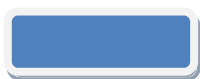# A SEMANTIC STUDY OF MODALITY EXPRESSIONS IN ARABIC TV NEWS CHANNELS

Lect. Majid Mohammed Saadoon

College of Education, English department

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Lect. Majid Mohammed Saadoon
College of Education, English department
majid.alhachami@uokufa.edu.iq

Abstract
The aim of the present paper is two-fold. First, it tries to propose a comprehensive and large-scale classification of modality expressions in Arabic by analyzing a great amount of data. Second, it uses the proposed classification to test the hypothesis that translated news from English into Arabic tends to use deontic modality expressions more frequently than originally Arabic one does. For the second objective, news from two leading Arab-world-wide news satellite channels, namely BBC Arabic and Al-Arabiya were analyzed. It came out clearly that BBC Arabic channel uses deontic modality expressions more frequently than Al-Arabiya. The latter channel draws more on assertions and on epistemic modality expressions.

KEY WORDS: modality, epistemic, deontic, alethic, boulomaic, Al-Arabiya, BBC Arabic

1. Introduction
The term, "modality" is multi-faceted and encompasses a set of concepts within the fields of philosophy and linguistics. It has been investigated from various perspectives by many linguists and numerous definitions have consequently emerged. In this respect, Sulkunen and Törrönen (1997: 45), for example, believe that the logical treatment of modalities is too narrow for linguists because it is concerned with the truth values of propositions. In contrast, linguistic analysis of modalities presents much more diversity in its problematics and approaches. In linguistic approaches, modality can be analyzed on a variety of linguistic levels of analysis. On morphological level of analysis, modality is manifested in the lexical forms in different languages. On syntactic level, modality is manifested in the complex syntactic configurations. Semantics aims to specify meanings of different modal expressions and to explore the various ways these meanings may be expressed morphologically, syntactically, phonologically, and pragmatically. In discourse analysis, modality can utilized for different purposes. For instance, it can be used to characterize political orientation of texts (Lillian, 2008:2).

Lyons (1977:452) refers to modality as the speaker's 'opinion or attitude towards the proposition that the sentence expresses or the situation that the

proposition describes'. Palmer (1986; 2001), on the other hand, presents a more general survey of modality as a typological category. He draws attention to the subjective nature of modality, and thereby defines it as 'the grammaticalization of speakers' (subjective) attitudes and opinions' (1986:16).

In the formal account of grammar, Quirk et al. (1985: 219), modality is "the manner in which the meaning of a clause is qualified so as to reflect the speaker's judgment of the likelihood of the proposition it expressed being true." In Hallidayan systemic functional grammar, modality is seen as an expression of a speaker's attitude toward the situation or event described by a clause or in regard to the proposition expressed by the sentence. It is an important linguistic tool for realizing the interpersonal function of language and expressing social roles between the speaker/writer and the hearer/reader (Halliday, 1994; Halliday and Hasan, 1989). Somewhat differently but relatedly, Bybee and Fleischman (1995: 2) define modality as the semantic domain which pertains to elements of meaning that languages express. It includes a wide range of semantic nuances such as jussive, desiderative, intentive, hypothetical, potential, obligative, dubitative, hortatory, exclamative, and so on. The common denominator among them is "the addition of a supplement or overlay of meaning to the most neutral semantic value of the proposition of an utterance, namely factual and declarative" (ibid.).

Despite the fact that there are broad categories of modality widely acknowledged in the linguistic literature,

there are nevertheless differences in the ways in which modalities are classified and categorized. Most often than not, modality is categorized into epistemic and deontic (Palmer 1986, 1990 and 2001). Epistemic modality (Greek episteme, meaning 'knowledge') concerns what is possible or necessary given what is known and what the available evidence is. Deontic modality (Greek: deon, meaning 'duty') concerns what is possible, necessary, permissible, or obligatory, given a body of law or a set of moral principles or the like (cf Kearns, 2000: 53). In the descriptive literature on modality, there is taxonomic exuberance far beyond the limit of this paper.

This paper seeks to shed some light on a number of conspicuous issues within this relatively new **discourse-oriented** program of research into modality, which can be briefly summarized as in (1)-(5) below:

(1) How can modality be aptly and comprehensively defined on both semantic and pragmatic grounds?

(2) What linguistic devices can be considered carriers of modal meaning?

(3) What are the means whereby each modal device modulates the speaker's involvement which is interpreted from the utterance of that sentence in context?

