



MOOD AND MODALITY: THEORETICAL ASPECTS AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MODAL UNITS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK

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Article history:	Abstract:
<p>Received: 6th March 2026 Accepted: 3th April 2026</p>	<p>This article examines the relationship between mood and modality in linguistics, focusing on how modal meanings are expressed in English and Uzbek. Building on the distinction between mood as a grammatical category and modality as a semantic category, the study draws on the works of Huddleston and Pullum, Bally, Krasnova, Ahmanova, and Uzbek scholars. It classifies modal units into four semantic groups – certainty and affirmation, probability and supposition, emotional-evaluative modality, and logical sequence – and provides parallel examples from both languages. The article also analyzes three key dimensions of modality: the speaker's attitude toward factuality, the modality of necessity and possibility, and the subjective-objective nature of modal meaning. The findings contribute to a better understanding of modal categories across typologically distinct languages.</p>

Keywords: Modality, mood, modal units, objective modality, subjective modality, epistemic modality, deontic modality, necessity, possibility.

In our country, in Uzbekistan, relations with nations around the world are developing year by year, which is accelerating the process of integration. During the exchange of information with representatives of different countries, issues such as understanding the national and cultural characteristics of communication, the verbal and nonverbal means used in intercultural interaction, the way reality is reflected in human consciousness, and the ability to accurately express concepts related to a people's way of life and national identity in a foreign language demonstrate the growing importance and relevance of learning foreign languages¹.

In linguistics, the study of the mood category necessarily involves its relationship with modality – one of the central theoretical questions in the field. Modality is understood as a semantic category through which a speaker expresses his or her attitude toward a proposition, a state of affairs, or an action. In this sense, modality indicates whether an action or event is presented as real or unreal, probable, necessary, desired, or imperative. The mood category, in turn, represents the grammatical means by which these modal meanings are expressed. "The distinction

between mood and modality is like that between tense and time, or aspect and aspectuality: mood is a category of grammar, modality a category of meaning."² Modality can be divided into two broad types according to its communicative function and the speaker's stance: *objective modality* and *subjective modality*. "Objective modality refers to the relationship between the content of a proposition and reality – encompassing notions such as real versus unreal, possibility versus impossibility, necessity versus probability – and is expressed through grammatical and lexical means (mood forms, modal words, particles, and intonation). Subjective modality, by contrast, reflects the speaker's personal attitude toward the propositional content (such as confidence or doubt, agreement or disagreement, expressive evaluation) and is conveyed through word order, lexical repetition, intonation, modal words, particles, parentheticals, interjections, and set phrases."³

The Swiss linguist Charles Bally described the modal category in the following terms: "Modality is the soul, the very heart of a sentence. It is expressed by verbs, moods, intonation, question and imperative forms, modal gestures, interjections, naming, and a great

¹ SHOMURATOVA, I. (2024). XORAZM SHEVALARIDAGI AYRIM SOMATIK FRAZEOLGIK LAKUNALAR VA ULARNING INGLIZ TILIDAGI EKVIVALENTLARI. «ACTA NUUZ», 1(1.5. 2), 339-342.

² Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K. (2002). The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language. Cambridge University Press, p. 172.

³ O'zbekiston milliy ensiklopediyasi. 6-tom. 2000. B-42



many other devices."⁴ This characterization underscores the pervasive and multifunctional nature of modality across linguistic levels.

The relationship between subjective and objective modality has also been addressed in the work of Candidate of Philological Sciences Tatyana Krasnova, who argues: "The categories of objective and subjective modality are interconnected and can be distinguished from one another only through a theoretical approach."⁵ This observation highlights the analytical challenge of separating two dimensions that are, in practice, deeply intertwined.

