Research Article

THE COMPARISON OF MODAL ADJUNCTS IN ENGLISH AND THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN ALBANIAN LANGUAGE

Syntax

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Abstract

Modal adjuncts are important syntactic structures that express the speaker's attitude towards the truth, probability, or validity of a proposition. They differ in their semantic strength and structural realisation, ranging from strong to weak modality, and may also express wishes or indicate the source of information. This study examines modal adjuncts in English and their counterparts in Albanian, focusing on their semantic properties, grammatical functions, and structural realisations. Particular attention is given to the differences in their grammatical classification, as structures functioning as modal adjuncts in English are generally treated as parenthetical words or groups of words in Albanian grammar. The research employs the contrastive and descriptive methods to identify similarities and differences between the two languages. The analysis demonstrates that, although these structures express similar modal meanings, they differ in their grammatical classification and forms of realisation. It also shows that Albanian uses a wider variety of structural forms than English.

INTRODUCTION

Modal adjuncts perform a function that is semantically very similar to that of epistemic modal verbs. Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 767) explain these adjuncts by comparing them with modal verbs, as illustrated below:

	Modal predication	Modal modification
[1]	Walking home she remembered that the gypsy woman's house must be nearby.	Walking home she remembered that the gypsy woman's house *probably* is nearby.
[2]	He must have gone down to drink a coffee.	He has *certainly* gone down to drink a coffee.

They further point out that modal adjuncts can co-occur with modal verbs. They refer to such combinations as *modal harmony*, whereby a single modal meaning is expressed twice or reinforced through two different grammatical means, as in:

[3] *Surely* he must have noticed.

Unlike modal verbs, which may express epistemic, deontic, or dynamic modality, modal adjuncts are restricted to epistemic modality, in which the speaker evaluates the truth or likelihood of the proposition expressed by the sentence. Modal adjuncts do not, in themselves, normally express deontic modality. They may, however, occur with the deontic modal verbs *can/could* in polite requests, as illustrated in:

[4] Could I *possibly* ask you to move your chair a little?

Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 768) also identify a specific type of modality associated with the modal adjunct *hopefully*. In this case, the adjunct does not express an assessment of the truth or probability of the proposition, but rather the speaker's desire or wish concerning the situation expressed. This type of modality is not expressed by modal verbs, although it bears some similarity to deontic modality.

[5] *Hopefully* it won't rain.

With regard to the strength of modality, Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 768) distinguish four levels: strong, quasi-strong, medium, and weak.

Strong modal adjuncts commit the speaker strongly to the truth of the proposition being modalized. This group includes *certainly, clearly, definitely, necessarily, obviously, surely,* and *undoubtedly*, among others, as illustrated below:

[6] *Obviously* they were scared.

The unmodalized proposition *they were scared* already presents the situation as true. The addition of the strong modal adjunct *obviously*, however, makes the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition more explicit and emphasizes the evidential basis for that commitment.

Quasi-strong modal adjuncts, such as *apparently, evidently,* and *seemingly,* indicate that the speaker does not have complete certainty that the proposition is true, even though there are indications that support its validity. This can be observed in:

[7] *Apparently* he had talked to her about things he should never have mentioned.

Medium modal adjuncts, including *arguably, likely,* and *probably,* explicitly leave open the possibility that the proposition may be false, while nevertheless assigning a relatively high degree of probability to its being true. This can be illustrated by:

[8] They will *probably* throw him out of the university.

Weak modal adjuncts include adverbs such as *maybe, perhaps,* and *possibly*. These indicate that there is no strong basis for rejecting the proposition as false, but at the same time the possibility that it is true is presented as relatively low or uncertain.

[9] They were *perhaps* the most frightening conspiracies in the world.

Quirk (1985: 589) analyzes and classifies these specific adjuncts somewhat differently. He primarily places them within the grammatical category of disjuncts, more specifically under content disjuncts, and explains that these adjuncts provide a comment on the truth value of what is being said. In other words, they indicate the degree to which, or the conditions under which, the speaker considers the proposition expressed in the utterance to be true.

In the grammatical literature on Albanian, these syntactic structures are discussed, but they are not generally interpreted as adjuncts. Instead, they are treated as parenthetical words/group of words.

According to Çeliku (2002: 368), these syntactic structures belong to the group of parenthetical words/group of words that specify the degree of truth of the proposition. They may present the proposition as completely true or certain, or alternatively as possible, presumed, or otherwise uncertain, as illustrated in the following examples:

[10] I kishte folur, *me sa dukej,* për gjëra që s'duhej të fliste dhe më pas ishte penduar.

[11] Ëndrra e ringjalljes, *pa dyshim,* kishte të bënte me të.

[12] *Ndoshta* ishte faji i tij.

The examples above contain syntactic structures that perform essentially the same semantic function as modal adjuncts in English. The expression *me sa dukej* ('seemingly') in example [10] expresses quasi-strong modality, indicating that the speaker has some basis for the proposition but does not commit to its complete truth. The expression *pa dyshim* ('undoubtedly') in example [11] expresses strong modality, conveying a high degree of certainty on the part of the speaker. Finally, *ndoshta* ('maybe') in example [12] expresses weak modality, presenting the proposition as possible but uncertain.

REALISATION OF MODAL ADJUNCTS

Modal adjuncts perform a function that is semantically very similar to that of epistemic modal verbs. Taking into account the degree of modal strength, Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 768) distinguish four levels: strong, quasi-strong, medium, and weak.

