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Analysis of the English as a Second/Foreign Language Learners' Use of English Modal Verbs: The Case of Second Year Master Students of English at the University "Frères Mentouri", Constantine 1

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my mother and the soul of my dead father (May Allah accept him in paradise), I appreciate their everlasting love, patience, encouragement and support and without them, I would not have been able to accomplish my thesis.

My deepest love also goes to my brother Tahar, to my sisters, Fairouz and Samia, to my brother in law Lahlali, to my nephews Anis and Mounib, to my nieces Imene, Bouchera and Nada Rayhen, whose affection and encouragement are much behind of my success.

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ABSTRACT

Successful communication in the target language requires not only the mastery of syntax, morphology, phonology and lexis, but also the ability to use appropriate expressions in appropriate context. Learners of the target language always need more than linguistic knowledge and skills in order to be better language users. Many grammarians and applied linguistic researchers consider modal verbs as the most problematic grammatical element for learners and teachers due to their formal and semantic features. This study investigates the second/foreign language learners' use of English modal verbs and the nature of difficulties and factors affecting their use. The purpose of this study is, therefore, to explore learners' use in terms of communication strategy usage and competence in the second/foreign language. With all the problems associated with the difficulties of teaching and learning modal verbs, as well as the call for the necessity of finding out an approach to facilitate the teaching and learning of modal verbs, we hypothesized that Algerian university learners would fail to use modal verbs if they were engaged to express modality in English, and that their lack of knowledge of the semantic and the pragmatic use of English modal verbs would be the reason behind that. In order to answer the research questions and assess the research hypotheses, data were gathered through a questionnaire and a test administered to a sample of 116 students from a total population of 360 second year Master students at the Department of Letters and English at the University "Frères Mentouri", Constantine 1. The results were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively to identify the factors that affect the students' use of English modal verbs and to investigate the frequency and difficulties in the use of each of the selected English modal verbs at comprehension and production level. The findings derived from this study provide a comprehensive understanding about assessing students' acquisition of modality. In this respect, possible explanation of the students' errors was discovered and pedagogical implications were provided both theoretically and practically.

Key words: Grammar, English modal verbs, comprehension, production, competence, performance

List of Abbreviations

CA: Contrastive Analysis

CBI: Content-Based Instruction

CL: Cooperative Learning

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

DM: Direct Method

ES/FL: English as a Second/ Foreign Language

EA: Error Analysis

GTM: Grammar Translation Method

IP: Input Processing

LAD: Language Acquisition Device

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

NL: Native Language

NPAH: Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TL: Target Language

TBA: Task-based Language Learning Approach

T.G.G: Transformational Generative Grammar

N: Number

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1. Statement of the Problem

The effective use of language involves in the first place the learners' ability to use linguistic competence in order to interpret different language functions. Linguistic competence is the speaker-hearer's knowledge of language and proficiency as the actual use of it in concrete situations (Chomsky, 1970). In recent decades, the goal of most second or foreign language learning has been to become communicatively competent and use the language necessary for a given social context (Hymes, 1972). Reasonable levels of competence and proficiency, among other elements, are prerequisites to comprehension and enable the productive aspects of communication.

Investigating the learners' use of a language different from their first language stems from the fact that they lack necessary ability to use the appropriate expression in the appropriate context. Though second/foreign learners have a good knowledge and command of grammar and lexis, they often encounter serious difficulties when they engage in real-like communicative activities. Inadequate mastery of grammar, together with socio-linguistic inappropriateness may cause learners to appear incompetent. It is not impossible to address these problems because a second/foreign language is usually acquired more successfully when the focus of instruction is on the meaning rather than on the linguistic form of the target language (Krashen 1982). Palmer's (1982) theoretical scheme of communicative competence includes grammatical (morphology and syntax), pragmatic (vocabulary, cohesion and organisation) and sociolinguistic competencies (register, nativeness and non-literal language). According to Bachman (1990), incompetence always results in unsuccessful communication events which lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication. He emphasizes the role of pragmatics knowledge in effective communication. He asserts that "in order to be successful in communication, it is essential for the second language learners to know not just grammar and organization, but also pragmatic aspects of the target language"(p.23). Baradovi-Harlig

(1996) similarly emphasized that successful communication in the target language requires, not only the mastery of syntax, morphology, phonology and lexis, but also the ability to use appropriate expressions in appropriate context. Therefore, learners of the target language always need more than linguistic knowledge and skills in order to be better language users.

As teachers of English at the University "Frères Mentouri", Constantine1, we have often found that students can readily do the fill in gaps type exercises that practise grammatical structures as usage, but they do not often reproduce these when engaged in spoken or written communication. This is probably not true of all grammatical structures, but we find it so with modal verbs. Many grammarians and applied linguistic researchers consider modal verbs as the most problematic grammatical elements for learners and teachers. Palmer (1974) noted that the complexity of modal verbs and their semantic functions cannot be compared with any other grammatical structures and highlighted the difficulties learners usually have in handling this grammar feature. In his study, Kasper (1979) showed that German students of English are unsure of certain grammatical aspects of English, especially in understanding the pragmatic category of modal verbs and modality in accounting for the differential contextual implications.

Despite the fact that many linguists have reported the countless difficulties non-native students face in terms of modal verbs, not many learner-corpus studies have covered the root of these difficulties by learners in general and Algerian learners in particular. There is not adequate research exploring the potential problems that learners encounter and the underlying reasons behind these troublesome issues. Consequently, we assume that analyzing the use of English modal verbs in learners' production might be an effective way of teaching them. Thus, an investigation of the semantic and pragmatic use of modal verbs is necessary to spot light on learners' errors of modal comprehension and production, and therefore provide teachers with suggestions regarding teaching English modal verbs.

2. Aims of the Study

The present study is an attempt to investigate how Algerian university students use English modal verbs. It aims to find out the main difficulties related to their uses, forms and functions. The major aim is to explore areas of difficulty in teaching English modal verbs and to draw teachers' attention to the importance of presenting modal verbs in association with their socio-cultural contexts. Our study could potentially provide a more comprehensive understanding towards assessing students' acquisition of English modal verbs. With the obtained data possible explanation of students' errors and pedagogical implications are provided.

The major aim of the study is to provide insights into the investigation of communication strategies and second/foreign language competence of Algerian university students of English, when using English modal verbs. It attempts to provide evidence concerning the difficulties that our students face in their use of English modal verbs and their ways to cope with these difficulties while involved in communication. The derived findings of the study will provide the Department of Letters and English, University "Frères Mentouri", Constantine 1 with some suggestions regarding the development of language learners' communicative competence. As a result, by means of evaluating second/foreign language proficiency and competence of our students, the language teachers can be aware of their current strengths and weaknesses in order to modify their teaching approach by promoting the notion of communicative competence.

It is hoped that this study will allow teachers to find out teaching and learning materials or remediation for students' inadequate use of English modal verbs. Thereby, our students would be able to use English modal verbs more accurately and appropriately in their speaking or writing. Additionally, the assessment of the students' performance of modal verbs would assist the decision makers in making future policies for developing language learners'

communicative competence. The findings could produce some benefits to language educators in terms of awareness of the current weaknesses and strengths of English language education and provide alternative propositions on their decisions regarding selection and design of teaching materials.

3. Research Questions and Hypotheses

Due to the complexity inherent in the teaching and learning of English modal verbs, the present research attempts to assess second/foreign learners' use and interpretation of English modals with a special concern of the Algerian university students. It addresses the following questions:

1. Do Algerian university students of English face difficulties in the comprehension and the production of English modal verbs?
2. Do Algerian university students use accurately English modal verbs at the syntactic, semantic or pragmatic level?
3. What are the major reasons behind the students' misuse of English modal verbs?
4. How do the students cope with deficiencies in their use of English modal verbs: which strategies do they use to compensate these deficiencies in order to express modality?
5. To what extent do Algerian university students demonstrate their linguistic competence within different social contexts?
6. What suggestions and recommendations our study may have in order to enhance better teaching and learning of English modal verbs?

With all the problems associated with the difficulties of teaching and learning modals, as well as the call for the necessity of finding out an approach to facilitate the teaching and learning of modals, we hypothesize that:

1. Algerian university learners would fail to use the modal verbs if they were engaged to express modality in English;

2. The students' lack of knowledge of the semantic and pragmatic use of English modal verbs would be the reason behind that.

4. Means of Research

In order to answer our research questions and check our hypotheses, both quantitative and qualitative analyses are adopted. Two research instruments are used: a students' questionnaire and a test are administered to Second Year Master students of English at University "Frères Mentouri", Constantine 1. The students' questionnaire attempts to assess the students' awareness of the difficulties they may encounter in the use of English modal verbs The major aim of the test is to investigate our students' knowledge of English modal verbs in terms of form, meaning and use.

As a first step, the students are asked to respond to a questionnaire aiming to assess their attitudes towards learning English modal verbs and their awareness of their difficulties in using them. Then, the students are required to complete a test to investigate their ability in recognising and producing modal verbs. The test consists of four parts. In Part One: Writing Activity, the students are asked to respond in just one sentence to nine envisioned real-life situations. In Part Two: a Multiple Choice Activity, the students are asked to choose among options the appropriate answer. Part Three is a Fill in the Blanks Activity where the students are asked to complete the blanks with the appropriate modal verbs. Part Four is a Cloze Procedure Activity requiring the students to complete a text with appropriate modal verbs.

5. Structure of the Study

The present study is organized around six chapters. The three first chapters provide the review of the literature relevant to this study. Chapter One, Second/Foreign Language Learners' Errors in Second Language Acquisition, describes the most popular theories in second/foreign language learning research and the major approaches to second/foreign language learners' errors. It also clarifies the notion of difficulty in learners' acquiring of a

second/foreign language different from their first language. Chapter Two, Grammar in Second Language Acquisition, reviews the major trends underlying the second/foreign language teaching with a major focus on the importance of grammar through the history of teaching. It further explores the current controversial issues related to grammar in second/foreign language teaching and learning. It ends with a description of the sources of difficulties in learning the target language. Chapter Three, Teaching English Modal Verbs, is about English modal verbs. The general concepts about English modal verbs are introduced from their forms to their meanings and functions that may possibly cause difficulties to second/foreign language learners.

