

## Modality Expressing Peculiarities in Different Languages (Based on the English and Georgian Languages)

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### Abstract

The article deals with the means of expressing modality in the English language and their Georgian equivalents, particularly the modal verbs expressing a sense of obligation or duty. As the study revealed, certain similarities and differences are found between the modal systems of the English and Georgian languages. In both cases modality is associated with mood and parenthetical elements. However, unlike the English language, parenthetical elements expressing sensual attitude are not discussed in the Georgian system of modality. The particle უნდა in the Georgian language is the equivalent of the English modal verbs **ought, should, have to, must**, but not the equivalent of the modal verbs *need/need not*, which belong to the group of above-mentioned English modal verbs. belonging to the same group. The particle უნდა has great importance in Georgian language as it has various meanings and expresses: obligation, duty, advice and wise decision.

**Keywords:** Equivalent, modality, mood, obligation, subjunctive

### Introduction

Contrasting analysis of different languages is very important for modern linguistics. Such an approach offers the best opportunity to compare of languages based on "common characteristics" (Qoridze, 2010, p. 431). Comparative analyses reveal the peculiarities and specifics of different languages more clearly than individual studies.

Our research deals with the modality systems in the Georgian and English languages; particularly outlining English modal words expressing obligation-necessity, their Georgian equivalents and their typological interactions. We have analyzed materials taken from English and Georgian fiction. We also present our translation of the sentences from English literature containing modal words. The study was based on typological and descriptive research methods.

In recent years modality, a topic covering a fairly wide spectrum, has become the object of typological studies of the languages (Palmer, 2009). Although the study of modality has a long history, there is no general definition clearly describing the content of modality. In most cases, due to different positions and purposes, attention is paid to various aspects of modality. However, any definition refers to the speaker's attitude towards the action, obligation or necessity expressed by the verb.

### Analyzing Modalities of Different Languages

Since modality is the subject matter of logical thinking, many similarities are found while analyzing modalities of different, even non-related languages. Regardless of what languages they speak, people of different nationalities use language for a common purpose- i.e. they suppose, they become convinced, they express or perceive something to be necessary or obligatory.

"Modality implicates the relationship of a statement with a reality expressed by various means" (Kvachadze, 1988, p. 31). According to modality three kinds of sentences are distinguished: declarative, interrogative and imperative. In addition, each of these can be colored by emotion or express strong views of the speaker. Accordingly, exclamatory and interrogative-exclamatory sentences are also distinguished.

As a result, a sentence expresses:

- a. certainty, authenticity, or confirmation;
- b. assumption, possibility, desirability, unreality;
- c. speaker's desire, usually referring to the second person to act according to his/her wish.

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It must be noted that several types can be identified in each kind of sentence; e.g. imperative sentence can express not only command, but also request, advice, warning, invitation... (Kvachadze, 1988).

From the standpoint of attitude towards the action expressed by the verb three moods are distinguished in the Georgian language: direct, real – indicative and indirect, unreal – subjunctive and imperative. The function of expressing modality is mostly imposed on indirect mood, especially on the subjunctive one (Bersenadze-Katsitadze, 2006).

The linguistic means of expressing modality are: the form of the verb mood, tone, modal words and particles, sentence structure (Kvachadze, 1988).

Like other languages, the following means of expressing modality are distinguished in English: lexico-grammatical, lexico-semantic, and the category of mood (Babukhardia & Kifiani, 2012). "The category of mood is a morphological expression of modality, that is, it marks the modality of reality or unreality of an action or state as viewed by the speaker" (Kirvalidze, 2013, p. 54). There are three categories of mood in modern English, as well as in Georgian: indicative – unmarked mood, according to it, the speaker considers the act expressed by the verb as a real fact; Subjunctive – conveys the action considered by the speaker to be unreal, possible, presumable; imperative – in the terms of order, request, or advice expresses essential action from the speaker's point of view.

The lexico-grammatical means for expressing modality are the modal verbs. According to one of the definitions, modal words are used to express the speaker's attitude towards the action or state expressed by the infinitive. They show that the action expressed by the infinitive is considered to be possible, impossible, doubtful, obligatory, necessary, reasonable, etc.

It must be mentioned that **modal verbs** are either invariable or close to invariable. "Thus modals might without too much simplification be regarded as 'modal particles' which have lost their historical connection with the inflectional paradigm of verbs" (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik, 1985, p.147).

