

MODALITY VERSUS PERFORMATIVITY IN GHANAIAN NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS

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ABSTRACT: *This paper takes a look at how modal and lexical verbs are used to perform speech functions in the editorials of two Ghanaian newspapers. It establishes what speech acts are performed by the editors using the modal elements the paper sets out to look at. The primary focus of this discussion is to establish which speech acts are performed with the modal elements under consideration for this study. The study has as its background theories such as Austin's Speech Acts, and Context-Dependency and Lexical Specialisation of Kratzer (1981). The study examined three of the central modal auxiliaries and lexical verbs in thirty editorials of the two Ghanaian newspapers under review, The Daily Graphic and The Ghanaian Times from February to March 2016. This exploration was done with the aim of identifying the distribution of modal auxiliaries and lexical verbs and their speech acts in the data. An interesting finding is that the use of will, should, must dominate the other modals in expressing speech acts. The modal auxiliaries mostly help in passing on information. In some few instances, however, some strong deontic modal auxiliaries such as must and should were identified to be expressing a command. The most frequent being must expressing obligation. With regards the modal lexical verbs, the editors are indiscriminate in their choice. It is observed that every lexical verb is worthy enough to perform speech acts.*

KEYWORDS: Modality, Performativity, Ghanaian, Newspapers

INTRODUCTION

This paper is an exploration of modal auxiliary verbs and modal lexical verbs used in expressing modality in the editorials of two Ghanaian newspapers in English; The *Daily Graphic* and The *Ghanaian Times* henceforth *D.G* and *G.T*. In human life, language does much more than merely states facts. Other traditional functions such as commanding and questioning are performed through the vehicle of language. In expressing these traditional functions, attitudes and emotions which may include hedging, demanding, suggesting are equally expressed consciously or unconsciously through linguistic and non linguistic cues. These functions of language conflate under the term modality. In a general sense, the term modality refers to expressions of attitude, opinion, sentiment, judgment etc. of a speaker of a perceived reality.

The use of performativity in studies of modality is gaining interest. Performativity was originally a speech acts concept. By performativity, one is concerned about the particular communicative function performed by a speaker with an utterance. Accordingly, 'actions' such as informing, requesting, questioning and commanding are believed to be performed with an utterance. Modality, on the other hand, is said to be an attitudinal phenomenon. It is a matter of one's attitude behind one's expression. A synthesis of these two notions implies that the expression of one's attitudes definitely results in a variety of speech functions.

Studies in modality in Ghana, such as those of Owusu-Ansah, (1994), Ngula (2007), analysed modality using the modal semantic theory framework but not performativity of speech acts theory.

Frimpong, (2007) in an unpublished desertation gave it a sub-topic in his work but did not talk about it extensively. Austin's speech acts theory has featured significantly in several semantic discussions but not much has been done in the area of modality and speech acts in Ghana yet. An aspect of Austin's speech acts theory of 1962 is performative acts or utterances.

Later developments upon performatives include Palmer (1994) Faller (2006) and Nuyts (2000). These discussions explore performativity of modal models. Palmer (1986: 16) writes; "Modality could, that is to say be defined as the grammaticalisation of speakers (subjective) attitudes and opinions." Modal forms do not designate an attitude of the speaker, but they express it. In other terms they do not fulfill the function of saying something, but that of doing something.

They bring into existence an attitude or an opinion of the speaker. In this sense they can be considered as performative (Palmer 1986:60, Verstraete, 2001).

As performative, modal forms are also indexical, that is, they define their meaning only from the speech situation in which they are uttered, context dependency by Kratzer (1987) will therefore also be used as one of the theories to analyse the data.

Conceptual Analysis

Performativity

Austin's speech acts theory has featured significantly in several semantic discussions. An aspect of this theory is his performative utterances. He begins his discussion by drawing a distinction between constative and performative utterances. This is a distinction between utterances that merely describe the event or action and those that perform the real action of the proposition.

Constatives are the utterances that only describe an event or action. Because of their descriptive role, they are referred to as descriptive utterances in other works (Nuts et al, 2006, Faller, 2006; De Haan, 2005). These utterances are normally factual statements or reports about a speech event. For example, in the simple statement '***It is raining***', without any special prosodic pattern to index an added meaning, it remains just a report of a factual event.

Performance utterances, on the other hand, do more than describe or report an event or action. They perform the action itself. For instance, in the utterance ***I name this baby Bob***, the baby, thereby instantly takes on the identification tag-Bob'-with immediate effect from the moment of the utterance.

According to Austin, performative applies to several events. These include marrying, christening, baptizing, naturalising etc. Two types of performatives are identified. These are primary performances and explicit performatives. Explicit performatives are utterances which contain performative verbs and whose intention is without any doubt. Primary performatives though perform the action of the utterance leave more room for denial since their intentions are not explicit enough. The following examples explain the two categories;

I'll be at your end tomorrow (primary performative)

I **promise** to be at your end tomorrow. (Explicit performative)

Apparently, though the illocutionary force of the two utterances above is a promise, it is not explicitly stated in the first one and the addresser can deny that it was a promise. For the avoidance of the doubt the intention of the second utterance is expressed explicitly with the use of the performative verb 'promise'. Verbs of this nature include *forgive, pledge, swear, accept, apologise, baptise confess, name* etc.

