

# About the Teaching Strategies of Modality in the Classroom

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**Abstract**—The article investigates the modality of verbs, words, expressions, and the methodology of teaching them in the auditorium. First of all, the author gives some information about the category of modality. She states the opinions of different scientists about the modality in different languages. For instance, the names of the scientists who investigated the category of modality such as O. Musayev, F. Jahangirov, I. Crilova, Y. Slinin, Y. Zvereva, I. Rickman and others have been referred to in the article. She gives the division of the modal verbs according to O. Musayev's classification in the English language. They are: primary modal verbs, and secondary modal verbs. Each of these modal verbs has been analyzed through the examples by the author. Besides modal verbs, there are words, expressions which can express modality too. These facts are also stated in the article. The author considers it noteworthy to mention that the usage of modality of *words, expressions* is not generally found in the textbooks which are studied in the auditorium of Azerbaijani students. For this reason this usage of modality is considered to be challenging by the students as they don't have much information about them. So, she gives the methodology of teaching modality in the auditorium. The methodology can be helpful for the lecturers to teach the category of modality. The examples used by the author can illustrate the exact model of the modal *words, expressions*, etc.

**Index Terms**—modality, verb, word, speech, expression, information, method

## I. INTRODUCTION

Modality is a grammatical category. It states the speaker's attitude toward the action or state which is expressed by the infinitive. The action which is expressed by the infinitive indicates the following attitudes of the speaker's such as possible, *impossible, probable, improbable, obligatory, necessary, advisable, doubtful or uncertain*, etc. The term "attitude" means the kind of information which the speaker wants to send to the listener. The sent information might be used and sent for various purposes according to the grammatical point of view. The information which is sent by the speaker can be grouped as the following:

1. The modality of declaration and negation;
2. The objective and the subjective modality;
3. The modality of truth and untruth;
4. The modality of reality and unreality;
5. The desirable and the undesirable modality;
6. The modality of probability;
7. The modality of necessity;
8. The modality of importance and unimportance;
9. The time modality (Jahangirov 2005, p.8).

Some scientists such as F. F. Jahangirov states that besides these, there is also a kind of modality which denotes assurance and disbelief; certainty and uncertainty; expressiveness. According to Jahangirov there also exists the amplifier modality and the debilitating modality, etc. (Jahangirov 2005, p.10).

The main purpose of linguists is determining the boundary of modality in the level of language at present. This problem is a little disputable. Sometimes modality is considered to be at the same level with plurality and is used as its kind; and sometimes it is understood as a kind of logical category. The principle differences between the linguistic and logical modality is clearly explained in the works of Y. A. Slinin's who is considered to be one of the founders of the theory of modality (Slinin 1967, p.147).

The lexical means of expressing the modality has been investigated by different linguists both in the Azerbaijani and English languages. Of course, in the comparing languages the main branch of expressing modality is the morphological means. In sentences modality can be expressed by lexical means too. For instance, in both of the stated languages the roles of modal words are not deniable in forming and strengthening the modality.

The Azerbaijani linguist O. I. Musayev gives the classification of the means of expressing the category of modality in modern English. He writes about the modal words: "The modal words denote the speaker's attitude to the reality, possibility or probability of the action he speaks about." (Musayev 2009, p.223)

He gives the division of the modal words: 1. words expressing certainty (certainly, surely, assuredly, of course, etc); 2. words expressing supposition (perhaps, maybe, possibly, probably, etc);

3. modal words expressing various shades of desirability or undesirability, such as happily, unhappily, luckily, unluckily, fortunately, unfortunately, etc. It is noteworthy to mention that O. Musayev enters the words *yes* and *no* to the modal groups. The words *yes* and *no* has taken a special place among the parts of speech depending on their specific features. Some scientists consider them affirmative-negative words; others consider them replying words, etc. As we stated above unlike them O. Musayev refers these words to the modal groups. He writes: "The words *yes* and *no* are a special group of words resembling modal words: like modal words *yes* and *no* have negative combinability, they never enter into the structure of the sentence, and are used freely. As modal words, comma is put after them in writing and pause is made in oral speech." (Musayev 2009, p.224). For instance,

Are you a teacher? – "Yes", he answered.

Do you drive? – "No", she said.

O. Musayev states that the lexical meanings of these words are those of affirmation and negation. *Yes* represents a previous statement adding the lexical meaning of affirmation, but *no* the meaning of negation. In this respect these words resemble modal words, because they, like modal words, denote the subjective attitude of the speaker to objective reality. Thus the hearer can answer one and the same question in two ways: to the question *Is it cold outside?* There can be two answers, depending upon the attitude of different hearers:

Yes, it is.

