binary {S-P}
	domain	saying

(2) لقد كانت تستعدّ لامتحان النهائي وقتها! / But she was preparing herself for the final exam at that time!

Traditional grammarians have dealt with *لقد* as a compound particle made of an emphatic *لـ*- attached to *قد*, a particle defined as conveying certainty when it governs a verb in the past and either minimization *التقليل* or expectation *التوقع* when it precedes an imperfective verb. This approach does not explain the working of *لقد*, as it is atomistic, context-insensitive and, most important, reductive of the scope of *لقد* to the mere verb.

(2) is a speaker-dependent utterance that cannot be decoded outside the justification strategy adopted by U. This strategy is the trigger of the modal operator *لقد*, which works outside *R*, stands for U, and encodes the validation of the predicative relation. This is confirmed by the contextual elements of (2) which involve a co-utterer protesting against the unwillingness of *G<sub>s</sub>*, *she*, to return his call: the intervention of U is therefore to provide a justification in order to clear up misunderstanding (she was concentrating on getting ready for the exam.). In other contexts, *لقد* not only conveys an epistemic modality but also encodes an aspectual value, as in: (2') *عفوا، لقد نفذ رصيديكم.* / *Sorry, you have exhausted your balance!* where an implicit 'already' is embedded in the semantic structure of the sentence. It may be rewritten as 'This is to confirm that *R* is validated'. *لقد* is also detectable in contexts where it codifies an utterer who passes a judgment on *R*:

(2') لقد فسد الزمان حتى صار الفظيع أليفا. / Times have become so corrupt that we've got used to atrocity.

Lastly, unlike *قد*, *لقد* and negators are exclusive, given that *laqad*-utterances announce saturated predicative relations undefinable as being true or false. It is therefore ungrammatical in SA to say: \**لقد لم يصل*, \**لقد لا يصل* or \**لقد ما وصل* (neg.+*laqad*+V).

#### • *Laqad* vs. <*inna*

Language learners and translation trainees have often dealt with these operators as if they were in free variation, especially when they work on similar surfaces (Kahlaoui, 2009).

- (a) *هو خرج* / *هو* He went out.
- (b) *إنه خرج* / *'inna + he* went out.
- (c) *لقد خرج* / *laqad + he* went out.

Extracted from their context, (a), (b) and (c) seem to work interchangeably and might therefore induce trainees to under-, over-, and mistranslation; but, approached in context, they are no longer ambiguous:

- (a') *عندما رآها هو خرج مسرعا.* / When he saw her he hurried out.
- (b') *بل إنه خرج ولن يعود أبدا.* / Rather, he went out and would never return.
- (c') *لقد خرج الآن فكفّ عن الصياح هكذا!* / He's gone now, so stop shouting like that!

Very briefly, (a') is a referential unmodalized utterance which provides information about *G<sub>s</sub>* (What did he do when he saw her?). The *G<sub>s</sub>* is autonomous and the sentence

structure is ternary (S-V-A). (b') is a non-referential modalized utterance where *إنّ*, triggered by the anaphorical *بل*/rather, quantifies the probability of *R*'s occurrence. The sentence is speaker-dependent and displays a binary structure (S - P). (c') is another non-referential modalized utterance where *U* confirms the realization of the propositional content, but *لقد* is not only modalizing: it conveys an aspectual value as well (completeness). An implicit *وانتهى* / *لقد خرج وانتهى* / He's gone now...

(3) سوف يرحل مهما كانت الظروف. / He'll be leaving whatever the circumstances.

The markers *س* and *سوف* are traditionally defined as temporal particles denoting respectively near and remote futurity and they are still being taught as such in pedagogical grammar, in spite of numerous counter-examples from language at work invalidating this explanation. Futurity is, in fact, a semantic effect derivable from the context not a value inherent in *سوف/س*. This is justified by the following arguments:

a. Reference to near and remote futurity in SA is often realized without *سوف/س* :

*تصل الباخرة بعد دقائق (أو بعد أيام).* / The ship arrives in a few minutes (or in a few days).

