ABSTRACT

The introductory chapter discusses certain theoretical aspects, limits the scope of the study to the epistemic, deontic and dynamic modalities, and proposes a data-centred semantico-syntactic descriptive approach.

With a broad classification of the kinds and a sub-classification of the degrees of modality, chapter two analyses the semantics of the English modal system.

The third chapter is concerned with the formal properties of English models. Negation, interrogation, past tense/time, unreality, voice, and subordination are examined with reference to each kind of modality.

Chapter four analyses the semantics of the Tamil modal system on a line similar to that of the second chapter.

The fifth chapter studies the grammatical properties of Tamil models on a line similar to that of the third chapter. The so-called future tense in Tamil is reinterpreted as a modal suffix.

Chapter six compares and contrasts the semantic features of the two systems.

The seventh chapter compares and contrasts the grammatical features of the two systems.

The brief concluding chapter is a cursory indication of some of the pedagogical uses of this work.