

**Preamble: Modality – Some key notions**

- two key dichotomies
    - (i) **root** modality – according to norms, expectations, desires, or circumstances  
     (a) **deontic** *subjunctive* [    - (b) **dynamic** *non-subjunctive, physical, circumstantial* [    - epistemic** modality – according to the speaker’s evaluation/judgement of, degree of confidence in (cf. evidentiality), or belief of the knowledge on which a proposition is based [
  - (ii) **necessity** modality □ (in *all* possible worlds;  $\forall$ )
  - possibility** modality ◇ (in *at least one* possible world;  $\exists$ )
- these two dichotomies together define a matrix with four cells, each of which is attested in natural language

	ROOT	EPISTEMIC
NECESSITY	[in order for Sp’s new seedlings to survive...] <i>it <u>must</u> rain this week</i>	[Sp saw someone coming in with a rain-soaked coat...] <i>it <u>must</u> be raining outside</i>
POSSIBILITY	[no outdoors events planned; as far as Sp is concerned...] <i>it <u>may/can</u> rain this week</i>	[Sp checked the weather forecast...] <i>it <u>may/can</u> be raining outside</i>

- other types of modality found in linguistic and philosophical texts
  - **alethic** or **logical** modality (modalities of *truth*; *logical* necessity, (im)possibility)
    - a subtype of epistemic modality  
[Von Fintel: ‘It is in fact hard to find convincing examples of alethic modality in natural language, and its inclusion in this list is primarily for reason of historical completeness.’ <http://web.mit.edu/fintel/fintel-2006-modality.pdf>]
  - **bouletic/boulemaic/boulomaic** or **volitive** modality (wishes, desires)
    - a subtype of deontic modality; related to *subjunctive* mood
  - **directive** modality (commands, requests)
    - a subtype of deontic modality; related to *imperative* mood
- Von Fintel: ‘In the descriptive literature on modality, there is taxonomic exuberance far beyond these basic distinctions.’

NB note the close relationships between **epistemic modality** and **evidentiality**, and between **deontic modality** and **mood** (imperative, subjunctive)

## Covert modality – An overview (probably non-exhaustive)

- imperative: a heterogeneous category, highlighting all manner of covertly modal non-finites
  - (i) finite
    - [necessity]: (*don't*) *do it! doe het (niet)!*
    - ◇ [possibility, permission]: *go ahead, smoke if you want to/must; rook gerust, ga (gerust) je gang*
  - (ii) bare infinitival, with deontic □ modality  
(*niet*) *doen! ne pas se pencher au dehors! nicht hinauslehnen!*  
[infinitival imperatives quite freely allow object drop in Dutch; possibly related to the presence of a silent modal, though not obvious how to establish the connection]  
[re: bare infinitives and modality, perhaps also note English *a no go/fly zone*]
  - (iii) past-participial (esp. Dutch, German – Duinhoven 1984, Hoeksema 1992, Rooryck & Postma 2007; also Romance: *cuidado! fini!*; there's also discussion on the internet of the 'imperitival participle' in New Testament Greek, which I know nothing about)  
*opgepast! opgelet! ingerukt! en nou opgesodemieterd!* 'pay attention / go away'  
*niet getreurd/gezeurd!* 'don't be sad/nag'  
[NB1: peculiar propensity for particle verbs in these constructions, in non-negatives; Rooryck & Postma: 'positive participial imperatives are restricted to a semantically coherent set of verbs' – verbs involving 'a call to attention' or 'a call to move off']  
[NB2: Rooryck & Postma point out that there is a remarkable distribution of negation in the realm of past-participial imperatives in Dutch: the ones that can be positive cannot be negative (*\*niet opgepast/opgesodemieterd!*) and *vice versa*; they relate the ban on negation in *opgepast/opgesodemieterd!* to tense restrictions – *hic et nunc*; Hoeksema notes that the ban on negation also holds of adjectival admonitions: (*\*niet voorzichtig!* – but note (*niet*) *de deur uit! niemand de deur uit!*; see also (viii), below]  
[NB3: for negative past-participial imperatives, Rooryck & Postma identify the negation as *boulemaic* negation ('I don't want'), which they say is 'never used with finite verbs' (in Dutch, perhaps more generally)]
- a near-exhaustive list of Dutch past-participial imperatives from Coussé & Oosterhof (2012) (who note, however, that there is some degree of productivity in the a-type)
  - a. *opgerot – opgesodemiederd – opgedonderd – opgehoepeld – opgekrast – opgetieft – opgeflickerd – opgekankerd – opgelazerd – opgekrast – opgeduveld – opgehoerd – opgefuckt – opgekut – opgesodeflickerd – opgemieterd – opgehoemd – opgesodehoepeld – opgesodehoerd – opgekloot – opgezeikt – opgeteringd – opgeneukt – opgesodestraald – opgesodedonderd – opgesodekanderd – opgesodetieft* ("Go away!")
  - b. *ingerukt – opgemarcheerd – ingepakt – opgerukt – afgemarcheerd – uitgerukt* ("Dismissed!")
  - c. *opgelet – opgepast* ("Take care! / Look out!")
  - d. *niet getreurd – niet geklaagd – niet gezeurd – niet getreuzeld – niet gedraald – niet getalmd – niet gejammerd – niet getwijfeld – niet geleuterd – niet gezeverd – niet gemekkerd – niet gearzeld – niet geschroomd – niet gesakkerd – niet gewiefeld* ("Don't hold back!")

