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# The German Modal Verb *müssen* and the Slavonic Languages — The Reconstruction of a Success Story[1]

*"Dem harten Muss bequemt sich Will und Grille."*
*Goethe*

## 0. Introduction

The following article concerns a particular instance of language contact between German and several Slavonic languages. The German modal verb *müssen* respectively its Old High German ancestor *muozan* (Middle High German *müezen*), entered into the Slavonic world and was taken up there by six Slavonic languages: Polish *musieć,* Czech *muset*, Slovak *musieť*, Lower Sorbian *musaś*, Ukrainian *musyty* and Belorussian *music´*. As Besters-Dilger (1997) shows, even Russian had a modal verb *musit´* at its disposal from the 17th to the 18th century. This article deals with the situation of the Slavonic exponents of modality at the time of this borrowing from German and the question as to why these languages so readily adopted the German modal *müssen*. The linguistic literature does not offer any explanations for this phenomenon, except for the hypothesis of the Polish linguist Aleksander Brückner, who claimed (1927, s.v.) that *müssen* "was a general borrowing because the anarchic Slavs did not have a word of their own for 'must'".[2] Mytropolyt Ilarion (1979–1994, 147f) objects to this statement: "Concerning the Ukrainians we can refute this statement of Brück-ner's by the following well-known Polish proverb: "'Must' exists only in Russia; in Poland everyone can do what he likes".[3]

[1] I thank P. M. Hill (University of Hamburg) and the participants of the International Conference of the Linguistic Society of Belgium 'Modal verbs in the Romance and Germanic Languages', Antwerp 1998, and of the 6. Norddeutsches Linguistisches Kolloquium 1999 in Hamburg for comments on earlier versions of this paper.

[2] "**mus**; [...] już w 14. wieku ogólna pożyczka; bo anarchiczni Słowianie nie mają własnego słowa dla 'musu'".

[3] "U vidnošenni do ukraïnciv, ce tverdžennja A. Brjuknera zaperečuje os´ take pol´s´ke notorične dictum: 'Musi — na Rusi, a w Polsce jak kto chce.'"

This paper consists of three parts. In the first part I will briefly characterize the history of the German modal with regard to its semantic development. The second part deals with the borrowing processes in the Slavonic world, especially with the time of borrowing and the semantics of the modal in the modern languages. Finally I offer an explanation based on a cross-linguistic definition of modal auxiliaries and the diachronic analysis of the means of expression for necessity in the Slavonic languages.

## 1. The History of German *müssen*

Throughout its history, the verb *müssen* changed from a diffuse expression of modality — predominantly of a form of possibility — to one of pure necessity and partly exchanged its meaning with *dürfen*. A certain trace of the old meaning still persists in the cognate noun *Muße,* 'leisure'. In the linguistic literature different explanations for this shift in meaning have been proposed, cf. Bech 1951, Gamon 1993, Grimm and Grimm 1854/1954, Müller and Zarncke 1854–61, Splett 1993, and Fritz and Gloning 1997. I will limit myself to characterizing the crucial elements of the view proposed by Fritz and Gloning (1997), to which I subscribe. They maintain that during the early period of old high German *muozan* carried the meaning 'to be in a certain situation':

> In early old high German the relatively open use of *muozan* refers to the fact that a course of action or a state of affairs is shaped by relevant external circumstances. In earlier old high German the prevailing implication is that the situation in question makes possible a course of action or a state of affairs [...] The use [of *muozan*] is still relatively open in later old high German but the word now takes on usages that imply that the situation in question determines a course of action or a state of affairs. (Fritz and Gloning 1997, 93; my transl. — BH)

This diffuseness of meaning is illustrated by examples from Old High German. The 'possibility' reading prevails in the earliest texts, although the meaning 'necessity' is already found in Otfrid and Notker:

> Possibility:
> *Ira férah bot thaz wíb, thaz iz múasi haben líb*. 'The woman offered her life, so that [the child] might stay alive.' (Otfrid, 9th century)

