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Mood and Modality in English

Abstract

The article discusses the definition of the terms “mood” and “modality” included in the terminology of English grammar. Modality and verb forms used in English grammar have almost the same meaning. The grammatical term “mood” is considered to be a variant spelling of the Latin word “modus”.

The article also comprehensively analyzes and studies the rules for the use of mood and modality in English grammar. In modern grammar, these two concepts are used almost equally. These two rules are widespread in both ancient and modern English.

In general, modality is an aspect of the descriptive force that is indicated by grammatical means and expresses the speaker’s point of view or general intention.

Keywords: *modality, auxiliary verb, to present, structure, term*

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İngilis dilində feil forması və modallıq

Xülasə

Məqalədə ingilis dili qrammatikasının terminologiyasına daxil olan "fel forması (mood) və modallıq" terminlərinin müəyyən edilməsindən bəhs edilir. İngilis dilinin qrammatikasında tətbiq edilən modallıq və fel formaları demək olar ki, eyni məna daşıyır. Fel forması (mood) qrammatik termini latınca "modus" sözünün variantının yazılışı hesab olunur.

Məqalədə həmçinin ingilis dilinin qrammatikasında fel formasının (mood) və modallığın işlənmə qaydaları hər tərəfli təhlil və tədqiq edilir. Müasir qrammatikada bu iki məhfum demək olar ki, eyni dərəcədə işlədilir. Bu iki qayda həm qədim, həm də müasir ingilis dilində geniş yayılmışdır.

Ümumiyyətlə, modallıq qrammatik vasitələrlə işarələnən, danışan şəxsin nitq nöqtəsini və ya ümumi niyyətini ifadə edən təsviri qüvvənin bir tərəfidir.

Açar sözlər: *modallıq, köməkçi fel, təqdim etmək, quruluş, termin*

Introduction

Mood is usually restricted to verbal morphology can be seen as merely one way of expressing modality. This point of view is confirmed by the analysis of the etymology of the terms modality and mood in English and by the terms in Early and Modern English Grammar. So for English where the modality is expressed in the verb the terms mood and modality can be used interchangeably.

English there is such a grammatical category as mood. Traditionally the grammar books on modern English say about three moods which are indicative, imperative, and conditional or subjunctive mood (Jalilov, 1988).

Modality is usually thought to be complex multifaceted phenomenon therefore in scientific literature different points of view are expressed about its nature. In linguistics literature the noun modality is used to denote a wide range of phenomena with various semantics, grammatical properties

and formal expression at different levels of the language structure. Modality is traditionally defined as a way of expressing person's attitude to the content of the statement the relation of content of the statement to objective reality (Fazira, 2010).

Research

Mood is usually described as a grammar set of finite verbal forms expressing the relation of action to reality from the position of the speaker. In traditional grammars a system of three moods is adopted; indicative, imperative, and subjunctive or conditional. This universal system is borrowed from the Latin Grammar. Indicative mood represents action as a fact of reality. An Imperative mood expresses an urge to act. The Conditional mood expresses a possible, probable, desirable or described action. When choosing the action from point of view of its reality, unreality, possibility, impossibility, desirability, undesirability.

Thus the content of the category of mood is nothing more than a modality (Sweet, 2014, pp. 498-499).

By the moods of a verb we understand grammatical forms expressing different relations between subject and predicate. Thus if language has special forms to express commands as distinguished from statements, we include the forms that express command under the term imperative mood. Thus in English *come!* is in the imperative mood, while the statement *he comes* is in the indicative mood.

As we know there are various ways of stating in the form of a thought as opposed to a fact (Groefsema, 1995).

The most unmistakable one is by stating in the form of a hypothesis, as when the fact statements it is true, it is not true, are made into the hypothetical clauses if it is true, if it is not true.

Here both pairs of sentences offer us a subject and a predicate standing to one another in the opposite relations of affirmation and negation, but while the first two sentences express the affirmation and negation as facts, the last two merely suggest them as objects of thought (Thompson, 2002, p. 85).

In English the only inflectional moods are indicative and subjunctive. But the inflections of the English verb are so scanty that we need not be surprised to find that the distinction between indicative and subjunctive is very slight. The only regular inflection by which the subjunctive is distinguished from the indicative in English is that of the third person singular present, which drops the *s* of the indicative (*he sees*) in the subjunctive (*he see*). In the verb *to be*, however, further distinctions are made; indicative *I am, he is, he was*, subjunctive *I, he be, he were*, although in the spoken language the only distinction that is still kept up is that between *was* and *were*. Consequently the sense of the distinction in function between subjunctive and indicative has almost died out in English, and we use the subjunctive *were* only in combination with other mood forms, the other subjunctive inflections surviving only in a few special phrases and constructions, such as *God save the queen!*, where the subjunctive expresses wish, being thus equivalent to the Greek optative (Thompson, 2002).

The combination of *should* and *would* with the infinitive (*should see, would see*), when used in the principal clause of conditional sentences, is called the conditional mood. The conditional mood has the same form as the future preterite tense (Klinge, 1993, p. 353).