Chapter Four, The Students' Opinion about the Use of English Modal Verbs, presents a full description of the research methodology pertaining to the analysis of the students' use of English modal verbs as well as an explanation of the selection criteria and the research procedures for data collection. A detailed description of the sample, the analysis and interpretation of the results of the students' questionnaire are provided. Chapter five, The Students' Use of English Modal Verbs, analyses thoroughly the students' answers to the test. In Chapter Six, Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations, the major findings are pointed out and some implications and suggestions are presented.

Introduction

Learning a second/foreign language (ES/FL) is a lifelong process; it is often a challenging experience for language learners. Errors in the foreign languages acquisition occur during both oral and written communication. It is thus necessary to describe the way in which learners internalize their new knowledge as well as the processes and mechanisms involved. In relation to this, scholars have proposed several theories based on first Language (L1) learning in order to have a better and deeper understanding of second language acquisition (SLA). Generally, approaches provide information about how people acquire their knowledge of the language and about the conditions which will promote successful language learning.

1.1. Definition of Second Language Acquisition

In linguistic terms, learning another language that is not your L1 is often referred to as SLA. In this section, a background to SLA is thoroughly presented in order to understand SLA.

1.1.1. Second Language Acquisition vs Foreign Language Acquisition

According to Ellis (1986), SLA is the study of how learners learn an additional language after they have acquired their mother tongue. The study of language learners began with the study of L1 acquisition (Ellis, 1986, p. 2). However, it is also used to describe third or fourth language acquisition. There are usually two different distinctions of SLA; the first one is informal learning (naturalistic learning), and the second one is formal learning (instructed learning). The first learning is often said to focus on communicative ability, whereas the second one often "focuses on some aspect of the language system" (Ellis, 1994, p. 12). Therefore, SLA can refer to any language you learn that is not your mother tongue. Consequently, it is not the second in meaning of the second one you learn, but can also refer

to the third or fourth language you learn (Ellis 1997, p. 3). Azikiwe (1998) opined that the processes are the same.

SLA is used as a general term that embraces both untutored (and naturalistic) acquisition and tutored (or classroom) acquisition. It is, however, an open question whether the way in which acquisition proceeds in these different situations is the same or different. Formal learning often takes place in classrooms with a specific aim to teach a second language (L2) and with clear language instructions. Informal learning on the other hand occur in more natural conditions, for example, when a person visits another country and picks up new words from people around him/her (Saville-Troike, 2006, p. 2). However, one cannot exclude one from the other since SLA could occur both in formal and informal contexts.

1.1.2. Language Acquisition and Language Learning

SLA research has tended to follow in the footsteps of L1 acquisition research, both in its methodology and in many of the issues that it has treated. Hakuta (1981, p. 1) explained that language acquisition research can be described as the search for an appropriate level of description of the learner's system of rules. The very circumstances of language acquisition and L2 learning are different, because the already acquired language, which is L1, can have an impact on the process of L2 learning. Thus, making the distinction between learning and acquiring L2 is a significant one to make when discussing SLA. It is not surprising that a key issue has been the extent to which SLA and L1 acquisition are similar or different processes. According to Krashen (1981, p. 1), adults develop language competence in two different ways: language acquisition and language learning. Acquisition, he asserted, is a natural language development process that occurs when the target language (TL) is used in meaningful interactions with native speakers, in a manner similar to L1 acquisition with no

particular attention to form. Language learning, in contrast, refers to the formal and conscious study of language forms and functions as explicitly taught in foreign language classrooms.

The term acquisition is used to refer to picking up a L2 through exposure in a natural context, whereas the term L2 learning occurs through classroom tutoring where by bits of the language are taught step by step following some kind of syllabus or scheme. Krashen (1981, p. 2).described language acquisitions as follows:

> Language acquisition is a subconscious process not unlike the way a child learns language. Language acquirers are not consciously aware of the grammatical rules of the language, but rather develop a feel for correctness. In non-technical language, acquisition is picking-up a language.

Krashen (1985) fused both learning and acquisition in that while "acquisition" initiates our utterance, and accounts for our fluency; "learning" has only one function - to "monitor" or to "edit" our utterances. Learning is responsible for our grammatical competence, a conscious knowledge of the language, whether L1 or L2. He emphasized that acquisition is the primary process; that learning can contribute to language production only when learned information is engaged as a monitor. This means that when it edits the output of the acquired system in situations where the speaker: (a) Is focusing on formal features of the language, (b) Knows the underlying rules (c) Has time to apply this knowledge (Krashen, 1985). Krashen's critics have pointed out that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to detect which system, acquisition or learning, is at work in any instance of language use (McLaughlin, 1987). Furthermore, the two terms require a much finer definition to be subjected to experimental study. Krashen's emphasis on SLA by using the new language for relevant communicative purposes has had substantial, positive influence on classroom practice, especially in regard to the move away from the drill-and-practice pattern aimed at language learning.

Harmer (1991, p. 33) presented his explanation of acquisition as a "… subconscious process, which results in the knowledge of a language…" whereas learning "… results only in 'knowing about' the language." According to him, acquiring a language is more successful and longer lasting than learning. Similarly, Stern (1995) commented that the innate ability may no longer be very active after the acquisition of the mother tongue, though it does not disappear altogether. L2 learning requires laborious formal learning and a higher degree of consciousness on the part of the learner. Richard-Amato (1996, p.42) added that the acquisition aspect of this hypothesis is subconscious, while the learning portion is a conscious effort by the learner. He further clarified that the learning of a language occurs separately where grammar, vocabulary, and other rules about the TL are explicitly taught

The term language acquisition according to Yule (1996) is the gradual development of ability in a language by using it naturally in communicative situation. The term language learning, however, applies to a conscious process of accumulating knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar of a language. In SLA, exposure of the learner to the natural form of the language is very important. Like L1 acquisition, the learner makes little or no conscious effort towards the acquisition of the language. The language is acquired through exposure and interaction. Therefore, if learners are exposed to bad and incorrect form of the language, they are bound to manifest these errors in their attempt to use the language. Yule (1997) stated further that even in an ideal situation, very few adults seem to reach native-like proficiency in using L2. He observed that some individuals can achieve great expertise in writing, but not in speaking. This suggests that some features (for example, vocabulary, and grammar) of L2 are easier to acquire than others (for example, phonology). He stressed that after the critical period has passed (around puberty), it becomes very difficult to acquire another language. The process involved after this period is that the 'language faculty' is being strongly taken over by

the features of the LI, with a resulting loss of flexibility or openness to receive the features of another language (Yule, 1997, p.191).

1.2. Theories to Second Language Acquisition

Theories about how people learn to speak L2 (or third or fourth) language are directly related to L1 acquisition theories. Researchers and educators interested in SLA and teaching have often used L1 acquisition as an ideal model, one that may inform us about how L2 might be taught. Many theories were developed specifically to explain why children acquire language in different ways, but we will discuss three of these theories which we consider the most important ones: the Behaviorist theory, the Innatist theory and the Interactionist theory.

1.2.1. Behaviorist Perspective in Second Language Acquisition

Behaviorist accounts of SLA view the learner as "a language producing machine". The linguistic environment is seen as the crucial theory and determining factor. The Behaviorist Theory is a development of the major learning theory developed by Skinner (1953) which emphasized stimulus, response, and reinforcement as the basic elements of learning. In simple words, any human behavior could be learned through a process of stimulus, response, and positive or negative reinforcement. Thus, the availability of suitable stimuli is an important determining factor in SLA. According to the behaviorists, input comprises the language made available to the learner in the form of stimuli and that which occurs as feedback. In this case, the learners' interlocutor models specific forms and patterns which are internalized by the learner imitating them.

In the view of Behaviorism, the process of language learning is seen as a process of forming habits. Transfer attracted people from different academic backgrounds, so different interpretations and definitions of the term were used. The term 'cross-linguistic influence' was suggested by Sharwood Smith & Kellerman (1986). They pointed out that "cross-

linguistic influence" is a broader term subsuming 'transfer', 'interference', 'avoidance', 'borrowing' and L2-related aspects of language loss. Odlin (1989) proposed a definition of transfer*:* "Transfer is the influence resulting from 11 similarities and differences between the TL and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps) imperfectly acquired." (1989, p. 27). Ellis (1994, p. 341) saw the term in the following light: "Transfer, is to be seen as a general cover term for a number of different kinds of influence from language other than the L2. The study of transfer involves the study of errors (negative transfer), facilitation (positive transfer), avoidance of target language forms, and their over-use. "

According to behaviorist theories, the interference from prior knowledge is the main impediment to learning. So the theories emphasized the idea of 'difficulty' in the L2 learning. It was believed that the degree of difficulty depended primarily on the extent to which the TL pattern was similar to or different from a NL pattern. When L1 and L2 were similar or even identical, it was easier to learn L2 through positive transfer of NL pattern; conversely, differences between two languages would give negative transfer, so more learning difficulties and errors would occur (Ellis, 1994). Furthermore, behaviorists claim that children learn their L1 through stimulus, response, and reinforcement, positing that imitation and association are essential in the process (Brown, 2000). This implies that learners will imitate what they hear and, then through practice, will develop certain habits (Conrad, 2001).

Behaviorists also believe that in the process of learning, children respond to environmental stimuli in an observable way (Harmon & Jones, 2005; Reynolds, 2009). In SLA, the processes involved also consist of imitation, repetition, and reinforcement, but particularly of grammatical structures. Errors should be corrected immediately to avoid learners forming bad habits that would be difficult to change later. This view started the well-known drill-and-skill practice which was often conducted through listening to audiotapes in language laboratories (Brown, 2000, Reynolds, 2009). A criticism of this theory is that

imitation does not necessarily help the learner in real-life situations. A small number of pre-practiced sentences are not enough to uphold conversation, not even when an instructor is present (Conrad, 2001).