For an utterance to be an explicit performative, Austin suggests it must take place in a special speech situation and that there are certain conditions that must be present at the speech situation (Lyons 1977; Umson ed. 1964). Not only this, Austin further suggests that the utterance must of a necessity have a first person subject and the performative verb must be in the simple present tense. It means that, for a marriage or a christening to be valid it must follow some 'felicity' conditions. It must be performed by a proper official at an appropriate place and must be attended by witnesses etc.

It is additionally noted that primary performatives always have their explicit performative versions. For instance, the second utterance in the examples above can be seen as the explicit performative version of the first utterance.

Austin was quick to admit though in later lectures, that performatives can exist outside the first person indicative paradigm as in the utterance;

All attendants are reminded to report back later in the afternoon.

Here the verb is in the passive voice and the subject is obviously not first person. Details of the requirements of performative utterances may not be necessary here. But it is important to note that, in the course of his lectures, Austin collapsed the constative/ performative dichotomy by saying that, in a sense, every utterance accomplishes a form of action. Utterances therefore came to be classified into locutionary acts, illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts.

A locutionary act is the basic enunciation of an utterance. It is the very act of producing a meaningful utterance. An illocutionary act, on the other hand, is an act performed in saying something: making a statement or a promise, issuing a command or request...' (Lyons, 1977). A perlocutionary act is the effect achieved with an utterance.

Various contributions have been made to the discussion of speech acts. The most recent of these contributions include Nuts et al (2005) and Faller (2006). Application of performatives in these and other discussions has been to see what act is performed by a speaker towards an addressee with an utterance. Acts performed in most cases include ordering, commanding, persuading. etc.

By performativity one is concerned about the particular communicative function performed by a speaker with an utterance. Accordingly, 'actions' such as informing, questioning and commanding are believed to be performed with an utterance. Modality on the other hand, is said to be an attitudinal phenomenon. It is a matter of one's attitude behind what he says.

Batch (1979) has it that although the focus of speech act theory has been on utterances, especially those made in conversational and other face-to-face situations, the phrase 'speech act' should be taken as a generic term for any sort of language use, oral or otherwise. Speech

acts, whatever the medium of their performance, fall under the broad category of intentional action, with which they share certain general features.

Performativity will be specifically applied in this study to identify what acts are performed with the use of the modal expressions in the corpus. Thus, sampled sentences from the data will be considered for their performative content.

Context-Dependency and Lexical Specialisation

Context-Dependency and Lexical Specialisation theory appears in the works of Angelika Kratzer (1981, 1991) on modality. This is a pragmatic approach to the study of modality. This theory features in von Stechow (2006). Stechow quotes Kratzer's argument that modal meanings should not be treated as 'a case of (accidental) polysemy.' Rather, modal meanings should be conceived as the product of 'context-dependency'. This means that, modal elements are in themselves skeletal out of context. Whether they are informing, commanding depends largely on the linguistic environment. The assumption in this discussion is that all modal auxiliaries pick up meanings according to their environment of use.

An extension to the Context-Dependency and Lexical Specialization theory will be to see how far sociolinguistic factors affect language. One is here thinking of the extent to which context is a determinant in the birth of a new variety. The question is, when the same linguistic expressions are used in different socio-cultural contexts, do they yield the same semantic realizations? Modal expressions in English, for instance, are universal. But their meanings, for obvious pragmatic reasons are relative to context. And what specific meanings are realized with these universal linguistic units among Ghanaian users of English is what this paper seeks to do.

This discussion therefore, is an endeavour to identify what speech acts are possibly performed with the modals in the data. An attempt is made here at studying the performative effects of modal auxiliaries and modal lexical verbs.

Traditionally, modal auxiliaries are sub-categorised into central and marginal modals (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech, & Svartvik, 1985). The discussion explores how the central modal auxiliaries and lexical verbs are exploited in the editorials of the newspapers under this study.

Modality is as much a matter of meaning, as it is a grammatical reality and transferring meaning from one language to another, as is usually the case in a second language situation, is not without some difficulty. And this is where pragmatics and semantics converge. That is, meaning making has contextual implications. People's cultural orientations and experiences are reflected in how they make meaning of universal categories. The conflict of interest in meaning making is a prevalent reality in the second language situation. This is because one is continually required by regular circumstances to render feeling, notions, opinions etc., native to one's culture. It is this intrinsic relationship between language and culture that Sapir (1921), cited in (Wardhaugh, 1992), discusses. It becomes more difficult when a writer transmits modal realities from his/ her cultural experiences to people of different cultural background.

METHODOLOGY

A total of 20 editorials are selected for the study with 10 editorials selected from each of the two newspapers chosen for the study. A total of 150 modal auxiliary and 100 lexical verb usages are recorded in the data. A few of these modal auxiliaries and lexical verbs are randomly picked for the purpose of discovering their speech functions.

Examples of modal auxiliaries used in the speech context of the selected editorials of this work are listed in the discussion;

It is an observation that the most frequented sources of reading material for the average educated Ghanaian are the local newspapers. This study is therefore a linguistic analysis of selected editorials of two daily national newspapers.

The study is basically textual analysis, focusing on how modal models are used to explore modal meaning through certain linguistic variables such as context dependency and performativity, to find out whether the meaning of modal auxiliaries and lexical verbs can be determined through context as well as to find out the actions inherent in modal utterances.

