

## HABILITATION THESIS REVIEWER'S REPORT

### Masaryk University

#### Applicant

**Egle Mocciaro**

#### Habilitation thesis

Paths of modality and beyond. The grammaticalisation of modals and directive markers in Sicilian

#### Reviewer

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Egle Mocciaro's dissertation on the expression of modality in ancient and contemporary Sicilian and the related grammaticalisation paths consists of two volumes, the thesis itself and an appendix with the original articles. The thesis is a collection of five previous studies framed by two theoretical chapters: Chapter 1 with an introduction to the topic and Chapter 7 containing a summary with conclusions and a semantic map.

In the first chapter: *Framing the study of modality in Sicilian: an introduction*, Egle Mocciaro introduces her topic: Sicilian in general, and specifically modality and modal means in Sicilian, and her theoretical framework, i.e. a usage based approach with functionalist theories combined with cognitive grammar. She gives a clear and thorough survey of the existing research on the topic and presents different corpora on both ancient and contemporary Sicilian. Among theoretical assumptions, she highlights three key notions: subjectification, grammaticalisation, and semantic topography.

Five chapters follow the introductory chapter, each indicating a path of grammaticalisation through the modal domain: Chapter 2: *First path. From possession and volition to modal meanings*, Chapter 3: *Second path. From volition to modal-passive meanings*, Chapter 4: *Third path. From volition to directive meanings*, Chapter 5: *Forth path. From (itive) motion to illocution*, and Chapter 6: *Fifth path. A semantic map for modal verbs*. Each chapter is a partially edited version of a previously published article.

Finally, in Chapter 7: *Towards a unified account: a modality's semantic map for Sicilian*, Egle Mocciaro draws her conclusions from the previous works and presents her results in a semantic map with both synchronic and diachronic scope. After the last chapter follows an impressive list of *References*.

The second volume consists of an appendix with the original versions of the five articles, four of them originally written in Italian, representing both individual and collaborative research, and with clear indications for which parts she herself is primarily responsible.

The entire thesis is very well written, clear and well organized in its structure. Both the theoretical considerations and the thorough analyzes testify that Egle Mocciaro is well orientated in her field and has largely contributed to its further development. Her thesis represents undoubtedly original research that, with its new insights, constitutes an important contribution to the exploration of the entire domain of modality in Sicilian.

**Reviewer's questions for the habilitation thesis defence** (number of questions up to the reviewer)

Would it be possible to build an equivalent semantic map of modality in standard Italian? If so, what are the main similarities and differences?

Is there any evidence that the development of the modal domain in Sicilian could reflect universal features?

### **Conclusion**

The habilitation thesis entitled Paths of modality and beyond. The grammaticalisation of modals and directive markers in Sicilian by Egle Mocciaro fulfils requirements expected of a habilitation thesis in the field of Linguistics of Concrete Languages (Roman Languages).

Date:

Copenhagen, Maj 4<sup>th</sup> 2023

Signature:

Erling Struds