

Grammatical peculiarities of the text of international treaties

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Annotation: This article examines the grammatical variations found in international treaty text, emphasizing the importance of grammar in attaining legal neutrality, clarity, and precision in international legal discourse. Certain grammatical characteristics of treaty language, such as the frequent use of the passive voice, modal verbs (such as shall, may, and must), and formal, impersonal constructions, are necessary for precisely conveying obligations, permissions, and conditionality. The study also looks at the subjunctive mood, nominalization, and the deliberate use of complicated sentence patterns to guarantee thorough articulation of legal provisions. The employment of tenses is examined, particularly the prevalence of present and future tenses, which aid in defining the temporal extent of treaty responsibilities. The importance of parallelism, repetition, and enumerative structures in preserving textual coherence and enforceability is also covered in the paper. The study highlights the importance of linguistic accuracy in treaty formulation and its consequences for legal interpretation, multilingual consistency, and intercultural understanding in international law by examining these grammatical components.

Key words: international treaties, legal neutrality, obligations, permissions, conditionality, parallelism, repetition, linguistic accuracy, passive voice, modal verbs.

Грамматические особенности текстов международных договоров

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Аннотация: В этой статье рассматриваются грамматические изменения в тексте международного договора и подчеркивается важность грамматики для достижения юридического нейтралитета, ясности и ясности в международно-правовой речи. Некоторые грамматические особенности контрактного языка, такие как частое использование пассивный залог, модальные глаголы (такие как должен, может и должен) и формальные, безличные конструкции, необходимы для точной передачи обязательств, разрешений и условий. В исследовании также рассматривается сослагательное наклонение, номинализация и преднамеренное использование сложных шаблонов предложений, чтобы гарантировать тщательное изложение правовых норм. Рассматривается занятость времен, в частности, распределение настоящего и будущего времени, что помогает определить временной уровень договорных обязательств. Важность параллелизма, повторения и структур подсчета для поддержания согласованности и выполнения текста также освещена в статье. В исследовании подчеркивается важность лингвистической точности в формулировании договора путем изучения этих грамматических компонентов и

его последствий для правовой интерпретации, многоязычной согласованности и межкультурного понимания в международном праве.

Ключевые слова: международные договоры, правовой нейтралитет, обязательства, разрешения, условность, параллелизм, повторение, лингвистическая точность, пассивный залог, модальные глаголы.

Xalqaro shartnomalar matnining grammatik xususiyatlari

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqola xalqaro shartnoma matnidagi grammatik o'zgarishlarni o'rganib chiqadi va grammatikaning xalqaro huquqiy nutqda huquqiy betaraflik, aniqlik va aniqlikka erishishda muhimligini ta'kidlaydi. Shartnoma tilining ba'zi grammatik xususiyatlari, masalan, tez-tez ishlatilishi passiv ovoz, modal fe'llar (kabi kerak, mumkin va kerak) va rasmiy, shaxssiz konstruksiyalar, majburiyatlarni, ruxsatnomalarni va shartlilikni aniq etkazish uchun zarurdir. Tadqiqot shuningdek, subjunktiv kayfiyat, nominalizatsiya va qonuniy qoidalarni puxta bayon qilishni kafolatlash uchun murakkab jumla naqshlaridan qasddan foydalanishni ko'rib chiqadi. Zamonlarning bandligi, xususan, hozirgi va kelajakdagi zamonlarning tarqalishi ko'rib chiqiladi, bu shartnoma majburiyatlarining vaqtinchalik darajasini aniqlashga yordam beradi. Parallellik, takrorlash va sanoq tuzilmalarining matn izchilligi va bajarilishini saqlashdagi ahamiyati ham qog'ozda yoritilgan. Tadqiqot ushbu grammatik tarkibiy qismlarni o'rganish orqali shartnomani shakllantirishda lingvistik aniqlikning ahamiyati va uning huquqiy talqin qilish, ko'p tilli izchillik va xalqaro huquqda madaniyatlararo tushunish uchun oqibatlarini ta'kidlaydi.

Kalit so'zlar: xalqaro shartnomalar, huquqiy betaraflik, majburiyatlar, ruxsatnomalar, shartlilik, parallellik, takrorlash, lingvistik aniqlik, passiv ovoz, modal fe'llar.