> Necessity:
> *úbe dánne héiz chúmet tér uuólchenônto súnt-uuínt. so mûozen die blûomen rîsen ába dîen dórnen*. 'When then the cloud-bearing south-

wind comes hot, must the flowers fall from the thorns.' (Notker, 10th century)

In Middle High German the 'necessity' reading gains ground and begins to dominate, but nevertheless *müezen* is still polysemious, since we can still find instances of the other meaning:

Necessity:
*Nu muoz ich von ir gescheiden sin: trûric ist mir al daz herze mîn*.
'Now I must leave you, I have a sadness in my heart.' (14th century)

Possibility:
*Si bat die eptissin, daz si siechmeisterin muste sin in deme siechhûse*.
'She asked the prioress to be allowed to serve in the hospital.' (14th century)

In modern German we use *müssen* in the first sentence, but *dürfen* in the second one. During the next stage of semantic development the 'possibility' reading is disappearing and is being restricted to negative contexts. The old 'possibility' meaning persists up to the 19th century and in spoken language up to the present:

*Ich muß nicht nach dem Schlosse zu gehn vergessen*. 'I must not forget to go to the castle.' (17/18th century)

*Du mußt nicht meinen, dass du mir damit einen Gefallen tust*. 'You can't think that your doing me any favor.', vs.:
*Du musst nicht kommen, wenn du nicht willst*. 'You don't have to come when you don't want to.'

In explaining that type of polysemy we have to consider the universal interdefinability of possibility and necessity: 'it is not possible that p' is semantically equivalent to 'it is necessary that not p' (in logical notation: $\neg \Diamond p \equiv \Box \neg p$). The difference in meaning between *du musst nicht meinen* ($\Box \neg p$) and *du musst nicht kommen* ($\neg \Box p$) can be explained in two ways: either as the persistence of the old possibility meaning in the first sentence ($\neg \Diamond p$ which is equivalent to $\Box \neg p$) or as two different readings of the scope of negation. In the latter case we are dealing with "a process whereby the less informative statement '$\neg \Box p$' implicates the stronger, more informative one '$\Box \neg p$'" (van der Auwera, forthcoming). Simply put, if a speaker denies the necessity of doing something, he or she does not have a great impact on the behavior of other people and hence does not say anything of

great importance. Therefore the listener might give a new interpretation to this statement by shifting the scope of negation, which leads to the reading 'prohibition'.

In modern German *müssen* belongs to the class of modal verbs ("Modalverben") and functions as the central expression of necessity on all three levels of modality, i.e. it can be used in dynamic, deontic, or epistemic readings or meanings. The old ambiguity is rather marginal.

Dynamic:
*Jeder Mensch muss sterben*. 'Every human must die.'

Deontic:
*Ich sage dir: Du musst sofort nach Hause kommen*. 'I'm telling you that you must come home right away.'

Epistemic:
*Herr Klemens muss früher einmal ein stattlicher Mann gewesen sein*. 'Mr. Klemens must have been a stately man once.'

## 2. The Verb *müssen* in the Slavonic World: Then and Now

We will begin with a reconstruction of the success story of *müssen* in the Slavonic languages. I will point out the first instances of the modal *müssen* in the individual languages and briefly characterize the language contact. Current meanings will also be given. Since a great many languages have to be analyzed, I will mainly rely on data from lexicographic works such as large explanatory and historical dictionaries.

### 2.1 Polish *musieć*

Polish came into intensive contact with German in the 12th century when masses of German settlers entered the country. In the cities founded by these settlers German law was used, the so-called Magdeburg law, and the use of both languages was widespread, which created a language situation leading to the borrowing of many German words. Polish belongs to one of the first Slavonic languages where the German modal can be traced in written texts. However, we do not know whether Polish adopted it directly or through the mediation of Czech. The exact date of the borrowing is not clear, because *musieć* is found in the earliest Old Polish texts, i.e. in the 14th and 15th century. At this stage we can find examples both of the dynamic and the deontic variant:

Dynamic necessity:
*Ono naszyenye ny myalo nad sobą pyersczy y nye moglo myecz maczyczye a przeto mvszylo vschnącz.* 'This seed had no breast above it and no nourishing mother and therefore had to dry up.' (15th century)

Obligation:
*Tho szlubyenye, czo thą pany wysznala* [...]*, to mvszy ona dzyerszecz.* 'The woman must keep the promise she made.' (15th century)

Since the 16th century the modal can be used epistemically.