1.2.2. Innatist Perspective in Second Language Acquisition

Chomsky (1965, p.25) supported the Innatist Theory saying that language acquisition could only be explained by an "innate, biological language acquisition device" (LAD). He claimed that infants universally possess an innate "grammar template", or universal grammar, which allows them to choose the appropriate grammatical rule of the language they hear spoken around them, as they gradually construct the grammar of their mother tongue. He argued that the ability of language acquisition is innate; therefore taking a biological stand. Children will automatically acquire language by being exposed to it. Chomsky's theories not only inspired psycholinguists to record and describe the developing grammars of L1 learners, they also influenced research on L2 learning.

It was believed that the research on L2 learners' errors in speech and writing would reveal the nature of the learning strategies involved. In a large scale study of Spanish-speaking and Chinese-speaking children learning English in school (Dulay & Burt, 1974), English language samples were collected using a structured interview based on colorful cartoon pictures. Children were asked questions about the pictures in ways that elicited the use of certain grammatical structures. Children's grammatical errors were then examined to determine whether they could be attributed to influence from the L1 or whether they were similar to the types of errors young, native English-speaking children make. Data analysis showed that the majority of errors were similar to those made by native English-speaking youngsters as they acquire their mother tongue. Based on these results, they proposed that English language learners creatively construct the rules of L2 in a manner similar to that

observed in L1 acquisition. Dulay and Burt therefore concluded that SLA is similar to L1 acquisition.

Nativist account of SLA views the leaner as "a grand initiator". They maintain that exposure to the language cannot satisfactorily account for L2 acquisition. Input is seen merely as a trigger which activates the internal mechanisms. Dulay, Burt & Krashen (1982) proposed that English language learners construct the rules of L2 in a creative manner similar to that observed in L1 acquisition. One such theory put forth to account for L2 development was the creative construction theory (Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982). As Larsen Freeman (1983, p. 88) observed "….researchers all too often have confined the scope of their studies to examining the learner's linguistic product, thus over looking an important source (i.e. input) of information which could prove elucidating in achieving a better understanding of the acquisition process". In other words, nativist views precluded the possibility that at least some aspects of the learners output could be explained in terms of the characteristics of the input. Thus, whereas a behaviorist view of language acquisition seeks to explain progress purely in terms of what happens outside the learner, the nativist view emphasizes learners' internal factors.

1.2.3. Krashen' s Hypotheses

A series of hypotheses about SLA have been developed by Krashen and became the foundation for L2 teaching. In addition to the acquisition-learning hypothesis mentioned earlier in this chapter (see 1.1.2.), each of the four other Krashen's hypotheses: the monitor hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the input hypothesis, and the affective filter hypothesis will be discussed here.

1.2.3.1. Krashen's Monitor theory

The monitor hypothesis considers that language which is learned can only be used as an editor, making changes to language production (Krashen, 1982, p. 15). The alterations can be made before an utterance is spoken or a sentence is written, or as self-correction afterwards. Krashen and Terrell (1988) acknowledged that the monitor can be used in written language production or prepared speech. However, they argued that 'Our conscious knowledge of grammar covers only a small portion of the rules of a language' (p. 19). Krashen suggested that the formal study of language leads to the development of an internal grammar editor or monitor. As learners produce sentences, the monitor "watches" the output to ensure correct usage. The learners use the monitor to apply rules to the already learned knowledge, such as which verb tense to use or which form of speech to use. Krashen maintained that knowing the rules only helps learners polish their language. From this assumption, he recommended that the focus of language teaching should be communication, not rote rule learning, placing him in agreement with many SLA and foreign language teaching experts (Celce-Murcia, 1991; Oller, 1993).

Krashen (as cited in Lightbown a& Spada, 1995, p. 27) explained that in order to use a monitor well, three conditions are necessary: sufficient time, focus on grammatical form, and explicit knowledge of the rules.

(1) Time: The learner must have sufficient time in order to think about and use conscious rules effectively. Taking time to think about rules may disrupt the communication;

(2) Focus on form: The learner has to focus on forms, the correctness of forms. He maybe more concerned with what he is saying but not how he is saying it.

(3) Knowledge of the rules: The learner has to know the rules. For example in the present study, the subjects need time to use the monitor hypothesis to comprehend the task and identify the time of the event so that he or she can decide on the appropriate English modal

verb to use, in order to respond appropriately to the tasks given. Through this process the knowledge of the rule is demonstrated.

Krashen (cited in Lightbown & Spada, 1995, p. 27) also asserted that the use of the Monitor varies among different people. There are those who use it all of the time and are classified as "over-users". There are also learners who either have not learned how to use the monitor or choose to not use it and they are identified as "under-users". Between the two groups are the "optimal users". This group uses the Monitor when it is appropriate. In ordinary conversation, an optimal user will not be excessively concerned with applying conscious rules to performance. However, in writing and in planned speech, he or she will make any correction which improves the accuracy of his or her output.

1.2.3.2 The Natural Order Hypothesis

According to the natural order hypothesis, L2 rules are acquired in a fixed way, pre-established, determined by innate mechanisms and not by the linguistic complexity or explicit teaching. Language learners acquire the rules of a language in a predictable sequence. For a given language, some grammatical structures tend to be acquired early, others late, regardless of L1 speaker (Krashen et al., 1983, p. 28). However, this does not mean that grammar should be taught in this natural order of acquisition. Krashen (1994:53) pointed out that the existence of the natural order does not imply that we should teach second languages according to this order. He believed that natural order patterns of SLA do not follow those of L1 acquisition patterns. However, the L2 acquisition patterns of a child are very similar to the L2 learning patterns of an adult.

1.2.3.3. The Input Hypothesis

Krashen's input hypothesis stresses the importance of comprehensible input. Acquisition takes place when having a focus on 'meaning' (what is said), rather than on 'form' (how it is said). Thus, the acquisition of L2 is the direct result of learners'

understanding the TL in natural communication situations. On the basis of the input hypothesis, Krashen et al., 1988, p. 55) suggested that if learning is peripheral to acquisition, then there is a 'Great Paradox of Language teaching', namely that the best way to teach language is by transmitting messages and not through direct language instruction in order to develop conscious learning. Although comprehensible input is crucial for language acquisition, it is not seen as the only factor for language acquisition to take place.

The Input Hypothesis which claims that language is acquired not learned, and acquisition takes place when the learner is exposed to input which is just beyond the current level of ability, referred to as i+1 (Krashen 1982: 20-21; Krashen et al., 1988, p. 32-33). The i represents the "distance between actual language development" and i+1 represents "the potential language development" (Richard-Amato, 1996, p. 42). Acquisition is achieved through comprehension of input (i+1), but what makes learning possible is the existence of innate mechanisms (LAD). Krashen (1982) suggested that acquirers are able to understand this challenging level of language input by using context, extralinguistic information such as gestures and pictures, and general background knowledge.

A crucial element in language acquisition is therefore the teacher's role in helping the pupils to comprehend. Visual aids, e.g. pictures, are considered as especially helpful. Krashen et al., 1988, p. 33) claimed that providing optimal input may simply mean for the teacher to 'make sure the students understand what is being said or what they are reading', and that enough input is provided. Moreover, acquisition is facilitated by a focus on communication and not grammatical form.

1.2.3.4. The Affective Filter Hypothesis

Krashen's fifth hypothesis addresses affective or social–emotional variables related to SLA. Citing a variety of studies, Krashen (1981) concluded that the most important affective variables favoring SLA are a low-anxiety learning environment, student motivation to learn

the language, self-confidence, and self-esteem. These factors foster or impede acquisition, though they do not produce acquisition. To be more concrete, lack of motivation or self-esteem can raise the affective filter so that comprehensible input is not able to reach the LAD.

Research has shown that pupils' motivation, self-confidence and level of anxiety are influential factors for language acquisition (Krashen 1982, p. 31). In order to efficiently make use of the input that is provided, 'the acquirer has to be "open" to the input' (Krashen et al., 1988, p. 19). A low anxiety environment is considered as one of several factors which can lead to a low affective filter, thus increasing acquisition. According to when pupils posit some forms of negative attitudes towards acquiring language, their efforts to acquire language are often found to be lowered. Moreover, their affective filters will also be quite high; thus even when the input is comprehensible, acquisition will not necessarily occur. In contrast, when pupils' attitudes towards acquiring language are more positive, they tend to be more engaged in the acquisition process and their affective filters are respectively low. Krashen et al., 1988, p. 21) suggested that the activities in language classrooms should aspire to lowering the affective filters of pupils by focusing on relevant and interesting topics for them and encouraging communication of thoughts, opinions and emotions.

Krashen summarized his hypotheses in a single claim: "People acquire second languages when they obtain comprehensible input and when their affective filters are low enough to allow the input in [to the language acquisition device]" (Krashen, 1981, p. 62). Krashen's assumptions have been hotly disputed. Many psychologists have criticized Krashen's unclear distinction between subconscious (acquisition) and conscious (learning) processes. According to Brown (2002), L2 learning is a process in which varying degrees of learning and of acquisition can both be beneficial, depending upon the learner's own styles and strategies. Furthermore, the $i + 1$ formula that is presented by Krashen raised the question how *i* and 1 should be defined. Moreover, what about the 'silent period'? Krashen stated that

after a certain time, the silent period, speech will 'emerge' to the learner, which means that the learner will start to speak as a result of comprehensible input. Nevertheless, there is no information about what will happen to the learners, for whom speech will not 'emerge' and 'for whom the silent period might last forever' (Brown, 2002, p. 281).

In summary, Krashen's SLA theories have been influential in promoting language teaching practices that (1) focus on communication, not grammatical form; (2) allow students a silent period, rather than forcing immediate speech production; and (3) create a low-anxiety environment. More questionable theoretically, however, are his acquisition/learning distinction and the notion that comprehensible input alone accounts for language acquisition. The importance of output, that is, speaking and writing, cannot be ignored in a balanced view of language acquisition (Swain, 1985). Finally, evidence indicates that some grammatical forms may not develop without explicit instruction (Harley, Allen, Cummins, & Swain, 1990).

