



## **MODALITY AS A FUNCTIONAL-SEMANTIC CATEGORY**

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### **Abstract**

This article provides a comprehensive theoretical analysis of the linguistic category of modality, paying special attention to its conceptualization in the traditions of Uzbek and Russian linguistics. In the study, using descriptive-comparative and analytical methods, well-known linguists, including Sh.Rakhmatullayev, Y.Mirzaahmedova, S.Saidov, J.Yakubov, V.Vinogradov, O.Akhmanova. Analyses show that in Uzbek linguistics, modality is understood not only as a grammatical category of mood of verbs, but also as a broader semantic and pragmatic category reflecting the speaker's subjective state, including certainty, doubt, desire, and evaluation. In the research, modality was studied as a complex phenomenon expressing the speaker's attitude to the content of the sentence and his attitude to reality.

**Keywords:** modality, modal meaning, modal words, linguistic semantics, pragmatics, mood, subjective evaluation, communicative intention

### **Introduction**

In modern linguistics, the study of lexical meaning and its functional aspects remains one of the most important and dynamic areas of research. One of the phenomena in the focus of scientists is modality, which is a complex category that reflects the speaker's attitude to the content of speech and reality. The study of modal meanings provides valuable insights into how linguistic forms encode subjectivity, evaluation, and the degree of reliability or doubt in communication. Sh.Rakhmatullayev, Y.Mirzaahmedova, S.Saidov, J.Yakubov, N.Dmitriyev, V.Vinogradov, O.Akhmanova conducted fundamental research. In their works, the multifaceted nature of modality, its connection with mood, tense, sentence structure, and its manifestation through lexical and grammatical means are revealed. Understanding modality as a reflection of the speaker's perception of



reality not only enriches the theory of linguistics, but also increases our understanding of how meaning is constructed in speech.

## **METHODS**

This research is based on a descriptive-comparative and analytical approach, combining theoretical and textual analysis. The main sources of information are the works of Uzbek and Russian linguists who contributed to the study of modality, their definitions, classifications, and interpretations. To summarize how different scholars define and classify modality, descriptive analysis was used. Comparative analysis was used to identify similarities and differences between the Uzbek and Russian linguistic traditions in understanding modality. Semantic and functional analysis was used to study how modal meanings are realized through words, grammatical forms, and sentence structures. The methodological basis of the research is based on the principle that linguistic meaning arises as a result of the interaction of semantic, grammatical, and pragmatic factors. Sh.Rakhmatullaev, Y.Mirzaahmedova, S.Saidov, J.Yakubov, N.Dmitriev, V.Vinogradov, O.Akhmanova (Russian and Uzbek linguists) have conducted research in this regard, and we can see that respected scholars have made deep reflections on modality.

## **RESULTS**

According to scientists, the concept of modality in the Uzbek language is expressed through a number of words and terminological expressions, such as modality, modalities, modal words, modal meanings, the category of modality, modal constructions. Each of these terms reflects various aspects of how modality functions in the language system from its grammatical realization to its semantic and pragmatic functions. The term modality itself comes from the Latin word *modalis*, which means “related to mode, method” and this word is derived from the word *modus* (“measure, method, way”). In the context of Uzbek linguistics, its lexico-semantic equivalents correspond to such concepts as emotion, feeling, belief, desire, mood, intention, and highlight the connection of modality with the expression of subjective evaluation and emotional attitude in speech. Thus, in the Uzbek language, modality is understood not only as a grammatical category denoting the moods of the verb in a narrow sense, but also as a reflection of the



speaker's inner state, cognitive position in relation to the content and reality of speech.

Linguist Sh.Rakhmatullayev, while studying modality and modal meanings, defines it as follows: “modals are integrated into a sentence as a whole and express the speaker's level of confidence in the accuracy and truth of the thought he is expressing, astonishment at reality, and regret” The scientist divides this category of modal meanings into 3 main groups: 1) modals expressing the accuracy of thought, 2) modals expressing the uncertainty of thought, 3) modals expressing the speaker's surprise and regret. The linguist bases the formation of modal words in the Uzbek language on the following categories: a) modals derived from noun lexemes (probably, apparently, in fact, actually) b) modals derived from category lexemes other than nouns (naturally, of course, probably, perhaps) d) modals resulting from the ellipsoid (dropping) of the predicate of a compound (spontaneously) e) modals resulting from the transformation of a compound into a modal (in any case).