No, it is not.

So, as we see in this point the words *yes* and *no* stand too close to the modal words. Taking into account the above-mentioned similarity between modal words and the words *yes* and *no* we consider it possible to name the words *yes* and *no* a special group of modal words (Musayev 2009, p.224).

## II. SCOPE OF STUDY

Modal words were investigated by V. V. Vinogradov in Russian linguistics. In English they (modal words) have been investigated by I. G. Rickman, V. V. Shuvalov, Y. M. Gordon, I. P. Crilova, etc.

Stating the means of expressing modality Y. A. Zvereva writes: "modality expresses the speaker's belief or disbelief in reality" (Zvereva 1962, p.20).

The morphological means of realization of the category of modality is represented by means of the mood. Here we'd like to state the importance of indicative modality. The indicative modality is related to the non-finite forms of the verb.

Investigations show that the number of verbs denoting modality is not the same in the Azerbaijani and English languages. O. Musayev divides modal verbs into two groups in the English language: 1. primary modal verbs; 2. secondary modal verbs. Primary modal verbs are *can, may, must, ought to*; secondary modal verbs are *shall, should, will, would, dare, need* (Musayev 2009, p.105). The Azerbaijani linguist F. Jahangirov claims that there are two verbs in Azerbaijani which have the meaning of modality. They are *bilmək* and *bacarmaq* (Jahangirov 2005, p.174).

There is an obvious etymological connexion between the terms 'modality', 'modal' and 'mood'. All these three terms have been given a variety of conflicting interpretations by linguists and logicians. One must be aware that the term 'mood' has long been used in different senses by linguists and logicians. Since linguistic semantics has been strongly influenced by logical semantics in recent years. 'Mood' is employed by linguists in the logician's sense of the word. Mood generally can be referred to such grammatical categories as "indicative", "subjunctive" and "imperative". Some functions of mood are non-propositional and the functions of them are beyond the scope of truth-conditional semantics. It is stated by the linguists such as Lyons that all natural languages have the categories of mood and tense. The grammatical category of mood is used more often than the grammatical category of tense in the languages. (Lyons 1995, p.327).

Some linguists have used the term mood to refer to the distinction of declarative/interrogative/imperative. This is not altogether inappropriate for English, but is not in accordance with the traditional grammarians' use of the term, which usually relates to the indicative, subjunctive and imperative moods that are marked inflectionally in Latin and other languages (Palmer 1971, p.93-4).

The only kind of modality is the notions of necessity and possibility that they relate the truth (and falsity) of propositions. They are alethic, or alethic, modality. It is necessary to mention that the terms 'alethic' and 'alethic' come from the Greek word for truth: 'alethic' means preferable, but 'alethic' is widely used in the literature.

We'd like to add that alethic necessity and possibility are interdefinable under negation. They are inverse opposites or duals. For instance,

'Necessary, the sky is blue'.

This sentence is logically equivalent to 'It is not possible that the sky is not blue'.

Or

'Possible the sky is blue'

This sentence is logically equivalent to 'It is not necessarily the case that the sky is not blue'.

Lyons states the importance of such a fact that whether other kinds of necessity and possibility have the same logical properties with respect to negation as alethic necessity and possibility is somewhat more controversial (Lyons 1995, p.327).

The fact that alethic necessity and possibility are duals means that in this respect they are like the universal and existential quantifiers (( $x$ ) or, alternatively, ( $Ax$ ): “all”; ( $Ex$ ) or ( $\exists x$ ): “some”) as these are standardly defined by logicians: ( $x$ )  $fx = ((Ex) - fx)$ , i.e. “For all  $x$ ,  $x$  has the property  $f$ ” is equivalent to “It is not the case that there is some  $x$  such that (i.e., there is no  $x$  such that)  $x$  does not have the property  $f$ ”. This parallelism between quantification and modality is by no means fortuitous. In traditional logic modality was commonly described as quantification of the predicate. Generally speaking, logicians take alethic modality to be necessity-based, rather than possibility-based. But from a purely formal point of view this is a matter of arbitrary decision (Lyons 1995, p.328).

Alethic modality, like propositional negation, is by definition truth-functional. Let us take another example, ‘He may not come’.

There is no doubt that this sentence can be used to assert a modalized negative proposition (with either external or internal negation: either  $\neg p$  or  $M\neg p$ ). In this case both the negative particle not and the modal verb ‘may’ are construed as contributing to the propositional content of the sentence (Lyons 1995, p.328).