The combination of *may* and its preterite *might* with the infinitive (*may see, might see*) is called the per-missive mood, as in *may you be happy!* Where it expresses wish, *let the dog loose that he may run about a little; we let the dog loose that might run about a little*, where it expresses purpose. The combination of the finite forms of the verb *to be* with the supine (*is to see, was to see, were to see*) is called the compulsive mood. This combination is so called because it primarily expresses compulsion or obligation, as in *what am I to do?, what is to be done?* In this sense it can hardly be considered a mood. But it is used as a pure mood in conditional sentences, as in *if it were to rain, I do not know what we shall do* (Hinkel, 2009, pp. 567-569). The word modality which we widely use in grammar nowadays comes from the Latin *modalis*. It meant pertaining to or affected by a mode from Latin "modus" measure, style or manner. This word was not often used in the Latin grammar tradition. In the grammar's of Donatus and Priscian, which as it is known formed the basis of modern English grammars, the concept of mood denotes various inclinations of the mind. The author distinguished five moods; indicative, or definite, imperative, desirable, subjunctive and indefinite. In

other Latin grammars even more moods were considered; for example, the mood of promise, concessions, impersonal mood, gerundial and participial, as well as, instructive or recommendatory. The list of moods, therefore is nothing more than a list of possible verb forms expressing the speaker's position to the reality (that is modality) (Musayev, 1996).

In early treaties on the grammar of the English language the authors do not separate the term "mood or mode" and never say anything modality including all modal meanings under the category of mood.

L. Murray for example, describes mood or mode as a form of the verb that states the manner in which the action is represented. The nature of a mood is to signify various intentions of the mind, and various modifications and circumstances of action. The author suggests that there are 5 moods of verbs in English; the indicative, the imperative, the potential, the subjunctive and the infinitive. But sometimes the thought mood can be divided in to different special groups mood. In English there two moods, as well. The first one is expressed by inflections and the second one by auxiliaries. The modal verbs with the infinitive example; the combinations to infinitive is considered as the compulsive mood (Murray, 1930, pp. 114-115).

The Imperative Mood expresses a command or a request . In Modern English the Imperative Mood has only one form which coincides with the infinitive without the particle to, it is used in the second person (singular and plural) ex; Be quiet and hear what I tell you.

Indicative Mood . This form represents something as a fact, or as in close relation with reality, or in interrogative form inquires after a fact; The sun rises every morning. In a close relation to reality; I shall not go if it rains. The indicative rains here does not state that it is raining, but indicates that the idea of rain is not a mere conception , but something close to a reality, for the speaker feels it as an actual problem in his day's program with which he has to reckon and is reckoning.

Subjunctive Mood. There are two entirely different kinds of subjunctive form –the old simple subjunctive and the newer forms consisting of a modal auxiliary and a dependent infinitive of the verb to be used. The function of the subjunctive is to represent something, not as an actual reality, but as formed in the mind of the speaker as a desire wish, volition, plan, conception, thought; sometimes with more or less hope of realization, or in the case of a statement, with more or less belief; sometimes with little or no hope or faith. The present subjunctive is associated with the idea of hopefulness, likelihood, while the past and the past perfect subjunctive indicate doubt, unlikelihood, unreality, modesty, politeness; "I desire that he go at once". May he return soon. I would buy it if I had the money. I fear he may come too late (Palmer, 1990, p. 193).

The various meanings may be classified under two general heads the optative subjunctive and the potential subjunctive. The optative subjunctive represents something as desired, demanded, or required by a person. The potential subjunctive marks something as a mere conception of the mind, but at the same time represents it as something that may probably or possibly be or become a reality or on the other hand as something that is contrary to fact (Curme, 1931, pp. 151-153).

The structure of a language is to a large extent conditioned by its system of formal oppositions. Thus, we have in English the formal oppositions illustrated by such pairs as boyboys and boy- boy's; among the personal pronouns we have the pairs I –We, and I-me, and the set of three he- she- it. It is around such oppositions that the grammatical system of the language is to a large extent built up. The subjunctive may be used in nominal subclauses depending on a main clause expressing will or wish, either by means of a verb or by a noun of similar meaning. Joanna had insisted that he come. The subjunctive is also found in adverbial clauses, chiefly of open condition or of concession (Traugott, 2006).

The subjunctive expresses a wish, in this sense it may be called an optative.

The subjunctive expresses possibility, in this sense it may be called a potential. The subjunctive expresses irreality, in this sense it may be called an irrealis. Of the three, the irrealis (were) only is common use in spoken and ordinary written English the optative and the potential being practically confined to literary English (Groefsema, 1995, p. 60).

Conclusion

We have seen that the range of meanings covered by the term 'modality' is functionally very wide. 'Modality' includes meanings such as ability and volition, which tend to characterize the subject referent; permission and obligation, which predicate compelling or permitting external conditions of the subject referent; epistemic possibility and epistemic necessity, which involve a speaker's confidence (or lack of it) in the truth of a proposition; the subjunctive, which creates possible worlds; and the imperative, which functions directly as a means of influencing the addressee's actions. As far as English modality in particular is concerned, a clause containing a modal auxiliary becomes twofaceted, providing complex possibilities for the temporal location and/or the negation both of the modality and of the proposition.

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