

THE MODUS-DICTUM RELATIONSHIP IN THE LINGUISTIC NATURE OF THE CATEGORY OF MODALITY.

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To'xtasinova Yoqutxon Baxromjon qizi

PhD researcher at Kokand State University

toxtasinovayoquthon@gmail.com

Abstract

This article examines the category of modality and the linguistic manifestation of the relationship between modus and dictum, which constitutes its conceptual essence. It also elucidates the lexical-semantic potential of modal sentence extenders in expressing the speaker's subjective attitude. Furthermore, the study provides a scientific substantiation of the category of modality as a universal linguistic principle and a fundamental regularity inherent in the language system.

Key words

Modality, predicativity, Modus, Dictum, Modal sentence extenders, subjective attitude, modal words

Introduction. The category of modality is manifested in the language system as a universal linguistic principle and a fundamental communicative regularity. Modality is a fundamental linguistic phenomenon that emerges at the intersection of the relationship between reality and the speaker, reflecting the anthropocentric nature of language. However, the full functional potential of the category of modality within language cannot be completely understood merely through its classification into separate groups. This is because modality forms an integral connection with syntactic phenomena, which represent one of the fundamental criteria for sentence formation. From this perspective, it becomes necessary to examine its relationship with **predicativity**, a fundamental category responsible for the formation of sentences. As some scholars explain, *"In relation to predicativity, modality is indeed a broader concept. While predicativity is characteristic only of the sentence level, modality is also inherent in non-sentential structures (for example, word combinations)"* [1; p-44]. Another group of researchers argues that modality and predicativity should be regarded as functionally independent categories, defining **predicativity as a phenomenon belonging to the language level and modality as a phenomenon belonging to the speech level** [6; p-8]. According to M. A. K. Halliday, *"Modality is an essential functional feature of communication, an interpersonal function, and a means through which the speaker participating in communication expresses their position"* [2; p-197]. Thus, the emergence of various theoretical perspectives on the categories of modality and predicativity in global linguistics has resulted in their interpretation not only within syntactic and structural frameworks but also as phenomena associated with communicative situations, the functional nature of interaction, and the expression of the speaker's subjective attitude. These

theoretical concepts have contributed to revealing not only the linguistic nature of modality at the level of language structure but also its discursive and communicative essence.

Literature Review. The linguistic means expressing modality make it possible to determine how the speaker evaluates objective reality and conveys their attitude toward it. From a syntactic perspective, modality is primarily realized through the structural and grammatical organization of the sentence. Researcher O. Matyakubov explains the formation of modality through various linguistic means as follows: *“In linguistics, modality is regarded as a semantic category expressing the speaker’s attitude toward the propositional content of an utterance and toward objective reality. Objective reality is reflected in the speaker’s consciousness, and this attitude is conveyed by means of different semantic categories. Thus, although subjective modality, which reflects the speaker’s communicative intention and emotional attitude toward the content of the utterance, constitutes the activating component of the sentence, its nature and functional role within sentence structure are so diverse that these phenomena can only be unified grammatically under the notion of ‘multilevelness’ and semantically under the feature of ‘expressing the speaker’s attitude’”*[5; p-99]. Sharing the researcher’s viewpoint, we argue that modality is not a purely grammatical category but rather a multilevel semantic-pragmatic system that cannot be reduced to a single unified framework. The only feature that integrates its diverse manifestations is the semantic component of the **speaker’s attitude**. Objective and subjective modality function simultaneously in parallel and intersecting ways, making modality one of the most complex categories of language. For example, in the Uzbek sentence *U hozir uyda bo’lsa kerak* (“He is probably at home now”), the modal construction *-sa kerak* simultaneously conveys two distinct modal meanings. When it expresses the probability or possibility of a situation, indicating that the person may be at home, it realizes **objective modality**. However, when the same construction reflects the speaker’s assumption or degree of certainty, implying that the speaker believes the person is at home without possessing definite evidence, it expresses **subjective modality**. In this context, a single modal device simultaneously encodes both the necessity or possibility associated with the objective situation and the speaker’s epistemic attitude, including confidence, doubt, or assumption. This illustrates the intricate interaction between objective and subjective modality within a single linguistic expression.

Linguists identify a variety of syntactic devices that express modality, including **“Parenthetical constructions, connective elements in complex sentences, verbal mood forms** (T. B. Borisova), **predicate forms devoid of subjective characteristics** (V. F. Shabalina), **the indicative mood** (D. N. Natanzon; N. G. Agazada), **verb forms, intonation, word order, and modal particles** (L. S. Yermolayeva), **the indicative mood with neutral intonation** (R. G. Komiljonova), as well as **intonation, word order, modal particles, defective verbs, and the lexical units *bor* (‘there is’) and *yo’q* (‘there is not’)** (G'. H. Zikrillayev) [4; p-25]. In addition, intonation is recognized as an important means of expressing different modal attitudes toward objective reality. Thus, modality constitutes a fundamental

