

PHILOLOGY

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Modal syntagms with the verb “could” as a means of expressing epistemic semantics in publicistic text

The notion of epistemic modality as a logical category has been the subject of numerous linguistic papers, and is viewed both as a textual proposition and as the content plane of modal verbs, which may be realized in their lexical meaning (root modality) and epistemic meaning, i.e. modal content proper. Attempts to reveal the essence of this dichotomy are mainly undertaken within the logical-conceptual approach, while the all-important question of language means used to express the modal content has not received all the attention it deserves. The paper reports on the results of analysis of modal syntagms with the verb “could” as a lexical-syntactic type of expressing modality in English publicistic texts of non-news matter. Characteristic features of modal syntagms with epistemic meaning and their place in discourse structure are described.

Key words: epistemic modality, modal verbs, modal syntagm, non-news matter, publicistic text.

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