The adverbial phrases are explicit locators of *R* in time.

b. *سوف/س* can be used in contexts where events are located at the time of speech, not in the future: *سوف أذهب في الحال يا مولاي!* / I'll set off immediately, my lord!

The presence of an explicit time locator referring to the immediate present shows that the main value of *سوف/س* is to be sought outside time reference, as we will see below.

c. *سوف/س* are incompatible with verbs that denote willingness and work in contexts implying futurity, The following sentences are ungrammatical:

*\*سوف أريد أن أحج البيت بعد عامين.* / \*I will want to make the Pilgrimage in two years.

*\*سأرغب في الحج هذه السنة.* / \*I will wish to make the Pilgrimage this year.

By ungrammatical, I mean that we cannot imagine a natural context which might have generated these sentences.

Example (3) is a speaker-dependent utterance endorsed by the linguistic subject who estimates the occurrence of *R* as inevitable. The adverbial *مهما كانت الظروف* - *whatever the circumstances* - is the key to understanding the function of *سوف*. It also maximizes the degree of certainty conveyed by the epistemic *سوف*. Intralingually, *سوف* is more effectively understood when contrasted with *س*, *ل* and *سوف* :

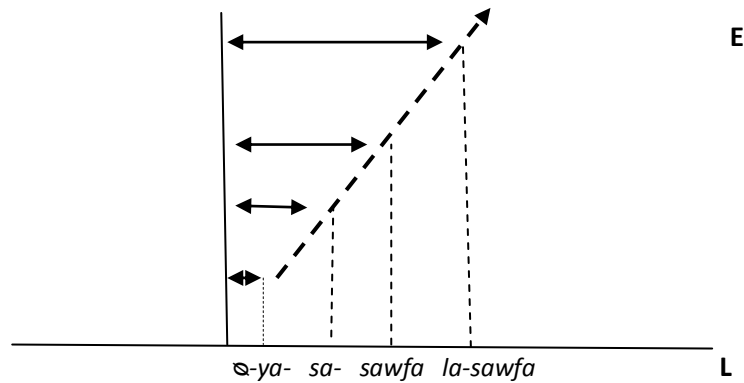
(3a) *غدا س يرحل الضيف.* / The guest *س* leaves tomorrow.

(3b) *أخيرا سيرحل الضيف!* / The guest is leaving at last!

(3c) *سوف يرحل غدا أيّا كان عذره!* / He will be leaving tomorrow whatever his pretext!

(3d) *لسوف يرحل شاء أم أبى!* / He shall be leaving whether he likes it or not!

These four markers encode four degrees of certainty which constitute an ascending scale of *U* visibility in discourse - from a zero degree, positive assertion in (3a) to a very high degree (3d), where the occurrence of *R* is presented as a matter of fact. The following figure illustrates this explanation:



The double arrow shows the gap between the two axes, the linguistic (L) and the extralinguistic (E). The more language deviates from the extralinguistic, the more it works metalingually. At one extreme,  $\text{ya-}V$  refers to events as they happen outside language: an assertive strategy is engaged; at the other, with  $\text{لسوف} - V$ , the linguistic subject leaves no option to the  $G_s$ . The realization of  $R$  is envisaged as a matter of fact in the normal course of events. Interlingually, (shall+be+v+ing) is an effective equivalent in English: *She will be having a baby in June.*

(4) ولا تمش في الأرض مرحا إنك لن تخرق الأرض ولن تبلغ الجبال طولا.

Nor walk on the earth with insolence: for thou cannot rend the earth asunder, nor reach the mountains in height.

(5) وما قتلوه وما صلبوه ولكن شبه لهم.

But they killed him not, nor crucified him, but it was made to appear to them.

(5') وما قتلوه يقينا. / For of a surety they killed him not.