Within Uzbek linguistics, a substantial body of scholarship has addressed the modality category. S.U. Boymirzayeva, for instance, investigates the problem of text modality, identifying the communicative-pragmatic characteristics of the modality category and determining the indicators that become activated in the cognitive and semantic field of the text. Her work focuses primarily on subtypes of subjective modality, distinguishing "...emotive, epistemic, deontic, and axiological varieties."⁶

O.S. Ahmanova, in her *Dictionary of Linguistic Terms*, defines modality as "a conceptual category expressing the relationship of the propositional content of an utterance to reality and the speaker's attitude toward that content, realized through various lexical-grammatical and other means, such as verb forms, moods, and modal words."⁷

Nazirqulova Dilrabo, in her recent article, notes that modality in Uzbek is most frequently expressed through parenthetical words and modal-meaning units. Analyzing the work of several linguists and researchers, she demonstrates that modal units can be classified into a number of principal semantic groups on the basis of the available material⁸. She analyzes the works of several linguists and researchers and demonstrates, on the basis of the collected materials, that modal units can be divided into several main semantic groups.

The first semantic group comprises modal words that express certainty and affirmation. These units convey the speaker's firm conviction in the truth of a proposition, or its acceptance as established fact. In Uzbek, such units include *albatta*, *shubhasiz*, *darhaqiqat*, *chindan ham* and similar expressions. For

example: "*Albatta bu gaplar hozir sizga juda g'ayritabiiy tuyuladi.*" (O.Yoqubov). In English, the equivalent semantic function is performed by modal units such as *certainly*, *definitely*, *of course*. For example: "*Certainly! You are right, old chap!*" (Ch. Dickens. *Great Expectations*). These units serve to affirm the propositional content of the utterance and to reinforce the perceived certainty of the speaker's claim.

The second group consists of modal units that express probability and supposition. Through these forms, speakers signal that a proposition is uncertain or only likely to be true. In Uzbek, the units *ehtimol*, *balki*, *chamasi*, *aftidan*, *shekilli* are widely employed. For example: "*Ehtimol, katta shaharlarda yashashar?*" (Ch.Aytmatov. *Oq kema*). In English, the equivalent units are *perhaps*, *maybe*, *probably*, *I suppose*. For example: "*Perhaps, I might have told Joe about the pale young gentleman.*" (Ch. Dickens. *Great Expectations*). These modal units signal the semantically tentative or probabilistic status of the proposition.

The third group encompasses units that express emotional-evaluative modality. Such units allow speakers to convey their affective stance toward the propositional content – including surprise, regret, joy, or admiration. In Uzbek, units such as *nihoyat*, *afsuski*, *ajabo*, *hayriyat* are employed in this function. For example: "*Afsus, ming afsuski, Qulibekning kelishini kutib turmading.*" (Ch.Aytmatov. *Oq kema*). In English, the corresponding function is fulfilled by units such as *unfortunately*, *fortunately*, *surprisingly*, *finally*. For example: "*Unfortunately, my calculations do not agree with yours.*" These units add a layer of subjective evaluation to the propositional content, thereby enhancing the expressive force of the utterance.

The fourth group comprises modal units that signal logical connection and sequential organisation. These units indicate the ordering of propositions or the logical relationship between them. In Uzbek, units such as *avvalo*, *dastlab*, *masalan*, *binobarin*, *darvoqe* serve this function. For example: "*Avvalo men undan roppa-rosa bir yarim oylik kattaman.*" (O.Hoshimov). In English, the corresponding units include *firstly*, *then*, *moreover*, *for instance*. For example: "*Firstly, they do all kinds of dirty and hard work, as cleaning. Secondly, devices can save a lot of time as well as storage space. For instance,*

⁴ Balli Sh. (2003). *Yazyk i zhizn*[Language and life]. Moscow, Editorial URSS Publ.

⁵ Krasnova, T. I. (2002). *Sub' yektivnost' – Modal'nost'(materialy aktivnoy grammatiki)[Subjectivity-Modality (materials of active grammar)]*. Saint Petersburg: University of Economy and Finance of Saints Petersburg.