1.2.4. Interactionist Perspective in Second Language Acquisition

The Interactionist Theory also called the Social Interaction Theory (Vygotsky, 1978). Where Chomsky decided to focus on the deep structure and abstractions of language acquisition, other linguists decided to focus on how the role of language as it is actually spoken contributes to SLA. The communicative process of natural conversations between native and non-native speakers is the defining element of the language acquisition process (Long & Porter, 1985). The Social Interaction Theory describes language acquisition as being influenced by the interaction of a variety of factors such as physical, linguistic, cognitive, and mainly social factors, because children learn a language in order to function in society (Brown, 2000). The learner's processing mechanism both determine and are determined by the nature of output. Similarly, the quality of the input affects and is affected by the nature of

the internal mechanisms. The interaction between external and internal factors is manifested in the actual verbal interactions in which the learner and his interlocutor participate (see 1.4.).

Interactionists view the communicative give and take of natural conversations between native and non-native speakers as the crucial element of the language acquisition process). Their focus is on the ways in which native speakers modify their speech to try to make themselves understood by English-learning conversational partners. This trial-and-error process of give-and-take in communication as people try to understand and be understood is referred to as the negotiation of meaning. As meaning is negotiated, non-native speakers are actually able to exert some control over the communication process during conversations, thereby causing their partners to provide input that is more comprehensible. They do this by asking for repetitions, indicating they do not understand, or responding in a way that shows they did not understand. The listener's natural response is then to paraphrase or perhaps use some other cue to convey meaning, such as gesturing, drawing, or modified speech.

In addition to the importance placed on social interaction, some researchers have looked more closely at output, or the speech produced by English language learners, as an important variable in the overall language acquisition process. Swain (1990) argued that comprensible acquisition is also necessary for successful SLA. When learners talk in the L2 they notice a gap between their knowledge of L2 and what they want and need to say. Having noticed this gap, they are now predisposed to modify their L2 speech, to pay attention to the L2 structure or grammar. At this level, they can begin to think about the language-a metalinguistic activity- and internalize the way L2 works.

This view has important implications for SLA, one of which is that learners need to be supported in the difficult task of learning L2 while interacting with the teacher. An approach to learning based on the Social Interaction Theory claims that "there is no such thing as knowledge separate from the knower, but only knowledge we construct ourselves as we learn"

(Gottlieb, 2000, p. 1). It assumes that people are interested in understanding the world around them rather than passively gathering objective knowledge as is proposed in behaviourist theories. The focus in this process is on the ways in which native speakers adjust their speech to make themselves understood.

1.3. Approaches to Second Language Learners' Errors

Major areas in regard to SLA approaches to L2 errors have emerged particularly contrastive analysis (CA) and errors analysis (EA), which constitutes the current research paradigm and the new directions in SLA studies. They are viewed as phases of one goal that dealing with the problem of learning difficulty and of providing insights into the nature of SLA.

1.3.1. The Contrastive Analysis Approach

CA theory provides an access for teachers to diagnose students' errors. Teachers may not predict students' errors in advance, but at least they can explain or diagnose students' errors through CA Theory. They can find out the features of L1 and L2, compare their differences and similarities, and explain if students make such errors on account of interference from their NL. Thus, they can devise some ways to prevent students' errors.

1.3.1.1. The Contrastive Study to Second Language Errors

For a long time, researchers think of learners' NL as the sole or the prime cause that results in difficulty and error in foreign language learning. That is, they believe that learners' errors are interfered by their NL. It is basically "... the juxtaposing of accounts of two languages and the extraction of certain observation of difficulty" (Hamp, 1968, p. 139). CA has two different ways to explain the learners' learning difficulty. One is the strong version—prediction, and the other is the weak version explanation.

According to Wardhaugh (1970), the strong form claims that all L2 errors can be predicted by identifying the differences between the TL and the learner's mother tongue. In the early stage of CA, Lee (1968) viewed that 'the prime cause, or even the sole cause, of difficulty and error in foreign language learning is interference coming from the learner's native language.' The strong form was greatly supported by many behaviourist linguists before actual research because later it was discovered that some kinds of errors could not be traced or predicted from the learners' NL.

However, the weak version is proposed because some researchers believe that all L2 errors could be predicted by identifying the differences between the learners' NL and the TL (Ellis, 1994, p. 367). In other words, learners' errors are interfered by their NL. Learners already have the knowledge of their NL; they may make errors if the features of the TL are different from those of their NL. However, the weaker form of CA Theory is proposed to explain, but not predict, learners' errors. Some researchers asserted that only some errors made by learners are traceable to transfer, and CA could be used only a posteriori to explain rather than predict (Ellis, 1994, p. 308). Learners' errors are not all the result of L1 transference and also many errors that CA Theory predicts do not actually happen. The weak form of CA claims only to be diagnostic. The CA can be used to 'identify' which errors is the result of interference.

1.3.1.2. Importance of Contrastive Analysis

In the preface to his book, Lado (1957, p. 2) noted the importance of CA as follows:

> The plan of the book rests on the assumption that we can predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty in learning, and those that mill not cause difficulty, by comparing systematically the language and culture to be learned with the native language' and culture of the students.

The strong version of CA has found acceptance in a large group of linguists like Lado (1957), Politzer & Staubach (1961), Ferguson (1968), Rivers (1968). They all favored of the

use of CA in the preparation of teaching material. They believed that materials based on a CA of the languages in question facilitate the teacher's work at the same time as they accelerate learning. Wardaugh(1970) refuted the weak version as "unrealistic and impractical" but cautiously suggests that the latter has "certain possibilities for usefulness" (p.12). The strong version maintains that it is possible to compare the system of the NL - grammar, phonology and syntax - with the system of the TL in order to predict the difficulties the learners will encounter and thus enable the text-book writer and teachers to construct more efficient teaching materials. The weak version makes fewer demands on contrastive theory. It does not aim at the prediction of difficulties or facilities but rather makes use of linguistics to account for observed difficulties in L2 learning.

James (1980, p. 148) also made the following statement to emphasize the importance of CA. ‘An important ingredient of the teacher’s role as monitor and assessor of the learner’s performance is to know why certain errors are committed. It is on the basis of such diagnostic knowledge that the teacher organizes feedback to the learner and remedial work’. Even the learners should know why they have committed errors if they are to self-monitor and avoid these same errors in the future.

1.3.1.3. Limitations of Contrastive Analysis

As we explained above, the strong version of the CA states that difficulties and facilities can be predicted if a comparison of two languages is made. The weak version claims that the linguist and/or investigator can predict difficulties by using his linguistic knowledge to analyze attested interference. However, none of them say how it can be applied to real teaching situations.

The major criticism made of the CA hypothesis is that it lacks reliable observation. As pointed out by Jackson (1971), of the numerous CA only a few have been tested in some way. Even in those cases, the tests are unintentionally biased in favour of the analysis; "they were

designed specifically to catch the errors the analyses predicted and no other error" (p. 202). Stressing the need for empirical verification, Jackson (1971) suggested two types of verification, primary and secondary. Primary verification is concerned with the objective replicability of the methods and procedures used in making the analysis , and secondary verification with the extent to which CA predictions match the learners' errors.

According to Hamp (1968), developing CA is very intricate and demands more than a simple parallel between two language systems. To achieve better teaching, it is more important to make an inventory of the mistakes which are made and then "proceed to a body of increasingly predictive statements" (p. 146). Such a body would constitute a contrastive study of the learning difficulties found in that specific group of students. In other words, a CA of two languages in only possible if the study proceeds from the real occurrence of errors to the explanation of the causes. The reverse is not valid.

Gradman(1970 and 1971) probably made the harshest criticism of the use of CA in foreign language teaching while explaining the usefulness of the theory. It "... makes not only unsupported claims but also unsupportable claims, at least for the present" (p. 131), that is, like the other linguists, he condemned CA for making unnecessary predictions about facilitations or difficulties which are not sustained because they demand an observation of their factual occurrences,

> ... the major weakness of methodologists who insist upon contrastive teaching, or perhaps better, contrastively based materials, is their failure to recognize not only that the claims based on the hypothesis are not supported by actual facts, but also that at very significant levels the hypothesis cannot be implemented. In other words, it is my contention that there has been an attempt to find far reaching implications for the contrastive analysis, an attempt made at application, long before the hypothesis has been seriously and critically examined. (p.73)

Therefore according to the weak form, CA needs to work hand in hand with an EA. First actual errors must be identified by analyzing a corpus of learner language. Then a CA can be used to establish which errors in the corpus can be put down to differentiate between the L1 and L2. It is assumed that L1 is not the only source as the interference of L2 learning.

1.3.2. The Error Analysis Approach

EA Approach describes how, and explains why errors are the way they are. EA is one of the most influential theories of SLA. It leads researchers and language teachers to a better understanding of language and language teaching.

1.3.2.1. Error Analysis Approach to Second Language Acquisition Errors

EA Approach to SLA errors is concerned with the analysis of the errors committed by L2 learners by comparing the learners' acquired norms with the TL norms and explaining the identified errors as indication of learners' ignorance about the grammatical and semantic rules of the target language (James, 1988, p. 304). Mac Arthur (1992) asserted that analysis proposes six types of errors, arising from inaccurate learning, inadequate teaching, wrong guessing, poor memory, the influence of L1, and the process of learning.

Although EA alone does not provide a sufficient description or explanation of learner language, it has a significant contribution to make as part of an analysis of this type of language because it can offer insights into the sequence of acquisition, the patterns of acquisition and the types of structures which learners find difficult (Hobson, 1999). According to James (1998, cited in Hobson, 1999), there are two reasons for the continued use of EA when investigating L2 data. Firstly, the empirical design is simple, with a clear indication of an error if a particular norm is chosen. Secondly, teachers play this normative role and encourage their students to achieve these target norms. This negative view of error may be held by many teachers, but many SLA theorists tend to regard errors in a more

positive way because they regard them as signs of creative hypothesis construction and testing (Hobson, 1999).

Another definition of EA regards EA as a process. EA is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language using any of the principles and procedures provided by linguistic theory. According to James (2001, p. 62), EA refers to “the study of linguistic ignorance, the investigation of what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance”. According to Hasyim (2002, p. 43) EA may be carried out in order to: (a) find out how well someone knows a language, (b) find out how a person learns a language, and (c) obtain information on common difficulties in language learning, as an aid in teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials. Brown (as cited in Ridha, 2012, p. 26) defined EA as "the process to observe, analyze, and classify the deviations of the rules of the second languages and then to reveal the systems operated by learner".

