

The French conditional mood is remarkably like the English periphrastic construction of *would* (or *should*) and the infinitive. Historically, it too is a periphrastic, composed of an infinitive plus the finite auxiliary *habere* 'have' in the imperfect indicative. The Latin phrase *cantare habebam* 'to sing I was having' ('I had to sing') becomes Modern French (*je*) *chanterais* 'I would (should) sing'. The morphological connection between the conditional endings and the imperfect indicative of the verb *avoir* 'have' is still apparent. The semantic connection is no longer apparent, but presumably the following changes took place: *habere* in Latin has the basic meaning 'have, hold'; it develops a weakened sense 'obliged' (compare English *I have a song, I have a song to sing, I have to sing a song, I have to sing*), which sense implies 'prospectiveness' and 'futuraity'. With a form signifying past time, like the imperfect, the word signifies either a past obligation or a past prospect, and no doubt is often indeterminate between the two. The development is parallel with the development of English *shall*. Latin *cantare habeo*, with present indicative *habeo*, first means 'I have to sing', then 'I shall sing'; Latin *cantare habebam*, with imperfect indicative *habebam*, first means 'I was having to sing', then 'I should sing'.

The indeterminacy of the modal *habere* makes it impossible to be certain of an exact sequence in the semantic development. Even in Latin, *habere* has occurrences in which only prospectiveness, and not also obligation, is meant. The sense 'obliged' must have preceded the sense 'prospective', but by the time the verb becomes a conditional ending, we cannot tell whether modality is practical or theoretical; we cannot tell whether the form conveys a notion of compulsion and so represents a state of affairs as a past necessity, or whether it conveys only prospectiveness and so represents a state of affairs as a past prospect. I assume that the Modern French conditional signifies theoretical modality because the auxiliary *habere* is inflectionally indicative originally, and once it loses its earlier sense 'obligation', no form conveying practical modality remains. Also, the accompanying conditional clause in Modern French has its verb in the imperfect indicative, which I assume signifies theoretical modality, and I see no reason to assume that manner of representation in the two clauses is different. Making the semantic development even harder to trace is that *habere* has another closely related sense, 'have in mind, intend', and the French future and conditional forms could just as well have developed from this sense, with the forms paralleling the semantic development of *will*. In any case, the notion 'past' conveyed by the imperfect makes the question of correspondence between words and world closed, whether the auxiliary is interpreted as signifying 'past and necessary (intended)', 'past and prospective', or 'past and necessary-prospective (intended-prospective)'. *Habere*, being forward-looking, has the same effect on the imperfect as the English subjunctive has on the past tense, causing its implication 'closed' to replace its earlier meaning.

Although French has four moods and English only three (perhaps two), the modal systems are quite similar semantically. Our theory of two modalities allows us to describe what the moods of the different languages signify in a way that reflects semantic similarities but is consistent with differences in distribution. Our theory also helps to account for historical change in French. The conditional mood replaces the Latin imperfect subjunctive as a form expressing 'imagined possibility'. The Latin subjunctive, a practical mood like the English subjunctive, produces the notion 'imagined possibility' when combined with the imperfect just as the English subjunctive does when combined with the past tense. The process of replacement, in which one originally practical modal substitutes for another, closely parallels the same process in English, in which the auxiliaries *should* and *would* substitute for the past subjunctive. The indeterminacy of the French conditional in the early stages of its development (or perhaps even now), like the frequent

indeterminacy of English *should* and *would*, does not refute the hypothesis of two modalities. Indeterminacy can be explained historically with reference to an implication of the practical modal *habere*, and it can be explained pragmatically with reference to the communicative purpose of a hypothetical statement, which is to represent an imagined possibility, and not to get words to match world nor world to match words. We can conclude that the French moods confirm our expectation that our theory of two modalities has applications beyond English. The Greek moods will provide further confirmation.