SUMMARY

TEACHING AND PRACTISING MODAL VERBS; MODALITY AND SIGNIFICANCE IN GRAHAM GREENE'S THE END OF THE AFFAIR-A CASE STUDY

My primary aim in the present thesis has been to lead research on the English modal verbs. The thesis is divided into four chapters.

Chapter 1

Modal verbs have been described in terms of their definitions, different meanings and characteristics, what separates them from the rest of the verbs, and even from the auxiliaries

We have firstly focused on Huddleston&Pullum (2002:173) who stated that modality is defined as the speaker’s verdict about the “necessity” and “possibility” of subjects. Quirk (1985) says that modality is how speakers decide on the genuineness of the topic.

It has been mentioned the fact that Modal verbs are auxiliary verbs that give additional information about the main verb, that they alter the mood of the verb giving additional information about the function, that they have five distinctive properties, possessing only primary forms, showing no agreement with the subject, taking bare infinitival complements, together with the fact that they are required in remote conditionals, and the use of their preterits with the modal remoteness meaning is less restricted than in the case with the other verbs.

Further remarks have been offered in terms of the fact that modal verbs are auxiliary verbs that give additional information about the main verb and that they alter the mood of the verb giving additional information about the function, providing a variety of communicative functions, such as: asking for and giving/refusing permission in the present or future, making arrangements, suggestions, offers, prohibition, suggestions, wish.

Employment of Terminological ‘Reflectors’

Methodology has been commented upon as the way teaching theory has been realized in methodological practice and it has been shown that, in time, teaching has been influenced by a variety of methods and trends. New methods have been introduced as a part of the ongoing search for the best way to teach.

Regarding the term ‘approach,’ we have shown that it refers to the theories about the nature of language and language learning, describing how people acquire their knowledge of the language and make statements about the conditions which will promote successful language learning.

A method is a practical realization of an approach through proper types of activity, roles of teachers and learners, helpful material and syllabus. Methods include various techniques and procedures.

The ‘procedure’ has been introduced as an ordered sequence of techniques. The ‘technique’ has been referred to as a single activity used by the teacher or the learners and has been illustrated in terms of the finger technique, silent reading, silent viewing, murmuring a new word or phrase to themselves etc.

In **Chapter 2**, **Teaching Modal Verbs**, we have tried to give an answer to the questions ‘What is grammar?’ and ‘Why do we teach grammar?’ We have further moved towards grammar based teaching and commented upon different methodologies, starting with Grammar-Translation Method. We have investigated the characteristics of grammar practice activities, ways to practice grammar. Further on, we have tackled The Direct Method, Audiolingualism and introduced drills, written exercises, elicited dialogues. They have been completed with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), grammar practice activities and games, Task-Based Learning (TBL). Investigating the two concepts inductive or deductive, we have explored both Inductive and the Deductive Approaches.

Subchapter 2.4. has moved towards the goal of our dissertation questioning why we should teach modal verbs, analysing the meanings they convey. Subchapter 2.6. has promoted with respect to modal verbs an optional course. The optional course has been dealt with in terms of the course objectives, research data, research hypothesis and objectives.

Subchapter 2.6.4. has covered issues related to the National Curriculum and School Chosen Curriculum, to Curriculum and Syllabus, highlighting values and attitudes, competences, presentation forms and contents of the course. Last but not least, subchapter 2.6.8. comprises significant items of information regarding course planning and work plans. After studying and describing a few teaching methods, I have argued that the Communicative Language Teaching is the most appropriate approach for modern days, for teaching language functions and, implicit, modal verbs.

**In Chapter 3, Testing Modal Verbs**, I have argued that a grammatically correct message can be completely wrong from the point of view of the meaning or semantically ambiguous. Thus, we have promoted the idea that testing modal verbs has to consider the grammatical correctness but, also, the correct use of them as language functions. I have insisted on the fact that each teacher should decide to test not only for knowledge but also for the ability to use new information in familiar contexts, in terms of language functions, that is to express a correct message both grammatically and semantically. We have also assumed that testing or assessing is an important stage in the learning-teaching process due to the fact that teaching without testing is useless, it is like a wall with missing bricks. The holes left will, eventually, produce the wall’s collapse.