1.3.2.2. Importance of Error Analysis Studies in Second Language learning and Teaching

Corder, (1974) EA has two objects: one theoretical and another applied. The theoretical object serves to ‘elucidate what and how a learner learns when he studies a second language.’ And the applied object serves to enable the learner ‘to learn more efficiently by exploiting our knowledge of his dialect for pedagogical purposes’. Corder, (1981, p. 112) argued that:

> the pedagogical justification, namely that a good understanding of the nature of error is necessary before a systematic means of eradicating them could be found, and the theoretical justification, which claims that a study of learners' errors is part of the systematic study of the learners' language which is itself necessary to an understanding of the process of second language acquisition.

This definition emphasizes the function of EA in its relevance to language teaching and the study of the language acquisition process. First, they help teachers with clues on the learning progress of their learners, since errors enrich research with evidence as to how language is acquired or learned; and also secondly, give learners themselves resources assisting them in their language learning process.

For teachers it can offer clear and reliable picture of the students' knowledge of the TL. EA is also a technique for measuring progress by recording and classifying the errors made by individuals or group of students after exposure to language teaching and learning in L2 learning because it reveals to us -teachers, syllabus designers and textbook writers of what the problem areas are. The study of error is part of the investigation of the process of language learning. In his article: *The significance of learners' errors*, Corder (1974, p. 125) emphasized the importance of studying errors made by L2 learners. The study of error is part of the investigation of the process of language learning. He emphasized that errors, if studied systematically, can provide significant insights into how a language is actually learned by a foreigner. EA provides us with a picture of the linguistic development of a learner and may give us indications as to the learning process (Corder, 1974, p. 125). He added that remedial exercises could be designed and focus more attention on the trouble spots. It is the learner who determines what the input is. The teacher can present a linguistic form, but this is not necessarily the input, but simply what is available to be learned.

EA provides the researchers with the evidence of how language is learnt or acquired. It helps the researchers to know the strategies adopted by the learners in acquiring a language. Thornburg (1999, p. 15) observed that it is the systematic errors rather than the random ones that respond well to correction. He comments that correction can provide the feedback the learner needs to help confirm or reject a hypothesis or to tighten the application of a rule that is being applied fairly loosely. According to Richards et al., (1996, p. 127), EA has been

conducted to identify strategies which learners use in language learning, to track the causes of learner's errors, obtain information on common difficulties in language learning or on how to prepare teaching materials. Weireesh (1991) considered learners' errors to be of particular importance because the making of errors is a device the learners use in order to learn. He said that EA is a valuable aid to identify and explain difficulties faced by learners, and it serves as a reliable feedback to design a remedial teaching method. This emphasizes the fact that problematic as the errors may be, when they are identified, learners get helped and teachers find it easy to do remedial work.

Other studies confirm Corder's observations. Kwok (1998, p. 12) asserted that language errors provide important information about the progress, or language system, of the learner. According to Ancker (2000), making mistakes or errors is a natural process of learning and must be considered as part of cognition. Candling (2001, p. 69) stated that L2 learner's errors are potentially important for the understanding of the processes of SLA. Olasehinde (2002) also argued that it is inevitable that learners make errors. He also cited that errors are unavoidable and a necessary part of the learning curve. Mitchell and Myles (2004) claimed that errors if studied could reveal a developing system of the students L2 language and this system is dynamic and open to changes and resetting of parameters. EA therefore can be used to determine what a learner still needs to be taught. It provides the necessary information about what is lacking in his or her competence (Vahdatinejad, 2008).

1.3.2.3. Limitations of Error Analysis

EA has been criticized, both from a theoretical and a methodological point of view. Firstly, in EA the norm is the TL and any deviation from the target is viewed as an error. However, determining a norm is problematic because it depends on a variety of factors including the linguistic context, 'the medium (spoken or written), the social context (formal or informal), and the relation between speaker and hearer (symmetrical or asymmetrical)' (van

Els et al., 1984:47, cited in Hobson, 1999). According to her, deviation from the norm is viewed negatively, which means that these studies do not acknowledge the creative processes learners use in building new Language. They, therefore, ignore a large part of the developmental process.

From a methodological point of view, Firstly, EA measures production which may be fairly restricte, rather than perception which may be less restricted ((Alexander, 1979, cited in Hobson ,1999, p 10). Secondly, EA studies focus on only a small part of the production data (i.e. the error) rather than all the learner language produced (Corder, 1975; Schachter and Celce-Murchia, 1977; Alexander, 1979;). This means that some 'errors' would not appear to be errors because they seem to be well-formed, although they may be misformed from a pragmatic point of view (Zydatiss cited in Alexander, 1979). Furthermore, learners may avoid some of the TL constructions because they do not know how to produce them or because certain structures are perceived as difficult and more likely to induce error (Kleinmann 1977; Schachter, 1974; Alexander, 1979). The group that does produce these constructions, albeit with errors, is not directly comparable to the group which avoids the constructions and, therefore, makes fewer errors overall (Hobson, 1999:11).

Another methodological problem is that the task used to elicit data may have an effect on the errors produced, so that different types and numbers of errors may be produced in different tasks. Shachter and Celce-Murcia 1977, cited in Hobson, (1999) claimed that errors were also often classified very subjectively and that analysts did not always know enough about languages they were studying to notice subtle but important differences. Analysts did not always correctly identify L1 influence on the learner language since different L1s may influence the source of the error. For example, what is probably a transfer error for a speaker of one language may be simplification error for a speaker of another language. Related to this point is the way in which errors are classified and quantified.

Some studies ascribe errors to one source when there could have been more than one source and other studies ascribe errors to several sources when there was only one source. As Long and Sato (1984cited in Hobson, 1999, p. 257) noted "explanations were often impressionistic and vague. Two or more sources of error were often plausible, yet analysts sometimes opted for just one". This is a criticism taken up by Burt et al., 1982), which saw the root of the problem as a researcher's attempts to describe and classify error simultaneously. They argued for a two stage analysis. First, errors should be described for example by reference to linguistic domain (word order, morphology, lexis, etc or 'surface strategy'(omission, addition, misinformation or disordering). Only then should causes, such as generalization or interference, be attributed.

Another quantification problem occurs when an error is found over a larger linguistic domain than a word (Schachter & Celce-Murcha, 1977 cited in Hobson, 1999). In some cases, one error may create additional errors in a text and it may be difficult to decide how to quantify these error forms. Quantification is also problematic since some studies count error types (the occurrence of an error is noted once) and some count tokens (every example of the error is counted; etc (Lennon, 1991). Making comparisons across studies is, therefore, unreliable and comparing error frequencies or generalizing the results is not a simple matter (Nickel 1989; Schachter & Celce-Murcia, 1977, cited in Hobson, 1999).

1.3.3. Classification of Errors

Modern linguists note that L2 learners are thought to produce deviant utterances before they achieve native–like competence; ES/FL errors make up a significant part of English output of L2 learners. Not only they provide feedback for language learner, they provide insights into the SLA processes that can be applied to improve language instruction in classroom. In SLA literature, there are several ways classifying errors of L2 learners in terms

of taxonomies or levels. It is important therefore, to review some approaches to error classification.

1.3.3.1. Definition of an Error and Mistake

The terms ‘mistake’ and ‘error’ are often used interchangeably; however, there is a clear difference between the two. Corder (1967, 1971) contended that mistakes should not be included in the quantification or analysis of errors and this is the approach taken by most analysts. In order to distinguish between errors and mistakes, he introduced the distinction between systematic and non-systematic errors. Nonsystematic errors occur in one’s NL. Corder (1976) calls these ‘mistakes’ and states that they are not significant to the process of language learning. Errors occur when the learner does not know the rule and needs to be taught it or when the learner needs to be shown that the wrong knowledge or partial knowledge has been applied to the particular situation (Shaughnessy, 1977).

In the same respect, Norrish (1983) postulated that errors are “a systematic deviation when a learner has not learnt something and consistently gets it wrong.” He added that when ES/FL learners make an error systematically, it is because they have not learnt the correct form. He defined mistakes as "inconsistent deviation." When learners have ben taught a certain correct form, and they use one form sometimes and another at other times quite inconsistently, the inconsistent deviation is called a mistake. Cunningsworth (1987, p. 87) used the phrase “systematic deviation‟ in his definitions of an error which can be interpreted as the deviation which happens repeatedly. Johnson (1988) believed that mistakes can be corrected by the learners, but in practice determining whether a learner cannot correct his or her own deviant utterances is very problematic.

In a different view, Edge (1989, p. 11) rejected this error-mistake classification and calls all deviations from the norm mistakes. These mistakes include:

1) slips, which are a result of ‘processing problems or carelessness’;

2) errors, which are comprehensible but which the learner is unable to correct, although the form has been taught; and

3) attempts, which are fairly incomprehensible and uncorrectable by the learner.

Moreover, Crystal (1980) emphasized that the term error itself was redefined in recognition that many mistakes in spontaneous speech and writing can be attributed to a simple pause, lapses caused by stress, emotional instability, indecision and fatigue. Such errors of performance are unsystematic and do not reflect a defect in the knowledge of the TL. However, they provide complementary information to that gained from analyzing systematic errors which reflect the language of learner's competence.

According to Richards (1984, p. 95) stated that a mistake is made by a learner when writing or speaking which is caused by lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness, or other aspects of performance. Therefore mistakes are not necessarily a product of one’s ignorance of language rules. Wilkinson (1991, p. 12) and Selinker (1992) opined that errors help to describe and explain the way in which learners learn a language rather than their progress towards conforming to a set of real or imagined standard of expression and thus, have a more positive role.