(4) How can the modal meaning in general and its dynamic relation to the context of utterance in particular, be adequately accounted for from a theoretical and descriptive standpoint?

(5) How can we characterize the enriching (reinforcing or cumulative) effect of contextual factors in the unfolding of "modal" meaning/s in a given piece of discourse?

The present paper handles modality in the broad sense of the term which includes non-subject-oriented modality (epistemic and deontic) and subject-oriented modality (dynamic). In other words, dynamic modality is not excluded from the category of modality. Therefore, I adopt the following working definition of modality. Modality is a 'form of meaning which expresses the possibility and necessity of relation between the subject or speaker's judgment and its action.' (Tiee, 1985:85). The paper is built up as follows. After introducing the concept of modality in section 1, the following section will be devoted to my classification of modal expressions in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) which will set the stage for the remainder of this paper. This classification is function-based. It accounts for items according to functions even though they tend to be encoded by words forms belonging to an identical formal category. Model auxiliaries are included within the account. The set of model auxiliaries in MSA is not identical that of English. To avoid any kind of discrepancy between modality (as a semantically defined category) and model auxiliary (as a syntactically established by structural criteria), I will never talk about modal auxiliaries as a formal category but as a set of functions. Some model auxiliaries in English such as 'can' and 'will' are not considered strictly matters of modality when they are used in the sense of ability and volition because they are claimed to inherently relate more to the characteristics of the subject than to the opinion or attitude of the speaker. 'yastadti9' and 'sawfa' in MSA seems to express attitude or opinion of the speaker.

In section 3, a general discussion is provided and finally Sections 4 will draw some conclusion and suggestions for future research. In addition, some translational implications are put forward.

The paper is built up as follows. After introducing the concept of modality in section 1, the following section will be devoted to my classification of modal expressions in Arabic which will set the stage for the remainder of this paper. In section 3, the two research questions of the paper will be briefly overviewed. Section 4 presents the research methodology. Section 5 explores the main results and discusses them and finally Sections 6 will draw some conclusion and suggestions for future research. In addition, some translational implications are put forward.

2. A proposed classification for modality expressions in MSA

This section gives a classification of modality expressions in Arabic. Although un-exhaustive, the classification is data-based and it is not a comprehensive one. A particular modal expression may appear subsumed under more than one category according to its functions.

2.1. A lexical classification

The lexical categories which denote modality expressions in MSA include the following:

2.1.1. Modal auxiliaries
2.1.2. Modal adverbs
2.1.3. Modal verbs
2.1.4. Modal particles
2.1.5. Modal adjectives
2.1.6. Modal prepositional phrases

2.2. A semantic classification

This section gives a classification of modality expressions in Modern Standard Arabic on the basis of their meaning. Although un-exhaustive, the classification is data-based and it is not completely comprehensive. A particular modal expression may appear subsumed under more than one category according to its functions.

2.2.1. Epistemic modality

Epistemic modality general refers to speaker's belief and knowledge. It is concerned with the degree of speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition that forms the complement of the modal, or the assessment of the likelihood of something being, or having been, the case (Biber et al., 1999; Huddleston & Pullum, 2002; Palmer, 1986, 1990; Quirk et al., 1985). Consider the following examples from:

(1) Ali is busy. (Speaker's assessment of whether the state of affairs is simply the case.)

(2) Ali must be busy. (Speaker's assessment of whether the state of affairs is necessarily the case.)

(3) Ali may be busy. (Speaker's assessment of whether the state of affairs is possibly the case.)

In English, epistemic modality appears in various grammatical forms. They are expressed by modal auxiliaries (e.g. can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would), lexical verbs (e.g. believe, seem, appear, insist, require, see, infer, know, wonder, order), participles (e.g. alleged, demanded), nouns (possibility, necessity, consideration, permission), adjectives (e.g. definite, possible, likely, probable, unlikely), adverbs (e.g. arguably, obviously, perhaps, undoubtedly, certainly, possibly), and a set of phrases expressing degrees of certainty (e.g. call into question, chances are, it seems plausible) (Lyons 1977, Kratzer 1981, Coates 1983, Palmer 1986, 1990, Sweetser1990, Bybee & Fleischman 1995). In addition to these grammatical categories, MSA tends to overuse prepositional phrases and sentences starting with ?inna (empty it in English) to express epistemic modality.

