

9. Shaxlo, M. M. (2025). DESIGNING AN ENGLISH FOR BUSINESS PURPOSES (EBP) COURSE: A TASK-BASED AND PROBLEM-BASED APPROACH FOR PRE-INTERMEDIATE BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS. PROSPECTS OF TEACHING ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL PURPOSES IN NON-PHILOLOGICAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS, 518-525.
10. UNESCO. Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger. – Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2010.
11. Yusupova Sh. O‘zbek tili o‘qitish metodikasi. – Toshkent: Innovatsiya-Ziyo, 2020.

PRAGMATIC FUNCTIONS OF MODAL VERBS AND COMMON ERRORS AMONG UZBEK LEARNERS

Odiljonova Munisa Nodirbek qizi

Student of Namangan State Pedagogical Institute, Foreign Languages Department, Email: odiljonova711@gmail.com

*Supervisor: **Raximjonova Muxlisa Rustamjon qizi** Teacher at Namangan State Pedagogical Institute, Foreign Languages Department*

Abstract: This article focuses on the use of modal verbs beyond grammar and meaning. It explains how they show speaker intention, politeness, and formality. The study distinguishes between epistemic modality (possibility or certainty) and deontic modality (obligation or permission). It also examines usage patterns and common errors by Uzbek learners, highlighting the importance of context and real-life communication.

Key words: *modal verbs, modality, pragmatics, speaker intention, politeness, formality, epistemic modality, deontic modality, usage patterns, learner errors, Uzbek learners, communication.*

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola modal fe'llarning faqat grammatik shakli va ma'nosi bilan cheklanib qolmay, balki ularning kengroq qo'llanilishini ko'rib chiqadi. Unda modal fe'llar qanday qilib so'zlovchining niyatini, muloyimlik darajasini va rasmiylikni ifodalashi tushuntiriladi. Tadqiqot epistemik modallik (imkoniyat yoki ishonchlilik darajasi) va deontik modallik (majburiyat yoki ruxsat) o'rtasidagi farqni ko'rsatadi. Shuningdek, maqolada o'zbek o'rganuvchilarining qo'llashdagi xususiyatlari va keng tarqalgan xatolari tahlil qilinib, kontekst va real hayotdagi muloqotning ahamiyati ta'kidlanadi.

Kalit so'zlar: *modal fe'llar, modallik, pragmatika, so'zlovchi niyati, muloyimlik, rasmiylik, epistemik modallik, deontik modallik,*

qo‘llanish xususiyatlari, o‘rganuvchi xatolari, o‘zbek o‘rganuvchilari, muloqot.

Аннотация: Данная статья рассматривает использование модальных глаголов не только с точки зрения грамматики и значения. В ней объясняется, как модальные глаголы выражают намерение говорящего, вежливость и степень формальности. В исследовании проводится различие между эпистемической модальностью (возможность или степень уверенности) и деонтической модальностью (обязанность или разрешение). Также анализируются особенности употребления и типичные ошибки узбекских изучающих английский язык, при этом подчеркивается важность контекста и реального общения.

Ключевые слова: модальные глаголы, модальность, прагматика, намерение говорящего, вежливость, формальность, эпистемическая модальность, деонтическая модальность, особенности употребления, ошибки учащихся, узбекские изучающие, коммуникация.

Introduction. Language is such a broad concept that it not only serves as a means of conveying information but also plays a crucial role in illuminating interpersonal relationships, intentions, and social connections. We can certainly achieve this through modal verbs, as their features—expressing possibility, necessity, obligation, and permission—play a unique and important role in conveying ideas [3].

Literature review. Modal verbs help speakers show not only what is possible or required, but also their attitude toward a situation and how they want others to behave [4]. Although many studies have focused on the grammar and meanings of modal verbs, understanding their practical use in real communication is just as important [1]. This is especially true for second language learners, who may find it difficult to grasp the subtle social and interpersonal meanings conveyed by modals [2]. Looking at modality from both a grammatical and pragmatic perspective allows us to better understand how language works in everyday interactions [5].