Lexico-semantic means for expressing modality are **modal words**. They show if speaker is confident about what he has said, or considers it to be doubtful, possible, and desirable. Accordingly, modal words are divided into three groups:

- a) Words expressing different kind of confidence: **really, of course, indeed, certainly...**
- b) Words expressing different level of probability: **maybe, perhaps, probably, possibly...**
- c) Words expressing different form of desirability (undesirability): **fortunately, lucky, unfortunately, unluckily.**

Interesting parallels can be drawn with the Georgian language. Parenthetical words perform the function of modal words here. To show it more clearly, classification by a Georgian linguist (L. Kvachadze) is given below:

"Parenthetical word or word combination is various according to its meaning. The main groups are:

1. Parenthetical word or expression conveys modality that shows the speakers attitude toward something said/mentioned: whether she/he perceives it as a fact, or as something possible. Accordingly, two subgroups of parenthetical words/expressions are distinguished from this group:

a) Parenthetical word expresses the speakers confidence about certitude of something said:

b) Expresses the speaker's supposition, admitting opinion given in the sentence as questionable.

2. Parenthetical word shows the speakers feeling caused by the content of something said, and gives the fact estimation: fortunately, unfortunately" (Kvachadze, 1988, pp. 295-296).

According to modality, parenthetical words are divided only into two groups, unlike English, and express speaker's certainty/uncertainty. Parenthetical words conveying the speaker's feeling are out of modality context, they are viewed separately, in the group of word expressing the feelings.

Unlike the Georgian, the sentence structure is not the means of expressing modality in English.

As discussed above, modality is a broad topic and impossible to analyze in one paper, especially when discussed in the context of contrasting analysis. Accordingly, we deal only with linguistic means of expressing obligation, necessity in the English language and their Georgian equivalents.

Expressing obligation/advice is one of the major functions of the modal system in English. **Ought, should, must, have to, need** are the modal verbs expressing obligation, advice. Ought, should –mainly express advice, or wise decision; must, have to – obligation, liability, **must not** – prohibition, need- necessity.

Ought and should are used in present and future, but also in the past if followed by the verb in the past form. Both verbs form negative and interrogative forms similarly: ought I? Should I? You oughtn't... you shouldn't. The only difference is that ought is followed by the full infinitive, and therefore it's often called **ought to**. As already mentioned above, both of these verbs express obligation, but should is more common (Thomson, Martinet, 1986, p.137).

"Besides, I want you to tell me why I should not go in for philanthropy" (Wilde, 1979, p. 97). გარდა ამისა, მიხდა ამიხსნათ, რატომ არ უნდა ვეწეოდე ქველმოქმედებას.

**Must** and **have to** convey the impression that the obligatory action expressed by the verb is or will be performed. This mostly refers to the first person, however, can often be found in other persons, too.

"There was so much in you that charmed me that I felt I **must** tell you something about yourself" (Wilde, 1979, p.105).

იმდენი მომხიზვლელობა იყო თქვენში, რომ ვიგრძენი რომ **უნდა** მეთქვა რაღაც თქვენს შესახებ.

“-მიქელგაბრიელო! ხარ თუ არა ქვეყანაზე, ახლა ერთია ყველა, უნდა ამიშვა, უნდა ამიშვა, უნდა ამიშვა...” (Dumbadze, 1983, p. 15).

“Archangel! No matter you exist or not, you **must** let me up, you **must** let me up, you **must** do it...” (Dumbadze, 1983, p. 15).

Inescapable performance of the action expressed by the verb is not conveyed by **ought/should** modal verbs.

“ერთი დიდი, თეთრი ბაირალი უნდა ფრიალებდეს ამაყად ჯომოლუნგმაზე ნიშნად უსაზღვრო სათნოებისა, სიკეთისა და სიყვარულისა”.

“A huge, white flag **should be** waving proudly over Jomolungma as a sign of virtue, kindness and love” [Dumbadze; White Flags].

Certain convergences can be found between the mentioned verbs: as already mentioned above, **ought** and **should** express the advice, but for more emphasize we use **must**.

“I **must eat** tuna so that I will not have a failure of strength” (Hemingway, 1952, p. 47).

თუმუხი უნდა ვჭამო, ძალა რომ არ გამომეცალოს.

In continuous infinitive **ought** and **should** hold the idea that the subject doesn't perform the duty or is wrong, reckless. Perfect infinitive structure implies that the certain act or the duty imposed on the subject was not performed. Modal verbs in negative forms express wrong, imprudent action performed in the past.

“I **shouldn't have** gone out so far, fish' he said” (Hemingway, 1952 p. 95).