According to Palmer (1986:51), there are two types of epistemic modality: judgments and evidentials. Judgments are concerned with opinions and conclusions. They denote the degree of confidence in the reality of a proposition, ranging from weak possibility (e.g. She may be a dentist) to strong necessity (e.g. He must be a dentist). By saying that something is possible or probable, the speaker commits himself (at least partially) to whether what is said is true or not. There are three subtypes of judgment modality: the speculative which encodes a state of doubt (e.g. She may be a dentist); the deductive which indicates an inference from other observable information (e.g. She must be a dentist); and the assumptive which expresses a reasonable conclusion drawn from what is generally known (e.g. She will be a dentist) (Palmer, 2001:24-25). Judgmental Epistemic Modality expressions in MSA can be categorized using Palmer's trichotomy in table 1 (see appendix 2).

Evidentials are those means by which any alleged fact whose truth is investigated is established or disproved. They indicate the source of evidence for

the reality of a proposition. The supporting the information may be secondhand (e.g. It is said that she is a dentist) or based on firsthand sensory experiences (e.g. I saw her studying dentistry) (Saeed, 1997:131-133). Evidential epistemic modality is either quotative or sensory. Natural language seems to typically treat propositions based on speaker's sensory experience to be true. However, if a speaker marks a proposition as quoted from others (not based on first-hand evidence), he typically expresses non-commitment to the truth of that proposition.

Quotative evidentials are used when the speaker has heard about the action from others and not witnessed it personally. When information about the event is conveyed through others, they are called quotatives or quotative evidentials (cf Haan, 2000:3).

Sensory modality or perception modality is often used to express the degree of commitment to the validity of a proposition by referring to human perception (Perkins 1983 cited in Simpson 1993: 50). Sensory evidentials are sometimes called direct evidentials and are used when the speaker has witnessed the action (visually, aurally, or potentially with other senses) (Haan 2000:3).

In Arabic, as in English, complements of sensory verbs such as 'yaraa' (see) and 'yasma9' (hear) exhibit evidential interpretation. Consider the following examples in 4:

(4) a. Ra?aytu ?anahu mut9ab.
    I saw that he was tired.

  b. Ra? aytuhu mut9aban.
    I saw him tired.

  c. Sami9tu ?anahu waqa9a 9alaa ?ddaraj.
    I heard that he fell on the stairs.

The complements of 'yaraa' and 'yasma9' do not mean that the actions were personally witnessed directly. The actions were deduced in (4a) and reported to the speaker in (4b). Therefore, 'yaraa' and 'yasma9' are indirect evidentials. These two verbs are not grammaticalized evidentials. The quotative evidentials in Arabic are usually expressed with a grammaticalized form of the verb 'yaqul' (to say). In Arabic, there is also the verb 'ulima' (is informed).

(5) Alimtu ?annaha muhandisa.
  I came to know that she is an engineer.

'Yabdu' (seem) developed from a full verb with a highly abstract meaning. This grammaticalization process seems to be a complex one in case of 'yabdu'. Intrinsically, 'yabdu' in above examples seem similar to, 'hunaaka ?adilla tushir ?ila ?ana' (there is evidence which refer to).

'Qad ataa' (He has come) is a present perfect in Arabic. It expresses an indirect evidentiality interpretation which allows both a report and an inference reading: It is said that *P* or I infer that *P*.

2.2.2. Deontic modality
Deontic modality refers to the necessity or possibility of acts performed by agents, e.g. obligation and permission. Unlike epistemic modality, it refers to acts not propositions. (Lyons 1977, Kratzer 1981,

Coates 1983, Palmer 1986, 1990, Sweetser 1990, Bybee & Fleischman 1995).

Deontic modality refers to the necessity or possibility of acts performed by agents, e.g. obligation, permission, forbidding and undertaking. It is based on the speaker's awareness of what is socially determined. It indicates what is socially determined and is used interpersonally. Deontic modality identifies 'the enabling or compelling circumstances external to the participant as some person(s), often the speaker, and/or as some social or ethical norm(s) permitting or obliging the participant to engage in the state of affairs' (van Der Auwera & Plungain, 1998: 81). Consider the following sentences:

(6) Ali prepares for the test. (Simple observation)
(7) Ali must prepare for the test. (Obligation)
(8) Ali may prepare for the test. (Permission)

Deontic modality involves words like 'ought' and 'may' in English and correspondingly 'yajib' and 'la9ala' in Arabic. There is also a large body of research on the logic of subjective or counterfactual conditionals. Consider the following example in English:
If the door had been locked, the house would not have been burgled.
Unlike epistemic modality, it refers to acts not propositions. (Lyons, 1977; Kratzer, 1981; Coates, 1983; Palmer, 1986, 1990; Sweetser, 1990; and Bybee & Fleischman, 1995). For a complete list of deontic expressions in MSA, see Table 3 in Appendix 2.