Comparing the Polish data with the development of German *müssen* described above we can see that at the time of borrowing, which definitely must be before the 14th century, the Middle High German verb in its main use had already changed to that of necessity, but nevertheless still displayed traces of the old 'possibility' meaning, especially in negated or other non-affirmative contexts. It is interesting to note that Polish adopted *müssen* as a pure expression of necessity and that even in negated contexts it did not contain any ambiguity at all. *Musieć* is from the beginning an unambigous word.

*Maćie tedy o to stáránie cżynić, aby mistrzom słuszne zapłaty były náznáczżone: ták, żeby oni nemuśieli sobie pożywienia tákiemi sposoby szukáć, ktoreby ich od náuk odryváły.* 'You have to take care that the masters get paid adequately so that they are not forced to look for their food in a manner that would distract them from education.' (16th century)

In general the negation scope functions iconically, meaning that we are dealing with a regular external negation. Polish thus adopted the German verb with a slightly different function, i.e. without its polysemy.

Today *musieć* is a full-fledged modal auxiliary; its uses on the dynamic, deontic and epistemic levels are more or less identical to German.

1. Dynamic necessity:
*Matka mi zachorowała i musiałem szukać doktora*. 'My mother fell ill and I had to call for a doctor.'

2. Obligation:
*Jest gorąco i źle się czujesz, ale będziesz musiał umyć mi wóz, synu. I jeszcze zmienisz mi olej w silniku*. 'It is hot and you are miserable, son, but you will have to wash my car and also change the oil.'

3. High probability:
*Czytałem cienkim głosikiem, chrzakając i pokaszlując. Musiało to wypaść żałośnie*. 'I read with a feeble voice, clearing my throat and hemming. That must have looked deplorable.'

### 2.2 Ukrainian *musyty*

Mediated by Polish, the modal appears in Ukrainian in the 15th century. In the 14th century the Ukrainian territory had become part of the Grand-Duchy of Lithuania and after creation of the Polish-Lithuanian Union in 1569 fell under direct Polish sway. Owing to the prestige of the rather highly developed Polish literary language, a lot of Polish words found their way into the written language of the Ukraine. Although the history of Ukrainian is characterized by a certain discontinuity, we can say that the modal *musyty* was present at the very formation of that language, i.e. at the time of the break-up of the unity of the East Slavonic languages.

Today *musyty* is an unambigious full-fledged modal auxiliary of necessity. The Academy of Sciences' *Slovnyk ukraïns´koï movy* lists the following meanings:

1. Dynamic necessity:
*Buvaje ščastja skriz´ pohancjam, a dobryj musyt´ propadat´*. 'The scoundrels everywhere are lucky and good people must perish.'

2. Obligation:
*Ja ujavljaju sobi mors´ku školu na visokomu berezi. Z usich vikon školi musyt´synity more.* 'I imagine a sailing school at the seaside. The sea must be visible from all windows.'

3. High probability:
*Ide šljachom molodycja, musyt´ buty, z prošči*. 'A young woman comes walking along, probably on a pilgrimage.'

### 2.3 Belorussian *music´*

In the 15th century, at the same time as in Ukrainian, we find the first evidence of the borrowing of the German modal. The similarities between Belorussian and Ukrainian are not surprising, since both peoples were integrated into the Polish-Lithuanian empire and therefore fell under intensive Polish influence. Contemporary meanings of *music´* are the same as its Ukrainian counterpart.

1. Dynamic necessity:
*Tysjačy maŭklivych i surovych synoŭ Palessja suproc´ svaëj voli i žadannja musili nad achovaju pol´skaj vaenščyny isci ŭ glybokija tyly dlja farmiravannja novych čascej, na papaŭnenne vojsk na fronce*. 'Thousands of taciturn and tough sons of Polesia, against their will and under the supervision of Polish soldiery, had to go to the hinterland to form new units reinforcing the troops on the front line.'

