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THE MEANS OF EXPRESSING THE CATEGORY
OF MODALITY IN THE TEXTS OF THE BIBLE (AS EXEMPLIFIED
BY THE ENGLISH, GERMAN AND OSSETIAN TRANSLATIONS
OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT)

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Цель настоящей статьи, посвященной проблеме репрезентации категории модальности в переводных текстах, заключается в выявлении и сравнительном анализе лексических и грамматических средств выражения эпистемической и неэпистемической модальностей в текстах перевода Священного Писания первой половины XX в. на английский и немецкий языки и тексте перевода Библии на осетинский язык начала XXI в. В качестве материала исследования привлечены тексты Нагорной проповеди Библии Менге и Американской стандартной версии, а также тексты современного перевода Евангелий на осетинский язык. Для достижения поставленной цели использовалась комплексная методика, включающая в себя методы контекстуального, семантического и сопоставительного анализов, а также элементы количественного анализа. В ходе исследования выявлены определенные закономерности в способах реализации категории модальности в текстах перевода Священного Писания. В результате проведенного анализа делается вывод о высокой частотности использования сослагательного наклонения для вербализации эпистемической модальности в немецком и осетинском языках, а также вывод об использовании инвертированного порядка слов в качестве средства уси-

ления степени достоверности знания в рамках языкового высказывания в текстах английского перевода и о существенно большей частотности употребления модальных глаголов как средства выражения значений долженствования и возможности в английском и немецком текстах по сравнению с осетинским. Выявляется преимущественное использование повелительного наклонения для вербализации неэпистемического значения волеизъявления во всех рассмотренных переводных текстах. Применение лексических средств в качестве экспликаторов модального значения нетипично для проанализированных текстов. Новизна работы определяется сравнительно-сопоставительным ракурсом осуществленного исследования, предопределившим привлечение к анализу переводных текстов из разноструктурных языков. Новой является также осуществленная в ходе исследования попытка выявить закономерности в использовании языковых способов реализации категории модальности в переводных текстах в корреляции с различными национальными картинками мира.

Ключевые слова: категория модальности, эпистемическая модальность, неэпистемическая модальность, лексические единицы, лексико-грамматические средства, переводные тексты, Священное Писание.

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Introduction

The texts of the Scripture represent the most important layer of every European culture and take a central place in their literary tradition. One of the brightest parts of those is considered to be the Sermon on the Mount of Christ, which still remains the moral compass of our society. As it is justly mentioned by V. Usoltsev, this passage could be perceived as a timeless and incontestable divine revelation, something relevant for both Apostolic period and modern times, and the text is not bound by the terms of time [1, 15–19]. It is common knowledge, that the Sermon on the Mount is perceived as a whole, complete and clearly structured composition. In spite of consisting of numerous, seemingly unrelated thematic passages, it has its own internal logic and cross cutting development.

The universal moral value and the structural integrity of the Sermon on the Mount make it a valuable source for analysis in terms of modality. The text can be considered modal in itself as it contains the core of Christ's teaching. Jesus deliberately and consistently dismantles the internal logic of Moses's legislation, replacing it with the logic of his doctrine, based on a fundamentally different message [2, 195].

Modality, in its turn, has been steadily attracting Russian and foreign researchers' attention for, being a functional and semantic-grammatical

category, it is regarded as one of the key notions of any language structure as it reflects various types of the subjective attitude of an utterance to the objective reality [3, 195] and can be represented by various lexical, grammatical and syntactic means.

Therefore, the purpose of the present article, devoted to the problem of verbalizing the category of modality in different linguacultures (English, German and Ossetian) in the XXth – XXIst centuries is to scrutinize the particular ways of expressing modality, both epistemic and non-epistemic, in the text of the Sermon on the Mount in the English and German translations of the XXth century (the American Standard Version and Menge Bible) and the modern Ossetian translation.

To achieve the aim of the study, the research has employed a complex methodological approach that included contextual-semantic and comparative analyses, thus allowing to identify specific characteristics of the modality implementation in the texts mentioned above, as well as some elements of quantitative analysis of the frequency of various modal constructions in the texts under study.