2.2.3. Dynamic Modality
Bouletic modality, sometimes boulomaic modality, concerns what is possible or necessary, given a person's desires. It is a subcategory of deontic modality, and expresses the desire or wish of the speaker, as in I wish, I hope, and I regret. Boulomaic modality can be paraphrased as 'it is hoped/desired/feared/regretted that'. Rescher (1968: 24-6) includes want under boulomaic modality (see also Simpson 1993: 47-8). Perkins (1983: 11) classes boulomaic modality as a type of dynamic modality because of the 'disposition' meaning. It could also be said that the disposition comes from the desire of a human source so is similar to deontic volitive modalities where a subject aspires to influence the world. It ranges from not-wanting through not-opposing to wanting. Palmer (1986: 12) suggests that 'bouletic' would etymologically be more preferable.

In dynamic modality, the subject-referent is judged to have certain capacities, possibilities or desires of his own which are enabled by the circumstances of the state of affairs.

(9) Yastaty9o an yatahadathe alhindiya. (Ability)
He can speak India.
(10) Mine almohtamal an yaaty ghadan. (Possibility)
He may come tomorrow.

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'Layta' and 'la9ala' within the dynamic category were equally used. Layta expresses a possible and an impossible wish as in the following two sentences 1 and 2 respectively.

(11) Layta Muhammadan muqbilun . (A possible wish)

   I wish that Muhammad is coming.

(12) Layta ?shabaabu ya9udu yawman. (An impossible wish)

   I wish that youth would return back.

La9ala expresses hope with possible consequences. It is never used to express impossible consequences as it is shown in the following sentences.

(13) la9ala Muhammadun muqbilun.

   It is hoped that Muhammad is coming.

(14)* La9ala ?shabaabu ya9uudu yawman.

   It is hoped that youth would come back again one day.

However, la9ala can be used to express two opposing meanings: positive and negative. It expresses a positive wish that is usually lovely and agreeable as in the following sentence:

(15) La9ala Allahu yar6amuna.

   It is hoped that /may Allah have mercy upon us.

It can also express a premonition or foreboding that something negative or bad that may happen as in the following sentence:

(16) La9ala l9aduwa yaqdimu.

   The enemy may come.

Table 4 in appendix 2 presents a comprehensive list of dynamic expressions in MSA.

2.2.4. Evaluative modality
Lyons' description of modality as the speaker's 'opinion or attitude' refers to the use of sentential adverbs such as frankly, fortunately, possibly, and wisely (1977:452). These include words denoting the speaker's opinion or attitude towards what he/she already accepts as true, traditionally grouped under evaluative modality (e.g., Rescher 1968). This indicates that evaluatives are recognized by Lyons as one kind of modality.

Palmer (1986:18) also distinguishes epistemic and deontic modalities. He observes that evaluatives are sometimes subsumed into modal systems. Since they express the speaker's attitude rather than his/her co

mmitment to the truth of a proposition, they are classified as belonging to deontic modality (1986:11921). Bybee and Fleischman (1995:6) further subdivide the traditional deontic modality into agent-oriented and speaker-oriented modalities.

The above cross-linguistic inspections reveal that modality is a semantic class encompassing meanings beyond the range of epistemic and deontic modalities. Evaluatives, though not linguists' primary interest in the study of modal logic, are in effect within the scope of modality.
Perkins (1983:12) goes further to make explicit that evaluative modality, presupposing the actuality of a proposition, is tied with
the real world, so he does not subsume it within the scope of English modality.

Table 5 in appendix 2 presents a complete list of evaluative expressions.

Though evaluative modality is not explicitly identified in their analysis, their definition of modalitytogether with the example of 'exclamative' (1995:2) shows that speaker's opinion or attitude towards known facts is treated as one type of modality.

Perkins (1983:12) goes further to make explicit that evaluative modality, presupposing the actuality of a proposition, is tied with the real world, so he does not subsume it within the scope of   English modality.