What the researcher is trying to do here is to explore the particular communicative functions performed by a speaker with an utterance. Austin (1964).

Two sampling methods were employed at two different stages of the corpus creation. While the quota sampling was used to select categories of text, the purposive sampling approach was used to select samples of each category of text. Two months; February and March editions of the newspapers; both The Daily Graphic and the Ghanaian Times were picked for the study. These were chosen for two reasons; those months happen to be the time the data was collected. They were therefore considered current and for that matter will reflect contemporary usage. In purposive sampling, selection is by choice, not by chance. A sample is chosen which is thought to be typical of the universe with regard to the characteristics under investigation Twumasi, (1986). Since the population from which a corpus is created to represent a variety of English is unlimited, a corpus builder ought to strive to make his/her corpus as representative as possible of the language from which it is chosen Sinclair, (2005). The sampling method which allows for a careful selection of categories of text to achieve representativeness is the purposive sampling method, and this method was therefore applied at this stage.

The Editorial in Ghana

The editorial serves as a platform for the media house to express its philosophies. Editorials are not just coverage of news events but also comments on events and contain background information, explanations, interpretations as well as opinions on the issues at stake. The editorial could be seen as a conscious expression of the media house's position on a particular issue. It could be seen as the voice of the editor, publisher and owner of the newspaper seeking to inform, admonish, influence, petition, appeal and motivate readers concerning important issues. These functions of the editorial make the researcher believe situating the study within performativity of Austin's speech acts theory is appropriate looking at their performative actions.

For the reader the editorial clarifies issues that have been raised in the paper or elsewhere. In other words, the editorial reports and also interprets the news for the reader since, according to MacDougall (1973) and Hulteng (1973), modern-day readers are inundated with information

and are, consequently, at times unable to come to conclusions. As a result, readers often assume a submissive reading position and are simply happy to accept the “undoubted superior knowledge of the writer” (Wallace, 1992:60) and this is exactly the case in the Ghanaian situation. Some readers of the newspapers would like to read the editorial to find out the position of the media house so as to also take a stand on issues unraveling in the country.

The discourse functions of the editorials to petition, admonish, appeal inform etc, therefore make them a very likely source for virtually all the speech acts.

Thus, various forms of modality are seen in them. As to how they are expressed is the purpose of this paper.

RESULTS/FINDINGS

Modality versus Performativity

As already stated, by performativity, one is concerned about the particular communicative function performed by a speaker with an utterance. Accordingly, ‘actions’ such as informing, requesting, questioning and commanding are believed to be performed with an utterance. Modality, on the other hand, is said to be an attitudinal phenomenon. It is a matter of one’s attitude behind one’s expression. A synthesis of these two notions implies that the expression of one’s attitudes definitely results in a variety of speech functions.

This discussion is an endeavor to identify what speech acts are possibly performed with the modal models in the data. An attempt is made here at studying the performative effects of modal auxiliaries and modal lexical verbs in the data.

The identification of meanings of modal use was based on my subjective judgements aided by the linguistic contexts in which the modals occurred. Palmer (1986) has shown that in identifying which usage belongs to which category of meaning, one has to rely on one’s idiosyncratic judgements.

A total of 526 modal auxiliary usages are recorded in the data. A few of these modal auxiliaries are randomly picked for the purpose of discovering their speech functions. Examples of modal auxiliaries used in the speech context of the selected editorials of this work are listed below for the discussion;

1. This means that we *must* be grateful for any assistance we receive from others. (D.G. 25- 11- 06)
2. For all you know, the total amount spent on the health sector *might* be running into billions of cedis... (M. 22- 07- 06)
3. The problem *can* be attributed to a number of factors including poverty, broken homes and forced marriages. (G.T. 02- 10- 06)
4. Also, views expressed during talks *may* change and positions may shift dramatically in the exchanges before conclusions are agreed. (G. T. 09- 10- 06)

5. ...the big men *should* let their children sacrifice to bridge the gap (D. G. 09- 02- 06)
The re-launching of the programme is timely as it will help the citizenry to keep their environment clean... (G. T. 16- 12- 06)
6. The occasion *will* be marked with a national parade of school children and security personnel. (D.G,5-3-16)
7. Accordingly, we *would* want to appeal to the assemblies which failed to agree on the candidacy of a PM to rethink their positions... (D.G. 03-11-06)
8. One of the major provisions of the 1992 Constitution intended...that, "It *shall* be the duty of every citizen to declare his..." (D.G. 13-11-06) (Informing)

Modal auxiliaries in the above excerpts express four speech functions. In examples 2, 3, 4, and 6 might, can, may, and will are informing. Thus, the authors use these modals to pass on information. The modals must, should and shall in examples 1, 5 and 8 express the speech function of a command, though not through the imperative form. Then would of example 7 perform the speech function of request.