Even though traditional grammarians have assigned a corroborative meaning to  $\text{لم}$  and  $\text{لن}$ , the negators have been treated essentially as conveying temporal values. To take a few examples,  $\text{لا}$  is said to "negate the meaning of the event in the future" (Ibn Hisham, 1959:406, vol.8),  $\text{ليس}$  negates present events or states,  $\text{لما}$  negates imperfective verbs and puts them in the near or remote past (Sibaweih, 1977),  $\text{لم}$  affects the imperfective and puts it in the past,  $\text{لن}$  is "a marker of negation, futurity and the accusative" mode (Ibn Hisham, 1959:464, vol.1), etc.. The scope of negators is limited to the verb or the noun which follows them in the sentence.

To understand how negators work in SA, it is necessary to adopt a contrastive intralingual approach in which negators are investigated as a system not only made of interrelated markers – لا, لن, لم, ما, لِمَا, لَيْسَ – but it is also in symmetry with the markers of the affirmative polarity - لقد and إنَّ, س/سوف, ه. In verbal utterances, Arabic negators are analyzable according two parameters: time reference in the sentence and the utterer's attitude towards the propositional content. Consequently, four detectable values account for the working of negators: neutral negation in the imperfective vs. modalized negation in the imperfective and neutral negation in the perfective vs. modalized negation in the

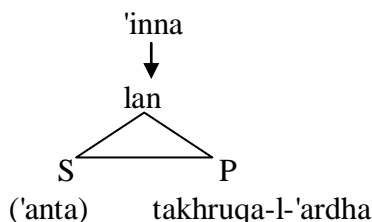
perfective. This symmetry is visible in the following table which offers illustrations and includes the markers of the affirmative pole:

**Table 3. Modalizing vs. unmodalizing negators in SA**

		affirmative (+)		negative (-)	
neutral	perfective	ﻻ ﺷﺎ:ﻤﺎ-ﺷ-ﺸﺎﻫﺮﺍ	ﻻ - v	ﻻﻡ ﻳﺎﺷﯘﻡ	ﻻﻡ - v
	imperfective	ﻻ ﻳﺎﺷﯘ:ﻤﯘ ﺩﺍ:'ﯨﻤﺎﻥ	ﻻ - v	ﻻ: ﻳﺎﺷﯘ:ﻤﯘ	ﻻ: - v
modalized	perfective	'inna-hu ﺷﺎ:ﻤﺎ -ﺷ-ﺸﺎﻫﺮﺍ	'inna - v	ﻤﺎ: ﺷﺎ:ﻤﺎ	ﻤﺎ: - v
		ﻻﻗﺎﺩ ﺷﺎ:ﻤﺎ -ﺷ-ﺸﺎﻫﺮﺍ	ﻻﻗﺎﺩ - v	ﻻﻤﻤﺎ: ﻳﺎﺷﯘﻡ	ﻻﻤﻤﺎ:- v
	imperfective	ﺳﺎ/ﺳﺎﻭﻓﺎ ﻳﺎﺷﯘ:ﻤ -ﺷ-ﺸﺎﻫﺮﺍ	ﺳﺎ/ﺳﺎﻭﻓﺎ-v	ﻻﻥ ﻳﺎﺷﯘ:ﻤﺎ	ﻻﻥ - v
		'inna-hu ﻻ-ﺷﺎ'ﯨﻤﯘﻥ...	'inna - ﻻ	ﻤﺎ: ﻫﯘﻭﻭﺍ ﺑﯩ-ﺷﺎ'ﯨﻤﯩﻦ	ﻤﺎ: - ﺑﯩ

However, the opposition affirmative-negative should not be applied mechanically. The utterances with ﻻ, ﻻﻡ, ﻻﻧ, ﻻﻧﻨ and ...ﻻ...ﺑ are not the automatic negations of utterances with ﻻﻧﻨ, ﻻﻗﺎﺩ, ﻻﻧﻨ, ﻻﻧﻨ and ...ﻻ...ﺑ. Utterances are context-dependent and different factors govern their production, working and reception. My aim is essentially to attract attention to this symmetry not often encountered in natural languages.

Two modal negators are involved in the Koranic sentences (4) and (5): the affirmative ﻻﻧﻨ and the negative ﻻﻧ. This is an example of saturated overmodalized utterance where U, an omnipotent judge, guarantees the non-realization of R.