Further arguments stood proof to the fact that testing gives the teacher the information about how much and how well the students have achieved the new material but, also the information about the lack of results of their work, being also necessary for grading the students, for motivating them to improve their command of English.

Since teaching without testing is useless, I have closely analysed various types of tests:

**Placement tests** usually consist of a number of indirect items and an oral interview. In our educational system teachers use initial tests, at the beginning of a school year. Initial tests provide information about the language level of the students and are used as a starting point for teaching.

**Progress tests** are given to see how did the students assimilate information from the last taught lesson; they are used for the permanent assessment of the students' knowledge on a short-term learning, a few days or a week. They check only a certain topic of the language from a recent lesson or unit.

**Achievement tests**, given at the end of a school year, have been tackled as measuring the students` achievements in all four skills, being typically given after a class completes a certain chapter or unit or at the end of a course. As concerns their goal, it has been shown that a teacher may give a final exam at the end of a semester to see how well a student has retained the information they were taught over the course or the semester and what the students are able to do that they couldn’t do at the beginning of the semester or of the course. It also appeared that achievement tests are created to measure what an individual has learned during a period of time or at the end of a school cycle and that they usually analyse the knowledge achieved for all the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening at the present time.

**Proficiency tests** have been expanded upon as being designed to show the level of a student, to measure people’s ability in a language, regardless of any training that may have in that language. The content of a proficiency test has been revealed as being based on a specification of what candidates have to be able to do in order to be considerate proficient and as usually having a strong backwash effect.

External proficiency examinations have been approached as national or international formal language examinations such as TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), IELTS (Internationale English Language Testing System) and the examinations offered by Cambridge ESOL (Lindsay and Knight 2010:122).

I have embraced the idea that assessment and evaluation is realized considering the Common European Framework, the Curricular Standards of Performance to be achieved at the end of school cycle and the National Evaluation Standards. Means and types of evaluation employed and ways of assessing progress have been described in chapter three. Initial and assessment tests for each grade are included as examples.

We have also shown that specialists in testing group tests face subjective and objective issues and discussed their efficiency. We have argued that objective items require the students to select the correct response from several alternatives or to supply a word or a short phrase, to answer a question or complete a statement. As concerns subjective tests, we have enhanced the fact that they assess the language understanding and the students’ ability to use the function of a language, their ability to adapt language to their communicative needs in real life situations, to integrate grammar rules into speaking.

We have also insisted on the fact that systematic observation measures the students behaviour from direct observations and considered that both events and behavioural patterns are specified to be observed and recorded. For describing three testing instruments, we have resorted to Vizental (2014: 109), who has commented upon the following issues:

Evaluation file, which reports information about important facts regarding the student’s activity; the evaluation yard stick which registers regularly student’s participations and contributions; the check-up list which checks the existence or lack of a confident characteristic in the student’s activity.

Holding that assessment and evaluation are not the same thing, we have approached assessment as the systematic process of documenting and using empirical data to measure knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs. As concerns evaluation, we have mentioned that it can be formal, using tests and examinations and informal, using lessons and questions to check understanding;

The semantic values of the modal verbs have been analysed in **Chapter 4,** as interdisciplinary research. The novel *The End of the Affair* by Graham Green seemed to be convenient from the point of view of the study of English modal verbs. The novel describes the love affair between Bendrix, Green himself, and Sarah Miles, after the Second World War. It is a novel about obsessions, love, jealousy and relationships between the characters, the two lovers and Sarah’s husband, Henry. For the fourth interdisciplinary chapter, I have employed three theories as possible methodological lenses to properly illustrate the characters' oscillations, their paradoxical attitudes and unprincipled behaviour.

I have turned to good account Nemoianu's assumption that history, theory and literature are organized in a similar manner. Exploring Nemoianu's theory, it appeared that the basic theoretical model that influenced him belonged to Max Weber but, the philosophical background has been appropriated from Hegel.

I have examined Nemoianu's claims that the access to the essential, to the principal is facilitated by resorting to the secondary and to strategies of indirection. Another strong point of reference emerges from Nemoianu's argument that Rhetoric, Stylistics and, generally speaking, linguistic communication, are under the sign of the secondary which shapes and modifies the human beings, precisely through the fact that the language of the secondary intervenes and modifies the instinctual bent for conquering, for centralizing which are specific for our historical and sociological dimension.