⁶ Боймирзаева, С. (2010). *Матн модаллиги*. Тошкент: Фан, 150. Б-152.

⁷ Ахманова, О. С. (2010). *Словарь лингвистических терминов*. Книжный дом "ЛИБРОКОМ".

⁸ Nazirqulova, D. Z. (2024). *Ingliz va o'zbek tillarida modallik kategoriyasining lingvopragmatik xususiyatlari*. Buxoro. Ta'lim va innovatsion tadqiqotlar, (8). B-59-66.



*a computer disk can contain the same amount of information as several thick books*⁹. Depending on the use of different linguistic means of the same communicative situations the same speech. Thus, in this regard, the acts can be implemented differently.¹⁰ The study of acquired words has its own tradition¹¹. Tilda so'zlar bir-biriga o'xshash bo'ladi va ularning ma'nolari turli kontekstlarda qo'llanishiga qarab o'zgaradi. (In language, words are similar to each other and their meanings change as they are used in different contexts.¹²).

Huddleston and Pullum analyse the semantic content of modality and identify three principal orientations of modal meaning¹³.

One of the primary functions of modality is to indicate the speaker's attitude toward the truth or factual status of the state of affairs described in the proposition. Declarative sentences typically carry no modal marking, and the speaker presents the content as fact: *He wrote it himself* – here the speaker expresses full confidence in the truth of the event. However, once a modal element is introduced, the propositional content becomes modally qualified: *He must have written it himself*. In this sentence, the modal verb *must* signals not a direct assertion of fact but a logical inference or supposition. Modality thus encodes the speaker's degree of epistemic commitment to the information conveyed.

Necessity and possibility constitute the semantic core of the modal system. Necessity modality conveys that the performance of an action is obligatory or inevitable; possibility modality indicates that an action is likely or permitted. For instance: *He may have written it himself*. Here the modal verb *may* signals epistemic possibility – the event is not certain but is considered likely. Equally: *You must help him*. In this example, *must* imposes a deontic obligation upon the addressee. Together, necessity and possibility thus form the central semantic nucleus of the modal category.

CONCLUSION. This article has examined the relationship between modality and mood in linguistics, drawing on both Western and Uzbek academic traditions. Several key findings emerge from the analysis.

First, mood and modality should be clearly distinguished: mood is a grammatical category that formally expresses modal meanings, while modality is a broader semantic category. This distinction parallels those between tense and temporality, and aspect and aspectuality.

Second, modality in both English and Uzbek can be divided into objective and subjective types. Objective modality concerns the relation of a proposition to reality, whereas subjective modality reflects the speaker's attitude toward that proposition.

Third, the classification of modal units into four semantic groups – certainty and affirmation, probability and supposition, emotional-evaluative modality, and logical connection – provides a useful framework for comparing modal expressions across the two languages. Although English and Uzbek employ different linguistic forms, they often perform similar communicative functions.

Finally, the three semantic orientations of modality identified by Huddleston and Pullum – the speaker's attitude to factuality, necessity and possibility, and the subjective-objective dimension – effectively describe the modal systems of both languages. The Uzbek data support the cross-linguistic applicability of this framework.

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⁹ Atajanova Saodat Avezovna, & Sobirova Bernara Umarjonovna (2020). The role of modern technology in human life. *Academy*, (3 (54)), 16-18.

¹⁰ Rokhatoy Abidova (2023). THE PROBLEM OF GRATITUDE SPEECH ACT IN COMMUNICATION. *Academic research in educational sciences*, 4 (4), 248-251.

¹¹ Mohira Husanovna Divanova (2023). Lexical semantic characteristics of Arabisms in Uzbek and English languages. *Science and Education*, 4 (1), 1185-1187.

¹² Alimovna, Ruzmetova Ozoda. "Semantic Derivation as a Method of Enriching the Vocabulary Content of the Language." (2023).

¹³ Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K. (2002). *The Cambridge grammar of the English language*. Cambridge University Press. P-173.



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