2. Obligation:
*Tavaryšy padtrymali svajgo starėjšaga, i Prochar musiŭ padparadkavacca.* 'The comrades supported their chief and Prokhar had to obey.'

3. High probability:
*Na svece, music´, ničoga njama macnejšaga za pryvyčku.* 'There is probably nothing stronger in the world than the force of habit.'

2.4 Russian *musit´*

In modern standard Russian this verb is not found, though we can find some examples from the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century. During this period, Russia was under Polish or combined Polish-Ukrainian-Belorussian influence. A lot of Polish books were translated into Russian and Polish was spoken at the court. Besters-Dilger (1997, 20) quotes the following example from the correspondence of Tsar Peter I, who knew Polish well.

*I poneže neprijatel´ ves´ma byl´ silen´, to musili naši otstupit´*. 'As the enemy was very strong, our troops had to retreat.'

After this short intermezzo *musit'* soon disappeared from written Russian and is attested today only in some dialects of Russian.

2.5 Lower Sorbian *musaś*

Lower and Upper Sorbian belong to the languages with the longest and most intensive contact with German. Lower Sorbian borrowed the German modal presumably rather early, in view of the fact that the Sorbians had lost their political independence and become part of German states as far back as the 12th century. The first written texts appear during the Reformation. Because of the late appearance of literary culture and the lack of extensive lexicographic works on this now almost extinct language, we are not able

to state the exact moment of borrowing, nor to describe the whole range of meanings of *musaś*. One example from a dictionary:

*To musy jaden z drugim byś*. 'We have to stick together.'

Unlike the other languages Upper Sorbian does not use this verb, but borrowed *dürfen*, or rather its Old Saxon cognate meaning 'must': *dyrbjeć*. This can be explained by the fact that middle high German *durfen* still retained its original meaning of an internal necessity, found in the current German words *bedürfen* or *Bedarf* 'need'. Examples can be found for the use of *musać*, but this verb is restricted to dialects and does not appear in standard language.

### 2.6 Czech *muset*

As with Polish, the German modal makes a similar early appearance in Czech. As already mentioned, we can not reconstruct the way *müssen* took in relation to Czech and Polish. The verb can already be found in the first transmitted texts of Old Czech dating from the 13th century, i.e. a certain time after the beginning of German settlement in that area. The influence of German culture and language was especially strong in the capital, Prague. As early as the 13th/14th centuries *musiti* functions as a typical expression of necessity on the dynamic and the deontic level.

*V zákoně mussys jmieti utrpěnie*. 'In a monastery you have to be patient.' (14th century)

*Což král chtěl, muzzi sě to státi*. 'What the king wants, has to be done.' (14th century)

Like Upper Sorbian, Old Czech had a modal based on an ancestor of today's *dürfen*. The loan word *drbiti* in the meaning of 'must' did not remain in use and was surplanted by *muset*. The modern verb *muset* has the same functions as its German and Slavonic counterparts:

Dynamic necessity:
*Nic jinýho pro vás nemám. Do večera to už musíte nějak vydržet*. 'I don't have anything more for you. You will have to put up with it till the evening.'

Obligation:
*Pane, ta več se musí co nejpří sněji vyšetrit!* 'Listen, you have to investigate that thoroughly.'

High probability:
*Musíl být unaven, když nepřišel*. 'He must have been tired, if he didn't come.'

2.7 Slovak *musieť*

Slovak, closely related to Czech, does not reveal any difference concerning the German modal *müssen*. Due to the fact that Slovak literary language began its independent existence only later on and due to the difficulty of distinguishing between older Czech and Slovak it is impossible to determine the first uses of the borrowed modal. It was only at the end of the 18th century that we can unequivocally speak of Slovak texts. Because primarily Czech had been used beforehand, the modal must have been mediated by Czech.

In modern Slovak the same meanings are found as in the other languages:

Dynamic necessity:
*Všetci ľudia musia zomrieť.* 'Everybody must die.'

