

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE CATEGORY OF MODALITY IN THE  
SENTENCE

Hayitov Xondamir

Lecturer at Bukhara State Pedagogical Institute

**Abstract:** The feelings of the subject of speech are expressed by modality. Modality as one of the dimensions of subjectivity is a universal concept in the meaning of a sentence. Modality determines the attitude of the speaker to speech. This article explores the logical and grammatical features of the concepts associated with modality and its linguistic means.

**Key words:** dictum, modus, modality, mode of expression, speech modality, modal value, subjectivity.

**Annotatsiya:** Nutq sub'ektining his-tuyg'ulari modalik bilan ifodalanadi. Modallik subyektivlik o'lchovlaridan biri sifatida gap ma'nosi doirasidagi universal tushunchadir. Modallik so'zlovchining nutqiga mayl-munosabatni belgilab beradi. Mazkur maqolada modallik va uning lingvistik vositalariga oid tushunchalarning mantiqiy va grammatik xususiyatlari o'rganilgan.

**Kalit so'zlar:** dictum, modus, modallik, modalikning bayon uslubi, nutq modalligi, modal qiymat, sub'ektivlik.

**Modality** (Lat. modalis — measure, method) is a functional-semantic category that expresses various forms of a thought's relation to reality, as well as different manifestations of the subjective classification of what is being expressed. The concept of “modality” was introduced into science by Aristotle. The term “modality” is used to denote phenomena that are diverse in terms of their semantic scope, grammatical characteristics, and the degree to which they are formed at different levels of language structure. Modality, together with the meanings of person and tense, forms the category of predicativity. Modality can be objective and subjective. Objective modality expresses the relation of the stated thought to reality (such as real and unreal, possibility and impossibility, necessity and probability) and is conveyed by grammatical and lexical means (mood, modal words, particles, intonation). Subjective modality, in turn, indicates the speaker's attitude toward the expressed thought (confidence or lack of confidence, agreement or disagreement, expressive evaluation) and is expressed through word order, intonation, lexical repetition, modal words, particles, interjections, parenthetical words, word combinations, and parenthetical clauses [ 2,15; 3,20 ].

Aristotle's students and commentators—Theophrastus, Eudemus of Rhodes, and others—studied the differences between judgments in terms of modality. In contemporary logic and philosophy, the classification of judgments proposed by I. Kant is widely used. According to this classification, judgments are divided into assertoric (judgment of actuality), apodictic (judgment of necessity), and problematic (judgment of possibility) types. Modality may be absolute (intrinsic) or relative (conditional). Judgments such as “true” and “false,” “provable” and “unprovable,” or “refutable” are also included within the scope of modality in the disciplines of logic and logical semantics.<sup>1</sup>

Modality is a fundamental feature of the sentence and the most important component of its content. In linguistics, modality is usually understood as the relation of the sentence content to objective reality and the speaker's attitude toward the content of the sentence. Since modality encompasses various meanings of the sentence that are connected with the subject, it is appropriate, first of all, to divide these meanings into two groups:

<sup>1</sup> O'zME. Birinchi jild. Toshkent, 2000-yil



Objective;

Subjective. Objective modality reflects the objectively relevant character of a particular situation toward which an act of knowledge is directed (possibility, actuality, necessity).

Subjective modality, on the other hand, expresses the speaker's attitude toward the degree of knowledge of these relations. Objective modality finds its expression at the semantic level of the sentence. Its formal indicators include:

Verb moods (conditional – wish, imperative, subjunctive, optative, etc.);

Special modal verbs: *hohlamoq*, *istamoq*, and others;

Lexical means: *kerak*, *lozim*, *darkor*, *majbur*, *zarur*, and others.

Objective modality, in turn, encompasses different meanings:

The relation of the content expressed in a sentence to reality. This is expressed through verbal moods and intonation (in nominative word-sentences) and distinguishes whether the content of the sentence is real (normal).

The subject's attitude toward their own action. This type of modality combines four subcategories:

a) Certainty, characterized by a zero marker;

b) Possibility / potentiality;

c) Necessity, obligation, compulsion.

This meaning of modality is expressed through words such as *kerak* (necessary), *lozim* (required), *darkor* (needed), *zarur* (essential);

d) Desire / wish. This meaning is expressed through special modal verbs (*hohlamoq* – to want, *istamoq* – to wish, and others).<sup>2</sup>

The concept of modality was initially studied within logic, philosophy, and grammar, and from the 1970s onward within the fields of discourse and pragmatics. As the linguist Meunier notes, “the term modality is increasingly becoming an object of study in disciplines such as logic, semantics, psychology, syntax, and pragmatics.

According to Charles Bally's theory of dictum and modus, a “complete sentence” consists of two parts: one is the dictum, “the representation perceived by sensation, memory, or imagination,” and the other is the modus, “the psychic operation of the thinking subject.” Although these two terms may at first appear contradictory, in fact they complement each other.<sup>3</sup>

Charles Bally expresses his idea as follows: “Modality is the soul of the sentence and of thought.” Determining the relationship between thinking, speaking, and representation is not always easy. The positioning of the subject within their own speech is conditionally connected with logic, psychology, and linguistics, and together they form a unity that is difficult to separate.

<sup>2</sup> Rahmatova Y. Sh. Modallikning yuzaga kelish yo'llari / ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN MODERN SCIENCE International scientific-online conference. 28-29 b. <https://zenodo.org/record/7185630/pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Bally, Charles. *Traité de stylistique française*. Volume 1. (1909) Publisher Heidelberg, C. Winter, 1965 p. 36.



For modality to manifest itself in a sentence, first of all, the existence and active participation of the thinking and speaking subject are required, because it is the subject who decides how to transfer the content of speech and who gives the utterance its primary meaning [1,23; 4,20].

