

The influence of negated 1st person uses on the emergence of new meanings in Spanish
deontic modality
Barbara De Cock

Deontic modality in Spanish can be expressed with various linguistic categories, such as particles, adverbs and verbs. This study deals with deontic verbs, focusing specifically on 1st person forms, occurring in combination with a negation. Such forms are susceptible of triggering new meanings, for two main reasons. (i) Research on deontic verbs has so far privileged occurrences in 2nd or 3rd person, and general semantic analyses of deontic verbs often (implicitly) assume the presence of a 2nd or 3rd person. This is coherent with the internal logic of deontic verbs having an effect on someone other than the speaker. Yet, there are good reasons to also study the first person uses of deontic verbs. Assuming that deontic verbs have a modal source (“the entity responsible for making the assessment encoded by the modal expression”) and a modal agent (“the person expected to carry out the action”) (Verstraete 2005: 1409-1410), these can generally be assigned to separate participants. First person forms, however, may serve both as modal source and agent (of the same modal expression). This entails the possible emergence of new meanings, such as intentional constructions or hedging constructions, where the original deontic meanings is bleaching.

(ii) Furthermore, our previous research has shown that some of these deontic verbs used in the 1st person occur much more frequently with a negation marker than without such a marker. This is another phenomenon that triggers new meanings or at least, alters the distribution of the expression of deontic modalities among different deontic verbs. *no obligo* clearly does not express an obligation, but rather a permission. Similarly

In my analysis, I will take into account various factors, such as the combination with certain modes – especially the conditional mode –, the combination with different types of negation markers (*no* ‘not’, *nada* ‘nothing’, *nunca* ‘never’, *nadie* ‘nobody’) and the absence or presence of the (optional) explicit subject pronoun.

It is my goal to show how these first person forms, and more specifically first person forms as combined with a negation markers, cause changes in the distribution of deontic expressions in contemporary Spanish.