

On the licensing of Modal particles in Italian and their interaction with Force, Focus and Polarity

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The aim of this talk is to discuss the so-called modal usages of the Italian elements *anche, ben, mica, poi *parallel to German modal particles and to explore their complex licensing conditions. Specifically, I will show that all the four elements are licensed through the same mechanism, which does not only involve the activation of ForceP (to be assumed to be a field encoding the illocutionary-type and clause-type features, cf. Coniglio&Zegrean 2012), but also of FocusP in the lower portion of the left periphery. The activation of FocusP in the left periphery will be shown to be fed by the sensitivity to polarity of all the modal usages of the particles - a property which is apparently absent from German modal particles.