Both ﻻﻧﻨ, which is triggered by a justification strategy, and ﻻﻧ are outside R. They reflect the utterer's intervention: the certainty that R is unrealizable (R saturated) is presented as a matter of fact (R overmodalized). Accordingly, (4) is not a referential event-utterance but a metalinguistic one expressing a processing strategy. The temporal value is therefore overshadowed by the modal one i.e. the guarantee of U. This explains why (4) cannot be the appropriate answer to the question "Is it possible for X to rend the earth asunder?" In theoretical terms, we witness a transition from a first phase, where U reports events, to a second phase, where U comments on R (judges, emphasizes, values, minimizes...), Adamczewski 1982.

Examples (5) and (5') are extracted from the same Koranic context where U intervenes to strongly refute the claim that Jesus had been killed and crucified. The sentence implies a commentary on a claim and not a reference to events as they occurred in

the extralinguistic. A contrastive intralingual analysis, including لم, sheds more light on the value conveyed by ما. To the true-false question "هل قتلوه؟ / Tell me, did they kill him?" the negative answer would be "لا، لم يقتلوه." / No, they did not." An answer with ما, though structurally well-formed, would have been ungrammatical as ما does not provide information but conveys a high degree of certainty. This is confirmed by the textual context of (5) ...ولكن...وما...ولكن... / not...nor...but... where the marker لكن/but announces the utterer's version of what had really happened "ولكن شُبّه لهم." / But it was made to appear to them".

In summary, لن and ما are epistemic modal negators which convey a guarantee of U that R will not (lan) and did not (ma:) take place. They scope over R and have a metalinguistic status.

(6) قال فيعزتك لأغوينهم أجمعين / He said: By your might, I will most certainly mislead them all.

Example (6) is a charged utterance where the imperfective verb is prefixed with the modal la- and postfixed with the modal nun (-nna), both defined in TG as corroborative particles. The operator la- is a transcategorial modal marker prefixable to a considerable number of categories: formal operators لَكَنَّ, adjectives (لصبور), adverbs (لطالما), nouns (لعبرة), prepositions (لفي), verbal nouns (لبنس), pronouns (لهي) and verbs as in (6). It conveys an epistemic modality codifying the utterer's certainty. The modal nu:n is suffixable to verbs in the imperfective (أغوين) or the imperative (أدخلتها) where it conveys a deontic modality. The combination *la-imperfective+nna* carries a strong illocutionary directive force which signals a great determination of U. From the subjective perspective of L<sub>s</sub>, the occurrence of R is inevitable. Four markers in (6) codify the utterer's visibility: the oath phrase ويعزتك, the markers la- and nu:n, and the amplifier أجمعين. This amplifier is an example of modal pronouns as كآهم and نفسه. It takes two forms: a weak modal form جميعا/all that contrasts with the strong form أجمعين/all together. In (6), U opts for the strong form to amplify determination.

#### A note on the modal nu:n and the imperative in SA

An intersubjective mode, the imperative is a form of deontic modality by which U orders or imposes an obligation on the co-utterer; but, compared with radical deontic modals, it is often a softened form of modality (انتبه لنفسك!/Take care!). In SA, the imperative is realizable in two patterns: أدخلها and أدخلتها. The second indicates a higher visibility of U, the trace of which is the nu:n suffixed to the imperative verb. The utterer not only gives an order to co-U but is also categorical about it. It is true that this is an outdated form of the imperative in SA, but it stands for a L<sub>s</sub> in ceremony, not only imposing his/her will but also insinuating that what is imposed is rightfully deserved. Interlingually, this form of the imperative calls to mind some English utterances where the role of the Arabic modal nu:n is assumed by the saturator *do* (Adamczewski,1991), which is infrequent in positive everyday-imperatives, though inherent in negative imperatives: "Do somebody open the window!".



**Corpus (2)**

(7) استفظع الأمر أيما استفظاع.

He was utterly appalled at the matter.

(8) يستحيل الحديث عن المعنى بمعزل عن القارئ.

It is impossible to envisage meaning detached from the reader.

(9) والثابت أن هذه الصورة ليست غريبة عن الذهن العربي.