The contextual-semantic analysis was conducted to identify the meaning and the function of modal constructions in the texts concerned. This involved examining the immediate linguistic context, as well as a broader cultural and historical context in order to determine the intended meaning of the modality explicators. The comparative analysis, in its way, was aimed at identifying the similarities and differences in the use of modal constructions in the three samples of Sermon on the Mount. This involved a detailed examination of their frequency, distribution and form in each translation.

In order to ensure the accuracy and the reliability of the data, the sample text was selected from each version of the New Testament, the translations under study being the American Standard Version in English, the German Menge Bible, and the Ossetian text of the Holy Scriptures. The selected texts were then analysed using a combination of linguistic and statistical methods including close reading and annotation of the texts, alongside with identifying and quantifying cases of using modal constructions in the corresponding chapters of Gospel of Matthew.

Overall, this methodological approach allowed for a comprehensive and nuanced analysis of modality explicators in the English, German, and Ossetian translations of the Sermon on the Mount. The results of this study may contribute to a better understanding of the similarities and differences in the implementation of modality across different languages and cultures, as well as shed light on the role of moral values in shaping linguistic expression. The versions under analysis were written at a turning point of the world history, when certain moral standards became an essential part of the European nations' ideology.

Moreover, the peculiarity of the material, employed in the present study, is that the languages presented belong to completely different Germanic and Iranian language groups, which eventually may give us an opportunity to draw some conclusions as to the differences in implementation of the category of modality in various communities with different world outlooks. In this aspect we agree with Peter Gärdenfors, who proposes the idea of language units arising from cognitive ones, since the latter induce «constraints of what linguistic constructions are possible» in narration [4].

Main part

L.B. Croft defines modality as an «attitude toward the content of what is said» [5, 5], this attitude being the speaker's statement that expresses «either the degree to which he wishes to be held accountable for the truth value of what he said or the manner in which what he says, relates to his conception of reality» [5, 5].

Accordingly, foreign linguists classify the meanings of modal verbs in correspondence with their semantic structure into those expressing epistemic meaning and those coveting deontic meanings of obligation (dealing with either permission or prohibition) and dynamic volition [6, 131]. A.V. Averina also singles out epistemic, voluntary and deontic modality types, arguing that modal verbs can convey any of these meanings [7, 270].

Analyzing the non-epistemic meaning of German modal verbs, E.V. Bodnaruk introduces two additional semantic subcategories to the previously discussed ones, which can be conveyed explicitly, for instance, the verb «wollen» may reflect both internal and external sources of modality, or implicitly, e.g. «sollen». Thus, these new subcategories relate to the source of modality as it pertains to the subject of the sentence [8, 22].

The notion of epistemic modality embraces a range of linguistic means used to express the speaker's assessment of the factual state of the proposition. According to H. Craig, «the related aspect of the unified semantic field of the modals is a shared subjective tendency» [9, 40] as they accentuate the speaker's perception and assessment of the reality. The attention, thus, can be transferred from the objective activity in the main verb towards a subjective evaluation of the present, past or future possibility of the activity expressed by the main verb. Interestingly enough, there is an opinion that the Ossetian language is characterized by a strict differentiation between dynamic and epistemic types of modality, which distinguishes it from the European languages [10, 5].

However, there is another opinion presented by Kristin Davidse et al., who consider the difference between epistemic, deontic and dynamic modality to be rather vague both from the point of view of semantics and grammar. They suggest the differentiation between objective and speaker-related modals which are either coded by the so-called «representational structures, in which the elements of structure are added to each other to provide a more complete

description» or by «interpersonal structures, in which an interpersonal modifier changes the representational material in their scope» [11].

Modality is known to be expressed by different linguistic means including «certain verbs, verbal auxiliaries, adverbs associated with the verbal mood» – both the Subjunctive and the Imperative [5, 6], inversion, full-fledged words and particles with modal semantics. The latter may interact with different sentence types, such as imperatives, interrogatives and declaratives, and modify the impact of the sentence type, thus changing the illocutionary force of the utterance [12, 99]. One shouldn't overlook the fact that the Future Tenses also tend to express additional modal meanings due to the inherent modality of futurity. According to J. Whyte, the use of «shall» expresses determination and not pure futurity, and does not follow conventional rules. «It may well be said that, since «will» is so frequently used for pure futurity, it is losing its force for determination and that «shall», which is less and less used for futurity, may sound more emphatic...» [13, 335].

It is clear, therefore, that modality can be regarded as a complex lexical-grammatical category that can be expressed by a wide range of language means that are to be examined below.

