

CHARACTERISTICS AND TRANSLATION PECULIARITIES OF ENGLISH MODAL VERBS

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Annotation. *The main features and functions of modal verbs in the English language have been investigated in this article. English modal verbs are essential to express a speaker's attitude, possibility, necessity, ability, and obligation. The paper analyzes both the grammatical and semantic characteristics of the main modal verbs such as can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, and would. It also discusses semi-modals like have to, need to, and be able to, which often serve similar functions. Furthermore, the study highlights the use of modals in different communicative contexts, showing how their meanings can vary according to time, formality, and intention. The findings emphasize the importance of mastering modal verbs for achieving accuracy and fluency in English communication.*

Key words: *modals of possibility, deduction, expectation, permission, advice, obligation, request, future plans, ability, habit.*

INTRODUCTION

Modal verbs are an important part of English grammar. They are used to express different meanings such as ability, possibility, permission, and necessity. Unlike ordinary verbs, modal verbs do not show actions directly; instead, they show the speaker's attitude toward the action. For example, in the sentences "She can swim" and "She must study," the words can and must express ability and obligation. Modal verbs are very common in both spoken and written English. They help speakers sound more polite, confident, or uncertain, depending on the situation. Understanding how to use modal verbs correctly is important for learners of English because they make communication clearer and more natural. This paper discusses the main features, meanings, and functions of modal verbs in the English language.

METHODOLOGY

This research is based on a descriptive and analytical method. The main aim of the study is to describe the grammatical and semantic features of English modal verbs and to explain their communicative functions. To achieve this goal, examples were collected from English grammar books and novels. The selected examples were analyzed to determine how different modal verbs express meanings such as ability, permission,

possibility, necessity, and obligation. The research also compares the use of core modal verbs (can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would) with semi-modals (have to, need to, be able to). Each example was examined qualitatively, focusing on its form, meaning, and contextual usage.

This methodological approach helps to identify the main grammatical and semantic distinctions between modal verbs and to understand how they function in modern English communication. It also contributes to a deeper comprehension of how meaning is shaped by modality in various linguistic contexts.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of modal verbs in English demonstrates that these auxiliary forms perform a wide range of grammatical and semantic functions in communication. Modal verbs express the speaker's attitude, degree of certainty, and level of politeness. The findings presented in this study are based on examples and theoretical insights from several authoritative grammar sources, including Murphy (2019), Swan (2005), Carter & McCarthy (2006), and Quirk et al. (1985). According to Murphy (2019), modal verbs are essential for expressing modality — the speaker's view of the likelihood, necessity, or desirability of an event. Similarly, Swan (2005) emphasizes that modals carry “interpersonal meaning,” allowing speakers to convey social relationships such as formality, politeness, and authority.

The discussion identifies ten main categories of modal usage:

- **Modals of Possibility** (may, might, could) indicate probability uncertainty:

Example: “It might rain later” (Murphy, 2019). “Bugun yomg‘ir yog‘ishi mumkin”.

Bu yerda modal fe‘l: “**might**” — bu modal verb bo‘lib, possibility (ehtimollik) yoki noaniqlikni bildiradi.

O‘zbek tilida “mumkin” so‘zi bilan tarjima qilinadi. O‘zbek tilidagi “mumkin” so‘zi ingliz tilidagi may/might/could kabi modal ma‘no beradi. Bu yerda “mumkin” ehtimollikni bildiradi, ya‘ni hodisa bo‘lishi ham, bo‘lmasligi ham mumkin.

- **Modals of Deduction** (must, can’t, could) express logical reasoning or assumption.

Example: “She must be at home; the lights are on” (Carter & McCarthy, 2006, p. 323).

“U uyda bo‘lsa kerak, chiroqlari yoqilgan”. Ingliz tilidagi gapda “Must” — bu modal fe‘l, bu yerda u logical deduction (mantiqiy xulosa) ma‘nosida ishlatilgan. Ya‘ni, gapiruvchi dalil asosida taxmin qilmoqda, lekin bu taxmin deyarli ishonchli. O‘zbek tilida esa bu ifoda “bo‘lsa kerak” taxmin yoki ishonchli gumonni bildiradi. Ingliz tilidagi “must” (deduction) ma‘nosiga to‘g‘ri keladi.

- **Modals of Expectation** (should, ought to) show likelihood or normality.