It is obvious that such an image is not uncommon to the Arab mind.

(10) وأين مجنون "أبواب المدينة" وقد مزق السرد تمزيقا، فقطع منطق الأحداث تقطيعا وضخم الكلام تضيخا.

(and what is it compared to) the madman of 'abwa:bu-l-madi:na' with whom narration disintegrates irreversibly, the logic of events turns into fragments and language develops into excessive amplification.

(11) فويل ثم ويل ثم ويل لقاضي الأرض من قاضي السماء.

Woe to (unjust) judges on earth; for there is no escape from the Judge in heaven.

(12) ومشى الرجل الغريب ومشى، مشى أيما لا تحصى ومشى وكانت الطرقات تلد الطرقات والغبار يلد الغبار، ومشى. وكانت الشوارع تقود إلى شوارع والأزقة تنتهي إلى أزقة، ومشى.

...The stranger walked and walked; he walked for countless days, and he walked; the streets were generating streets and dust was bringing forth dust, and he walked; the avenues were leading to more avenues and the lanes giving on more lanes, and he walked.

A high degree of U visibility is the common denominator of these attested utterances where different modalizing devices, conveying different modal values, are deployed. In (7), the scanning operator أيما/*whatever* is used to maximize the commentary of U on R. The phrase استفظاع أيما assumes the grammatical function of مفعول مطلق/absolute object, a highly modalizing category indicative of an evaluative modality. (10) is another example where the absolute object works to convey, in Rockendorf's terms, absolute, powerful and incessant senses (cited in Talmon, 1999:112). Talmon suggests additional determinants of the absolute object such as "the dramatic atmosphere of the narrative" (1999:112) which triggers an affective value as detectable in (7). The absolute object is often undertranslated and rendered by approximate qualifiers like *indeed*, *verily*, *altogether*, *with vigor*, *excessively*, etc., if not simply untranslated (Kahlaoui, 2010). The maximizer أيما/*whatever* alludes to the expressive strategy at work in the sentence which constitutes the vast reservoir for similar devices prefixed to the scanning operator ما (أيما، أينما، قلما، حيثما) (أيما، لشدما، etc.). They announce U-dependent utterances. Contrastively, a one-to-one equivalence is detected between ما and the maximizer ever in English (wherever, whomsoever, whatever, etc.).

In (8), the intervention of the linguistic subject is codified by the epistemic verb يستحيل/*it is impossible* by which U declares R invalidatable. A list of epistemic verbs includes the category defined as "verbs of cognition and certainty" رأى/*see*, وجد/*find*, حسب/*consider*, ظن/*think*; the approximators كاد/*almost*, أو شك/*about to do* and other verbs

like *يمكن/ be possible*, *أقسم/swear*, *حَبَّذَ/prefer*, *حَتَّمَ/prescribe*, etc. (9) introduces a modalizing frame (N-'anna) *الثَّابِتُ أَنَّ* which corresponds to Halliday's objective explicit modality (1985). It is also detectable in *الْحَقُّ أَنَّ* the truth, *الرَّاجِحُ أَنَّ* it is probable, *الأَكِيدُ أَنَّ* most certainly, which convey epistemic values. Other frames are given in the table below:

**Table 4. Some modalizing frames in SA**

Modalizing Frames	Examples
{noun – 'anna}	الثَّابِتُ أَنَّ، الْحَقُّ أَنَّ، أَكِيدُ أَنَّ، الرَّاجِحُ أَنَّ...
{preposition – noun}	فِي الْوَقْعِ، فِي الْحَقِيقَةِ، بِصِرَاحَةٍ، مَعَ الْأَسْفِ...
{verb – 'an}	يَنْبَغِي أَنْ، يَجِبُ أَنْ، يَسْتَحْسِنُ أَنْ، أَحَبُّ أَنْ...
{verb – conditional}	وَدَّ لَوْ، تَمَنَّى لَوْ...
{negator – restrictive}	لَيْسَ...إِلَّا، لَيْسَ...سِوَى، مَا...إِلَّا...، إِنْ...إِلَّا...
{conditional-'inna/-ma:}	لِنَنْ...فَإِنَّ، لِنَنْ...إِنَّمَا...
{negator... li...}	لَمْ/مَا (كَانَ) لَمْ...
{interrog. ... 'illa: ...}	هَلْ...إِلَّا...