Some more speech acts identified in the data are the following

1. It is, therefore, the hope of the Times that the West Africa Examination Council *would* conduct an investigation into the cause of the leakage, and take immediate steps to address the situation (G.T 15-2-2016)
2. Perhaps the clergy *should* go back to the foundations of Christianity which is the true word of God," President Manama advised, (G.T 6-2-2016)
3. we believe the GTUC and its constituent assembly *will* abandon their original plan to demonstrate, as the path of dialogue with government has yielded dividends. (G.G. 6-2-2016)
4. The commission is a statutory body with clearly defined goals and *must* be seen as such and justifiably too! (G.T 1-2-16)
5. Life is precious so we *must* protect it at all cost! (G.T 2-3-2016).
6. Strict separation of powers *must* be respected at the corporate level to ensure effective management of organizations. (D.G 2-3-2016).
7. The money *must* be used strictly for its intended purpose. (D.G. 2-3-16)
8. There *should* be zero tolerance for shoddy work. (D.G 2-3-2016)
9. They *must* not wait for their funds to dry up before they begin looking for support. (D.G 22-2-2016)
10. The DAILY GRAPHIC believes that the country *should* not relapse after providing these facilities but continue to upgrade them in line with technological advancement. (D.G. 21-2-2016)

11. They *should* exercise restraint and avoid pettiness and the pursuit of parochial political agenda. (G.T.19-3-2016)
12. There abounds evidence in social science literature that women are resourceful and hardworking, so we *cannot* wish away their contributions to national development! (G.T. 12-3-2016)
13. We, therefore, urge the government to strengthen the alternative livelihood schemes in mining communities and assist galamsey operators to acquire concessions, so that their activities *can* be monitored and streamlined. (D.G. 20-2-2016)
14. So our plea is that, the voter *should* be made aware of his/her responsibilities and duties, before he/she goes to the poll, to get it all wrong. (G.T. 29-2-2016)

The modal auxiliaries in the above excerpts express four speech functions. The modals *would*, *should* and *will* in examples 1, 2 and 3 express the speech function of a directive where the speaker tries to make the addressees do something matching the modals with such action verbs as conduct, go back and abandon respectively thus imposing an obligation on the addressees. Also, the modals *must* in examples 4-7 and *should* in example 8 express the speech function of command as evidenced from the above through the imperative form. The speech function, advice-giving/caution is also found with modals *must*, *should* in examples 9, 10, 11 and *can* in example 12 respectively expressed with the negation 'not' are illustrated above. Then *can* and *should* of examples 13 and 14 perform the speech function of request.

Formal imperative structures in the data are just about three. But certain structures without the formal features of the imperative mood express command.

These latter structures combine with the true imperatives in this discussion. Below are the imperative structures recorded;

Let us all resolve to work hard; Stop the Saboteurs! Let us all Beware; This Discrimination Should Stop! Right Must Prevail; Let's Stop stealing Money; Let us maintain the president; Hard Work Must be Hallmark in 2016; March Towards Growth; pastors Must be Exemplary;

The structures recorded under imperative fall into three patterns. There are structures which begin with *let us/let's...*, structures without a subject e.g. *March Towards Growth; Stop the Saboteurs! Come Let us vote for the right person* etc. Then there are formal statements performing the speech function of a command e.g. *Right must prevail*.

It is observed that these imperative and pseudo-imperative structures characteristically feature mostly as the headlines of the editorial columns. Moreover, a closer consideration of the list of statements with the speech function of command reveals that they contain 'strong' modal auxiliaries of the deontic typology typically *must* and *should*. It is these deontic modals that enable the non-imperative forms perform the speech function of a command. The impression is that, apart from using these particular modals *must* and *should*, it is doubtful the editors have recourse to other modal models in expressing directives or commands.

It is again remarkable that the traditional requirement of an exclamation mark after imperative structures is absent in some imperative expressions. There is no consistency in the use of this punctuation mark, though. The authors just decide where they want to use the mark. As a result, the statement *this Indiscipline Should Stop!* Is punctuated with the exclamation mark while true

imperative structures such as *come Let us all campaign against corruption, March Towards Growth* and all structures with ‘*let us/lets...*’ are bare. The issue here is not that a formal declarative is punctuated with an exclamation mark but what determines which structure should take an exclamation mark. It is very normal that punctuations are used in unexpected contexts for special communicative effect. So that authors can manipulate these elements in order that they may appropriately convey their message.

The problem arises when the writer uses the traditional sentence types to perform the appropriate speech function and refuses to punctuate them accordingly. The position this discussion takes is to look at the speech function performed and name the structure as such. And so structures with inherent content of a command are classified under imperatives with or without exclamation marks.

The following table illustrates the occurrences of the highest speech functions in the frequently occurring modals in the data

Table 1: frequently occurring modals

MODAL	FUNCTION	TOTAL NUMBER OF OCCURRENCE	PERCENTAGE
will	prediction	7	9.2
	Intention	6	7.8
	Informing	8	11
	Directive	7	9.2
must	Obligation	15	19
	Directive	10	13
	necessity	7	9.2
should	Obligation	9	12
	directive	7	9.2
TOTAL		76	100%

WILL

Prediction : the epistemic interpretation of *will* in the data sample mainly involves ‘prediction and happens to be the most common use of *will* in the Ghanaian context. There are 100 cases of *will* in the data that carry a sense of prediction. The idea of knowledge does not permit a pain and absolute assertion. Coates (1983, p. 179) shows that this meaning of *will* can be paraphrased I predict that...and the main prediction always has future time reference. According to Quirk et al (1985. P. 228) the meaning can be glossed by “ it is (very) likely that... here are some notable examples from the data sample for illustration:

1. “ the best time will be the when schools are in session. (G. T. 20-3-16)
- 2 ... and very soon our own children *will abandon* tradition. (G. T. 21-3-16)
- 3.This *will enable* the students to learn how to use English in socially appropriate ways within various socio – cultural contexts. (D.G 30-3-16)
4. Such an inquiry will help identify real state of the nation. (G. T. 26-2-16)
5. Any objective analysis of current economic trends will show that we need to sit up as a nation.

