

Importance of Modality in Learning Process

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Abstract: *The aim of the article is to describe modality and modal verbs of English language. In this article categories of modality and their meanings are given with examples.*

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Shaping communicative competence in students in the process of teaching foreign languages is the main goal of today's methodology. Communicative competence, in turn, includes several sub-competencies and the first of these is linguistic competence. Linguistic competence refers to the student's English grammar and having excellent knowledge and skills in vocabulary. Modal verbs are main part of English grammar and it is important to know them.

Modal verbs are those that do not denote action, but verbs denoting the speaker's reaction to action [1]. In other words, modal verbs indicate the possibility, probability, necessity of an action represents. The interrogative and negative forms of modal verbs are formed without the help of auxiliary verbs. Most modal verbs have multiple meanings [2]. They can show a talking point in terms of whether the action is necessary, possible, desirable, dubious, problematic or mandatory. Modal verbs are not about the action itself, because it expresses a relationship, the command is not used in the form of inclination, i.e., action cannot express the motive [3].

Modality is an aspect of Systemic Functional Linguistics drawn upon in critical discourse analysis. Halliday (1994:75) asserts that modality is the "speaker's judgment of the probabilities or the obligations involved in what he is saying" [4]. There 3 categories of modality in English:

1. Modals of Possibility: can, could, may, might.
2. Modals of Deduction: could, may, must.
3. Modals of Expectation: shall, should (rarely), will, would.

Modal verbs are often crucial to talking politely, making requests, giving suggestions, setting plans [5]. In English, modal verbs are auxiliary verbs that add meaning to the main verb. For example, the verb can modal adds the meaning of being able to do the main verb [6].

I swim. (no modal verb)

I can swim. (modal verb)

- Most modal verbs do not change depending on the person. For example: can, could, may, might, must, should, ought to modal verbs fall into this category.

I can speak five languages and he can speak five languages.

You must see the doctor and they must see the doctor.

- Most modal verbs in the present tense are directly related to the infinitive form of the verb (run, read, be ..), there are not used “to” before the main verb. For example: can, could, may, might, must, should, needn't modal verbs are included in this series of verbs [7].

They may go to Italy for their holiday next week.

My grandfather could swim 3 kilometers at a time.

But the modal verbs have to, ought to have the preposition to.

I have to / ought to study hard for the exams.

- Since modal verbs are auxiliary verbs, the word “not” is added to deny the sentence. Modal verbs themselves are also used to form interrogative sentences. For example: can, could, may, might, must, should, ought to modal verbs fall into this category [8].

She can't even boil an egg, she is so helpless at cooking.

You shouldn't tell off the students in the presence of their parents.

Must you go so soon? You should stay a little longer.

May I come in? Yes, please do.

But the interrogative form of the modal verb “have to” are formed with do / does / did auxiliary verbs.

Do you have to get up early in the morning?

She doesn't have to buy eggs.

Why did you have to leave the party early last night?

Modality lies in the realm of interpersonal meanings and represents how the speaker / writer reacts to a situation or event: whether it is true, necessary, inevitable, possible, desirable, and so on. Modality is a semantic phenomenon, not a syntactic one, because it is related to meaning and meaning can be realized through a wide range of structures [9].

Thus, all of the following is an expression of this or that type of modality:

I need to eat something.

This is a necessary conclusion.

We can't help it.

Water freezes at 0 ° C.

I have no obligation to pay.

I am ready to help.

They can't be late.

I shouldn't have said that.

Pass the salt.

My conclusion is that he doesn't like me.

You can't be serious.

We have to go.

This is true.

He is definitely related to Mary.

Will you marry me?

I'll wait for you at 6 o'clock.

I was able to do that.

Achieving this flight means getting up very early.

You will see that only six of these examples have a modal auxiliary verb (must, must, possible (twice), must, will). Many examples of modal auxiliary verbs are used to illustrate the concepts below, but you should not think that such verbs are the only way to express modality [10]. In the other examples above, modal adjectives (necessary, ready, unable), modal nouns (conclusion, obligation), modal suffixes (probably, of course), and lexical or basic verbs used to express modality (freeze, wait, control, meaning) [11].

To conclude we can say that to express ideas is not only to use modal verbs but also to utilize modal words (certainly, surely, etc.) correctly in our speech. Besides intonation also plays a great role in expressing attitude. In some cases we can use one modal verb instead of another according to their meaning.

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