2.2.5. Temporal modality
Temporal Modality concerns the way according to which a fact originally associated with a granule or interval at a given granularity distributes itself over the corresponding granules at "finer" granularities or within the interval at the same level of granularity. Explanation (Nota Bene: The term "finer" in this discussion refers to granularities that are related by groups-into relationship, see the granularity glossary for a discussion of granularity relationships.) We distinguish two basic temporal modalities, namely sometimes and always. The sometimes temporal modality states that the relevant fact is true in at least one of the corresponding granules at the finer granularity, or in at least one of the granules of the interval in case an interval is given. For instance: "The light was on yesterday afternoon," meaning that it was on at least for one minute in the afternoon (assuming minutes as the granularity).

The always temporal modality states that the relevant fact is true in each corresponding granule at the finer granularity. This is the case, for instance, of the sentence: "The shop remained open on a Sunday in April 1990 all the day long" with respect to the granularity of hour. This issue is related to attributes varying within their validity intervals. See Table 6 in Appendix 2 presents a comprehensive list of temporal modal expressions in MSA.

3. Research Questions
Modality is a difficult concept to define especially in cross-linguistic studies as Bybee and Fleischman (1995: 3) point out "because of the extent to which languages differ in their mapping of the relevant semantic content onto linguistic form." Palmer (2001: 1) suggests that "modality is a valid cross-language grammatical

category that can be the subject of a typological study."

The present paper examines modality expressions news broadcast by two leading Arab-world-wide news channels. The issue of modality has been selected due to its importance not only when conveying the attitude to the truth value of the statement but also when attempting to persuade potential readers and sell their ideologies convincingly. Besides modal verbs there exist other linguistic expressions of modality, which might be referred to as modal expressions (Huddleston and Pullum, 2002) or stance markers (Biber, 1999). These include modal adjectives (possible, likely), modality adverbs (certainly, possibly, undoubtedly), other verbs (seem, appear, insist, require), and nouns (possibility, necessity, permission). This paper explores the use of modal verbs and modality adverbs not only in isolation but also in combinations. It is supposed that modal verbs and modality adverbs as well as their combinations may be found in newspapers. It is also assumed that the differences in the use of modal verbs and modal adverbs by different newspapers are likely to occur. The excerpted material will also be examined from a semantic point of view with the purpose of proving its important role in successful and effective newspaper articles.

4. Methodology
4.1 Corpus

The data is based on a corpus of 42 hours recording of news broadcasted by two important news channels in Arab world, Al-Arabiya and BBC Arabic. Finding a corpus large enough to get a solid

number of examples to arrive at a fine-grained system is tantalizing and daunting task. The rationale behind selecting these two channels is the fact that both of these channels use Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). ANC's news is produced by native speakers of Arabic. BNC's news is most probably translated into MSA from Standard English.

4.2 Procedure

The analysis was started by recording pieces of news broadcasted by Al-Arabiya and BBC Arabic news channels. The news was written and the occurrences of modal auxiliaries were highlighted. Next, each occurrence of modal expression was classified according to the proposed taxonomy of Arabic modal expressions. The results were double-checked for maximum accuracy. Classifying modal expressions is by no means unproblematic, since individual modals may function in more than one category. This is also true for English. Halliday (1970; 1976), for example, proposes that most modal expressions can be used in two ways (both epistemic and deontic). Therefore, there are ambiguities in the interpretations of the sentence, "Peter must have a bath every day" (ibid). Consequently, it was necessary to consider the context in which each modal expression appeared and to attempt to interpret which possible meaning was the most likely one. Because interpretation and judgment are involved, the classifications arrived must be regarded as being open to some differences of opinion should another scholar examine the same data. Thus, in addition to interpreting and classifying the modals according to their functional category, I also made a count of

which particular modal auxiliaries were used by each of the two authors, with interesting results.

5. Results and Discussion

All the breaks and interviews were stripped out from the news. The analysis was manual. The details of news are summarized in the following tables. The total number of each modal expression is not stated due to the lack of space in this paper. However, certain expressions were highly more frequently used than others.

5.1 Modality Expressions in ANC and BNC

The second aim of this paper is to investigate whether there is any statistically significant difference in the use of modality expressions used in news by ANC and BNC. To attain this objective, chi-squares were chosen as an effective nonparametric statistical test to examine and determine the difference in modality expression frequency and amount across the corpora. This section presents the frequency profile of the two corpora under study with respect to the five main types of modality expressions. Table 7 presents information about the research corpus.