- (iv) *ge*-nominalisation (Rooryck & Postma 2007; always negative, with *geen* (rather than *niet*); but Iatridou [[http://lingphil.scripts.mit.edu/papers/iatridou/Non-Canonical\\_Imperatives-talk\\_version.pdf](http://lingphil.scripts.mit.edu/papers/iatridou/Non-Canonical_Imperatives-talk_version.pdf)] notes that when used conditionally, they can be non-negative: *getoeter alleen op Koningsdag!* ‘honking only allowed on King’s Day’) *geen gezeur!* *geen geleuter!* ‘no nagging/waffling’
- (v) outwardly nominal gerunds (Rooryck & Postma 2007; again, always negative, with *no* (rather than *not*), as root utterances; but Iatridou notes that when used conditionally, they can be non-negative: *smoking, on the balcony!* ‘if you want to smoke, you have to do it on the balcony’) *no talking!* *no smoking!* *no drinking alcohol!* *no exposing/relieving oneself in public!* [note that these gerunds can take a nominal object, so they are not *inwardly* nominal; but on the outside they are necessarily nominal, as witness *no*]
- (vi) pluperfect imperatives, with counterfactual (‘should/ought to have’) modality *was toch naar huis gegaan!* ‘if only you’d gone home; you should’ve gone home’
- (vii) negative impersonal passives (Rooryck & Postma 2007), with deontic  $\neg\Diamond$  (‘not allowed’) modality and imperative force (available only when negation is present) *er wordt hier niet gezeurd!* ‘there shall be no nagging here’
- (viii) verbless imperatives, with deontic  $\Box$  modality
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>careful!</i>                              | <i>voorzichtig!</i>                         |
| <i>not so fast!</i>                          | <i>niet zo hard!</i>                        |
| <i>into the dungeon (with that traitor)!</i> | <i>de gevangenis in (met die verrader)!</i> |

- subjunctive
  - root: *God save the Queen*
  - embedded: *it is important/imperative that he do this*

NB the so-called subjunctive is form-identical with the bare infinitive in English, even for the most irregular of verbs, *be*; note that the so-called imperative in English is also always form-identical with the bare infinitive

- remarkably, the bare infinitive of *be* occurs under the dummy *do* in imperatives: *do be quiet!*
- in this respect, negative *why*-requests behave like imperatives: *why don’t you be quiet?*  $\approx$  *please/do be quiet!*  $\approx$  *I want you to be quiet*

- *wh*-question (I): *why*+bare infinitive (only with *why*, as far as I am aware – see also below)
  - *why wait?*, *why bother?* (deontic,  $\Box$  [necessity] ‘should’)
- *wh*-question (II): *wh*+past (probably passive) participle (Dutch; Rooryck & Postma 2007)
  - *waarom zo ver gereden?* ‘why would/should we/you drive so far?’
  - *wat nu gedaan?* ‘what shall we do now, what should be done now?’

[NB: while Dutch has *wh*-drop in (*wat*) *heb je nou gedaan?*, such is impossible in *wh*+past participle questions – perhaps dependent on overt Aux-to-Comp movement]

- *to*-infinitive
  - (i) root
    - active: *to do today*: *x, y, z; what to do?, how to do this?, where to go?*
    - passive: *still to be done*: *x, y, z; to be determined/announced; \*what to be done?, \*how (this) to be done?*
  - NB *wh*-infinitives with *to* feature all *wh*-words except *why* (*\*why to do this?*); *why*, on the other hand, is the only *wh*-word occurring in bare infinitives
  - (ii) infinitival relative (Bhatt's dissertation; NB: note the effect of the article on modality)
 

<i>a/the man to fix the sink</i> 'man who can/should fix the sink'	subject relative
<i>a/the book to read</i> 'book that one can/should read'	object relative
<i>a/the place to go</i> 'place where one can/should go'	other relative
  - (iii) embedded under the copula
    - active: *you are to do this* (deontic, □ 'must/should'); *he was to be a great president* (epistemic, 'will'); *dit is niet te doen/eten/lezen* (deontic, ¬◇ 'not V-able')
    - passive: *this is to be done* (deontic, □; I don't think this ever has epistemic uses)
  - (iv) embedded under *have (got)* or *got*
    - active: *you have (got)/got to do this* (deontic, □); *there has (got)/got to be a way* (epistemic)
    - passive: *this has (got)/got to be done* (deontic, □); I can't think of an epistemic use of *have (got)* or *got* embedding a passive *to*-infinitive  
[NB: non-raising *have* in the absence of *got*: *you haven't \*(got) to do this, you don't have to do this*; in the presence of *got*, *do*-support is impossible (regardless of whether *have* is present or not): *\*you don't (have) got to do this* – on *have (got) to*, see last year's GLOW-paper by Thoms *et al.*]
  - (v) embedded under *get*
    - active: *you get to do this (if you're good)* (deontic, ◇ permission)  
[this could be elliptical for *you get a chance to do this*; *get* probably does not deliver ◇ by itself: you can get both permission (◇) and an order (□) to do something]
    - passive? *you get to be selected* – not obvious that this is modal
- NB *to*-infinitives are often unrealis/futurate – but this is not the case across the board (e.g., ECM-infinitives are not: *I consider her to be/have been right*); the modality of certain *to*-infinitives cannot be blamed on some semantic aspect of *to*, which by itself is presumably meaningless
- gerund
  - on outwardly nominal gerunds used as imperatives, with *no*, see above
  - in finite contexts, gerunds (again with *no* rather than *not*) can also be used modally (Kjellmer 1980, referred to in Sabine Iatridou's slides on non-canonical imperatives) *there was no mistaking that scream* – ◇ [possibility]  
*there is no telling whether (or when) the situation will get back to normal*
  - Iatridou notes the difference in modality between the *no*+GER imperative (□) and the *no*+GER construction noted by Kjellmer (◇); she argues on this basis (informatively) that the *no*+GER imperative cannot be derived via partial ellipsis of a copular clause