Obligation:
*Musím ísť do školy.* 'I have to go to school.''

High probability:
*Nevládal na nohách stáť, musel ich mať tiež dokatované*. 'He could hardly stay on his feet. He must have deeply wounded them.'

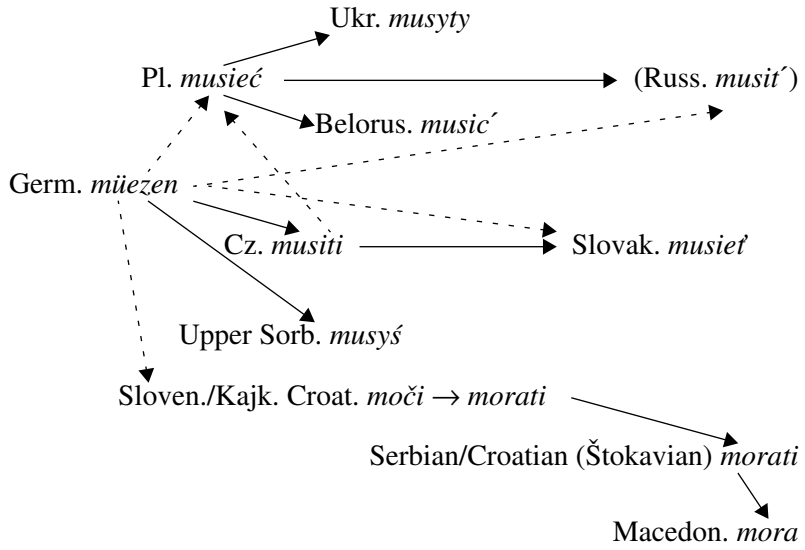
2.8 Slovenian, Serbian/Croatian, and Macedonian

The question arises why the South Slavonic languages, some of which, like Slovenian and Serbian/Croatian, have been in enduring contact with German, apparently did not borrow the modal. In these cases though, something different has happened. Three South Slavonic languages — Slovenian, Serbian/Croatian, and Macedonian — have their own full-fledged auxiliary of necessity *morati* or *mora*. In view of the process described in reference to the other Slavonic languages, the origin of this modal seems rather clear. The verb *morati* is first found in Slovenian and in the kindred Kajkavian dialects of Croatian in the 16th century. In both languages we can observe a rather striking phonetic similarity: *moram* 'I must' resembles *morem* 'I can'. We can assume that Slovenian and the northern dialects of Croatian developed this modal on the basis of an expression for 'can' as with German (cf. Skok 1972:2, 446; see examples in Ivšić 1931, 168). In

this case we are not dealing with a borrowed word, but a calque from German. The history seems to speak in favor of this hypothesis, since the Slovenes have always been in intensive and enduring contact with Germanic peoples. In the 8th century Carantania, the first state of the ancestors of the Slovenes, fell under the control of the Frankish Kingdom and was systematically colonialized by Germanic settlers in the 10th century. In the 19th century *morati* spread from Kajkavian to Štokavian, the present main dialect of Serbian/Croatian, entering the South East, i.e. Bosnia-Hercegovina and Serbia (Ivšić 1931, Karadžić [2]1852). Macedonian presumably borrowed it from the bordering Serbian dialects. The fact that *mora* is not used in the southern Macedonian dialects in Greece, which are less influenced by Serbian, speaks in favour of this hypothesis.[4]

Thus all Slavonic languages borrowed a modal directly or indirectly from German, except for modern Russian and Bulgarian, the languages geographically most distant from German-speaking territory. Table 1 shows the paths of borrowing the modal took:

Table 1. The Paths of Borrowing




## 3. An Explanation

Before offering an explanation for the success story of *müssen* in the Slavonic languages, I would like to elaborate my concept of the category of

[4] P. M. Hill, personal communication.

modal auxiliaries. We are dealing with a fuzzy category with a rather clear-cut center and an open periphery. I propose three factors in two parameters constituting the cross-linguistic **prototype of a modal auxiliary**. A highly developed full-fledged modal auxiliary is to be defined as a surface unit concurring with a main verb with the following features:

**Semantic parameter 1** — grammatical polyfunctionality:
The unit is grammatically polyfunctional, i.e. it works on more than one level of modality (dynamic, deontic, epistemic) or works on one level as well as another 'postmodal' grammatical realm (term by van der Auwera and Plungian 1998) such as tense.