Table 7: Totals of Modal Expressions in ANC and BNC

	ANC	BNC
Hours	20	22
Total words	114,000	113,700
Total modality expressions	1628	1711
Percentage of modality expressions	1 per 70 words	1 per 66,45 words

The two sub-corpora have a relatively similar length. The pieces of news of the same day were recorded to ensure compatibility. They covered the following topics: political affairs, suicide blasts, natural catastrophes and social and scientific issues and discoveries. The analysis was carried out manually to ensure maximum validity. It is worthy to say that modal expressions are multifunctional. Therefore, a context-sensitive analysis of each expression had

to be carried out before it was finally classified. For the analysis of modality expressions in Arabic media, 42 hours of news broadcasted by ANC and BNC were selected. The ANC corpus comprised of 20 hours and BNC of 22 hours to have approximate number of words. News of both channels covered similar topics and events. Table 8 summarizes the data of the corpora by presenting the sum of the each constituting sub-corpora.

Table 8: Totals of Modal Expressions

Modal Expressions		ANC	BNC
Evidentials	Quotatives	492	216
	Sensory	47	97
Judgments	Speculatives	161	52
	Deductives Inferentials	120	369
	Assumptives	67	58
Deontic	Permission	79	61
	Obligation	53	61
Dynamic	Ability	92	113
	Possibility	192	286
	Bouletic	53	46
Evaluative		196	237
Temporal	Sometimes	33	78
	Always	43	37

5.2 Null Hypothesis

In order to compare the types and amounts of modality expressions employed by ANC and BNC, five chi-square tests were run. Table 9 summarizes the results.

Table 9: The chi-square tests

Modality Expressions	ANC	BNC	X^2	Probability Value	Significance of the Value
Epistemic	887	792	10.17	0.050	Significant
Deontic	132	122	0.757	0.900	Insignificant
Dynamic	337	445	34.6	0.001	Significant
Evaluative	196	237	8.57	1.01	Significant
Temporal	76	115	20	0.001	Significant

Of all the five chi-square tests, the second proved that the variation in frequency of deontic modal expressions between ANC and BNC is insignificant. The differences in the rest were all significant.

On a general level, the quantitative analysis reveals the BNC used a higher number of modality expressions than did ANC (BNC, n=1711; ANC, n=1628). There was significant difference between the subtypes of modality expressions

employed by ANC and BNC. As for epistemic expressions, ANC used a lower number of modality expressions than BNC did (ANC, n=887; BNC, n= 892). However, from a statistical perspective, this difference was not significant (p = 0.028). A detailed look into the subcategories that comprise the epistemic category reveals striking and interesting difference. Figures indicate that ANC uses evidentials far more frequently than BNC. In contrast, BNC uses judgmental epistemic modality expressions far more frequently than ANC. This finding indicates that ANC relies more on quotative and sensory information but BNC relies more on information got by using deduction, speculation and assumption strategies. However, with evidential subcategories, both ANC and BNC tended to use quotatives far more frequently than sensory expressions. Within the judgmental subcategory, ANC used speculatives more than the other subcategories. BNC used deductives six times more than other subcategories. This finding in general may suggest that ANC was more cautious than BNC in protecting their claims. The attempt to protect claim is not based on actual sensory grounds but on mere quoting from various sources.

Within the system of dynamic modality expressions, we notice that both ANC and BNC corpora favor expressions of possibility (ANC, n = 192; BNC, n = 286). However, BNC used expressions of possibility more frequently than ANC did. Bouletic expressions in both ANC and BNC display the lowest frequency within the dynamic expressions. Evaluative expressions were the second most frequent expressions in ANC (n = 196), while in BNC they were the third most

frequent ones (n = 237). 'Layta' and 'la9ala' within the dynamic category were equally used. Layta expresses a possible and an impossible wish as in the following two sentences 1 and 2 respectively.

(13) Layta Muhammadan muqbilun . (A possible wish)
   It is hoped that Muhammad is coming.

(14) Layta ?shabaabu ya9udu yawman. (An impossible wish)
   It is hoped that youth would come back again one day.

Regarding the temporal modal expressions, findings disclose that BNC used more temporals than ANC (ANC, n = 76; BNC, n = 115). Modal expressions conveying the meaning of 'sometimes' were more numerous than those expressing 'always' in BNC and the reverse was true in ANC.

6. Conclusions

On the basis of contrastive corpus-based analysis I have delimited the concept of modality in Arabic, its taxonomy and its application to the field of media in Arab world. Meanwhile, some preliminary conclusions may be advanced:
1. News makers use modality expressions as a way of fine-tuning the factuality and the force of the statements they make. They modify claims which could be challenged or prove difficult to substantiate. 2. Model expressions are most often the first items in the Arabic sentence.
3. Like French and English, Arabic lacks grammatical evidentiality, specification of

the source of knowledge is not obligatory. However, marking of evidentiality can be achieved lexically or as evidential extensions of other grammatical categories, such as mood and tense.