To reproduce a credulous understanding of Nemoianu's theory, I have taken into consideration some of his most important assumption: the secondary is in the foreground and it is the winner; it might be a new type of the principle because it has acquired autonomy and the tendency towards self-division; the principal tending to be regressive facilitated the secondary to assert its authority in relation to the principal.

Due to the fact that the dialectics has weakened and become elusive, the secondary has become victorious over the principal; the secondary invigorated the principal by opposing it; since the principal seems to have almost disappeared, being regressive, upset, precarious, the secondary has acquired autonomy, preserving its tendency towards self-division and multiplication.

It is focused on "corruption, subversion, decadence," being estimated as a vivid and intricate form of negativism, due to its nihilistic charge; the secondary can be regarded as opposed to any form of constructivism; its status as the winner, emerges from its assumed failures and losses, thus illustrating "failure as success." It is associated with "the defeated and retrograde," with "reaction and aggression." The secondary points the way to the future, which, in postmodern literature and history, is the way to "liberation, individualism, alienation."

Literature is regarded as "constructivist," in the sense that it tries to stop "the entropic tendency towards decline." It illustrates, through its own devices, "the parasitical, troublesome, inevitable part played by the secondary.” The most important item of knowledge from Nemoianu's critical approach to the secondary arises from focusing on Shakespeare's depiction of Coriolanus as the ‘victorious victim.’

As concerns, my methodological approach, it is a case study grounded in the selection of a large amount of quotations, in identifying the modal structures and their meaning and setting them in relation to the basic characteristics of the Theory of the Secondary with a view to finally arguing that the modern world is subject to change, decay and dissolution, due to the imperfect character of our human nature.

For offering a solution to the two terms devised by Nemoianu, namely *imperfection* and *decay,* which indicate the precarious condition of the modern world and how we could surface and keep under control our dark sexual inner drives and, in order to promote Nemoianu's paradoxical syntagm "victorious victim," I have also turned into account Lupașcu's concept’of the "comprised third person."

I have deduced from Lupașcu's claims that there exists a third term "that is simultaneously A and non A" (76, our translation), that this third term T "unifies existence and non-existence" and that it is to be found on a "different ontological level of reality," solving contradictory issues in a non-contradictory manner, on a much higher ontological level.

Similarly, Buciu's triad "denunciation, enunciation and transfiguration" (2005 : 218), already employed within our analysis, has become functional through our having denounced the war events depicted in the novel, having enunciated issued related to the truth of the heart and through having tackled Sarah's periodical appearances as an agent of transfiguration, completely changing the two male character's mundane existence.

For further decoding the meaning of modal structures present within the selected quotations, I have resorted to the stylistics of the parts of speech, basically to the stylistics of the noun and the verb, have selected various nominal and verbal structures and commented upon their stylistic connotations showing how they can enhance modality.

The methodological grid has been further enriched with the stylistic connotations of nouns and verbs ecountered in Greene’s *The End of the Affair*, preceded by a short presentation of the theoretical issues related to them researched by Câmpaeanu, Fârnoagă, Leech and Mihăilescu. We have assumed that the verb is the most dynamic linguistic means as it mainly expresses actions. However, the semantic character is not sufficient for defining the grammatical category of the verb as the noun also expresses processes and actions. So that one could properly define the verb, we argued that the semantic characteristics of this part of speech should be completed with the other grammatical categories specific to it; it is through such categories that the verb individualizes itself as concerns its way of conceiving and expressing actions and processes.

The grammatical category of number and person is important in terms of their stylistic connotations. For instance, when the verb is in the first person singular, the action is more intensively and subjectively experienced, both by the characters and the readers; the action takes the form of a direct confrontation when the verb is in the second person singular; when the verb is in the third person singular, the action becomes a process projected in place and time, experienced by the speaker in a rather objective manner (Câmpeanu 1997: 93).

As concerns the grammatical category of time and mood and its stylistic connotations, the following tense issues have been turned to good account: firstly, the present tense simple has been approached as the time of real actions, through the fact that it implies a greater spiritual involvement on the part of the reader as compared to other tenses (1997: 94). Fârnoagă states that such involvement derives from the capacity of the Present Tense Simple to express habitual actions, general characteristics or permanent situations.