linguistic phenomenon that emerges at the intersection of the relationship between objective reality and the speaker, reflecting the anthropocentric nature of language. Nevertheless, the full functional potential of the category of modality cannot be adequately explained solely by classifying its constituent types. This is because modality forms an inseparable relationship with syntactic phenomena, which constitute the principal mechanism underlying sentence formation. Consequently, the study of modality requires an integrated approach that considers its interaction with the syntactic organization of language rather than treating it as an isolated grammatical category. Linguist D. B. Boymatova likewise emphasizes the interrelationship between modality and predicativity, stating that *"the interdependence of modality and predicativity constitutes a well-established linguistic theory. The distinction between these two syntactic categories should be examined within the framework of the language–speech dichotomy. Since both modality and predicativity are fundamentally based on the concept of relation, they should be studied in close connection with one another"*[3;p-65]. However, according to Ferdinand de Saussure's distinction between *language (langue)* and *speech (parole)*, generalized linguistic symbols and patterns acquire their individual realization only in actual speech. Building upon this theoretical framework, Boymatova also characterizes modality and predicativity as phenomena whose concrete manifestations emerge at the level of speech. For example, in the sentence *O'quvchi kitob o'qidi* ("The student read a book"), the predicative relation is realized through the person-number markers encoded in the verbal form. However, when this sentence is transferred to the level of speech and supplemented with subjective modal expressions, such as *O'quvchi kitob o'qigan, shekilli* ("The student seems to have read a book") or *O'quvchi kitob o'qisa kerak* ("The student has probably read a book"), the nature of the speaker's communicative attitude changes accordingly. These examples demonstrate that predicativity establishes the objective propositional basis of the utterance, whereas modality introduces the speaker's subjective evaluation of that proposition.

Accordingly, we concur with the view that predicativity and modality are closely interconnected yet represent distinct linguistic categories. The objective foundation established by predicativity and the subjective modal attitude constructed upon it together form the semantic integrity of the sentence at the syntactic level. This relationship is most appropriately analyzed within the framework of the **dictum–modus dichotomy**. In this regard, **"Dictum"** is understood as the objective content expressed by a syntactic construction, that is, the **proposition** itself. However, the expression of a proposition alone is insufficient for a syntactic construction to function as a complete sentence. According to Charles Bally, a proposition becomes a sentence only when it is accompanied by **modus**. Consequently, *modus* constitutes the indispensable component of sentence formation, since without it the sentence cannot express modality" [6; p-82]. Within this interpretation, various communicative sentence types—including declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory meanings—as well as subjective-modal meanings, are regarded as manifestations of *modus*.

Discussion. The ideas concerning the leading role of *modus*, originally proposed by Charles Bally and further developed by V. V. Vinogradov, provide the theoretical foundation for interpreting *dictum* and *modus* as a two-layered structure within semantic syntax. This theoretical approach has been consistently advanced in Uzbek linguistics, particularly in the studies of B. Qo'ldoshev. According to the scholar, "*Modus and dictum are two complementary components constituting the semantic and communicative structure of the sentence: while dictum represents the objective content of a fact, modus expresses the speaker's attitude toward that fact, including the degree of certainty, assumption, or evaluation. For example, in the sentences Halim keldi (Halim came), Halim kelmoqchi (Halim intends to come), Halim kelsa edi (If only Halim came), and Halim balki kelar (Perhaps Halim will come), the dictum remains identical – the objective proposition concerning Halim's coming – whereas the modus differs in each case, expressing subjective meanings such as certainty, intention, wish, or probability*" [8; p-68]. From this perspective, sentence modality represents the linguistic realization of *modus* in speech, reflecting the speaker's subjective attitude through linguistic means, including emotional state, evaluation, degree of certainty, and doubt. In expressing such meanings, **modal words** occupy a particularly important position. Lexical items such as *perhaps*, *probably*, *certainly*, and *undoubtedly* function as direct lexical markers of *modus*, explicitly conveying the speaker's modal evaluation.

It should be emphasized, however, that the speaker's subjective and emotional attitude is not always overtly expressed in every sentence. In many cases, *modus* assumes a neutral form, that is, it is realized through a **zero marker**, without any explicit subjective linguistic devices, thereby giving rise solely to **objective modality**. Under such circumstances, the sentence serves only to represent facts and objective reality. Among sentence types, **declarative sentences** constitute the primary grammatical means of expressing objective modality, since their principal communicative function is to present information by affirming or denying facts about reality. For example, the sentences *The students are sitting in the library* and *It is not raining today* merely report objective states of affairs without conveying any subjective evaluation or emotional attitude on the part of the speaker. Their communicative purpose is exclusively informative. Owing to this characteristic, declarative sentences provide the grammatical foundation of objective modality.

In this respect, the views of T. B. Borisova and V. F. Shabalina may also be endorsed. In sentences expressing objective modality, the predicate carries no subjective semantic component; rather, it represents reality directly through its grammatical form. The informative nature of declarative sentences derives from the primary communicative function of the sentence as the central unit of the language system, namely, the transmission of information.