In all these examples, the meaning of *will* is one of prediction. For example we can interpret the meaning of (1) “I predict that, the best time is when schools are in session. (G. T. 20-3-16)

Intention

The volitional sense of ‘intention’ is more common than that of *will*=‘willingness’ in the sample. The meaning ‘intention’ is implied when the circumstances clearly involve a future event that is planned by the speaker /writer. The following are some examples for illustration.

1. We, however, call for prudence in the management and application of the funds such that the country *will* derive optimum benefit from the initiative. (D.G 2-3-2016)
2. It is through the power of the thumb that we *will* choose our leaders. (D.G 20-3-2016)

In the above illustrations even though the events to be taken are not planned by the writers, they chose to identify with the planners in the realization of those goals.

As the prime function of the editorial is basically to inform and report events, the most obvious cases revealed in the corpus show that the speaker/writer reports the intention of others as the following examples show.

1. This *will* be a very significant initiative to revamp the road sector and open up the countryside... (D.G 2-3-2016)
2. The Electoral Commission *will* soon embark on the biometric voters registration exercise to prepare for this year's general election and we call on Ghanaians to actively take part in the forthcoming exercise,(D.G 20-3-2016)
3. Recognising their duties as non-executive directors *will* enable board members to provide guidance towards the attainment of corporate goals. (D.G 2-3-2016)
4. The exercise *will* provide sanity in the political arena, as a basis for the general acceptance of the result in the 2012 election. (G.T 19-3-2016)

Generally, the two meanings of *will* described so far are very much similar. That is, the use of modal *will* to indicate willingness’ is very much similar to the modal *will* expressing ‘intention’. In coates’ (1983, p. 173) own words, “ the difference between *will* -willingness and *will* - intention is a subtle one since both describe a state (either depicting the subjects willingness or his intention) and both involve single future event. But the difficulty in separating these two meaning of *will* seems to be resolved, as coates establishes that the difference between the two meaning is one of focus; that is while *will* - willingness focus on the subjects state of mind *will* - intention focuses on some future event.

Directive

Will combines with the main verb in the sentence to tentatively convey the notion of a ‘directive’ in the sample, two cases are recorded. The examples are given here:

1. we believe the GTUC and its constituent assembly *will abandon* their original plan to demonstrate, as the path of dialogue with government has yielded dividends. (D. G, 2012-2-6)

3. The DAILY GRAPHIC, therefore, calls on the leadership of organised labour and the government *to continue to dialogue*, so that whatever decision they arrive at will be in the interest of all. (D. G, 2012-2-6)

This sense of a directive conveyed by modal *will* + the main verb in the simple present tense seems to be a peculiar feature emerging in the editorials (Frimpong, 2007). In the examples, the impression of a **request** is seen when we consider that the writer is calling for something to be done about a situation or some action to be taken on a particular matter.

MUST

The 63 occurrences of *must* in the data exhibit deontic obligation and necessity speech acts with the deontic obligation having wider semantic range.

Obligation

As Table 2 shows, the primary and most frequent function of *must* in the sample is to express deontic 'obligation'. 17 cases are recorded in the corpus representing obligation. Though the modal *should* also expresses deontic obligation as seen in the data, when modal *must* is used to express deontic obligation meaning, it is considered as a stronger equivalent of *should* (Yule, 1997). However, considering the use of *must* to express deontic obligation, one can observe from the data that the 17 examples extend from strong to weak obligation. In other words, they range from cases which can be paraphrased 'it is imperative/obligatory' (strong obligation) to cases where the paraphrase 'it is important' (weak obligation) is more appropriate. The deontic obligation meaning often involves animate subjects (typically humans) who are capable of performing the actions required by the obligation. Here are examples from the data in which *must* expresses a stronger sense of obligation:

1. The various transport unions *must* also teach, their members to behave professionally in order to minimize these accidents. (G.T, 5-3-16)
2. We call for a radical change in the approach to solving the problems in the education sector, and it *must* be now! (G.T, 2-3-16)
3. We believe the authorities *must* see the fight through to its logical conclusion. (D.G, 7-3-16)
4. These wicked and obnoxious practices abound throughout the country, and we *must* nip them in the bud. (G.T, 28-2-16)
5. Our pastors and other church leaders *must* move away from the spiritual corruption which is gradually creeping into the church and fervently live up to their call. (G.T, 6-2-16)
6. Politicians *must* also spare the nation the unhealthy practice of using the media as the conduit to settle personal scores. (G.T, 21-2-16)
7. Strict separation of powers *must* be respected at the corporate level to ensure effective management of organizations. (D.G, 2-3-16)
8. The money *must* be used strictly for its intended purpose. (D.G, 2-3-16)
9. Women *must* continue to strive! (G.T 12-3-16)

In these examples 'it is imperative/obligatory' interpretation of *must* is more appropriate. The obligation sense is strong in these cases because they involve urgent responsibilities and instructions that are binding on the persons involved. It is clear in such examples that failure to perform those responsibilities may lead to some devastating consequences hence their urgency.