To illustrate the relationship and the gap between dictum and modus, let us consider the following examples:

Karim came (dictum)

Karim undoubtedly came (modus)

Karim may come (modus)

Karim must come (modus)

I believe that Karim has come (modus).

In the five examples above, although the meaning of the sentence is focused on “Karim’s coming” (Karim came), their manner of expression is different, because in each utterance the speaker enriches their speech with various modal meanings by means of the adverb “undoubtedly” and verbs such as “may,” “believe,” and “must.”

It should be emphasized that while the dictum is invariable, the modus can change depending on the speaker’s intention. In speech expressed through the dictum, the speaking subject functions as the constructor of meaning, whereas in speech expressed through the modus, the subject conveys meaning by adding one or more other elements that express their attitude or judgment.

A dictum can exist without a modus, but the reverse is not possible.

In speech expressed through the dictum, the speaking subject functions as the creator of meaning, whereas in speech expressed through the modus, the subject conveys meaning by adding one or more additional elements that express their thoughts or attitudes. A dictum can exist without a modus, but the reverse is not possible.

Modality is connected not only with linguistics but also with logic, because the category of modality belongs to the group of linguistic phenomena that are closely linked with the logical structure of thought. Therefore, modality is an object of investigation for both linguistics and logic. In linguistics, modality is regarded as one of the most important features of the sentence, while in logic it is viewed as a feature of thinking. Accordingly, V. Z. Panfilov points out the necessity of studying modality as a linguistic category in close connection with modality as a logical category. He argues that a judgment expressed through a sentence has two levels. The first of these is the judgment as a propositional function, as distinguished by modern formal logic<sup>4</sup>.

Concepts developed by different disciplines point to different aspects of the notion of modality. First of all, logic extensively analyzes concepts expressed according to whether a process is carried out in accordance with the principles of truth. These are concepts limited to the affirmation of necessity, possibility, impossibility, and contingency, which exclude other forms of the realization of modality. The following examples are constructed with modalities that

---

<sup>4</sup> Панфилов В. З. Грамматика и логика. (Janua Linguarum, Series Minor, 63.) Гаага: Мутон, 1968. Стр. 106. - Том 6 Выпуск 1.



include three categories of logical modality that modify the dictum (alethic–necessity, epistemic–certainty, and deontic–obligation):

I think he will not study throughout the whole vacation.

Undoubtedly, he will study throughout the whole vacation.

I think he will study throughout the whole vacation.

He must study throughout the whole vacation.

He may study throughout the whole vacation.

He will certainly study throughout the whole vacation.

I know that he will study throughout the whole vacation.

He is not obliged to study throughout the whole vacation.

In grammar, modality is most often represented by modal values and units that characterize meanings expressed through verbs. Grammar generally emphasizes the way an action is conceptualized and presented; therefore, grammatical modality is constructed around the verb and the various relations of the speech subject to the content of the utterance. For example, the desiderative or optative mood is often expressed in connection with psychological modality. Thus, in grammar, modality is indeed a concept associated with the verb as constructed by the speaker. In conclusion, different modal values exist for each tense and verbal mood. For instance, one of the modal values of the present conditional tense points to the speaker's imagination: You would be a bad wolf, and I would be Little Red Riding Hood.

In linguistics, different categories of modality are interpreted differently in semantics, semiotics, and syntax. However, these interpretations represent complementary relationships among the concepts of modality. For example: "I am trembling, I feel weak, it seems that I have pain somewhere, going outside right now would not be a good idea. I had better not take the risk; it might be contagious; it is better for me to stay at home. This is boring, but there is no better solution. You call me selfish—how dare you say that? I feel so unhappy and upset."

This passage is taken from the song *Le Dîner* by the singer Benebar, in which the speaker expresses their attitude toward their own speech through various modal categories, such as the verbs "to believe" and "to prefer," the adjectives "painful," "justified," "unhappy," "upset," and the adverbs "perhaps" and "maybe."

It would not be incorrect to say that logical modality originated in Aristotle's logical works. There are three main types of logical modality: alethic, epistemic, and deontic. To classify and explain these types of logical modality, we use a table that has been adopted by many linguists. In conclusion, while emphasizing the diversity of tendencies in the theorization of modality, we can state that every subject produces speech, and this speech often manifests itself in various forms in order to attract attention, exert influence, and sometimes change the interlocutor's attitude, or simply to express oneself and represent the world from one's own perspective. Through modality, the speaker's positioning with respect to the content of the utterance becomes evident, and it clearly demonstrates the connection between the speaking subject and language. This, in turn, reveals the speaker's direct and internal relationship with language.



**Bibliography**

1. Бобокалонов Р. Неразрывная связь семиотики нейропсихолингвистики в изучении иностранных языков для детей с ограниченными возможностями. Монография. LambertAcademic Publishing, 2021. P.3-178. INNB:9786204729268.
2. Бобокалонов Р. Феъл ва феълли фразеологик қурилма (конструкция) ларнинг лексик маъноси ҳақида // Тил ва адабиёт таълими. –Тошкент, 2000, № 3. -Б.74-78. (10.00.00; № 9).
3. Bobokalonov R. Differentiation of Communicative Speech and Discourse State. International journal on orange technology. /index.php/IJOT. Indonesia. e-ISSN: 2615-8140| ISSN:2615-7071, Volume: 04 Issue: 3 |Mar 2022, p. 15-20.
4. Bally, Charles. Traité de stylistique française. Volume 1. (1909) Publisher Heidelberg, C. Winter, 1965 p. 36.
5. Панфилов В. З. Грамматика и логика. (Janua Linguarum, Series Minor, 63.) Гаара: Мутон, 1968. Стр. 106. - Том 6 Выпуск 1.

