

Dianne Jonas:

Just do it already - On directive modal particles in English and Swedish

In non standard American English, an innovative usage of *already* has emerged as the result of a translation borrowing from Yiddish. In this usage, *already* appears to have the properties of a Modal Particle, despite the fact that such a category has been argued to be essentially absent from English. It is shown that *already*, and the Swedish Modal Particle *nångång*, share all of the relevant properties of a Modal Particle: They are phonetically weak elements, homophonous with lexical adverbial expressions, and are strictly limited to sentence final position. They scope over the entire proposition, are implicational, and only compatible with one particular kind of illocutionary Force, namely directive. Furthermore, they add expressive content, in particular that of impatience, and convey the expectation of immediate compliance on behalf of the hearer.