On the other hand, the following examples from the sample demonstrate the weak obligation sense of *must* where the paraphrase 'it is important' is more appropriate

- (1) It is about people; and every development process *must* always target the well-being of the people. (D.G, 14-2-16)
- (2) As President J.E.A. Mills said, "... we *must* act in ways that are pleasing to God". (D.G, 20-3-16)
- (3) We *must* all continue to act our parts well. (D.G, 20-3-16)
- (4) We *must* demonstrate our religiosity with acts that tell our neighbors that we are true believers of God. (D.G, 20-3-16)

In these examples the obligation sense of *must* appears weaker than those found in (1) – (9). Besides, it is clear that examples (1) – (4) appear more as a suggestion than as an instruction. The obligation sense of *must* in these examples is therefore non-binding on the persons expected to perform those actions.

Necessity

Another meaning for modal *must*, is identified as necessity which is common throughout the 63 uses of *must*. Roughly, it can be paraphrased 'it is necessary for...' (Coates, 1983, p.32). The following examples illustrate the point:

1. Many a time we fail to maintain our equipment and facilities and turn round to blame the government. That negative attitude *must* change. (D.G, 2-21-16)
2. We *must* put our health first. (D.G, 1-2-16)
3. It is not easy to take money from government kitty and that explains why the GES *must* have a system in place to ensure that before the students get back to school, everything is set for a smooth transition. (D.G, 13-2-16)
4. Those we give our mandate to *must* be deserving of that honour to serve God and Ghana. (D.G, 20-3-16)
5. We *must* be seen to be practicing what we claim to believe in. (G.T, 21-2-16)
6. The PAC *must* be given the teeth to bite in order to sanitise public financial administration. (G.T, 6-3-16)
7. In deed the infringing among management and board of members of the hospital is worrying and *must* therefore be checked immediately. (G.T, 24-2-16)
8. We feel the current situation at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital is not the best, and the president *must* step in to restore order. (G.T, 24-2-16)

9. Women especially those in their 30s *must* examine their lifestyles and consult medical experts anytime they see abnormalities....(G.T, 2-3-16)

Prediction

The epistemic interpretation of *will* in the sample mainly involves ‘prediction’ and this happens to be the most common use of *will* in the editorials looked at. The idea of prediction means saying what one thinks will happen because one’s state of knowledge does not permit a plain and absolute assertion. This meaning of *will* can be paraphrased “I predict that...” and the main prediction always has future time reference. According to Quirk et al (1985. P. 228) the meaning can be glossed by “it is (very) likely that... here are some notable examples from the sample for illustration:

1. BARRING any climatic change, the country's weather pattern shows that the rainy season will start from early May and end some time, mid-July. (G.T, 2012-3-21)
2. No doubt, the future will be full of challenges, but they need to brave the odds, and confront the difficulties ahead. (G. T, 2012-7-7)
3. Failure to comprehensively and firmly deal with breaches of the peace will motivate others to do same, if not worse.(D. G, 2012-3-27)
4. But if we go along with the present development paradigm that focuses on economic development, instead of human-centred development, the living standards of the people will continue to deteriorate. (D. G, 2012-2-14)
5. MANY Ghanaians, particularly those infected with HIV and AIDS, will heave a sigh of relief following the announcement by the government that it has allocated GHC150 million to support the national response to the pandemic for the next five years.(D.G, 2012-2-22)
6. This is particularly so in this election year when many uniform men and women will be called on to maintain law and order. (D. G, 2012-2-21)
7. Some of the victims of the pandemic are very skilled and talented individuals whose talents Ghana will miss. (D. G, 2012-2-22)
8. So that we can ensure sustainable development that will take care of the needs of future generations. (D.G, 2012-2-20)
9. In the case of Ghana, the general election which will come on in December has given another reason for people especially politicians to be in an expectant mood. (G.T 2012-2-23)

In all these examples, the meaning of *will* is one of prediction.

For example, we can interpret the meaning of (1) as I predict that the rainy season starts early May to some time, mid-July.

SHOULD

In the data the modal *should* is used to perform five acts. It expresses ‘advice’, ‘obligation’, ‘recommendation’, ‘directive’, ‘suggestion’, and ‘necessity’ statements. Each of these meanings and illustrations are given below.

Obligation:

Should frequently expresses a deontic meaning of ‘obligation’ in the corpus. The obligation uses are usually expressed in terms of appropriate behaviour. This function of *should* as already stated in the discussions of *must* has been generally regarded as a weaker sense of obligation than is found with modal *must* (Yule, 1996, p.107). At its strongest, *should* has the meaning of moral obligation or duty. At its weakest, it merely offers advice, suggestion or recommendation. The following examples illustrate this cline of meaning:

1. We should not allow anyone to use foul means to get to power. (D. G, 2012-3-20)
2. As law makers, they should initiate steps to expunge that clause from the Constitution. (G. T, 2012-2-20)
3. The fact still remains that the NCCE should not exist as merely as the manifestation of a fine democratic institution, it must be seen to be working. (G. T, 2012-2-1)
4. We believe the ECG, as one of the utility service providers, should be up and doing, by ensuring that customers are given efficient and reliable services all the time. (G. T, 2012-2-27)
5. We believe that in staying focused on its mission, the UCC should not lose sight of its original mandate to train graduate professional teachers for the basic and second-cycle schools. (D. G, 2012-2-7)
6. The DAILY GRAPHIC believes that our commitment to religion should not be seen in the outward appearance and public show of religiosity. (D. G, 2012-3-20)
7. We should not think that the pandemic is the figment of anybody's imagination. (D. G, 2012-2-22)
8. "Perhaps the clergy should go back to the foundations of Christianity which is the true word of God," Vice President Manama advised, (G. T, 2012-2-6)
9. Of course, there should be some amount of humour to make proceedings in the House a bit interesting, but this should be done in such a way that discipline would not be undermined. (G. T, 2012-2-20)
10. These are achievements that we should all be glad of and support to ensure that the country assumes its proper place in the world. (D. G, 2012-2-6)

