

# English Language and Translation 2

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Language - 2018-19

Lesson 3: 20 November 2018

Modality

# Modal Verbs

A closed class:

Can

Could

May

Might

Shall

Should

Must

Need (to)

Dare (to)

Ought (to)

Will

Would

# Modal Verbs

Present the NICE syntactic features of auxiliaries:

- Negation: You cannot do that.
- Inversion: May I ask a question.
- Code: Yes, you may. (Ellipsis)
- Emphasis: No, you can't

# Modal Verbs

Incomplete verb forms:

- No infinitive
- No 3<sup>rd</sup> person conjugations
- Limited past forms
- No past or present participles

# Modal Verbs

Need (to)

I do not need to do that

I needn't do that

Do I need to do that?

Need I do do that?

I need to do that.

\*I need do that.

# Modal Verbs

Dare (to)

I do not dare to do that

I daren't do that

Do I dare to do that?

Dare I do that?

I dare to do that.

I dare say that is a good idea

# Modal Verbs

Epistemic (propositional) modality

Expresses a level of probability that a proposition or event is true and/or will occur:

Will – Shall – Must – Should - Ought to –  
Can – Could – May – Might

A present or future (never a past) meaning

# Modal Verbs

Epistemic (propositional) modality

A present or future (never a past) meaning when used with the simple infinitive:

I might go – I should go

A conjectural or contra-factual sense when used with the perfect infinitive:

He may have done it.

It can't have happened.



# Modal Verbs

Deontic modality

Relates to ability, permission, volition and obligation:

Can – May – Will – Must – Shall - Should

Generally, a present and/or future sense

# Modal Verbs

Deontic modality

Past references often with alternative forms:

- To be possible/permitted/allowed/able
- To be willing
- To be supposed to

# Modal Verbs

## Deontic modality

A true past form only with Can and Would:

- When I was a child I could speak French (Ability)
- I would (used to) study all day long (Volition)

# Modal Verbs

## Positive and Negative

- I must study these verbs
  - I have to study these verbs
  - I need to study these verbs
  - I should study these verbs
- 
- I must not repeat the same mistake
  - I do not have to repeat the exercise
  - I need not repeat the exercise
  - I should not repeat the exercise

# Modal Verbs

## Subjective and Objective

- I must study these verbs
- I need not repeat the exercise
- I cannot smoke here
  
- I have to study these verbs
- I do not have (need) to repeat the exercise
- I am not allowed to smoke here