The analysis has revealed that both epistemic and non-epistemic modality appear to be equally characteristic of the texts under study. All the presented translations of the Sermon on the Mount contain various types of epistemic modality that can be implemented in a number of ways, involving all the layers of the language structure: syntactical, grammatical and lexical.

It is common knowledge, that syntactically the inversion is used to add more weight to the utterance in English or German, thus making it sound more confident and stand out structurally in the text. The English translation of the Sermon on the Mount contains 26 cases of inverted constructions, the most striking examples of which are represented in the Beatitudes:

*Mw 5:4 «**Blessed are they that mourn:** for they shall be comforted. <...>»*

*Mw 5:12 «Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for **great is your reward** in heaven: for **so persecuted they the prophets** that were before you» [14].*

It is notable that the Ossetian translation contains expressions which look structurally close to those in the English text:

*Mw 5:4 «**Тæхудиаг сты** кæуджытæ – уыдон баййафдзысты рæвдыд».*

*Mw 5:12 «Цин кæнут æмæ райут– **уæлæрвты уæм æнхæлмæ кæсы стыр хорзæх**. Афтæ æфхæрдтой, уæ размæ цы пехуымпартæ уыди, уыдоны дæр» [15].*

It should be noted, however, that although the Ossetian translation of the passage is mostly similar to the English one in terms of word order, the former can be regarded as a means of expressing epistemic modality only to a degree, as there are no fixed syntactic structures in the given language. The similarities are likely to be accounted for by a common original and the willingness of the translators to follow the pattern of the sacred text.

The same is true about the German translation that demonstrates similar constructions:

*Mw 5:4 «**Selig sind die Bekümmerten, denn sie werden getröstet werden!**» <...>*

*Mw 5:12 «**Freuet euch darüber und jubelt, denn euer Lohn ist groß im Himmel! Ebenso hat man ja auch die Propheten vor euch verfolgt**» [16].*

Yet, unlike that of the English translation, the German verse Mw 5:12 contains a sentence with a regular word order, which may be explained by the peculiarities of the individual style of the German translators.

As the text itself represents the basics of Christianity, the usage of inversion in these cases testifies of the conclusiveness of these statements and, simultaneously, draws the readers' attention to the passage. Expressing a high degree of certainty, the abovementioned Beatitudes pose a good example of epistemic modality.

Another common means of expressing epistemic modality on the grammatical level can be represented by different types of the Subjunctive mood and the Conditionals, the Ossetian translation of the Sermon on the Mount, containing 53 examples, the English version, following with 22 examples of subjunctive forms, and the German text, employing 15 cases. The presented verses demonstrate various degrees of certainty in the statements voiced:

	Ног Фæдзæхст [15]	American Standard Version [14]	Menge Bibel [16]
Mw 5:29	«Дæ рахиз цæст дын тæригъæды хос куы уа, уæд æй фелвас æмæ йæ аппарат – хуыздæр дын у дæ уæнгтæй уу фесафын, цæйнæфæлтау дын дæ буар æггасæй дæр зындонмæ баннæрстæуа».	« And if thy right eye <i>causeth</i> thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members <i>should perish</i>, and not thy whole body <i>be cast</i> into hell».	« <i>Wenn dich also dein rechtes Auge ärgert (oder: zum Bösen verführen will), so reiß es aus und wirf es weg von dir; denn es ist besser für dich, dass eines deiner Glieder (dir) verloren geht, als dass dein ganzer Leib in die Hölle geworfen wird».</i>
Mw 6:22	«...Æмæ дæ цæст сыгъдæг куы уа , уæд дæ буар уууылдæр рухс уыдзæн».	«...if therefore thine eye be single , thy whole body shall be full of light».	«...Wenn nun dein Auge richtig (oder: gesund) ist , so wird dein ganzer Leib voll Licht sein (oder: helles Licht haben)».

The Ossetian and English verses contain corresponding examples of the Subjunctive with some minor differences including a case of the Infinitive in the Ossetian translation and a Present Simple form in the English text.

The highlighted forms accentuate the universal nature of the text under analysis, representing the essence of Christ's commandments. Therefore,

they refer to the different types of the Subjunctive that employ a great deal of generalization (where the Analytical Subjunctive with «*should*» expresses a little more certainty than the Conditional in the second passage) and show a lack of priority, as one of the functions of the Subjunctive mood. The aforementioned examples allow us to agree with E.B. Sattsaeu, who stresses that the Subjunctive mood expresses a possible or an expected present or future action in the Ossetian language [17, 87].