○ Strong modal adjuncts are realised by adverbs, primarily those derived from adjectives by means of the suffix *-ly*, such as *certainly, clearly, definitely, necessarily, obviously, surely,* and *undoubtedly*, as well as by the prepositional phrases *without doubt* and *without question.*

[13] His dream of resurrection *certainly* had something to do with it.

[14] He is, *without doubt*, the largest inhabitant of the globe.

o Quasi-strong modal adjuncts are expressed by adverbs such as *apparently*, *evidently*, and *seemingly*, as well as by the prepositional phrases *in all probability* and *in all likelihood.*

[15] *Evidently* Liza had been part of the transition that was vital to the creation of this strange zone.

[16] *In all probability* she would have forgotten the question, and a good opportunity to explain something of real interest to her would have been lost.

o Medium modal adjuncts are realised by the adverbs *arguably*, *likely*, and *probably*.

[17] In one case, the technology, writing, *probably* resulted in our memories getting worse, but we gained much more than we lost.

o Weak modal adjuncts include adverbs such as *maybe, perhaps,* and *possibly*, among others.

[18] We know that everything that could *possibly* have happened took place in the taxi between the hotel and the airport.

There is a specific semantic nuance of modal adjuncts that does not express an assessment of truth or probability but rather a wish or hope. This meaning is primarily conveyed by the adverb *hopefully*.

[19] *Hopefully* things would settle down for them now, but it was comforting knowing that their love was strong enough to survive the worst.

o There are also modal adjuncts that cannot be classified within the aforementioned groups. These are realised by prepositional phrases such as *in my opinion, in my judgement,* and *according to.*

[20] I told her that *in my opinion* the child ought to be separated from the family for a few weeks at least--that she must learn to depend on and obey me before I could make any headway.

[21] *According to Lisa*, they were the closest thing to a family that she had other than her parents and siblings.

o In some cases, modal adjuncts may also be realised by parenthetical clauses, as illustrated in the following example:

[22] "There's going to be trouble, *I'm sure*," remarked the horse.

The most of Albanian equivalents of these syntactic structures are treated as parenthetical words/group of words.

- Strong modal adjuncts are illustrated by the following example:

[23] I kujtohej, *sigurisht*.

- Quasi-strong modal adjuncts are exemplified by:

[24] Dhe tamam atë ditë, që *sipas gjithë gjasave* duhej të ishte një ditë pajtimi, ndodhi dhe grindja më e ashpër.

- Medium modal adjuncts correspond to the following sentence:

[25] *Siç duket*, të drejtën për të qenë i ngrysur, e kishte fituar prej kohësh.

- Weak modal adjuncts are illustrated by the following example:

[26] Pak çaste më vonë, ndërsa po largohesha, mendoja se ishte vërtet një tuafëri nga ana ime që të shqetësohesha sadopak se ç'ndjesi do të provokonte fytyra, emri, apo ftesa ime, te njëfarë polici civil që, *ndoshta* s'do ta takoja më kurrë në jetë.

According to Çeliku (2002: 368), these syntactic structures belong to the category of parenthetical words/group of words that qualify the degree of truth of an utterance. They may present a proposition as entirely true or certain, or as possible, hypothetical, and so forth. Depending on their semantic nuances, they may be realised by adverbs such as *sigurisht, qartë*, and *ndoshta*; adverbial syntagms such as *qind për qind* and *pak a shumë*; nouns accompanied by prepositions, such as *pa fjalë, pa dyshim,* and *pa frikë*; and syntagms such as *pa asnjë dyshim* and *sipas gjithë gjasave*, among others.

An interesting point concerns the English modal adjunct *according to Lisa* in example [21], whose Albanian equivalent is *Sipas Lizës*. This structure does not belong to the subgroup of intermediate words or groups of words that qualifies the degree of truth of an utterance. Rather, it falls within the subgroup that indicates the source of the information conveyed.

The examples above demonstrate that Albanian has a wider range of structural realisations for modal adjuncts than English. In English, these adjuncts are realised primarily by adverbs and prepositional phrases, whereas Albanian employs a broader variety of structures, including adverbs, adverbial syntagms, prepositional constructions, and other syntagms.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of modal adjuncts in English and their Albanian counterparts has demonstrated that these structures play an important role in expressing the speaker's attitude towards the truth, probability, and validity of a proposition. Although English and Albanian use different grammatical classifications, they share similar semantic functions in conveying various degrees of certainty and uncertainty. In English, modal adjuncts are primarily classified as adjuncts or disjuncts, whereas in Albanian they are generally treated as parenthetical words or groups of words. The analysis has also shown that modal adjuncts can express different levels of modal strength, namely strong, quasi-strong, medium, and weak modality. Furthermore, both languages employ various structures to express the speaker's opinion, judgement, expectations, and sources of information. However, an important difference lies in their structural realisation. While English relies mainly on adverbs and prepositional phrases, Albanian offers a wider variety of forms, including adverbs, adverbial syntagms, prepositional constructions, and other syntactic structures. Despite these grammatical and structural differences, the two languages demonstrate considerable semantic similarities. Therefore, understanding modal adjuncts and their equivalents is essential for identifying how speakers express their attitudes and degrees of commitment in different languages. Overall, this contrastive study highlights both the similarities and differences between English and Albanian and contributes to a better understanding of their syntactic and semantic characteristics.

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