These examples reveal the various facets of the deontic ‘obligation’ sense of modal *should*. As noted, at the strongest end of the cline *should* takes on the meaning of moral obligation or duty. Examples (1), (2), (3) and (4) are of this type. Examples (5), (6) and (7) reveal the weakest functions of obligation where *should* merely offers advice, (8) and (9) offer suggestion and (10) recommendation.

Furthermore, one of the corpus examples contains a ‘how’ interrogative clause. According to Coates (1983), such forms are idiomatic. Despite the interrogative form of such expressions, they are essentially statements asserting that some state of affairs is not necessary. In other words, they are rhetorical questions that convey the speaker’s impatience with a supposed obligation. It is shown below:

1. “How long *should* it take the Finance Minister to iron out issues concerning the retention of the 25 per cent of the internally-generated funds” (G. T, 2012-2-8)

Modal Lexical Verbs with *will*

The following are some of the of the lexical verbs from the data sampled for illustration:

1. Otumfuo Osei Tutu *cautioned* the company to avoid using chemicals which will pollute water bodies and the soil (G. T. 3-3-16)
2. He *urged* the people to continue with their self – help spirit to complement the efforts of the government to provide them with amenities which will better their lives (D. G. 2- 1- 2016)
3. ... while males are *encouraged* to aspire for various careers and offered limitless opportunities so that they can occupy the powerful position of the head of household, females are often limited to aspiration that will enable them support the men in their lives (D.G. 2-3-16)

In all these examples, *will* combines with the main verb in the sentence to tentatively convey the notion of a directive.

Some occurrences of *will* and some lexical verbs were also recorded in the data. The examples identified in the corpus are given here:

1. We *will* therefore *plead* with the president to make true his promise. (G. T. 13-3-16)
2. We *will* therefore *entreat* the chairman of the Electoral Commission to ensure that the validation exercise is done. (D. G. 14-2-16)
3. It is not the job of traffic wardens to direct pedestrians once lights have been provided. However, we *will implore* they occasionally be at vantage points near such pedestrian crossing to arrest offenders. (D. G. 17-2-16)

This sense of a directive conveyed by modal *will* + the main verb in the simple present tense seems to be a peculiar feature emerging in Ghanaian usage. In all these examples, the impression of a request is seen when we consider that the writer is calling for something to be done about a situation or some action to be taken on a particular matter. When *will* is used this way to express a directive it represents a divergence from native English usage where writers usually find it just enough to use the simple present tense verb alone (without a modal) to achieve the same semantic purpose.

According to Austin (1962), if the sentence expresses a locutionary force, it is a directive, it carries with it simultaneously the illocutionary force of the directive. That is, it performs the act of directing there and then. There is no indication that the directive is to be made in the future. But the prefixing of the main verb with modal *will* in the Ghanaian context gives the indication that the directive will be made sometime in the future. Thus, a feature of performative acts in the editorials of Ghanaian newspapers is that *will* can combine with a main verb in the simple present to express a directive, it is preferable in British English to express the same meaning by using only the main verb in its simple present form.

Modal Lexical Verbs

According to Austin's taxonomy of verbs into categories of behavitives, commissives, exerbitives, etc. based on their illocutionary content (Austin, 1962), the data abounds in lexical verbs and each would require analysis. But since the focus of this paper is specifically modality, only lexical verbs with allied notions, except for theoretical reference, will be sidelined for the purpose of this paper. A frequency distribution of thirty-four of these modal lexical verbs is presented with their semantic scope and illocutionary force in Table 2 below. The frequency count is helpful in determining the most frequent modal lexical verbs for the purpose of the analysis.

Table 2: Frequency distribution of lexical verbs. (Illocutionary classification)

Lexical verb	Frequency	Illocutionary force
Need	13	Desires
Want	9	Desires
Appeal	8	Solicitation
Ensure	7	A.P.R
Think	6	Cognition
Encourage	5	A.P.F.
Require	3	APR
Believe	6	Cognition
Urge	7	A.P.F.
Expect	3	Ascertainment
Know	3	Cognition
Hope	4	Projection
Suggest	4	Declaration
Enable	4	A.P.R
Wish	4	Desires
Declare	4	Declaration
Appear	4	Experience
Promise	3	Assertion
Consider	2	Cognition
Plead	2	Solicitation
Demand	2	A.P.R
Commend	3	Assertion

The modal lexical verbs which recorded the highest frequency in the data are need, want, appeal, ensure, urge, think, encourage, believe, and expect. The others are negligible. In the data, want is almost grammaticalised. It is even more frequent than some of the modal auxiliaries. It is also almost always used at the position of the auxiliary verbs, accompanying a main verb.