Examples (11) and (12) display a repetitive structure where a verbal noun *ويل/woe* to in (11) is repeated three times in succession and a lexical verb *مشى/walk* in (12), framing the sentence, is repeated six times. Repetition in Arabic is not only a cohesive device but also a rhetorical structure laden with cultural<sup>iv</sup> connotations. Many chapters of the Koran are constructed on a rhythmical repetition of the same sentence or device. In chapter 55, the clause *(فِي أَيِّ آلاءِ رَبِّكَمَا تَكْذِبَانِ)* is repeated thirty-one times, and in chapter 52, the marker *أم* is repeated fourteen times in so excessive a way that its English translation flouts natural readability. Repetition is also detectable in Arabic constructions like the *مفعول مطلق* (ضَحْمٌ) *جهد جهيد/ شغل شاغل/ حصن حصين* / *تضخيما/ over-amplify*) and a long list of expressions such as: *العجب العجاب* which 'Al-Tha<a:libi: considered as indicative of exaggeration (1972:372). The basic value of effective repetition in SA is to encode a modalizing strategy of the utterer. It is generally triggered by expressivity where the presence of the utterer overshadows the propositional content. A pertinent example in English is the repetition of the modal *shall* in Churchill's famous speech where modality is conveyed not only by *shall* but also by its excessive repetition.

## Conclusion

In the foregoing sections, I have attempted to provide a framework for the description and analysis of the modal resources in SA, building on an extended view of modality as a codifier of utterer visibility in discourse. I chose to restrict my investigation to some ill-defined modal categories in dominant grammar, as the richness of Arabic's modalizing potential is far beyond the scope and the nature of this paper. The utterances investigated reflect neither the initial large corpus gathered nor the traces of modality

detected. Interrogation, word order, quantification, the plural, exclamation and many rhetorical devices that feed into modality have not been covered in the study in spite of the availability of data collected from language at work.

Finally, it must be stressed that the paradox that the richness of Arabic modal resources has been reflected in theoretical and pedagogical grammars proves that the traditional approach has been ill-equipped to account for the working of modality. It has built on the linearity of the surface, assigned semantic values to the traces of deep operations, dismissed the major contextual factors, such as the utterer and the co-utterer, envisaged language as an end-product not a process, and foregrounded the inflectional potential of language markers. Furthermore, it has been formulated from introspective and written data. However, this is not to discredit the tremendous work of traditional grammarians, it is rather a call to update a prevailing pedagogical grammar still adhering to prescriptivism, taxonomy and semanticity; thus, preventing any insight into the working of Arabic. Nothing, in fact, justifies such insensitivity to fast-moving modern linguistic research. It is as if the working of Arabic was irrevocably deciphered ten centuries ago.

#### About the Author:

A contrastivist, discourse analyst and literary translator, **Dr. Mohamed-Habib Kahlaoui** holds an M.A. and a Ph.D. in Theoretical and Contrastive Linguistics from the Sorbonne Nouvelle University, France. He is currently Assistant Professor of English at Sultan Qaboos University Oman, and Kairouan Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Tunisia. His main areas of teaching and research include contrastive linguistics, translation studies, text linguistics, discourse analysis and intercultural rhetoric.