Example 1: German *müssen* is polyfunctional, because it displays dynamic, deontic, and epistemic uses.

Example 2: German *sollen* functions in the realms of deontic modality, evidentiality (hearsay), and conditionality.

Modal: *Der Arzt sagt, du sollst nicht rauchen*. 'The doctor says you shouldn't smoke.'

Evidential: *Herr Klausen soll sehr reich sein*. 'Mr. Klausen is supposedly very rich.'

Conditional: *Sollte es morgen regnen, bleiben wir zu Hause*. 'If it should rain tomorrow, we will stay at home.'

**Semantic parameter 2** — lack of lexical meanings:
Beyond the modal ones, the word does not exhibit fully lexical meanings like 'to owe' or 'need':

Russian *nado*: *Nado chleba*. 'We need bread.'

German 18th century sollen, 'to owe': *Was ich Ihnen soll für den Tee?* 'How much do I owe you for the tea?' (Goethe)

**Syntactic parameter** — verbal complex:
The unit obligatorily and exclusively governs an infinite verb form[5] and beyond that does not open any argument positions. Therefore modal auxiliaries do not have any selection restrictions of their own; cf. German *können* and *in der Lage sein*:

*Klaus kann schwimmen. — Die Bombe kann gleich explodieren* 'Klaus can swim'; 'The bomb could go off at any moment now'; vs.:

*Klaus ist in der Lage zu schwimmen. — *Die Bombe ist in der Lage gleich zu explodieren*.

[5] In many languages modals allow ellipsis of the infinite verb or a substitution by a pronoun; cf. Russian *Davajte zavtra pospim podol´še. — Net, ja ne mogu***.** 'Let's sleep in tomorrow.— No, I can't.'

In the course of time, premodals adopt these features step by step and evolve into prototypical auxiliaries. They take over new levels of modality (e.g. epistemic *müssen*), shed old lexical meanings (the above mentioned 'to owe' of *sollen*), and tend to be combined with all types of subjects and verbs. My research on the development of Slavonic modals (Hansen 1998a, 1998b, 1999) has shown that some premodals enter this process earlier and some later. Interestingly, we find a correlation between this sequence of auxililiarization and the lexicalizability hierarchy of Löbner (1990):

possibility > necessity > impossibility > unnecessity
$\Diamond > \Box > \neg \Diamond > \neg \Box$

In all Slavonic languages, without exception, Common Slavonic **mogti*, a cognate of German *mögen,* has developed into the central exponent of possibility: Pol. *móc*, Czech *moct*, Slovak. *môcť*, Upper Sorb. *móc*, Lower Sorb. *moc*, Ukr. *mogti*, Beloruss. *magčy*, Russ. *moč´*, Bulg. *moga*, Macedon. *može*, Serb.-Croat. *moći*, Sloven. *moči* and Old Church Slavonic *mošti*.

Common Slavonic **mogti* developed before the break-up of the Slavonic linguistic unity and can be considered by far the oldest modal. In the realm of 'necessity', however, the Slavonic languages differ greatly: most of them borrowed a German verb and all languages have competing semisynonyms for necessity with a similar degree of auxiliarization (Russian: *dolžen, nado, nužno*). These modals apparently developed later after the break-up of the Slavonic unity and therefore differ among the languages; they belong to the next step of auxiliarization. The success story of *müssen* is to be explained by the fact that, after having auxiliarized an expression of possibility, the languages made the next step in this sequence and developed a modal of necessity.