But with this particular sentence (when it is uttered in most everyday contexts), the modality is more likely to be either epistemic or deontic than alethic. The term ‘epistemic’ is a Greek origin means “knowledge”. It is used by logicians to refer to that branch of modal logic that deals with knowledge and related matters. And the term ‘deontic’ comes from a Greek word relating to the imposition of obligations. Like ‘epistemic’, it is borrowed from modal logic. Both kinds of modality may be either objective or subjective. If the example given an objective epistemic interpretation, its propositional content will be “Relative to what is known, it is possible that he will not come”;

It is given an objective deontic interpretation, its propositional content will be “It is not permitted that he will come”.

If we draw the notion of possible worlds we can paraphrase as:

“There is some epistemically possible world in which he comes”

Or “There is some deontically possible world in which he comes”.

Lyons states that in both cases, the modality is represented as something that holds, as a matter of fact, in some epistemic or deontic world which is external to whoever utters the sentence on particular occasions of utterance. Both epistemic and deontic modality are always construed objectively in standard modal logic and in formal semantics (Lyons 1995, p.329).

Palmer also writes about modality. He states that several kinds of modality can be distinguished. There is one kind which is called epistemic modality. It expresses the degree of commitment of the speaker to the truth of what is being said. So we can distinguish between He may/must/will be in his office. This may be paraphrased: “It is possible that he may come”, “The only possible conclusion is that he must have visited her”, “A reasonable fact is that we must have sent it.” Secondly, the modal verbs are used for to express deontic modality. The stated modality is able to express the imperative form. The permission, the obligation or an undertaking can be used to express future events. For example, You may (or can) must/shall visit us tomorrow. Thus, while epistemic modality is concerned with the speaker’s relation to propositions, deontic modality is concerned with his active relation to events (Palmer 1979, p.58-9).

Investigations show that the grammatical category of modality is used to express suggestion. This character of it is not observed in any other grammatical form. Of course, it is possible that some modal verbs can to express ability (He can climb miles in some minutes) or will is used to express willingness (He won’t act as he is told). But these are not considered to express modality at all. Nevertheless, there are two points which need to be taken into account. First, it is normally only with epistemic modality that the modals occur with have – to express judgements about the past, He may/must/will have been in his office (except for ought to have and a “future perfect” use of will have). Secondly, alongside may and can, English has be able to, and alongside must it has have (got) to; one clear difference is that the other verbs do not normally express either type of modality. It can even be argued that the essential difference between will and be going to is that one expresses a modal, the other a non-modal future (Palmer 1979, p.108).

Palmer states that the distinction of mood and modality, and especially that of the English modals, illustrates a further point – that we cannot draw a very clear line between sentence meaning and utterance meaning (Palmer 1979, p.154).

### III. THE DIVISION OF MODALITY

Besides modal verbs, there are some words which express modality.

The first group of words are the following: *appear, feel, know, reckon, suppose, believe, gather, look, seem, tend, expect, guess, promise, sound, think*, etc. These verbs express possibility and likelihood.

Examples:

I **expect** to be back home by 6.

I **think** the meeting is about to start.

I **suppose** we’d better go.

I **promise** you that I will continue to listen and, where I can, I will do my best.

We often use *it* with *appear, feel, look, seem* and *sound* when the following clause is the subject of the verb. *It* anticipates the subject:

**It appears** that they won’t be able to sell the house.

**It seems** like I was dreaming.

**It feels** more comfortable in here than in the kitchen.

The second groups of verbs express *obligation*, *permission* and *necessity*. They are: *allow*, *force*, *make*, *permit*, *require*, *demand*, *involve*, *mean*, *prohibit*, *want*, *forbid*, *let*, *oblige*, etc. For instance,

There aren't any flights that **allow** smoking.

Millie **made** us walk back.

Do you **want** him to come and work here?

The third group is the words which express degrees of *certainty* or *obligation*.

Adjectives: possible, probable, certain, sure, likely, unlikely, definite, clear, obvious;

Adverbs: possibly, probably, certainly, surely, definitely, clearly, obviously. For instance,

Is it **possible** to ring us back when my husband is home? (or Can/could you (possibly) ring us back when my husband is home?)

I'm thinking of **possibly** buying a house now. (I might buy a house.)

The fourth group is the expressions which are very common in informal speaking: *for certain*, *for sure*, *for definite*. The following examples can illustrate the stated facts:

It's nice to get something for free, that's for sure.