#### Works Cited

- ADAMCZEWSKI, H. (1982). *Grammaire Linguistique de l'Anglais*. Paris: Armand Collin.(2002). *The Secret Architecture of English Grammar*. Precy-Sur-oise: EMA.
- AL-HASSAN, H.M.(1990). Modality in English and Standard Arabic: Paraphrase and Equivalence. *King Saud University Journal* 2, 149-166.
- AL-KAROONI, D. (1996). *The Transfer of Modal Content in Translation*. PhD thesis, University of Glasgow.
- ANGHEKESCU, N. (1999): Modalities and Grammaticalization in Arabic. In: Suleiman, Y. (ed.): *Arabic Grammar and Linguistics*. UK: Curzon Press.
- ATH<A:LIBI, A.M (1972): *fiqhu-l-lughati wa 'asra:ru-l-<arabiyyati*. (ed.): Assaffar, M., Abyari, I. and Shalabi:, A. maktabat wa matba<atu M. al-Halabi:.
- BENVENISTE, E. (1976), *Problèmes de Linguistique Generale*. Paris: Gallimard.
- COATES, J. (1983), *The Semantics of the Modal Auxiliaries*. Beckenham, UK: Croom Helm.
- CULIOLI, A. (1978). Valeurs Modales et Operation Enonciatives. In: *Le Français Moderne*, 46.
- (1990). *Pour une Linguistique de l'Enonciation*. Vol.1. Paris: Ophrys.
- HALLIDAY, M.A.K. (1970). Functional Diversity in Language, as seen from a Consideration of Modality and Mood in English. In: *Foundations of Language* 6, 322-361.
- Edward Arnold. (1985). *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, London:

- IBN FARIS, A. A. (1964). *Al-Sa:hibi: fi: fiqhil-lugha.* (ed.): Mustafa: Suwaimi and badra:n, A. Beirut.
- IBN HISHAM, J. A. (1959). *mughni-l-labi:b <an kutubi-l-'a<a:ri:b.* (ed.): M.M. Abdulhami:d. Cairo: 'almaktaba-t-tije:riyya.
- KAHLAOUI, M. H. (1992). *La symetrie des Phases dans les Grammaires de l'Anglais et de l'Arabe.* Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. The Sorbonne Nouvelle University. Paris.
- (2009). *Theoretical Linguistics at the Service of Translation.* In: Zidjali, N.(ed.): *Building Bridges: Integrating Languages, Linguistics, literature and Translation in Pedagogy and Research.* Muscat: SQU Press.
- (2010). *اللغوي والميتالغوي في فتنه المتخيل: مقارنة نصية-لغوية.* Tunis: Miskilyani Publications.
- 2012). *Excessive Discourse in Literary Criticism.* A Conference paper to appear in the proceedings of the conference on Excess held in Sfax College of Humanities, Tunisia.
- LAKOFF, R. (1972): *The Pragmatics of Modality.* In: *Papers from the English regional meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society,* 247-258. University of Chicago: Linguistics Department.
- LEECH, G. (1971). *Meaning and the English Verb.* London: Longman
- PALMER, F.R. (1974): *The English Verb.* London: Longman.
- (1979). *Modality and the English Modals.* London: Longman.
- (1986): *Mood and Modality.* Cambridge: CUP.
- PERKINS, M.R. (1983). *Modal Expressions in English.* London: Ablex Publishing Corporation
- QUIRK, R. and GREENBAUM, S. (1993). *A University Grammar of English.* UK: Longman
- RESHER, N. (1968). *Topics in Philosophical Logic.* Dordrecht: Reidel. Syntheses library Series.
- SIBAWEIHI, A.B. (1977). *'al-kita:b.* (ed.): Abdussalam M. Ha:ru:n. 5 vols. Cairo: 'al-hei'a-l-misriyya-l<a:mma li-l-kita:b.
- TALMON, R. (1999). *The Syntactic Category maf<u:l muṭlaq.* In: Suleiman, Y. (ed): *Arabic Grammar and Linguistics.* UK: Curzon Press.

<sup>1</sup> The paper draws on the utterer-centered approach to language, i.e. the enunciation school whose leading figures are Emile Benveniste, Antoine Culioli and Henri Adamczewski.

<sup>2</sup> *Right* and *left* are used here not in relation to conventional right-left writing but in relation to the left-right transcribed sentence.

<sup>iii</sup> In other contexts, anaphora, justification, the verb *qa:k* or presupposition are triggers of 'inna.

<sup>iv</sup> To take one example, unlike Western music, Arabic classical music is heavily loaded with repetition which lengthens not only the time of performance but also the pleasure of reception, as seen in audiences pleading for repetition of musical phrases already excessively repeated by the performer!