Towards a systemic profile of the Spanish MOOD

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore the MOOD system of the Spanish clause, as a region of interpersonal meaning within the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter, SFL). Given the paradigmatic perspective privileged in SFL descriptions, the focus here is on the choices underlying the different lexicogrammatical structures used by Spanish speakers in verbal exchanges, in particular, the resources available for the exchange of information and goods and services in dialogue.

The variety addressed in this account is Chilean Spanish; the descriptive focus is on the (simple) clause and the (verbal) group. Key interpersonal features are first addressed from the perspective of discourse semantics, beginning with the exploration of the key negotiatory features of the organisation of the clause, and moving on to the realisation of ‘subjecthood’ and ‘finiteness’. Subsequently, a general MOOD system network is outlined, including discussion of the systemic contrasts motivating its features and their structural realisation. Finally, a number of issues emerging from this discussion are raised.