Leech holds that the reader's involvement is directly related to the opposition transitive versus intransitive verbs. Transitive verbs reflect a clear, linear cause-effect relationship and the general impression is that of equilibrium. Intransitive verbs reflect a split cause-effect relationship, the general impression being of chaos, lack of control, loss of identity which are strongly felt both by the characters and the readers who follow the social traumatic experience. Irimia focuses upon the differences between the grammatical and the narrative tenses.

As concerns Câmpeanu, he has identified four narrative present tenses: “The Historical Present” is also called “the Dramatic Present,” possessing a theatrical character, turning the reader into an emotionally involved spectator; “The Descriptive Present” is used in descriptions of nature where landscapes are visually and auditorily perceived; it covers a “durative reality” (1997: 95, translation mine), having a permanent character; “The Lyrical Present” is used in artistic writings. It is a “perfective tense” used to narrate events; it synchronizes with the moment when the action is narrated; the action is felt to be more authentic and expressive; “The Eternal Present” possesses an unlimited eternal temporal dimension, both regarding the “infinite past” and the “unlimited future” (1997: 96, translation mine). It is stylistically relevant in passages which refer to future actions; “the Eternal Present” grants an oral character to the respective action.

Past Tense Simple has been approached as a means of characterization, of locating the action in a characteristic socio-linguistic background, of placing the action “not far from the present” (Câmpeanu 1997: 103, translation mine). It has been employed as a means of showing a past action which “theoretically lasted only for a moment,” without mentioning when it was performed (Iordan in Câmpeanu, 1997) or as a means of projecting a certain amount of objectivity, of indifference upon the action, having a “non-participative character” (1997: 104, translation mine), or a means of suggesting the rapid succession of events.

Fârnoagă stipulates that certain stylistic connotations derive from using Past Tense Simple to express statements about two simultaneous or consecutive past actions or from descriptions of past events or habits at certain times in the past (in Mihăilescu 2003).

Approaching Past Tense Continuous, we have argued that it renders a past action in progress and the stylistic connotations which arise from it; it suggestively expresses actions which are normally continued over a past period of time and it convincingly expresses an action in progress at a certain past moment; it emotionally expresses narrated facts in order to keep the events in the present and also to open future perspectives (1997: 100).  The Present Perfect Simple shows an action that has been performed and which is related to the moment of speaking; it is associated with verbs which express long-lasting actions (to remain, to live, to grow old) increasing their “durative” significance. It can be connected with the present moment “when the subject narrates what happened” (Iordan in Câmpeanu 1996: 136); it evokes intense emotional experiences placed in the present which are, however, regarded as having come to an end; it adds regrets and sadness to something that has definitely come an end; it insists on past completed actions whose time of occurence is not mentioned (in Mihăilescu 2003).

Fărnoagă mentions some uses of Present Perfect Simple which can be associated with expressive values; for example it is used to express an action completed before the present moment but whose time is not specified; it is used to express an action completed at an earlier time (associated with ‘before’); it is used to express a past action whose result is obvious in the present; it is used when you want to know if the action has been performed (associated with ‘yet’); it is used for actions completed at a time earlier than expected (associated with ‘already); it is used for actions performed in an incomplete period of time (associated with the adverbs: ‘today,’ ‘this afternoon’); it is used to indicate an action begun in the past that has continued up to the present time (associated with ‘for,’ ‘since’).

The Simple Future Tense approached in terms of its stylistic connotations has been tackled as performing the stylistic function of the Imperative due to the fact that it extends the meaning beyond the moment of speaking (1997: 111).

Fărnoagă focusses upon some future constructions and their expressive connotations, in the sense that “Will you ...? is used to express an invitation or a request.” “Shall we ...?' is used to express suggestions;” “Shall / Will” are used for expressing future habitual actions assumed to take place soon; “shall / will” are used for narrating future events. The Future Perfect indicates a future action completed before a future moment; a future action completed before another future action; strong probability, virtual certainty in the present, with reference to an action performed at a previous moment. Fârnoagă identifies some situations when Future Perfect Continuous is used with implicit stylistic values to express a future action in progress up to a certain future time or to refer to a period of time extending up to a moment in the future (in Mihăilescu 2003).

In terms of conclusions, we have embraced Bachelard’s opinion that the verbs, nouns and adjectives are the archetypes of speaking and we have depicted and analysed them in *The End of the Affair* to highlight the inner selves of Greene’s characters.

.