Another way of determining whether a deviant form should be classified as an error or a mistake is to decide on the gravity of the error. In order to do this, James (1994, p. 191) believed that criteria for error gravity need to be established (for example ‘are lexical errors more serious than grammatical?’), as well as who will judge the gravity (for example, LI teachers / L2 teachers / non-teachers). An additional criterion is that errors have a lack of speaker intention; otherwise they may be classified as deviances (James 1998) in Hobson. Ellis (1996, p. 710) stated that overgeneralization errors occur when learners yield deviant structures based on other structures of the TL, while ignorance of rule restrictions refers to the application of rules to inappropriate contexts. Ellis (1996, p. 710) further claimed that

incomplete application of rules arises when learners fail to develop a structure fully, while false concepts hypothesized occur when learners do not completely understand a distinction in the TL. Snow (1996, cited in James, 1998) argued for two steps in error development. The first step is the presence of errors which the learner does not recognize as errors, and the second step is the presence of errors that the learners recognize as errors but which they cannot correct.

It is worth mentioning that errors are considered to be systematically governed by rules, and appear because a learner's knowledge of TL is incomplete. They provide evidence about the language learning process (Crystal 1999, p. 256). It can be concluded that errors are caused by lack of understanding and knowledge in TL while mistakes are caused by temporary lapses of memory, confusion, and carelessness in expressing the TL either in spoken or written form. An error is the use of language in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as faulty or incomplete learning Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 184). It refers to a systematic error of competence, both covert and overt, that deviates from the norms of the TL (Eun-pyo, 2002:1).

1.3.3.2. Interlingual and Intra– lingual Errors

Many linguists such as Weinreich, 1953; Corder (1971) in Littlewood,1984; Richards,1970a; Richards,1972b ; Selinker, 1972; Hadley, 1993; and Brown,2000 classified errors into two major groups. These are inter-lingual and intra – lingual errors. Inter- lingual errors are those that arise from conflicts between the TL and mother tongue while intra – lingual are those that the Learners encounter in the TL such as overgeneralizations and false analogies. Interlingual Interference is 'those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language' (Weinreich, 1953, p.1, cited in Brown, 2000, p. 224). This means that those errors that are traceable to L1 interference.

Interlingual errors are attributable to negative interlingual transfer. Note mentioning, the term "interlingual was first introduced by Selinker (1972). Nemser (1974, p. 55) referred to it as the Approximate System, and Corder (1967) as the Idiosyncratic Dialect or Transitional Competence. Intra lingual errors are those due to the language being learned the TL, independent of the NL. According to Richards (1970), they are “items produced by the learner which reflect not the structure of the mother tongue, but generalizations based on partial exposure to the TL. The learner, in this case, tries to “derive the rules behind the data to which he/she has been exposed, and may develop hypotheses that correspond neither to the mother tongue nor to the target language” (Richards, 1970, p. 6).

Interlingual errors can be identified as transfer errors which result from a learner’s L1 features, for example, grammatical, lexical or pragmatic errors. On the other hand, intralingual errors are overgeneralizations’ (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 379) in the TL, resulting from ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete applications of rules, and false concepts hypothesized. As far as the intralingual errors are concerned, they result from faulty or partial learning of the TL rather than language transfer (Keshavarz, 2003, p. 62; Fang and Jiang, 2007, p. 11). Richards (1972) cited four main types of Intralingual errors, namely: overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false concepts hypothesized. He further identified six sources of errors: interference, overgeneralization, performance errors, markers of transitional competence, strategies of communication and assimilation and teacher-induced errors.

1.3.3.3. Performance and Competence Errors

The distinction between errors and mistakes is actually the distinction between competence and performance. Mistakes are a performance problem rather than a competence problem (Corder, 1967). Corder (1981) classified errors into systematic errors which are usually called errors of competence, and non-systematic errors which are performance errors

that could be corrected. All people make mistakes, in both L1 and L2 situations. Native speakers are normally capable of recognizing and correcting such "lapses" or mistakes, which are not the result of a deficiency in competence but the result of some temporary breakdown or imperfection in the process of producing speech. Corder (1967) suggested that identification of errors of competence can be possible if the difference between the actual and intended L2 utterances is established. This information can be obtained from the L2 learners in his mother tongue and then translated into TL and the original attempt is then used as a guide to the transaction. This performance competence distinction is maintained by most theorists in distinguishing errors from mistakes.

While defining error and mistake, Brown (1994) also referred to mistake as a performance error that is either a random guess or a “slip” in that it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly; an error is a noticeable deviation from the adult grammar of a NL (Brown, 1994, p. 205). Hadley (1993) also classified errors into “competence” and “performance” errors. She stresses that errors of competence have high priority for correction and their effects are stigmatized, while errors of performance have low priority for correction. Gao (2002) believed that performance errors that have occurred in the process of SLA can be systematic, and even become fossilized.

1.4. Factors Influencing Second Language Acquisition

When learning L2, there are many factors that can influence the learning process. The roles played by male and female students, their social contexts, beliefs and experiences, age, aptitude and cognitive characteristics, their affective states and personal characteristics help to understand their learning processes and the final results they obtain. Besides the factors related to an educational context such as the curriculum, materials and available resources, social and individual factors do have effect on SLA (Drew & Sørheim 2004, p. 16).

1.4.1. Social Factors Influencing Second Language Acquisition

Social factors are a part of what Ellis (1994, p. 24) called external factors. These external factors are explained as factors relating to the environment in which the learning is taking place. Platt (1979) emphasized that the social context is essential for Learning. Children first started to learn language from home then school. He added that their homelike atmosphere encourages them to use their innate powers of inference and also help them to understand social sensitivity moreover the language and its meaning (p.620- 621). Though a child is never consciously taught a language, they acquire their L1 through hearing and experiencing a high amount of language from communicative situations with adults and other children (Harmer, 1991, p. 33). In addition, the social factors influencing SLA are likely to be different according to different social contexts. Students' social context is determined by a set of social factors associated with their social class, cultural level, home language, environmental language, ethnic and religious context.

Furthermore, L2 learners have a variety of beliefs or "mini-theories" on L2 learning that may affect the way they behave in class and the interest shown in certain academic tasks. Students' reaction to certain classroom tasks may differ a lot according to the relevance and usefulness given to them. There have been few researches about the effect of all these internal factors in learners' results with L2. Language learning involves emotional reactions that often determine positive or very negative results (Madrid, 1995). Social factors are those that "have to do with the way language is regarded and used in the society in which it is being learned" (Drew and Sørheim, 2004, p. 16). L2 learners will most of the time find themselves living in a TL community. In case of students of English, an English-speaking country would be the TL community. However, based on the status of the language, TL can also be in a place where the language is not necessarily the main language. Students learning English in Algeria will be exposed to the language through movies, television programs, music and computer games.

Based on this, one can make the comparison between TL and a high level of exposure to create better learning conditions for the students. One can draw a parallel between high exposure to the language and the student's success in language learning. Exposure is also linked to Krashen's theory as we have seen in section 1.1.

1.4.2. Individual factors

Several research studies got the evidence that the learners' individual characteristics can help to explain L2 learners' outcomes (Tarone, 1980; Ellis, 1986, 1994; Madrid, 1995. These factors provide the learners with a "…Language acquisition device that enables them to work on what they hear and to extract the abstract ´rules´ that account for how the language is organized" (Ellis, 1994, p. 24). Ellis (1986) opined that learners shift the input they receive and relate it to their existing knowledge. In doing this, they may use general cognitive strategies which are part of their procedural knowledge and which are used in other forms of learning. These strategies are often referred to as leaner strategies. Alternatively they may possess a special linguistic faculty that enables them to operate on the input data in order to discover the L2 rules in maximally efficient ways. Thus, linguistic faculty is referred to as universal grammar (U.G). Tarone (1980) identified three sets of learner strategies. These are learning strategies, production strategies and communication strategies.

Firstly, learning strategies are the means by which the learner processes the L2 input in order to develop linguistic knowledge. They can be conscious and behavioural. For instance, memorization or repetition with the purpose of remembering, or they can be subconscious and psycholinguistic, for example, inferencing and overgeneralization. Secondly, the production strategies involve learners' attempts to use the L2 knowledge they have already acquired efficiently, clearly and with minimum effort. Examples are the rehearsal of what should be said and discourse planning, working out a way of structuring a series of utterances. Finally, communication strategies like production strategies are strategies

of use rather than of learning, although they can contribute indirectly to the learning by helping the learner to obtain more input. Communication strategies consist of learners' attempts to communicate meaning, for which they lack the requisite linguistic knowledge. Learners, particularly in natural settings, constantly, need to express ideas which are beyond their linguistic resources. They can either give up and so avoid the problem, or try to find some way around it. Examples of typical communication strategies are requests and paraphrase, avoidance of circumlocution etc.

Though important to any SLA theory, individual factors are not directly observable and are for the most part only inferred by learner's reports of how they learn and by studying learner output (Ellis, 1994, p. 28). Personality, intelligence, motivation and attitude are all examples of individual factors that can have an impact on the language learning process (Drew & Sørheim, 2004, p. 17). As a part of individual factors, one can also mention motivation as a factor that can influence L2 learning. Lightbown and Spada (2006) explained how it is difficult to know if motivation is a reason for successful learning or if successful learning is a reason for motivation, or if both examples are affected by other factors. Nevertheless, Lightbown and Spada (2006) claimed, "…there is ample evidence that positive motivation is associated with a willingness to keep learning" even though "research cannot prove that positive attitudes and motivation cause success in learning" (p.. 63).

Drew and Sørheim (2011, p. 21) presented Gardner and Lamberts' (1972)'s theory that there are different types of motivation. They introduced a distinction between integrative and instrumental motivation. Integrative motivation is described as identifying with and admiring the TL culture and is motivated to integrate with that culture, meaning learning a language for cultural enrichment. Instrumental motivation, on the other hand, is viewed as something being a means to an end, such as learning L2 in order to be successful in a career, or being able to travel to other countries. Nevertheless, Drew and Sørheim (2011) argued that the distinction

between these two forms of motivation is considered too narrow as students may have interrelated and complex motivations. Lightbown and Spada (2006, p. 64) supported this by stating that early research on motivation "tended to conceptualize it as stable characteristics of the learner" while newer research accentuates the vigorous nature of motivation and tries to take into consideration the changes that occur over time.