In the analyzed abstracts from Menge Bible, it is notable that in all the cases the Subjunctive is replaced by Present and Future Indicative forms, where the given verses are examples of conditional sentences with the conjunction «*wenn*» and «*als dass*» that express the epistemic meaning of probability.

One of the examples demonstrating partial coincidence of the German Konjunktiv II and the Ossetian the Subjunctive can be found in the following abstract:

	Ног Фæдзæхст [15]	American Standard Version [14]	Menge Bibel [16]
M w 7:9	«Йæ фырт дзы дзул куы кура, уæд ын дур чи ратта, уе 'хсæн ахæм исчи ис?»	«Or what man <i>is</i> there of you, who, if his son <i>shall</i> ask him for a loaf, <i>will</i> give him a stone?»	«Oder wo <i>wäre</i> jemand unter euch, der seinem Sohne, wenn er ihn um Brot <i>bittet</i> , einen Stein <i>reichte</i> ?»

Here Christ poses a rhetorical question, persuading his audience that they should trust God in terms of their sustenance. To illustrate his position, he presents a hypothetical situation where a father would reject his child's needs, the German and Ossetian sentences sounding highly improbable due to the use of Konjunktiv II. The subjectivity of the German version, however, is expressed less explicitly than that of the Ossetian text, while the English translation makes the use of indicative «*shall*» and «*will*» forms conveying the meaning of premeditation rather than futurity, which, in its turn, may be accounted for by the differences in the exegetic interpretation of the Scriptures by the translators.

The epistemic modality on the grammatical level can definitely be expressed by the English and German modal verbs. Although the English text under analysis contains the whole inventory of the modals, only «*may*» (6 of the 92 modals detected in the text) is used in its epistemic meaning, which is demonstrated by the following example:

Mw6:16 «Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they **may be seen** of men to fast» [14].

The modal verb «*may*» can be regarded as epistemic per se, the lack of certainty in what is said being one of its key meanings. The presented examples convey the idea that hypocrites pray openly for the sake of the mere possibility

to be seen as righteous people, although it may not necessarily happen.

At the same time, these cases in the German translation are represented by the «*um ... zu*» constructions, conveying the meaning of a possible purpose:

Mw 6:16 «Weiter: Wenn ihr fastet, sollt ihr kein finsternes Gesicht machen wie die Heuchler; denn sie geben sich ein trübseliges Aussehen, um sich den Leuten mit ihrem Fasten zur Schau zu stellen...» [16].

The mentioned examples are also based on supposition verbalized by conditional sentences and, being accentuated by «*um... zu*» construction, they can also be regarded as conveying epistemic modality.

Taking into account the frequency of the Oblique mood as the major means of verbalizing epistemic modality in the Ossetian text of the Sermon on the Mount, the verses above predictably contain more examples of the Subjunctive: «*уыдон ныридæггæн райстой сæ хорзæх*», «*цæмæй адæм феной, ком кæй дарынц, уый...*» [15].

It may be said that the epistemic use of modal verbs is generally not characteristic of the analyzed German translation. Only one example of those (out of 45 cases) demonstrates the meaning of supposition:

Mw 6:23 «Wenn also das in dir befindliche Licht Dunkelheit ist, wie groß muss dann die Dunkelheit sein!» [16].

Jesus suggests that his audience should imagine the immenseness of darkness that could possibly quench the light of God. The English text of this verse, however, contains the Present Simple form of the verb that does not convey any modal meaning. Therefore, the modality in the English translation, if any, may be implied on the contextual level only. Verbs that can be referred to as modal in the Ossetian language mostly convey non-epistemic meaning, therefore there are no examples of these in the text under study.

As for the lexical level of the language, epistemic modality can be expressed by a wide range of the so-called modal words. The English text of the Sermon on the Mount contains only 8 cases of these, whereas the German and Ossetian translations provide 7 and 4 cases correspondingly, the most common being «*verily*» / «*wahrlich*» / «*æуæз*» used in the repeated Biblical construction «*Verily I say unto you*».