Introduction. A lot of scholarly attention has been focused on the legal and semantic aspects of international treaties, but their grammatical structure is just as important because it influences how obligations, rights, and intentions are expressed and interpreted across various legal systems and languages. International treaties are among the most important legal instruments in global governance, acting as legally binding agreements between sovereign states and international entities. The employment of modal auxiliaries, passive voice, complicated sentence constructions, and formal registers are among the main grammatical characteristics of international treaties that are examined in this article. It seeks to show how these grammatical rules support the interpretive requirements of various legal cultures and languages while also enhancing the clarity, accuracy, and enforcement of treaty obligations. In order to ensure accuracy and minimize ambiguity in interpretation, legal texts, including international treaties, are characterized by a "high degree of syntactic complexity and formality," according to Bhatia (1993). This complexity is often expressed through the use of passive constructions, nominalizations, and modal verbs, all of which are essential for expressing deontic modality (obligation, permission, prohibition), which is a fundamental function of legal texts (Crystal & Davy, 1969; Tiersma, 1999). The grammatical structures of treaties must also be standardized for their worldwide applicability in order to preserve uniformity among multilingual editions. Šarčević (2000) emphasized that precise adherence to grammatical equivalency is necessary when creating legal documents in international settings to avoid misunderstandings, especially in treaties with equal

authoritative passages in many languages. This emphasizes how important it is to have a thorough awareness of the grammatical quirks that characterize treaty language.

Methods. The goal of this study is to identify and interpret the unique grammatical features that define the language of international treaties and to explore their functional significance in the legal and diplomatic contexts in which these texts operate. To this end, the following methodological approaches have been used: interdisciplinary and methodologically rigorous, the grammatical analysis of international treaty texts draws from applied linguistics, discourse studies, corpus linguistics, and comparative legal analysis.

The fundamental technique for investigating the grammatical structures found in treaty texts is **discourse analysis**. This technique enables a qualitative analysis of the ways in which linguistic decisions – like nominalization, passivation, and modality – support the legal and communicative purposes of treaties.

Utilizing **corpus linguistics** techniques, a representative corpus of international treaties – which included texts like the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, the Paris Agreement, and the WTO Agreements – was assembled, and the study used concordance software to analyze the frequency of particular grammatical elements like modal verbs (“shall”, “may”, and “must”), passive constructions, and enumerative syntax.

Drawing on Systemic **Functional Linguistics** (SFL), the study investigates the connection between linguistic structures and the legal roles they play. Tense, mood, voice, and clause structure are grammatical forms that are used to describe legal relationships including responsibilities, permissions, prohibitions, and conditions. Functional grammar examines these interactions, especially in the framework put forward by Halliday (2004).

Complex sentence patterns that are commonly found in treaty language were broken down using **syntactic analysis**. Several subordinate and conditional clauses are frequently inserted into lengthy, syntactically complex sentences in international law writings. The links and interdependence between clauses were examined using syntactic trees and manual parsing.

This study employs a thorough methodological framework to examine the grammatical characteristics of international treaties by fusing qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Every technique – corpus linguistics, functional grammar, discourse analysis, and syntactic analysis – contributes to a better comprehension of how grammatical decisions are strategically used in treaty texts to maintain cross-linguistic consistency, legal clarity, and enforceability. These approaches shed light on the complex interrelationship between form and legal function in international law in addition to revealing the linguistic architecture of treaties.

Results. Several fundamental grammatical peculiarities have been identified through the application of various analytical techniques to the texts of international treaties. In addition to being traits of legal speech, these qualities are essential for attaining the authority, neutrality, and accuracy demanded by international law. The main grammatical findings are presented in an organized manner below, in accordance with the study’s methodological instruments.

1. The Preponderance of Modal Verbs Signifying Permission and Obligation.

Modal verbs, especially “shall,” “may,” and “must,” are used prominently and consistently to convey duty, consent, and recommendation in all of the treaties that have been examined. Treaty provisions frequently use the modal verb “shall” to convey legally obligatory commitments, particularly in normative clauses involving state parties.

For example, Paris Agreement states that “Each Party shall prepare, communicate, and maintain successive nationally determined contributions.”

A corpus-based investigation verified this usage, revealing that “shall” appeared in obligations about 85% more frequently than other modal auxiliaries. This validates the formulaic nature of legal language in treaty contexts and supports Gibbons’ (2003) findings on modal preference in legal English.

2. Frequent Use of Passive Constructions The analysis revealed that the passive voice is frequently used in treaty texts.