In the article “Reflections on the category of modality”, Y.Mirzaahmedova reflects on this topic. The linguist-scientist had her own thoughts about the origin of the word modal, its dictionary meaning, how it is called by other names, the need to distinguish the category of modality from other categories and study it separately, the achievements and shortcomings of the work of world linguists and Uzbek linguists on the category of modality. She states that “Modality occurs during the realization of thought and is manifested at all levels of language. Consequently, in order to deeply and comprehensively determine the category of modality, it is vital to study the sound of each language in connection with the laws of pronunciation, intonation structure, lexical-semantic system, morphology, syntactic system and methodological aspects of each language”[4]. There are obvious reasons for such a reflection by the author. As a result of preliminary views (research) about the category of modality, research shows that the category of modality is very close to the category of mood in verbs, is closely and directly related to the category of tense, and that modal words and prepositions (in the Uzbek language) are closely related to each other. Many linguists have interpreted modality by linking it to morphological categories. Some linguists, on the other hand, have learned the concept of modality as a syntactic category and tried to explain it by linking it to the content of a sentence, the structure of a sentence, the forms of a sentence. The



research results show that modality functions as an independent linguistic category operating at several levels of language and plays a central role in the formation of meaning and communicative intention.

Y.Mirzaahmedova follows turkologist N.Dmitriev's approach to the complex form of the adjective as a modality, and mentions that the scientist used the expressions "conditional form", "conditional mood", "conditional modality"[3] when thinking about conditional verbs. Studying the researches of O. Akhmanova, understanding the means of expressing modality in speech, which have lost their specific meaning when called modal words, comments are made that such means can be in the form of sounds, suffixes, words and sentences[1]. In the process of studying the research conducted by scientists in Russian linguistics, academician V. Vinogradov called words such as "maybe", "but", "not only", "only", "just", "like", "never", "not at all" as modal predicates[2] and it is noted that he explained and indicated the cases related to their application, function and semantics.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

The category of modality in the language, the linguistic scientist S. Saidov, who carried out research on modal words, addresses in detail the origin of the category of modality, its connection with the science of logic, the division of modal words into different groups, the specific place of modality in Russian and Uzbek linguistics, topical issues about the periods of formation of modal words in Uzbek linguistics in his article "From the history of learning Modal words"[6]. According to linguist S. Saidov's writing, insisting that the modal category is related to judgment, one of the main sections of the science of logic, our knowledge of reality, expressed in terms of modality, expressed in terms of the fact that the judgment has three different manifestations: manifestations of reality, probability, necessity. The linguist insisted that scientists, relying on the modality of judgment in logic, applied the inclinations of clarity, condition and command of the verb as a means of expressing it in language. The author states that the word modality is derived from the Latin word "modus" and describes it as a method or way in which the speaker seeks to express his attitude to reality. The article emphasizes that the term modal words was first introduced into Russian linguistics by academic scholar V. Vinogradov, and the academic scholar defines modal words as "modal words express the speaker's attitude to reality." As a result of the research of Russian



linguists, the academic scholar V. Vinogradov and Prof. E. Galkina-Fedoruk, a broad and narrow understanding of the category of modality and modal words emerged. In Turkic languages, as well as in Uzbek, modal words are divided into three periods by linguists. In the first period, modal words were studied as adverbs, in the second period, as introductory words, and in the third period, as modal words. In Turkology, modal words were studied in the first period by Prof. M.Kazam-Bek, M.Terentev include it in the account of adverbs, K.Brokelman, M.Ryasyanen include it in the account of adverbs and prepositions. In Uzbek linguistics, modal words are also considered to be in the adverb, conjunction, and prepositional structure. It has been mentioned that the basis of the representation of the modality category and the grammatical method is the representation of modal meanings through verbs that represent grammatical mood, thus, modal words enter into the fact that modality meanings are again represented by an additional lexical method. S. Saidov believes that while the first and main modality layer is made up of verb miles, the second - additional layer is made up of modal words.

J.Yakubov emphasizes the reflection of modality in the semantic field and gives such a theory that modality is a category of meanings that expresses the speaker's attitude to the content of the utterance and the attitude of the utterance to reality[7]. The category of modality, which indicates the attitude of the thought expressed in the utterance to reality, is one of the important constructive features of each utterance. This semantic concept expresses the speaker's attitude to objective existence, the speaker reflects this objective reality in his mind and expresses his attitude using various semantic categories. J.Yakubov's interpretation of modality as a semantic category expressing both the speaker's attitude to the content of the sentence and his attitude to reality illuminates both the cognitive and linguistic nature of modality. In his opinion, modality functions not only as a grammatical or structural element, but also as a reflection of the speaker's perception of reality. This approach corresponds to modern linguistic theories, which consider modality as the main mechanism of subjective evaluation in language and the intersection of objective reality. In this sense, Yakubov's position contributes to a broader understanding of modality as a central category in the organization of meaning and communicative intention in discourse.



## CONCLUSION

This study defines modality as a central and autonomous functional-semantic category important for understanding linguistic subjectivity. Although modality is inextricably linked with grammatical mood and tense, the speaker's evaluation (attitude) of reality acts as a unique and comprehensive mechanism for encoding certainty, doubt, desire, and intention. The analysis confirms that it is carried out through a unique and holistic set of tools operating at all levels of the language. Ultimately, this research confirms that modality is the basis of meaning generation. This is not an arbitrary addition, but a critical linguistic interface, which filters objective reality through the conscious point of view of the speaker, thereby forming a communicative intention and forming a general understanding in discourse.

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