ასე შორს არ უნდა წამოვსულიყავი, თევზო, თქვა მან.

“მე ისევ შემრცხვა, - ალბათ ასე არ უნდა მეთქვა, და ამან გადაწყვიტა ყველაფერი ...” (Dumbadze, 1983, p. 311).

“I was so embarrassed, - maybe I shouldn't have told so. It determined everything

„-ახლა რაღა დროსია, ჯერ გაზრდა უნდა დაგეცდიათ და ისე უნდა გაგეშვათ შინიდან“ (Chiladze, 1981, p. 204).

“- It's too late. You should have first waited for her to grow up and let her leave afterwards”

Accordingly, modal verb **must** express obligation or emphatic advice. Obligation is also expressed by the modal verb **have to**, but there is a slight difference between them. **Must** expresses the obligation imposed by the speaker himself.

“Yes, I feel I **must** come with you. Do let me” (Wilde, 1979, p. 130)

დიახ, ვგრძნობ, რომ უნდა გამოგყვეთ, ნება მომეცით.

“პირიქით, თქვენგან უნდა ვისწავლო ყველაფერი” (Dumbadze, 1983, p. 13).

“ In the contrary, I **must** learn everything from you”

It's the matter of internal factor. **Have to** expresses the

obligation imposed by the external factor. **Must** is used in present and future tenses. In past tense it is replaced by **had to**.

“წესდების მიხედვით, კომპზე უნდა დამხვდეთ, მომახსენო ვითარება და მორიგეობა ისე ჩამაბარო, - შეახსენა საღმის მაგივრად ძნელადემ (Dumbadze, 1983, p. 9).

“According to regulations, you **have to** meet me on the tower, report the situation and pass the roster, - reminded Dzneldze instead of greeting.

A wise decision is also expressed by **had better** in English, Georgian equivalents of which can be **ჯობია, აჯობებს** (it would be better).

“Perhaps, you **had better** write to him. I don't want to see him alone” (Wilde, 1979, p.143)

მგონი, აჯობებდა მიგეწერათ მისთვის. არ მინდა მისი მარტო ნახვა.

To be also expresses obligation and duty.

“Am I to go, Mr. Dorian?” he asked (Wilde, 1979, p. 97).

ლორდ ჰენრიმ გაიღიმა და დორიანს შეხედა. “უნდა წავიდე, ბატონო დორიან?” ჰკითხა მან.

As it's shown in the examples above, particle **უნდა** is the equivalent of the English modal words **must/have to/should/had better/to be to**. But it's not the only means of expressing obligation and duty. Necessity is also expressed by the imperative mood, without any modal verbs or particles. Except this we will distinguish the samples from the fiction expressing obligation/duty/compulsion using the certain words **emphasizing the situation more clearly**:

“მაიორი, ვალდებული თუ არა, იძულებული ნამდვილად იყო, ბოლომდე დაეცვა ისინი, იქამდე მაინც, სანამ თათრისაგან ხიფათი აღარ იქნებოდა მოსალოდნელი.”

“If **not obliged**, major was at least **constrained** to defend them till the end, at least till the danger wasn't feasible from Tatar.”

However, particle **უნდა** is not the only means of expressing obligation, duty. It also expresses advice, wise decision, and necessity. Though, this particle is often scattered within the text so insignificantly that its various functions seem to be left unnoticed. In quantitative terms, this particle is used more frequently than any other means of expressing modality. For example, in a small part of the “White Flags” by Nodar Dumbadze, it is used for 14 times.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, we can say that there are certain similarities and differences between the modal systems of the English and Georgian languages. In both cases modality is associated with:

- **Mood** – mainly with subjunctive one;
- **Parenthetical elements** – modal words: 1. Those expressing possibility... maybe, perhaps, possibly...; 2. Those expressing certainty.... really, of course, certainty, indeed.

However, unlike the English language, parenthetical elements expressing sensual attitude - **სამედნიეროდ/fortunately, საუბედუროდ/unfortunately** and etc. - are not discussed in the system of modality.

The particle უნდა in the Georgian language functions as the equivalent of the English modal verbs **ought, should, have to, must**.

But it is not the equivalent of the modal verbs **need/need not**, belonging to the group presented above. Equivalent of this verb in Georgian language is **საჭიროა/არ არის საჭირო**.

As shown by this study, the particle უნდა has a great importance in Georgian language as it has various meanings and expresses: obligation, duty, advice and wise decision.

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