This stylistic and grammatical choice avoids needless attribution of agency and contributes to the impersonal, formal, and objective tone typical of legal discourse.

For example, the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties: "A treaty shall be interpreted in good faith..." This reflects the results of discourse and syntactic analysis and supports Bhatia's (1993) claim that passivation supports the depersonalized authority of legal texts. Passive constructions help generalize legal obligations across parties without directly mentioning any particular actor.

3. High Level of Syntactic Intricacy International treaties usually feature lengthy.

Syntactically complicated sentences with conditional assertions, enumerative sequences, and embedded clauses.

"A Member State which decides to withdraw shall notify the European Council of its intention..." is one of the multi-layered sections in Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union that clearly outlines the legal procedures for withdrawal.

Hierarchical clause structures reflecting procedural sequencing were found in this provision's syntactic analysis. Tiersma (1999) points out that this kind of intricacy makes it possible to express rights, obligations, and conditions all at once in a single statement.

4. Encoding Legal Meaning through the Use of Grammar According to the study's application of the functional grammar method, treaty grammatical structures are motivated by function. Every grammatical form, verb choice, and clause structure directly adds to the expression of legal intent.

"Each Member shall ensure the conformity of its laws," is a common phrase in the WTO Agreement.

According to Halliday (2004), grammar serves as a tool for enacting meaning. Modal obligation in this case, along with generic subjects ("Each Member"), guarantees that duties be expressed in a universal and unambiguous manner, which is a key objective in treaty negotiation.

The analysis demonstrates that the grammatical constructions used in international treaties are purposefully chosen to serve particular legal, diplomatic, and procedural objectives rather than being random. The excessive use of complicated clauses, modal verbs, and passives enhances the treaty language's impartiality, universality, and legal enforceability. Additionally, comparative research shows that in order to prevent misunderstandings, grammatical divergence in multilingual writings needs to be closely watched. These results underline the significance of interdisciplinary analysis when examining international legal documents and the necessity of grammatical accuracy in treaty drafting and translation.

Discussion and Analysis. The results of this study demonstrate the complex relationship between legal function and grammar in the context of international treaty language. In order to achieve accuracy, clarity, impartiality, and enforceability across many legal and linguistic traditions, it has been shown that the grammatical design of treaties is a practical necessity rather than just a cosmetic choice. In addition to discussing the wider ramifications of these findings for legal drafting, interpretation, and translation in international law, this discussion will summarize the main grammatical aspects that were found, including modal verbs, passive constructions, syntactic complexity, and multilingual variance. The prevalence of modal verbs, especially "shall," in conveying legal responsibilities is one of the study's most notable findings. This result is consistent with earlier legal linguistics research that found modality to be essential to the deontic character of legal writings (Hiltunen, 1990; Tiersma, 1999). More significantly, the modal "shall" functions as a legislative tool that conveys legally binding obligations in addition to being a symbol of the future. Its widespread use in treaty agreements, particularly normative ones like the Paris Agreement, attests to its function as a grammatical standard in legal drafting. But it's important to remember that in some legal traditions, especially in American legal reform movements where "must" is preferred for clarity, the use of "shall" has also been criticized for being viewed as ambiguous (Garner, 2011). In order to account for jurisdictional variations in legal interpretation, this tension emphasizes the necessity of

continuous harmonization efforts in the design of international treaties. Another noteworthy grammatical finding from the investigation is the prevalence of passive forms in treaty texts. By depersonalizing and universalizing legal requirements, passivation essentially takes away agency so that attention can be directed at the deed or result. Passive voice allows treaties to remain neutral and inclusive by leaving out explicit agents, which is crucial in a multilateral setting with equal standing for sovereign states. However, even though the passive voice promotes objectivity, it can also obfuscate accountability, especially in sentences pertaining to responsibility or enforcement. In order to prevent the abuse of impersonal structures from weakening the legal implications of treaty provisions, drafters must therefore achieve a balance between neutrality and transparency (Mattila, 2013). Another feature that is ingrained in the grammatical structure of international treaties is syntactic complexity. To guarantee thorough articulation of legal duties and procedures, long, multi-clause sentences are frequently used, frequently accompanied by conditional and relative clauses. This complexity serves a practical function: it allows treaty drafters to include multiple legal contingencies and procedural steps within a single textual unit. However, this complexity can also hinder accessibility and comprehension, particularly for non-specialist stakeholders such as civil society actors or developing countries with limited legal resources. As Gibbons (2003) observes, there is a growing call within legal linguistics for “plain legal language” to improve public understanding of legal texts, including international agreements.