1.4.3. Language Transfer

As it has been explained in section 1.1., when one is learning L1, one has already accomplished learning a language before. Even though there is variation as to what extent L1 is used when learning a L2, learners' mother tongue will influence their fluency and what level of proficiency they will be able to achieve in TL (language transfer explained). Examples of language transfer include translation and borrowing, for example using L1 as a tool for successful communication; code-mixing, namely using both L1 and L2 to construct the same sentence; and code switching, meaning to alternate the use of L1 and L2 within a discourse (Ellis, 1994, p. 28-29).

Incorporating features of L1 into the knowledge system of the language that the learner is trying to acquire is an example of transferring. One must distinguish between a learning process that excludes L1 for purposes of communication and one where L1 is a natural part of the teaching (Ellis, 1994:28-29). Based on this one can draw the conclusion that the study of language transfer collects evidence demonstrating that the language learners' L1 will influence both the use and acquisition of the L2 (Ellis, 2008, p. 351). Interlanguage is also presumed to be unstable and in the process of changing, or in other words characterized by a high level of variability (Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p. 16). The types of errors that are made by a language learner in their utterances vary between a range of correct and incorrect forms over longer periods of time. This variability is a central feature of learner interlanguage that theories on SLA aim to explain. However, Ortega (2009) claimed that there is strong

evidence of the fact that L1 transfer cannot radically impact the route of SLA but can alter the rate of the language learners' progress and development. To support this theory, Ortega (2009:41) created the hypothesis that L1 knowledge can interrupt certain L2 choices and prime others, which can result in the underuse and overuse of certain L2 forms in spoken and written learner production.

Conclusion

Students' errors play a significant role in helping teachers to identify and to classify their students' errors as well as helping them construct correction techniques. It helps researchers find out what strategies learners use to learn L2 and also indicate the type of errors learners make and why. When learners made an error, the most efficient way to teach them the correct forms is not by simply giving it to them, but by letting researchers discover the error and test different hypotheses to improve language competence. The latter is our main concern.

Discussing what constitutes difficulty in SLA has been explored from various perspectives in the field of SLA, and each of the accounts has its own strengths and limitations. However, one message conveyed by these accounts is certainly that SLA is a complex phenomenon and more research on the issue of grammatical difficulty would contribute to our understanding of it. In this study we specifically investigate whether English modal verbs are problematic for Algerian students and if they have difficulty; what are the sources of this difficulty. This will be theoretically discussed in the next two chapters and practically in the last ones.

Introduction

Grammar is fundamental to language. Without grammar, language does not exist. Throughout history, language teaching has undergone many changes due to a number of theoretical and empirical developments in the field. Some exclusively focus on grammar, while others on meaningful communication leading to the emergence of recent instructional options with a focus on both grammar and meaning. Attention will be directed to the shifting views on grammar teaching. At the one extreme, grammar is a fundamental part of language teaching, with mastering of grammar as the aim of teaching. At the other extreme, grammar has little or no place at all in language teaching. Whatever position we take regarding grammar instruction, it is important to understand the theoretical foundation underlying its application.

2.1. Grammar in Second Language Acquisition Literature

The issue of grammar is a heavily debated in the area of SLA. In what follows, we define grammar as a concept and then highlight some of the major controversial topics related to grammar learning and instruction.

2.1.1. Grammar as a Concept

There are several ways to define grammar, and many have written definitions of grammar, based on their view of language. Cobbett (1984) regarded grammar as constituting rules and principles that help a person to make use of words or manipulate and combine words to give meaning in a proper manner. It concerns with form and structure of words and their relationships in sentences. This means that as the word order or form in a sentence changes, the meaning of the sentence also changes. Huddleston (1988) saw grammar as consisting of morphology and syntax. Morphology deals with forms of words while syntax deals with the ordering of the words to form sentences.

Hudson (1992) was in the opinion that grammar embraces any kind of information about words since there are no boundaries around grammar. One definition, which is found in Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar, says that grammar is "the entire system of a language, including its syntax, morphology, semantics and phonology" (Chalker & Weiner, 1994, p. 177). Other definitions, often popularly used, include the structural rules of a language, but exclude vocabulary, semantics and phonology. Grammar may also serve to express time relations, singular/plural distinctions and many other aspects of meaning. There are rules which govern how words have to be manipulated and organized so as to express these meanings: a competent speaker of the language will be able to apply these rules so as to convey his or her chosen meaning effectively and acceptably (Ur, 2009, p. 3). Summer (2011, p. 22) said that the second definition implies that "we are moving towards a perception of a meaning-oriented concept of pedagogical grammar that considers rules as an aid to expressing meaningful language".

Whether a definition of grammar comprises structural aspects only, or whether it also covers semantics and functions, depends strongly on the current view on language and learning. This will be exemplified later in this chapter by looking at some of the various approaches to grammar teaching over the past century. The term grammar is also used in the sense of a book containing rules of grammar, or it can be used as an individual's application of the rules. In this thesis we will not give attention to the two latter, but rather focus on grammar as a language system and how grammar is used for communication and to make meaning.

2.1.2. Major Dichotomies in Grammar Learning and Teaching

The basic controversies associated with the teaching of grammar constitute a hot debate in language teaching literature. Thornbury (1999) asserted that "the claims and

counterclaims for and against the teaching of grammar" in the history of language teaching (p.23) are present whenever a new teaching method appears. In this work, we selected the most recurrent controversial concepts related to grammar learning and teaching: form and function; implicit knowledge and explicit knowledge; deductive and inductive teaching; grammatical competence and grammatical performance.

2.1.2.1. Form and Function

Halliday(1975) described seven language functions. People use language to get things done (instrumental); to control the behaviour of others (regulatory); to create interaction with others (interactional); to express personal feelings and meanings (personal); to learn and discover (heuristic); to create a world of imagination (imaginative); and to communicate information (informative) (Halliday, 1975). Functions can be defined as "the communicative purposes for which we use language" and notions as "the conceptual meanings expressed through language" (Nunan 1988, p. 35). These functions are developed in three phases according to Halliday. From a native speaker point of view, the children develop a sense of meaning first, then they learn to express meaning, in simple words at first, and then at the final stage (adults) they are able to express meaning in appropriate manners for these functions.

Form means the external characteristics of language (Chalker & Weiner, 1994), i.e., the structure of the language. Function stresses the semantic role of sentences, and the ways in which language functions pragmatically and socially, rather than formally (Chalker & Weiner, 1994). Newby (1998) defined notions as a single grammatical concept, which is encoded into a form, or "single meanings that are expressed through forms" (p. 188). Examples of notional categories are time, duration, movement, location, and space. Chalker & Weiner (1994, p. 266) said:

> Suggested notional categories covered three areas: semantico-grammatical (e.g. time and space), modal meaning, and functions (e.g. how to express disapproval, persuasion, or agreement). (…) In later developments in foreign language teaching, the term notional tended to be restricted to the first category (general concepts of time and space, etc.) which were explicitly contrasted with functions, such as agreement or suasion.

Language is complex. A single form can realize more than one function. Furthermore, a given function can be realized by more than one form. When the notion categories, rather than the formal categories, are the starting point for grammar teaching, there is a stronger focus on how grammar functions, and the various purposes of language can be identified.

2.1.2.2. Implicit Knowledge and Explicit Knowledge

The terms "explicit knowledge" and "implicit knowledge" are more often used in the SLA literature. The term explicit knowledge is used to refer to conscious, abstract and analysed knowledge, which is reportable, as opposed to implicit knowledge, which is intuitive and exists in unanalysed form (Bialystok, 1994),. Explicit knowledge is activated in problem-solving activities according to Ellis (1995) through for example sentence-transformation tasks. However, implicit knowledge is present in a conversation and other naturally occurring language behaviours. Explicit knowledge comprises both *"analyzed knowledge"* and *"metalanguage knowledge"* Ellis defined *"analyzed knowledge"* as "conscious representations of linguistic structures that can be verbalized on demand" (2006, p. 437), and *"metalanguage knowledge"* as learners' ability to use technical or semi-technical terminology to describe the language feature in use. Berry (2009) distinguished between "metalingual knowledge" and "metalinguistic knowledge (i.e., knowledge about language)" on the grounds that, "knowledge and the terminology for it do not always co-occur" (p.114). Roehr (2008) argued that metalinguistic knowledge is a specific type of explicit knowledge, and that it

includes, “explicit knowledge about categories as well as explicit knowledge about relations between categories” (p. 72).

Despite the fact that cognitive psychology, developmental psycholinguistics and SLA literature provides a variety of definitions of implicit and explicit knowledge, these two types of knowledge are often distinguished with reference to (1) absence or presence of awareness/consciousness, and (2) ability (or the lack thereof) to verbalize linguistic knowledge on demand. In accordance with these two characteristics, Ellis (2009) argued that implicit knowledge can be characterized as “tacit and intuitive” and “only evident in learners’ verbal behaviour,”, whereas explicit knowledge is “conscious” and “verbalizable” (Ellis, 2009, p.11-13). Ellis further differentiated these two by five other characteristics: type of knowledge, accessibility, use of L2 knowledge, learnability, and systematicity. Ellis argued that implicit knowledge is procedural knowledge (type of knowledge), accessible in automatic processing (accessibility) and employed in spontaneous L2 production (use of L2 knowledge). Learning of this knowledge may be affected by the age of the learner (learnability). In contrast, explicit knowledge is declarative knowledge and potentially available in controlled processing and for specific tasks (for example, completing a written grammaticality judgment test). The characteristics reveal Ellis’s attempt to conceptualize these two types of knowledge from various perspectives. However, as Ellis has acknowledged, some of these criteria are controversial and some are still subject to empirical verification.

2.1.2.3. Deductive and Inductive Teaching

The terms deductive and inductive are relevant in relation to how grammar is presented and acquired. An inductive approach to grammar instruction is defined as a process in which learners’ attention is focused on consciously analyzing a number of examples given so as to discover the underlying grammatical rule governing the use of a particular structure in

those examples. Contrasting to that, a deductive approach to grammar instruction is defined as learners' receiving teachers' explanations of the concerned grammatical rule first, which is then followed by their analyzing and / or practicing the application of such a rule in the examples or exercises provided Shaffer (1989). As we will see in section 2.3, deductive teaching of grammar is at the core of much traditional grammar, whereas inductive grammar teaching is found in more recent approaches, as well as in the traditional direct method (Newby, 1998; Simensen, 1998).