4. The selection of a particular evidential expression or strategy in preference to absence of evidential marking on the one hand, and in preference to another evidential marker on the other hand, is therefore a matter of speaker choice, not of grammatical necessity.

5. Speakers of MSA are not obliged to provide evidential modification. The use of such forms indicates a marked stance towards information. Indeed descriptions of the pragmatics of reportive evidential forms in MSA have shown that they are not used as just markers of hearsay, but also of irony, disbelief and criticism. These uses appear similar to the uses of reportive adverbs in English (eg. *apparently*, *supposedly*), which may serve to distance the speaker from the reliability of the information and as a consequence can also be used in contexts of irony and disbelief.

6. Epistemic stance is marked through a continuum between the highest certainty assertions to uncertain possibility. The continuum from the highest to the weakest certainty in that order is as follows:

a) factual predicates (e.g. understand, observe, etc.),

b) reporting predicates (certain according to a source in the literature) (e.g. state, show, etc.),

c) reporting predicates (certain based on self observation),

d) necessity predicates and modality morphemes (e.g. necessitate, must, etc.),

e) Weak assertive predicates: (think, believe, suppose, etc.),

f) possibility predicates, modality morphemes (to be likely, can, etc.)

g) adverbial modifiers, including disjuncts (obviously, really, apparently, as easily understood, on one hand and hardly ever, possibly, perhaps, etc.), and

h) stance devices for boosting or hedging.

While the higher certainty structures denote high commitment of the speaker and strength of the proposition, weak certainty structures denote detachment and a tendency to avoid strong commitment. Thus, the speaker reflects his epistemic stance either through boosting or hedging the propositions. Boosting shows an authoritative stance put forward by the speaker, whereas hedging indicates that the speaker distances himself from what is stated. Hedging is a strategy to avoid challenge to the claim made and making a generalization that is too strong and therefore liable to potential falsification.

7. The general observation illustrates that both channels includes more boosting than hedging. An important boosting strategy observed in the data is that speakers prefer to stativize an event predicate. As is well known, stative predicates denote permanent properties, while activities, accomplishments, achievements denote temporary events. Permanent situations can hardly be challenged for falsification because they do not cease to exist over time or go through a change. A state denotes almost an inherent nature of the subject under discussion.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Transliteration System for Arabic Language

Consonants ١.

٢.

Arabic Symbols	Specification	Roman Symbols
أ	Voiceless glottal stop	?
ب	Voiced bilabial stop	b
ت	Voiceless alveolar stop	t
ث	Voiceless interdental fricative	th
ج	Voiced alveopalatal affricate	j
ح	Voiceless pharyngeal fricative	ĥ
خ	Voiceless uvular fricative	kh
د	Voiced alveolar stop	d
ذ	Voiced interdental fricative	ž
ر	Voiced alveolar flap	r
ز	Voiced alveolar fricative	z
س	Voiceless alveolar fricative	s
ش	Voiceless alveopalatal fricative	sh
ص	Voiceless alveolar emphatic fricative	ŝ
ض	Voiced alveolar emphatic stop	dh
ط	Voiceless alveolar emphatic stop	t́
ظ	Voiced interdental emphatic fricative	d́
ع	Voiced pharyngeal fricative	9
غ	Voiced uvular fricative	gh
ف	Voiceless labiodental fricative	f
ق	Voiceless uvular stop	q
ك	Voiceless velar stop	k
ل	Voiced alveolar lateral	l
م	Voiced bilabial nasal	m
ن	Voiced alveolar nasal	n
ﻫ	Voiceless glottal fricative	h

2. Vowels

	Arabic Symbols	Specification	RomanSymbols
Short Vowels	Fatĥa Dhama kasra	Front half/ open rounded Back close rounded Front open spread	**a** **u** **i**
Long Vowels	آ أو إي	Front open unrounded Back close rounded Front close unrounded	**aa** **uu** **ii**
Semi-Vowels	ي و	Non-syllabic palatal approximant Non-syllabic labio-velar approximant	**y** **w**