We often use *for certain*, *for sure/for definite* with *know*. For instance,

We think Graham is coming. We don't know for certain. (or for sure/for definite)

The fifth group is the expressions with *to be*. They are *be to*, *be certain to*, *be meant to*, *be able to*, *be due to*, *be obliged to*, *be about to*, *be forced to*, *be set to*, *be allowed to*, *be going to*, *be supposed to*, etc.

I'm about to eat. Can I phone you back?

It is often used with just:

We're just about to set off for a walk. Do you want to come?

When used in the past, *be about to* can refer to things that were going to happen but didn't:

I was about to complain but he came over and apologized.

We don't use *be about to* with time expressions:

I was about to call you.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

The effective teaching strategies are used to develop the students' interest in classroom activities, as well as to encourage them in learning and developing their ways of thinking habits. The teaching methods also show students the ways of doing their tasks, the classroom activities are also covered by the teaching strategies. In fact, teaching strategies are used to enable and enhance the learning of the classroom. The three ways of modalities are considered to be taken into account. They are visual, auditory, and kinesthetic ways. The mostly teaching methods are lectures, class participations, demonstrations, memorizations, etc. The combinations of these methods are shown in the visual style. The second kind of learning such as kinesthetic one takes place by the student carrying out a physical activity. The student prefers to use this style instead of listening to a lecture. A person's learning through listening is named as auditory learning. A learning style of ideas, concepts, information which is related to images and techniques is considered to be a visual learning one.

It has been proved that the category of modality is difficult for student to master it. That is why there are some activities for to help the students to study the modality much better. For example, the some ways of teaching the semi-modal verb *should* in the classroom. It is known that *should* is often used in the meaning of expressing obligation, advisable, etc. We can ask the students to use *should* in the meaning of advice. The teacher can use some ways.

1. Draw some pictures, or find the photos with the images of the people who have problems. For example, some have stopped in the way because their car was broken down; others are in bed because they have flu, etc. Then hand the pictures to the students and ask them to give advice to the people who need help. Of course, the students should use the modal verbs either *should*, or *ought to*.

2. Now write some questions such as If you have a sour throat what should you do?; If you think TV is a headache, what should you do?, etc. on the cards. Then divide the group into two parts and ask one group answer the questions using the modal verbs *should* and *ought to*. After the first group has answered the questions then ask the second group make a dialogue using the very modal verbs.

3. As it is known modal verbs can also be followed by *have + Past Participle* referring the action to the past. *Should+have* has two uses referring to the past. The first one is that the desirable action was not carried out in the past. For example, You should have bought this book. I have not got it. The second one is that the undesirable action was carried out in the past. For instance, You shouldn't have forgotten your promise. Explain this role to the students then ask them to write sentences which can illustrate their regrets in the past. For the students to absorb the role comprehensively you should give your own examples such as:

I should have seen him yesterday.

You shouldn't have sent the telegram.

They should have studied more.

4. Now write some sentences on the board with the modal verb *should* such as I intended you should never have known; You should come here often; I should have hated that, etc. Then ask students to use these kind of sentences in a situation that they make themselves.

5. Write some sentences on the paper such

Father to the son.....

Student to the teacher .....

Doctor to the patient .....

Mechanic to the car owner .....

Then ask students to write a sentence using *should* and *ought to* or their negative forms.

6. Ask one of the students to write the following sentences on the board. Then ask the students to explain the meaning of the modal verb *should*.

1. Can you show me any English woman who speaks English as it should be spoken? 2. I confess I did not foresee this turn of events. But I should have foreseen it. 3. You have discovered what I intended you should never have known. 4. He should not have said it. The moment the words crossed his lips he knew it was not the right thing to say. 5. "You should come here often," he said to Shelton... "You ought to come here often," he repeated.

## V. CONCLUSION

We can enlarge these steps. Our aim is to deliver the correct way of using a purposeful teaching strategy. The activities which are prepared by the teachers can be prepared in any various ways. The aim of the teachers for preparing different teaching activities is to increase the way of learning in the classroom, to motivate students to the grammar materials, to encourage them to be independent in the classroom and try to make them to be fixed to the material in the classroom. Of course, there can be observed different teaching strategies while teaching any material. The teacher can choose any way that she/he thinks to be purposeful in the lesson. The main purpose is to help students to achieve more during the lesson.

The investigations relating with the category of modality made us come to the conclusion that the category of modality can be considered to be both a philosophical-logical and linguistic category. The verbs which are used to express the speaker's attitude toward the action or state indicated by the infinitive are called the forms of modality. It is also observed that modality can be seen not only in the scientific style but also in the negotiation style. Besides modal verbs there are some words, expressions, etc. which can express modality. The author also gives the methods that can be helpful for the lecturers while teaching modality in the classroom.

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