It is essential to consider pragmatic functions of modal verbs, they serve functions beyond expressing tense or grammatical mood; they also convey the speaker’s intentions, attitudes, level of politeness, and degree of formality in communication. For example, in English, the sentence “You must remove my picture from your mobile phone now” indicates a strong obligation or requirement, whereas “You should remove my picture from your mobile phone” expresses advice or a recommendation in a softer, less authoritative tone. Such subtle differences in meaning often pose challenges for Uzbek learners, who may transfer grammatical

or communicative patterns from their native language. This can result in errors or unintended social consequences. Understanding these pragmatic nuances is therefore essential for effective communication, as it enables learners to use modal verbs appropriately in different social contexts and convey their intended meaning accurately.

Additionally, we should take into account other factors including epistemic modality and deontic modality. Epistemic modality expresses the speaker's assessment of likelihood, possibility, or certainty, for example, “She may be at the theatre” indicates that the speaker considers it possible that she is there. On the other hand, deontic modality conveys obligation, permission, or necessity, as in “You may drive my car for going to hospital” where the speaker grants permission. Understanding this distinction is important for clear and effective communication, because using modal verbs incorrectly can cause confusion or misinterpretation, even if the sentence is grammatically correct. For language learners, especially those whose first language does not mark such distinctions explicitly, mastering the difference between epistemic and deontic uses is key to conveying intended meanings accurately and politely.

If we consider its other dimensions, such as frequency and usage patterns, it becomes clear that certain modal verbs appear more frequently in particular contexts than others. For example, can and must are commonly used in everyday conversations, whereas forms like shall or might are less frequent.

Can indicates ability or possibility. If I give an example for this : “I can swim very well.” This shows the speaker's capability.

Must expresses obligation or strong necessity. Like this : “You must wear a helmet when riding a bike.” This is often used in rules or instructions.

Shall is used for suggestions, offers, or future actions, especially in formal contexts, such as : “Shall we go to the cinema tonight?”

Might expresses possibility or uncertainty, for example, when we say: “It might rain later, so take an umbrella.”

Uzbek learners of English often overuse or underuse certain modals because the way modality is expressed in their native language differs from English. In Uzbek, for instance, obligations are often conveyed through verbal constructions rather than auxiliary verbs. This can result in literal translations into English, which may sound unnatural or convey unintended meanings. Understanding the typical frequency and context of modal verbs, along with their specific functions like can for ability, must for obligation, shall for suggestions, and might for possibility, is therefore essential for learners to use them accurately and appropriately.

In my opinion, learning modal verbs is very important for Uzbek learners, but they often make mistakes due to the influence of their native language. For example, they may confuse meanings of possibility or obligation, or use modal verbs incorrectly when asking for permission or giving commands. This can make their sentences sound too direct or socially inappropriate. From my experience, if teachers and learners pay special attention to the pragmatic aspects of modal verbs, learners can not only form grammatically correct sentences but also communicate confidently and appropriately in real-life situations. Therefore, I believe this topic deserves special focus in English language teaching.

Conclusion. From the discussion above, it is evident that this article demonstrates that modal verbs cannot be fully understood through grammatical structure and semantic meaning alone. As shown in the analysis, modality functions as a powerful pragmatic tool that reflects speaker intention, degrees of certainty, politeness strategies, and social relationships in everyday communication. The distinction between epistemic and deontic modality is particularly significant, as it directly influences how messages are interpreted in real-life contexts rather than in isolated sentences.

When it comes for Uzbek learners of English, the challenges associated with modal verbs are not merely linguistic but also pragmatic. Interference from the native language often leads to inappropriate levels of formality, misunderstanding of obligation versus possibility, and reduced communicative effectiveness. This highlights the need for a context-based and discourse-oriented approach to teaching modality, where learners are encouraged to analyze authentic situations and speaker intentions.

References

1. Palmer, F. R. Mood and Modality. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2001.
2. Lyons, J. Semantics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1977.
3. Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K. The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2002.
4. Yule, G. Pragmatics. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2010.
5. Levinson, S. C. Pragmatics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1983.
6. Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1987.