(Non)epistemic modality: English *must, have to* and *have got to* and their correspondences in Lithuanian

This paper deals with the three types of modality – epistemic, deontic and dynamic (Palmer 2001). The study accounts for the relation between the synchronic uses of the central modal auxiliary *must* and the semi-modals *have to* and *have got to* as well as their Lithuanian translational correspondences (TCs) found in a bidirectional translation corpus (the adverbials *tikriausiai, greičiausiai, veikiausiai* ‘certainly/surely/most probably’, *turbūt* ‘probably’, *matyt* ‘seemingly’ and the modal verb *turėti* ‘must/have to’), identifying differences and similarities of how modal meanings are expressed in the two languages, e.g.:

(1) *He must have broken the window!*

‘Tikriausiai *jis* išdužė langą.’
probably.**ADV** he **break-PST.3** window.**ACC**

(2) *I have to move to the doorway.*

‘Tur-iu **nueiti** prie durų.’
have-**PRS.1SG** go.**INF** to. **PREP** door.**GEN**

The purpose of the study is to find out which type of modality is most common in the use of *must, have to* and *have got to*, to establish their equivalents in Lithuanian and to determine whether there is any language-specific conceptualisation of the strength of the speaker’s commitment to the factuality of his/her proposition and to what extent the speaker’s evaluation of the proposition is influenced by the interactional context of use and available evidence (Squartini 2008; Boye and Harder 2009).

The research is based on the analysis of the data derived from a self-compiled bidirectional translation corpus – *ParaCorp_{E-LT-E}* (Usonienė and Šolienė 2010). The corpus is designed following the ENPC model (Johansson 2007). It includes original English fiction texts and their translations into Lithuanian and original Lithuanian fiction texts and their translations into English. The size of the corpus is about 5M words. The paper is primarily based on the analysis of the TCs in the direction EN-orig $\rightarrow$ LT-trans;
however, it would be interesting to explore the other direction of translation in future research.

The analysis has shown that must is mostly used to convey epistemic nuances, while have to and have got to usually encode non-epistemic senses. The results are in line with the claims made by many other scholars (Heine 1995; Hoye 1997; Mortelmans 2000; Tagliamonte 2004 among others). The results indicate that must exhibits the greatest variety of TCs. Some of them serve as epistemic markers; others feature in deontic contexts only. Have to and have got to, on the other hand, are usually translated by the modal verbs reikėti ‘need’ and turėti ‘must/have to’, which mostly encode deontic modality. The findings also demonstrate that the Lithuanian adverbials tikriausiai ‘most probably’, turbūt ‘probably’ and matyt ‘seemingly’ can cover the whole range of the epistemic scale. What is more, the markers of epistemic necessity are used interchangeably with the markers of epistemic possibility in Lithuanian; this could suggest that the distinction between low and high degree of speaker certainty might be blurred in Lithuanian (Usonienė 2007).

Key words: modality, epistemic necessity, inferential evidentiality, translational correspondence

References