Example: “The train should arrive soon” (Swan, 2005, p. 142). “Poyezd tez orada kelishi kerak” Ingliz tilidagi gapda “Should” bu modal fe’l, bu yerda u “expected result” (kutilayotgan natija, ehtimol) ishlatilgan. O‘zbek tilidagi “kerak” esa shu ma’noga mos keladi. reja yoki kutish asosidagi taxmin.

- **Modals of Permission** (can, may, could) indicate allowance or restriction.

Example: “You may leave early today” (Murphy, 2019). “Bugun erta ketishingiz mumkin”. Ingliz tilidagi “may” bu yerda ruxsat berish ma’nosida ishlatilgan. O‘zbek tilidagi “mumkin” esa aynan shu ruxsat ma’nosini beradi.

- **Modals of Advice** (should, ought to, had better) provide recommendations.

Example: “You should see a doctor” (Carter & McCarthy, 2006). “Siz shifokorga ko‘rinsangiz yaxshi bo‘lar edi”. Ingliz tilidagi “should” bu yerda tavsiya yoki maslahat ma’nosida ishlatilgan. O‘zbek tilida unga “yaxshi bo‘lar edi” mos keladi.

- **Modals of Obligation** (must, have to, should) express necessity or duty.

Example: “All employees must wear an ID badge” (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 220). “Barcha xodimlar identifikatsiya kartasini taqishlari majburiy”. Ingliz tilidagi “must” bu yerda qonun, qoida yoki siyosat asosidagi majburiyatni bildiradi. O‘zbek tilidagi “majburiy” so‘zi aynan shu ma’noni beradi.

- **Modals of Request** (can, could, may, would) function as politeness markers in interpersonal communication. Example: “Could you pass me the salt, please?” (Swan, 2005). “Iltimos, tuzni uzata olasizmi?” Ingliz tilidagi “could” bu yerda muloyim so‘rov (polite request) ma’nosida ishlatilgan. O‘zbek tilidagi “-a olasizmi” shakli aynan shu ma’noni ifodalaydi.

- **Modals of Future Plans** (will, shall, be going to) express intention or prediction. Example: “I will call you tomorrow” (Murphy, 2019). “Men sizga ertaga qong‘iroq qilaman”. Ingliz tilidagi “will” bu yerda kelajak zamoni va qaror (va‘da) ma’nosini bildiruvchi modal fe’ldir. O‘zbek tilida unga “qilaman” shakli mos keladi.

- **Modals of Ability** (can, could, be able to) refer to a person’s skill or capacity.

Example: “She can speak three languages fluently” (Carter & McCarthy, 2006). “U 3 tilda ravon gaplasha oladi” Ingliz tilidagi “can” bu yerda qobiliyat (ability) ma’nosini bildiradi. O‘zbek tilidagi “qila oladi” aynan shu qobiliyatni ifodalaydi.

- **Modals of Habit** (will, would) describe typical or repeated past behavior.

Example: “When we were young, we would spend summers by the river” (Quirk et al., 1985). “Bolaligimizda, biz daryo bo‘yida yoz fasllarini o‘tkazardik.” Ingliz tilidagi “would” bu yerda o‘tgan zamondagi odatni bildiradi. O‘zbek tilidagi “o‘tkazardik” aynan shu ma’noni ifodalaydi. Ya’ni yozni daryo bo‘yidan o‘tkazish odat bo‘lib qolgan ikki tilda ham o‘tgan zamondagi odatni ifodalayapti.

Overall, the cross-source analysis confirms that modal verbs are multifunctional linguistic tools central to English discourse. They allow speakers to express degrees of certainty, social stance, and intention with precision. As Quirk et al. (1985) note, modality is “a complex intersection of grammar, meaning, and pragmatics,” which explains why mastering modal usage is one of the most challenging yet essential aspects of English language competence.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that modal verbs are essential for achieving pragmatic appropriateness and communicative competence in both spoken and written English. They help learners express subtle shades of meaning, predict or infer situations, and interact effectively in social contexts. Furthermore, the classification of modals into categories such as modals of possibility, deduction, expectation, permission, advice, obligation, request, future plans, ability, and habit demonstrates the complexity and richness of English modality. In conclusion, the study reaffirms that mastering modal verbs is a key step toward proficiency in English, as it enables speakers to convey not only factual information but also attitude, emotion, and perspective. Future research may explore how modal usage varies across different registers, dialects, and levels of formality, contributing further to the understanding of modality in English linguistics.

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