It is notable that non-epistemic modality, which employs the meanings of obligation, ability, necessity and volition, can also be verbalized on different levels of language structure. As we have already stated, the Sermon on the Mount, being the essence of the Christian morality, is a modal text itself. This accounts for the widespread usage of deontic and voluntative modality.

Predictably, modal verbs turn out to be the most common means of expressing non-epistemic modality in the English text under study, the most wide-spread being «*shall*» with 65 cases. Apart from verbalizing the inherent idea of futurity, «*shall*» here is characterized by a different mode of distribution as it is used not only with the 1st person, but in all other environments.

Mw 6:4 «... thy Father who seeth in secret **shall recompense thee**».

Mw 7:16 «By their fruits ye **shall know them**» [14].

In the given verses the verbal forms with «*shall*» express both the idea of future events and the modal meaning of determination and obligation. 6:4 poses the God's promise to reward righteous men who are modest in their worship, while Mw 7:16 gives an instruction as to how one should differentiate between the good and the evil.

In the German and Ossetian translations of the text under study the given examples also employ the Future forms (Futurum I (werden + Infinitive) for the German text (37 cases) and synthetic forms with the suffix «-дзæн-» in the Ossetian version (51):

	Menge Bibel [16]	Ног Фæдзæхст [14]
Mw 6:4	«<...> dein Vater aber, der auch ins Verborgene hineinsieht, wird es dir alsdann vergelten ».	«Уæд де 'ххуысы хай уыдзæни сусæг, æмæ дæ Фыд, сусæггаг уынæг, дæу схорзæхджын кæндзæн [æргомæй]».
Mw 7:16	«An ihren Früchten werdet ihr sie erkennen ».	«Сæ хъуыддæгтæй сæ базондзы-стум ».

Although such forms have become a part of the grammatical tense paradigm they still convey, as it is clear from the given examples, the inherent meaning of volition and obligation.

The English «*shall*»-forms are also employed in the imperative meaning (8 cases on the whole), which can be demonstrated by the following example:

	Ног Фæдзæхст [15]	American Standard Version [14]	Menge Bibel [16]
Mw 5:27-29	«Сымах фехъуыстат, [рагон адæмæн] цы загъд уыди, уый: "Ма хæт" . <...> Дæ рахиз цæст дын тæригъæды хос куы уа, уæд æй фелвас æмæ йæ аннар ...»	«Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt not commit adultery : <...> And if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee...»	«Ihr habt gehört, dass (den Alten) geboten worden ist: "Du sollst nicht ehebrechen! "» «<...> Wenn dich also dein rechtes Auge ärgert (oder: zum Bösen verführen will), so reiß es aus und wirf es weg von dir...»

Mw 5:27 contains one of Moses's commandments and, thus, is evidently imperative. The prohibition to commit adultery is expressed in the German translation by means of the modal verb «*sollen*» (the latter being the most widely used modal verb in the German abstract under study with 27 examples throughout the text) and the negative particle «*nicht*», while the corresponding passage in the Ossetian text makes use of the negative form of the Imperative. The assertive nature of the abstract is supported in all cases

by the use of Imperative mood in Mw 5:29, where Christ accentuates the Old Commandments in order to call the multitudes to an even more righteous life.

It is worth mentioning that imperativeness is characteristic of all language systems and all types of texts and expresses the speaker's will, inducing the addressee to commit a certain action, thus, verbalizing modal volutative semantics [18, 79]. The main aspect of inducement in the texts under study is a combination of moral obligation and volition. It should be noted, inferring from the texts under study, that imperative forms are the second most common means of expressing non-epistemic modality in the English and German versions of the Sermon on the Mount (being incorporated in 67 and 24 examples correspondingly) and are even more characteristic of the Ossetian translation with 61 imperatives, mostly the 2-nd person both singular and plural, throughout the text. Here we can partially agree with A.P. Vydrin [10], who suggests that imperative in the Ossetian language is an ultimate means of expressing inducement, while subjunctive forms are closer to a wish.