Results. As noted in linguistic research, "*In addition to propositional content, the semantics of every sentence necessarily incorporates the speaker's communicative intention and one of the possible types of modality. In other words, the transition from a proposition to the meaning of an actual sentence requires not only a propositional frame but also two additional frames: a modal frame and a communicative frame. Both of these latter frames*

constitute indispensable components of the semantic structure of every sentence"[6; p-82] Accordingly, the semantic organization of any sentence is inherently complex and multidimensional, comprising at least three interrelated components: (1) the propositional component, (2) the modal component, and (3) the communicative component. This demonstrates that the coexistence of propositional, modal, and communicative components determines the semantic complexity of the sentence. Among these, the modal component occupies a particularly significant position because it reflects the speaker's attitude toward reality, including evaluation, degree of certainty, and assessment. In contemporary linguistics, modal words are regarded as one of the principal linguistic markers of this modal component. Without altering the propositional content, they add the speaker's subjective perspective by expressing meanings such as probability (*perhaps, probably*), necessity (*necessarily, necessarily required*), assumption (*apparently, seemingly*), and certainty (*certainly, undoubtedly*). Consequently, in the transition from proposition to the meaning of an actual utterance, modal words function not only as elements of the grammatical system but also as communicative-pragmatic devices. Therefore, the complete realization of sentence meaning depends not only on its propositional basis but also on the modality expressed through modal words. Their use extends the semantic structure of the sentence while simultaneously strengthening its communicative orientation. In other words, the speaker conveys not merely what is being communicated but also the attitude with which the message is presented.

Accordingly, the semantic structure of the sentence may be represented as consisting of three interconnected components: 1) Propositional component – the objective representation of reality expressed by the proposition. 2) Modal component – the speaker's subjective evaluation, probability, certainty, or other modal meanings expressed through modal words or other modal devices. 3) Communicative component – the communicative purpose of the utterance (declarative, interrogative, imperative, etc.) together with the speaker's pragmatic intention.

The modal words investigated in the present study perform a linking and enriching function within this triadic structure by transforming the proposition into a communicative act. The foregoing analysis demonstrates that the modal component exists alongside, rather than within, the propositional foundation, while simultaneously serving as an indispensable element for the full realization of communicative meaning. Within sentence structure, this modal component is manifested through a variety of linguistic means. Among these, modal sentence extenders deserve particular attention, as they determine the modal and pragmatic orientation of the utterance without modifying its propositional content. By enriching the semantic organization of the sentence, they contribute significantly to the realization of modality and the overall communicative effectiveness of discourse.

Particular attention should be paid to **modal sentence extenders** [9; p-416], as they determine the modal and pragmatic orientation of the sentence without altering its propositional content, thereby contributing to the expansion of its

semantic structure. It is well established in Uzbek linguistics that several syntactic devices serve to expand and complicate sentence structure. These include **forms of address, detached sentence elements, coordinated sentence constituents**, as well as **parenthetical words, phrases, and insertions**. Although forms of address and parenthetical constructions are semantically related to the sentence, they do not enter into grammatical dependency relations with its principal constituents. Consequently, they do not modify the core syntactic structure of the sentence but rather enrich its semantic and pragmatic content. For example, in the sentence *Qaylardasan, sevikli erkam* ("Where are you, my beloved?"), *sevikli erkam* functions as a **form of address**. In *Shavkat, so'zsiz, va'dani uddalaydi* ("Shavkat will undoubtedly fulfill the promise"), *so'zsiz* ("undoubtedly") functions as a **parenthetical modal word** expressing the speaker's degree of certainty. Likewise, in *Tabibning ta'biricha, bu dardga davo yo'q emish* ("According to the physician, this illness is said to be incurable"), *Tabibning ta'biricha* ("according to the physician") functions as a **parenthetical phrase**, introducing the source of the information while leaving the propositional content unchanged.

Among these complicating devices, **modal words** that constitute the structure of parenthetical words and parenthetical phrases hold particular significance. This is because the expressed predicative framework also incorporates meanings of affirmation, negation, and modality. Therefore, modal meanings such as affirmation and negation, assumption, doubt, uncertainty, certainty, definiteness, determination, condition, desire, wish, command, possibility, necessity, and obligation are expanded within the sentence through specific linguistic devices. These devices are primarily represented by **modal words and affirmative-negative markers**, which function within the sentence as parenthetical or inserted elements. Modal extenders, however, do not enter into grammatical relations with other sentence constituents and, consequently, do not form word combinations. Nevertheless, they clarify modal and evaluative meanings inherent in predicativity at the level of sentence semantics, ensuring a more complete realization of linguistic meaning in the process of speech.

Conclusion. The category of modality should be regarded as a multidimensional semantic-pragmatic phenomenon that arises from the interaction between **dictum**, which represents the objective propositional content of the sentence, and **modus**, which reflects the speaker's subjective attitude toward that content. The analysis of the relationship between *modus* and *dictum*, together with the study of **modal sentence extenders**, provides deeper insight into the pragmalinguistic potential of the Uzbek language and the principles governing text and discourse formation.

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