The functional grammar analysis underscored that grammatical structures in treaty texts are not ornamental but serve communicative purposes grounded in legal function. According to the functional grammar analysis, grammatical structures in treaty texts serve communicative functions based on legal function rather than being beautiful. This study illustrated how register, modality, and clause structure convey legal connections including obligations, permissions, and prohibitions, drawing on Halliday’s (2004) Systemic Functional Linguistics. Thus, legal grammar turns into a tool for establishing normative frameworks among international actors and enforcing institutional authority. Mellinkoff (1963), who contends that legal language should be interpreted within its socio-institutional context and is a specific instrument created to support legal institutions, supports this viewpoint. The study’s findings about the grammatical differences between multilingual versions of international treaties are arguably among its most important findings. Furthermore, the results point to wider ramifications for multilingual drafting methods and legal education. The necessity of interdisciplinary training in both law and linguistics is becoming more and more clear as international treaties become more common in managing transnational issues, such as trade regulation and climate change. The ability to explore and assess the consequences of grammatical decisions is a prerequisite for legal professionals engaged in treaty negotiation and interpretation. Similar to this, linguists who work in legal settings need to be aware of the legal implications of syntactic embedding, passivation, and modality. Overall, this discussion emphasizes how important grammar is in treaty texts. It plays an important role in mediating between legal intent and legal effect, influencing the formulation, interpretation, and application of international law. The study’s examination of grammatical anomalies reflects intentional and calculated decisions meant to maximize literary authority, cross-cultural coherence, and legal clarity. Future studies could build on this basis by adding treaties from non-Western legal traditions to the corpus or by evaluating how different grammatical structures impact judges’ and lawyers’ interpretations of treaties using psycholinguistic research. The importance of grammar in the structure of the international legal system would be strengthened by such research, which would also add to the expanding multidisciplinary field of law and language.

Conclusion. By examining the grammatical quirks that define the language of international treaties, this study has illuminated the complex relationship between linguistic form and legal function. According to the findings, treaty texts are characterized by unique grammatical features that fulfill particular legal and communicative purposes. These features include the use of modal verbs to convey obligations, passive constructions to preserve neutrality, syntactic complexity to encapsulate multiple legal provisions, and functional grammar to guarantee enforceability and clarity across

jurisdictions. According to the study's findings, modal verbs – especially "shall" – are essential for conveying legally enforceable commitments in treaties, and the passive voice reinforces the impersonal character of legal language by depersonalizing and objectifying legal responsibilities. Further demonstrating how language is deliberately used to communicate intricate legal relationships, conditions, and procedures are syntactic complexity and functional grammar. The difficulties in attaining grammatical equivalency in legal documents are also brought to light by the comparative study of multilingual treaty versions. This can occasionally result in interpretive uncertainties and inconsistent enforcement. The grammatical characteristics found in this study are not only stylistic; they also have important legal and diplomatic functions, guaranteeing that international treaties fulfill their function as legally binding agreements in a multilingual, multicultural world. Treaties must use clear, concise language that can withstand a variety of interpretations in many legal systems and languages. But the study also brings up significant issues with comprehension and accessibility. Understanding may be hampered by the frequent use of intricate grammatical constructions and formal language choices, especially for non-native speakers, legal novices, or inhabitants of signatory states with low legal literacy. In order to ensure that treaties remain understandable and available to all parties concerned, this problem raises the possibility that future treaty drafting efforts could profit from a more nuanced approach that strikes a balance between legal precision and clarity. In order to comprehend how legal concepts are stored differently across languages, future study could concentrate on the cross-linguistic analysis of grammatical aspects in treaties, investigating new language pairs. Also, a study of the changing patterns in treaty language, especially in light of growing globalization and international cooperation, will shed light on how legal language changes over time to address new issues. In conclusion, even though the grammatical peculiarities of international treaties are perfectly suited to their legal purposes, further consideration is still required to determine how these documents might develop to become more legally accurate while still being understandable to a larger spectrum of international actors. Linguists, legal academics, and politicians can work together across disciplinary boundaries to continuously enhance the writing and interpretation of international treaties in order to meet the needs of a world that is becoming more linked and complicated.

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