Voluntative modality can be clearly traced in the famous prayer to «Our Father». Let us have a closer look at all the three versions:

	Ног Фæдзæхст [15]	American Standard Version [14]	Menge Bibel [16]
Mw 6:9-13	...«Нæ Уæларвон Фыд, сыгъдæг УÆД Дæ ном. АРЦÆУÆД Дæ Паддзахад. Уæларвы куыд у, афтæ зæххыл дæр уæд Дæ фæндон. Абон дæр нын ратт цæрынваг къæбæр. Ныббар нын нæ хæстæ, мах нæ хæсджынтæн куыд барæм, афтæ. Ма нæ бафтау фæлварæны, фыдбылызæй нæ бахиз»	«... Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed BE thy name. Thy kingdom COME . Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.»	«...Unser Vater, der du bist im Himmel: geheiligt WERDE dein Name! Dein Reich KOMME ! Dein Wille geschehe wie im Himmel, so auch auf der Erde! Unser askömmliches Brot gib uns heute! Und vergib uns unsere Schulden (= Verschuldungen), wie auch wir sie unsern Schuldner vergeben haben! Und führe uns nicht in Versuchung, sondern erlöse uns von dem Bösen!»

The aforementioned abstract in the English and German languages contains examples of both Imperative mood (highlighted in bold), verbalizing the pleas of the believers to the God and the subjunctive verbal forms (in capital letters) expressing desire for the Kingdom of Heaven with a shade of uncertainty as to what the future holds. The latter is expressed in the Ossetian translation by means of the 3-rd person singular imperative conveying a similar meaning. As for the pleas to God, they are predictably incorporated in the 2-nd person singular imperative and match their English and German equivalents.

Apart from the above-mentioned examples, volition is also expressed by «let»-phrases in the English version of the Sermon on the Mount (with 5 examples of these found in the text under study). Let us consider one of the verses containing such a construction:

	Ног Фæдзæхст [15]	American Standard Version [14]	Menge Bibel [16]
M w 6:3	«Ды та мæгуырæн куы æххуыс кæнай, уæд дæ галиу къух ма зонæд, дæ рахиз цы гæнæг у, уый»	«But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth... »	«Nein, wenn du Almosen gibst, so lass deine linke Hand nicht wissen, was deine Rechte tut »

The highlighted English phrase can be referred to both lexical and grammatical means of expressing voluntative modality. On the one hand, it poses an example of the so-called objective infinitive construction, on the other hand, though, the lexical meaning of the word «let» is that of permission in itself. A similar construction can be found in the German variant (2 cases of such a phrase found in the Sermon on the Mount of Menge Bible). It should be noted that «lassen» is generally regarded as a modal verb in its primary meaning, expressing mainly possibility. In the text under study, however, this is not the case, both examples conveying imperativeness. The Ossetian translation demonstrates another case of using the 3rd person singular imperative with the object the inducement refers to.

Non-epistemic modality has not been verbalized by means of syntax in the referred text. Going back to morphological means of expressing non-epistemic modality and modal verbs as the major means of verbalizing it in particular, the results of the research allow us to state that the inventory of the English modal verbs discovered in the text under study also includes «can» conveying the meaning of ability (7 cases), «will» and «would» expressing volition (9 and 3 cases correspondingly) and «should» in the meaning of obligation (2 cases).

The range of modals, identified in the German translation of the Sermon on the Mount, includes «können» conveying the meaning of ability (6 cases), «wollen» expressing volition (7 cases), «mögen» (1) – wish, necessity. The meanings of obligation, based on the will of the others, principle, commandment and law are expressed by the modal verbs «sollen» (27 cases), «dürfen» (2 cases), «müssen» (2 cases).

The Ossetian modal verbs detected in the text under study are not numerous and include the aforementioned «бон уæвын» in the meaning of ability (3 cases), «хъæуын» expressing obligation (3 cases) and «фæндын» which has voluntative semantics (1 case). Therefore, we may come to the conclusion that, as opposed to English and German versions, what could be called modal verbs per se are not the main means of expressing modality in the Ossetian text under study.

To illustrate the use of the modal verbs, let us consider the following examples:

	Ног Фæдзæхст [15]	American Standard Version [14]	Menge Bibel [16]
Mw 6:24	«Никæй бон у дыууæ хицауæн кусын – сæ иуæй йе сæфт уындзæн, иннæйы та уарздзæни <...>. Уæ бон нæ бауыдзæни Хуыцауæн æмæ мулкæн кусын».	«No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; <...> Ye cannot serve God and mammon».	«Niemand kann (gleichzeitig) zwei (sich widerstreitenden) Herren dienen ; denn entweder wird er den einen hassen und den andern lieben <...>: ihr könnt nicht (gleichzeitig) Gott und dem Mammon dienen ».
Mw 7:12	«Уæдæ адæммæ цæмæдæрдæр æнхæлмæ кæсут, уый сын аразут уæхæдæг дæр...»	«All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them...»	«Alles nun, was ihr von den Menschen (= von anderen) erwartet, das erweist auch ihr ihnen ebenso».