A close observation reveals that, these most frequent modal lexical verbs perform two functions. They perform the speech function of prefacing a statement as in we want..., ...we believe...we appeal to...that... I think etc. Then they also function as the main predicator in their respective statements. When think, for instance, is used merely as a preface, it does not necessarily imply any mental exercise on the part of the speaker. It only functions as an adjunct,

and is at the initial, medial or final position to anticipate the main proposition. In the data, however, these verbs are mostly at the initial when they preface the proposition.

Certain lexical items, it is observed, constantly collocate with particular modal lexical verbs. As a result, one can safely guess, in a given context, what lexical units to expect. Below is a list of some few collocations;

Need- we need to..., we need to act..., needs to be...

Want- they want to work..., we want to commend..., ...others want to see... might want to create..., may want to

Ensure- efforts should be made to ensure that..., outline steps to ensure that..., ...to ensure that..., it is important to ensure that..., must ensure that...,

Expect- they expected that..., it is expected that..., is expected to, are expected to...

Think- they thought it was... we also think that..., we do also think that..., we think that..., we don't think that...,

Encourage- we would encourage the teachers..., to encourage some educated..., ...encourage the students...,

Believe- we believe it is..., we believe that..., they believe their efforts...,

Appeal-...we would want to appeal to..., we would equally want to appeal to..., we wish to appeal to our politicians..., we would appeal to the electoral commission..., we would want to appeal to...

The speech act performed here is that an appeal is expressed with the verb *appeal* and mostly with the auxiliary *would*. There is never an appeal expressed with *will*. Perhaps in the Ghanaian situation, *will* is too strong for making appeals. Most frequently used with *appeal* is the lexical item *want*. It is also mostly used in the infinitive followed by the preposition 'to'. So that, one is not far from right to classify *appeal to* in the data as a prepositional verb. Rarely do we have 'appeal for' or 'appeal that'.

The verb *believe* behaves much like *think*, their popular function in Ghanaian editorials is prefacing and their collocation with the pronoun 'we' is remarkable (Frimpong 2007). Furthermore, *believe* and *think* consistently follow the structure Subj. + Verb. The verb *ensure* is constantly used in the infinitive with the 'to' particle. These features of the verbs are occasioned by the orientation of the editors. Their cultural, geographical and educational background are likely determinants for their selection of the particular lexical units.

Implication to Research and Practice

The implication this paper has relates to analyzing language with real textual data, it is probably better to avoid labeling certain linguistic features too specifically on the basis of introspection, especially in grammar textbooks but to first of all study their occurrence in real language usage as this may reveal a lot more than we might have thought. Modality is one of such linguistic feature that must be studied in context. The paper has shown that the modal auxiliaries express varied meanings in different circumstances and situations. This justifies Branford's (1967) claim that we should desist from assuming that each modal has some specific function and

therefore we can easily assign specific meanings to them. Branford thinks that we should always examine the meanings of modals in real contexts of language use.

CONCLUSION

This paper has sought to establish the performative functions of modal auxiliary and modal lexical verbs in 30 editorials of two Ghanaian newspapers. These modal elements were analyzed in the light of their performative functions with regard to Austin's 1962 performative speech acts and Kratzer's context dependency and lexical specialization looking at their distribution and what specific speech function is performed in their speech in the editorials.

It is an observation that modal auxiliaries are the most frequent modal models in the data. The use of *will*, *should*, *must* dominate the other modals in expressing speech acts. The modal auxiliaries also mostly help in passing on information. In some few instances, however, some strong deontic modal auxiliaries such as *must* and *should* were identified to be expressing a command.

The most frequent being *must* expressing obligation. This modal dominated the others probably because the period the data was collected was Ghana's election year and as part of the function of the editorial to inform caution among others could have been the reason for this dominant modal to call people to order and to remind them to perform their obligations as in the words of von Stechow (2006), modal elements take certain meanings according to their context of use.

Additionally, it is observed, that the selection of a particular modal auxiliary in a particular context is, to a large extent, influenced by the interplay of the addresser of the speech and the participants involved.

About the distribution of the modal lexical verbs, the editors are indiscriminate in their choice. It is observed that every lexical verb is worthy enough to perform speech acts.

The modal lexical verbs accounted for in this discussion are need, want, appeal, ensure, think, encourage, expect, believe among others. Of course there are other modal lexical verbs presented in the results which were not accounted for in the analysis. These latter set of lexical verbs are negligible in terms of their frequency in the data.

It has also been observed from the data that the modal elements, though related by their common communicative functions, are not to be treated as polysemous. Their modality analysis, however, brings out their individual differences.

As already stated, by performativity one is concerned about the particular communicative function performed by a speaker with an utterance as seen in the illustrations above. Accordingly, the 'actions' such as informing, directing, commanding, advising and requesting are believed to be performed with the utterances above. Also, modality as already stated above, is an attitudinal phenomenon; a matter of one's attitude behind what he says.

Batch (1979) has it that although the focus of Speech Act theory has been on utterances, especially those made in conversational and other face-to-face situations, the phrase 'Speech Act' should be taken as a generic term for any sort of language use, oral or otherwise. According to him, Speech Acts, whatever the medium of their performance, fall under the broad category of intentional action, with which they share certain general features.

List of Abbreviations

D. G	Daily Graphic
G. T	Ghanaian Times
A.P.F	Actions Performed with Force
A.P.R	Actions Producing Reactions

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