Analyzing the conditions leading to this borrowing process, we have to look at the situation in the earlier periods of the history of the Slavonic languages. One problem consists of the fact that some languages, e.g. Slovak, were rather late in developing their own literary culture. The data from the first Old Polish literary records clearly show that the German modal at that time already had been fully integrated in the language and thus must have been borrowed in the pre-literary period. For an insight into the means of expressing modality in the early periods, we have to analyze the oldest Slavonic literary language, Old Church Slavonic. This language represents a state very close to late Common Slavonic and in spite of Greek influence

allows us to formulate hypotheses about the situation in the pre-literary period of all Slavonic languages. Without going into detail, we can point out the following features proper to the expressions of necessity in Old Church Slavonic:

1. No exponent of necessity is polyfunctional according to the semantic parameter 1:

— one part of expressions is exclusively deontic as with *dlъžьnъ* 'to owe', *dostojati* 'it behoves to'and *podobati* and its derivatives 'it is appropriate';

— the other part is exclusively dynamic as with *nǫžda* 'necessity' and *potrěbьnъ* 'necessary'. It is interesting to note that none of the parts functions epistemically.

2. All exponents of necessity are semantically complex; i.e. they have additional semantic components besides the modal primitive of 'necessity' as in 'predestination', 'ethic obligation', 'appropriateness', and others.

3. All surface units exhibit additional, fully lexical meanings: 'to owe', 'guilty', 'worthy of', 'misery', 'need for', and others. This means that they do not meet the conditions of semantic parameter 2.

4. All exponents of necessity can take regular objects and are not syntactically restricted to the selection of infinite verbs. Moreover, most of them are used in impersonal constructions similar to the English 'it is not appropriate for you to do p'. Such impersonal constructions are characterized by their restriction to human agents (cf. *'it is not appropriate for the table to do p'). Hence, no exponent of modality meets the conditions of the syntactic parameter.

It thus becomes apparent that Old Church Slavonic did not have an auxiliarized expression of necessity. The words mentioned are to be classified as pre- or semi-auxiliaries. We are dealing with a "system of modal expressions *in statu nasciendi"* (Pallasová 1991, 272). In spite of the lack of a modal auxiliary however, we cannot say that the speakers of Old Church Slavonic were not able to express the notion of necessity, since they had at their disposal the so called 'independent infinitive'. However, this syntactic construction has the functional disadvantage that it is polysemious between necessity and possibility and has to be disambiguated by context (cf. the German passive construction of the type *Das ist zu machen* 'That is to

be done'). On the basis of the situation in Old Church Slavonic, we can formulate the hypothesis that the Slavonic languages did not have an modal auxiliary of 'necessity' of their own. In this situation some of them came into contact with German and readily borrowed the modal *müssen,* or, influenced by the early Middle High German model, created one on the basis of an expression of possibility. In this way speakers gained a morphosyntactic equivalent means of translating the German modal into their native language.[6] Later these languages spread the modality to other neighboring Slavonic languages with which they came into contact. It is worth noting that they adopt it as an unambigous marker of necessity with no traces of the old 'possibility' meaning. When the modal entered Russia at the end of the 17th century, it was presumably too late for a borrowing, because in the meantime Russian had created an expression of necessity of its own, the personally constructing adjective *dolžen,* with the original meaning 'to owe'.[7] When *müssen* came to Russia, *dolžen* was used in deontic and dynamic contexts. For that reason there was no need for the original German modal. This modal never gained foothold in Russian and vanished after a short interim.

## 4. Conclusion

All Slavonic languages except two make use of a modal of necessity derived from German *müssen* or *dürfen*. This success story might be explained by the sequence of auxiliarization. By borrowing *müssen,* the languages at once gained a polyfunctional modal that was not burdened by additional semantic components and non-modal meanings like the competing genuine Slavonic forms. The German modal furthermore had the advantage that it was used in personal constructions and therefore was not syntactically restricted to human subjects. The borrowing process established a morpho-syntactic translation equivalence. It is interesting to note that not only the Slavonic languages were receptive of *müssen,* but Hungarian as well, which has the particle *muszáj* (> *muss sein* 'must be'). Later on the Slavonic languages developed their own auxiliaries of necessity, which now compete with the borrowed *müssen*.

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[6] P. M. Hill, personal communication.

[7] I subscribe to the view of Besters-Dilger (1997, 21f.).

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