The interrelation of Tense, Aspect and Modality with Evidentiality in Australian Aboriginal languages

From 2009-06-01 to 2013-07-31, closed project

Project details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total cost:</th>
<th>Topic(s):</th>
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<td>EUR 82 800</td>
<td>FP7-PEOPLE-IRSES-2008 - Marie Curie Action &quot;International Research Staff Exchange Scheme&quot;</td>
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<th>EU contribution:</th>
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<td>EUR 82 800</td>
<td>MC-IRSES - International research staff exchange scheme (IRSES)</td>
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| Coordinated in: | |
|-----------------| France |

Objective

The present research project focuses on the relationship between tense/aspect and modality with evidentiality in Australian Aboriginal languages. These languages are good candidates for such a study, for they possess tense-aspect markers with both modal and evidential uses, as well as fully grammatical evidentials. From a purely theoretical point of view, tense, aspect, modality and evidentiality (TAME henceforth) are known to form a semantic cluster with deep-running synchronic and typological connections. Thus many so-called tense-aspect markers exhibit evidential readings, and vice-versa, evidential markers are often derived from tense-aspect markers (Aikhenvald 2004). Recent works (e.g. Faller 2004, 2006, Chung 2007...) have highlighted the necessity of proposing a complex theoretical (and formal) approach to evidentiality, and have started trying to integrate evidentiality and tense-aspect within a unified theoretical framework, comprising an explicit semantics/pragmatics interface. Indeed, TAME markers often associate a semantic with a pragmatic contribution; some have been identified as illocutionary force-level items. In addition, evidentiality and modality are known to be 'sister' categories, overlapping to some extent. Current research on modal items is increasingly focusing on an integrated theory of modality and tense/aspect (cf. Arregui 2007, Ippolito 2006, Kaufmann 2005); this makes it all the more desirable and fruitful to propose an integrated account of tense/aspect, modality and evidentiality, which would help us delineate and articulate better these four connected yet distinct categories. It is our goal to bring together specialists of the different subfields at stake (tense/aspect, modality, evidentiality, Aboriginal linguistics), to turn what is today a merely emerging theoretical convergence into an in depth, large scale unified theory, developed from a rich, and - sadly - endangered empirical object: Australian Aboriginal languages.

Related information

Report Summaries

Final Report Summary - TAMEAL (The interrelation of Tense, Aspect and Modality with Evidentiality in Australian Aboriginal languages)
Coordinator

UNIVERSITE PARIS DIDEROT - PARIS 7
RUE THOMAS MANN 5
75205 PARIS
France
See on map

**Activity type:** Higher or Secondary Education Establishments

**Administrative contact:** Anne Bonvalet
Tel.: +33157 27 55 59
Fax: +33157 27 55 47

Contact the organisation

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