Appendix 2

Table 1: Judgmental Epistemic Modality expressions in Arabic

Types	Subtypes	Examples
Judgments	**Speculatives**	La shaka, la reiba, minal mashkuki fihi ?anna, fil waaqi9i, bilfi9l, bikuli ta?kiid, ţab9an, qad, rubamaa, la9alla, fil 6aqiqa, akiid, qaţ9an, kaana yajib, yajib, kaana 9alayhi, 9alayhi
	Deductives Inferentials	Minal muntathari ?anna, minal mutawaqa9i ?anna, labuda, minal mu?ammal, minal mutanaba?i fih, kulu l?adilati tushiru ?ila ?annahu, minal mutakahani fiihi ?annahu, hunaka ?adilla tushiru ?illa ?anna,
	Assumptives	9alayhi, min hunaa, wabithalika, wabihathaa, wa bina?an 9alaihi, wahakatha, wa bina?an 9alla ma sabaq, bina?an 9alayhi,

Table 2: Evidential Epistemic Modality expressions in Arabic

Types	Subtypes	Examples
Evidentials	**Quotatives**	Yuqaal ?anna, 6asbama yuqaal, 6asbama uthkar, 6asbama yushaa9, yuthkar ?annahu, 6asbama yushaa?, yushaa9 ?annahu, yurwaa ?annahu, kamaa warad, 6asbama warad, 6asbama yataradad, qiila, yuhkaa, Yabdu wadhi6an, yabdu jaliyan, yabdu 9alayhi, hunaka man yaqul ?anna, wa afaada mašdarun 6ukuumi, minal ma9luum,
	Sensory	Minal waadhi6i ?anna,?raa ?anna, kama awdhaha, minajalii, minadhaahiri ?anna, ?innahu minal wadhi6i ?anna, kama taraa biwudhu6, mina jaliyyi, aDahir ?annahu, kamaa taraa biwudhu6,

Table 3: Deontic Modality expressions in Arabic

Types	Subtypes	Examples
Deontic	**Permission**	Yumkinuka ?an, mumkin, minajaa?iz, yajuzu, laka ?an, lahu ?an, bil imkan, bi? imkaanika, tastaʈi9u ?an, laysa laka ?an, biwis9ika ?an, laa yumkinuka ?an, laa ?a?thanu laka bi, laa ?asmahu laka bi, laysalahu ?an, tastaʈi9u, masmu6 laka, masmu6un bihi ?an, ma?thunun laka, ja?iz, mina jaa?iz ?anna, yajuzu laka ?an, bil?imkan, bi?imkanika
	Obligation/ Necessity	Labuda laka ?an, min wajibihi ?an, yajibu ?an, minal maʈlubi ?an, 9alayka ?an, yanbaghi ?an, 9alayhi, 9alayha, yajib 9alayhi ?an, kaana yajib, Minal lazim, mulzamun ?an, yanbaghi, 9alaa ?an, yajib 9alayka ?an laa, 9alayka ?an laa, kun, laa yatawajabu 9alayka ?an, 9alaa + (pro-)N Base imperative: iqraa?, ?ithhab, isma9,
	Undertaking: Promise, guarantee, threat, etc.	Lasawfa + verb base (shall) La + verb (shall) Walasawfa + verb base (shall) Lan + verb base (shan't)

Table 4: Dynamic Modality Expressions in Arabic

Types	Subtypes	Examples
Dynamic	**Ability**	yastaʈii9u ?n, bi?imkanihi ?an, qadir 9alaa,
	Possibility	Minal mumkini ?an, yumkin, yumkinu ?an, yu6tamal, rubamaa, ja?iz, qad, muhtamal,
	Bouletic/ volition	Atamanaa ?an, arghabu ?an, ?a?safu ?an, minal mu?sifi ?an, layta, minal marghubi fiihi, arjuu, ?a?mal ?an, yuriidu ?an, ?aghdu mumtanan ?in, ?arju ?an, ?arghbu ?an, ?arnu ilaa, yaa layta, law,

Table 5: Evaluative Model Expressions in Arabic

Main types	Examples
Evaluative	Minal afdhali ?an, minal ŝa6ii6i ?n, minal mustaghrabi ?n, yas9ubu, bi?sa, ni9ima, bisa9ada, ya6sun, bi šara6a, min 6usnal 6aD, minal 6ikmati ?an, minal mumkini ?an, minal ša6i6i, ?itha ša6aa ?ta9biir, šedqan, bikuli šedq, minal badihii,

Table 6: Temporal Modality expressions in Arabic

Main types	Subtypes	Examples
Temporal	**Sometimes**	Qalamaa, naadiran, naadirammaa, a6yanan, bilkadi (?an),
	Always	Maazaala, dhala, labitha, baqiya, daa?iman, aqaama, nazala, makatha, sakana,