Verse Mw 6:24 in all the employed versions makes use of modal verbs with the same meaning – «*can*», «*können*» and «*бон уæвын*» – thus stressing a person's inability to pursue opposite goals, i.e. to foster both their soul and wealth. «*Will*» in the English translation is used to show the inner volition of the believer to incline to either side. This notion is verbalized in Menge and Ossetian Bibles primarily by means of the future tense. The Ossetian «*бон уæвын*» is seemingly lexical in its structure and consists of a link verb with a noun «*бон*» in the meaning of 'strength'. This phrase, however, is generally referred to as a potential modal form of the verb by the researchers of the Ossetian language [17, 87].

As for verse Mw 7:12, it contains the English modal verb «*would*» in the meaning of wish and «*should*» expressing the meaning of obligation to follow some moral principles. The former idea is implemented by lexical means both in the German and Ossetian passages employing «*erwarten*» and «*æнхæлмæ кæсын*» in the meaning of expectation. The meaning of obligation is embodied in similar imperative sentences in both German and Ossetian translations.

Conclusion

As a result of the analysis, it may be concluded that the modality of the Sermon on the Mount is implemented in all the examined translations not only on the contextual level, but also by a wide range of purely linguistic means, the Subjunctive and the Conditional being the most common way of expressing epistemic modality in the Ossetian and the German translations correspondingly. The English version makes an extensive use of inverted word order as a means to increase the degree of reliability of knowledge, which is

explained, in our opinion, by the strict regulation of the word order in English syntax.

In all the texts under study the use of the Imperative has been the major means of expressing the non-epistemic meaning of volition and inducement, while German and English are characterized by a wider range of modal verbs to express the meanings of ability, necessity and obligation, the English translation also featuring examples of non-epistemic modal «may».

The use of purely lexical means of expressing both epistemic and non-epistemic modality is rather sparse in all the translations under study, Menge Bible, though, displaying a wide range of the modal particles.

The highlighted similarities can be accounted for by the translative nature of the analyzed texts and the common original, while the differences are due to the essential divergence between the Germanic English and German languages and the Ossetian language belonging to the Iranian group. It should also be stated that the disclosed differences may also indicate the peculiarities of the national worldviews of the aforementioned ethnicities, this statement, however, requiring further investigation.

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THE MEANS OF EXPRESSING THE CATEGORY OF MODALITY IN THE TRANSLATED TEXTS OF THE BIBLE (AS EXEMPLIFIED BY THE ENGLISH, GERMAN AND OSSETIAN TRANSLATIONS OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT).

Keywords: *the category of modality, epistemic modality, non-epistemic modality, lexical units, lexical-grammatical means, translated texts, the Scriptures.*

The article, devoted to the problem of representing category of modality in translated texts, is aimed at identifying and comparing lexical and grammatical means of expressing epistemic and non-epistemic modalities in the XXth century English, German and the modern Ossetian Bible translations. The research is conducted on the material of the texts of the Sermon on the Mount from Menge Bible and the American Standard Version, as well as the Ossetian translation. The study employs a complex methodology including methods of contextual, semantic, comparative analyses and elements of quantitative analysis. The research reveals certain patterns of implementing the category of modality in Bible translations. Based on the analysis, the conclusion is drawn about a high frequency of Subjunctive mood verbalizing epistemic modality in German and Ossetian. Inversion is revealed as a means of strengthening the degree of knowledge reliability in the English translation, whereas modal verbs expressing obligation and possibility are proved to be used significantly more frequently in the English and German texts compared to the Ossetian one. The extensive use of Imperative is found to verbalize non-epistemic meaning of volition in all the analyzed translations. The use of lexical means of implementing modality is uncharacteristic of the analyzed texts. The novelty of the work is determined by comparative approach to the study, that accounts for scrutinizing the Bible translations into structurally different languages. The researchers attempt to trace the correlation between the language means of verbalizing the category of modality in the translated texts and various national worldviews.

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