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THE APPLICATION OF THE CONCEPT OF "POSSIBILITY" MODALITY IN MODERN LINGUISTICS

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Abstract

This article analyzes the meaning and usage features of the modality of "possibility," which is an important component of the category of modality in modern linguistics. The linguistic and logical aspects of the concept of "possibility" are examined in interrelation, and their distinctive features are highlighted.

Keywords: Modality, possibility, semantic category, predicative means, functional-semantic analysis, linguistic modality

Modality (Latin: *modus* – measure, norm, boundary, limit, degree, method, manner, way, style) is one of the semantic categories of language and thought that expresses, from the speaker's point of view, how the content of a judgment should relate to reality. In different languages, the category of modality is expressed by various linguistic means.

In contemporary linguistics, the concept of modality is used extremely broadly and, as a semantic category, is highly diverse in terms of the combination of certain forms of expression and various meanings. To date, no single consensus has been reached regarding the content and scope of the category of modality. This is explained by the fact that linguistic modality and logical modality do not fully coincide, which constitutes a major problem for both disciplines.

In linguistics, modality is usually understood as a grammatical-semantic category expressing the speaker's attitude toward the thought being expressed, or as the speaker's attitude toward the content of the sentence. For example, one may mention I.V. Ostroverkhaya's analysis of the functional and semantic specificities of the modal meaning of "possibility" in the text of the Russian writer L.N. Tolstoy's novel *Anna Karenina*. This study identified the specific features of the means expressing the modal meaning of "possibility" in the original text of *Anna Karenina* and in its English translation.

It should be emphasized that in modern linguistics, a number of scholars, including Professor J. Yakubov [2007] and B.F. Lomaev [2014], have comparatively analyzed the category of "possibility" modality both in logic and in linguistics. Professor J. Yakubov analyzed the expression of the interrelation between logic and language in the category of "possibility" modality in French and Uzbek. In his study, he showed that in French and Uzbek the category of "possibility" modality forms the

following syntactic model in simple declarative sentences with the modal verb *pouvoir*: S *Vm Vinf*. He demonstrated that the expression of the meaning of "possibility" in simple declarative sentences arises on the basis of this semantic model.

According to B.F. Lomaev, the modality of "possibility" is a set of certain modal meanings realized in the predicate; this follows from the very logical nature of modality, which affirms the character and content of the connection between the subject and the predicate of judgment. Since modality as a complex of meanings is expressed in language primarily in the lexical meaning of the verb and in the semantics of words in predicative function that realize the communicative purpose of the utterance, it appears necessary first of all to investigate the predicative means of expressing this concept as the material means of expressing "possibility."

R.G. Gatina, in her research, attempted to reveal the functional-structural essence of the modal meanings of "possibility" and impossibility. In this study, she substantiated that the functional-semantic category of possibility and impossibility modality, which is one of the semantic components of modality, has not been sufficiently developed in Turkology, particularly in Bashkir linguistics. For the first time in Bashkir linguistics, the modality of "possibility" and impossibility was comprehensively studied; for the first time, a functional-semantic description of the specific features of realizing the modal meaning of this semantic category in the modern Bashkir language was presented, and likewise, for the first time, the category of "possibility" was explicated on the basis of the content-oriented grammar of the Bashkir language[Gatina 2007].

It should be noted that the origin of the category of "possibility" modality is directly and inseparably connected with logic. In logic, "modality is an essential and important property of judgment in which one or another feature of the object is expressed. In accordance with the content of the reality stated in a judgment, modality is the semantic characterization attributed to it: it refers to the logical connection between the predicate and the subject in such notions as *necessary, probable, accidental, improbable*. In logic, modality denotes meanings such as *true (real), false, affirmation, negation, condition*, and these are expressed through special modal operators. In traditional logic, *necessary* (apodictic), *probable* (problematic), and *actual* (assertoric) judgments are distinguished from one another."

In French, E. E. Kordi considered the category of "possibility" as a lexico-grammatical field. According to the scholar, this semantic field is distinguished by the following semantic differential features: 1) the presence or absence of negation in the semantic structure of the verbal-predicate construction *pouvoir ne pas pouvoir, il est possible - il est impossible*, and 2) the meaning of "possibility" is divided into situational, situational-evaluative, and epistemic types. E. E. Kordi analyzed the category of "possibility" only in simple declarative sentences, but did not pay attention to its use in other sentence types (interrogative, exclamatory), as well as in compound or complex sentences.

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