As seen with the dichotomy direct and indirect knowledge, again no consensus has been reached in interpreting the deductive and inductive divide mode of grammar instruction. According to Burgess and Etherington, the two dichotomies: conscious / unconscious teaching and of deductive / inductive teaching 'are both sometimes equated with the explicit /implicit teaching division' (2002, p.440). Some researchers regard both the notions of inductive and deductive teaching to be conscious in nature. Further, as revealed in the various studies reviewed in Norris & Ortega (2000, 2001), there has already been substantive evidence gathered in the field which proves the relative effectiveness of conscious form-focused instruction over its unconscious counterpart in promoting learners' acquisition of the TL.

2.1.2.4. Grammatical Competence and Grammatical Performance

Grammatical competence is the speakers' knowledge of the forms and meanings that exist in grammar, and a theoretical knowledge of how to use them. This type of knowledge is reflected in the grammar rules. Grammatical performance, on the other hand, is the ability to use grammar correctly and appropriately. The latter is the ultimate goal of language teaching (Newby, 1998). Tasks that are sentence-based typically develop the grammatical competence, whereas performance tasks are typically more communicative in nature. Newby (2006)

referred to the distinction “declarative and procedural knowledge” to define competence and performance. He defined declarative knowledge as knowledge about facts and things, and procedural knowledge as knowledge about how to perform various cognitive activities. this distinction is important because it reflects the distinction between competence and performance because it supports a rationale of specifying the aims of learning grammar in terms of performance, rather than mere competence.

Larsen-Freeman coined the term grammaring, which is similar to the concept of grammatical performance, in the early 1990s. By drawing attention to the skill dimension of grammar, she challenges the way in which grammar has traditionally been viewed. Grammar involves more than memorizing rules. To use grammar and develop the grammaring skill, practice (other than repetition and drills) is required. Larsen-Freeman emphasized that although grammar has to do with accuracy, it has much to do with meaning and appropriateness as well. Grammaring is “the ability to use grammar structures accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately” (Larsen-Freeman, 2003, p.143). However, one major problem of ES/FL teaching is that learners are often not able to transfer the grammar that they can perform in the teaching situation to the communicative settings in the classroom, let alone outside the classroom. “Even though they know a rule, their performance may be inaccurate, or disfluent, or both” (Larsen-Freeman, 2003, p. 7).

2.2. Teaching Grammar in Second Language Acquisition Classroom

The 20th century was characterized by many changes and innovations in the field of language teaching ideologies In order not to confuse the reader both terms approach and method are used based on Anthony model (1963) in which an approach described the assumptions and beliefs about language and language learning, while method is the overall concept for the presentation of teaching material based on the underlying approach. Method is

therefore the level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about which skills should be taught, the content to be taught and the order of presentation of the content. In the following, we review some of the approaches and methods to grammar teaching. However, not all of the existing approaches and methods to language teaching are described in this review. Only those, which influenced mainstream language teaching and teaching materials, are discussed in detail.

2.2.1. The Traditional Approach to Grammar Teaching

In a traditional approach to grammar teaching and learning, grammar is defined primarily as a set of forms and structures, which is also the main focus of the textbook syllabus (Newby, 2000). Accuracy is significant in traditional grammar, hence the focus on the ability to form correct sentences. Below three traditional approaches to grammar are discussed, i.e.; the grammar translation method (GTM), the direct method (DM), and the audio-lingual method.

2.2.1.1. The Grammar-Translation Method

Drawing from the approaches used in the teaching of classical languages such as Latin and Greek, GTM was applied to the teaching of English. As the name suggest, it focused exclusively on studying grammatical rules and structures. Based on categories of Greek and Latin grammar, the TL was segmented into various parts of speech (e.g., nouns, verbs, adverbs, pronouns, articles, participles, conjunctions, and prepositions), which were taught deductively through an explicit explanation of rules, with memorization and translations of texts from the L2 to the L1. The focus on translations, vocabulary lists and drills means that students could recall isolated aspects of the language readily and not produce lengthy coherent structures.

Williams (1990) outlined other characteristics of GTM. It includes reading aloud of literary selection textbooks and explicit teaching of terminology as it applies to the grammars of the native and foreign languages with little or no systematic practice of pronunciation. He added that through this method, teaching is held in the NL without enough active use of the TL and hardly any attention is paid to communicative content in the tests, which mainly provide practice in grammatical analysis. Accuracy was an important feature of this method as well, since students were expected to achieve high standards in translating sentences, which was tested in written exams (Richards & Rodgers, 2007, p. 6). Learners grasp both the meaning of new sentences in the TL and the grammatical rules that guide them. Unfortunately, these did not help the learners to speak or write the language in actual communicative situations. The language learned in the classroom was far detached from real life situation.

With advances in linguistic theories, linguistic theory came into conflict with the GTM. The material used by the proponents of the GTM was criticized as being unauthentic; i.e, students were taught the TL detached far from actual communicative situations. Hence, sentences were to be presented in context. Though GTM develop some exceptionally intelligent students intellectually through rigorous exercise (Opega, 2008), the GTM can provide learners with perfect skills in reading and writing, but it draws very little attention to pronunciation; much time is spent talking about L2, little time talking in L2. Besides, the interaction, as a rule, is directed from the teacher to the students, and there is little chance for student-student interaction. The GTM's use of translation exercises lacked cultural awareness of the TL and usability in everyday situations. The grammar-translation method was not effective in preparing the students to communicate in the FL, and thus an increasing need for a somewhat different approach to language teaching called the Direct Method (DM) emerged.

2.2.1.2 . The Direct Method

The dominances of the DM prevail over the years between 1880 and World War I (Stern, 1983). The goal is to communicate and think in the TL. Language is referred to as a conversational and less formal variety. Similarly to L1 learning, advocates of this method argue that grammar rules should be built up in the speaking progress. Different from the practice in the former GTM where the language used was primarily L1, Classroom instruction was only given the TL. As opposed to GTM, Grammar was taught inductively, i.e. the students studied a grammatical phenomenon in a text, and formulated a rule from what they found in the examples given through the use of both L1 and TL (Mella, 1998, p.46-47). "The rationale behind the method was to develop the ability to think in the foreign language, thus listening to and speaking the language took precedence over reading and writing it" (Baldeh, 1990).

Learners should be exposed to a great deal of listening to and speaking of the TL by actually getting involved in practical speech and by associating speech with appropriate actions. Teachers would demonstrate the meaning of a word, rather than explaining, for example by using of ostensive definitions, i.e. pointing at pictures and objects to explain a word's meaning (Franke: 1884). Dictation was also a common classroom activity, i.e. the teachers read a sentence or a passage and the learners wrote what the teacher read, giving a focus to pronunciation and spelling. It was highlighted further that vocabulary was acquired more naturally when it was used in sentences rather than memorized in isolation. Connected and meaningful texts are usually the basis of the lesson, which are listened to and or read by the students, and then they are later to induce the rules on the basis of these observations. The content of the text is, as a rule, dealt with in question – answer sequences.

The DM had its drawbacks as well. Teaching in the L2 implies that it requires the teachers to have high level of FL oral proficiency. Richards and Rodgers (2007, p.12-13) pointed out

that the method failed to consider the practical classroom realities: for example, the DM required teachers who were native speakers or spoke with a native-like fluency. Moreover, the method is criticized for its complete neglect of the textbooks and the total abandon of grammar presentation. Additionally, It is also criticized on the exclusive use of the TL which is sometimes counterproductive since it is often easier to translate a word or phrase instead of "performing verbal gymnastics", as Brown (1973, p. 5) quoted out in Richards & Rodgers (2007, p. 13). Due to these disadvantages, a new scientific method – The Audio-Lingual Method has emerged.

2.2.1.3.The Audio-Lingual Method

The audio-lingual method was developed from the mid-fifties to approximately 1970 in the United States during World War II, as a consequence of the fact that soldiers needed to learn L2 rapidly for military purposes. As also known as the aural-oral method, speech was viewed as the main component of language and the basic grammatical structures were regarded as central to speaking ability. In the Audiolingual method, most emphasis was put on *"the mastery of the formal properties of language".* Similar to the DM, grammar teaching was carried out inductively, i.e.; the grammatical forms were induced from examples given (Larsen-Freeman, 1986). This learning theory has the goal to duplicate **native language** habits in learners through a stimulus-response-reinforcement teaching methodology, through the use of various kinds of drills, such as repetition drills, completion drills, substitution drills, etc. (Dendrinos, 1992, pp.113-115).

Versions of this approach are still used in language teaching, but its critics have pointed out that isolated practice in drilling language patterns bears no resemblance to the interactional nature of actual spoken language use. Oral proficiency was understood in terms of accurate pronunciation and grammar and the ability to answer quickly and accurately in

speech situations such as conversations (Richards & Rodgers, 2007, p. 58). Even though the aim is communication conversation is taught as habit formation, and, the methods used make the learning of language somewhat mechanical. They could follow instructions in the classroom without difficulties, but when they were faced with real-life situation their language performance was unsatisfactory. The teacher, on the other hand, serves as a model and sets up situations in which the target structure can be practiced. The teacher is regarded as "skillful manipulator" who uses questions, commands, etc. to elicit correct sentences from the pupils (Richards & Rogers, 2007, p. 43).

2.2.2. The Cognitive Based Approach to Grammar Teaching

The Cognitive Theory arose not as an explicit teaching method, but as a reaction to Structuralism and to behavioral principles. The cognitive approaches were based on a set of new beliefs of L1 language and learning involving the notions of universality, creativity and innateness and reject the passive view on learning inherited from the traditional approaches to grammar teaching and learning. These new principles came from two fields: the psychological and the linguistic frameworks in opposition to Nativist and Innatist theories, which are highly concerned with the way in which children learn their first languages and say that people are born with an innate set of rules about language in their minds. The cognitive learning method is defined as language teaching method that lays emphasis on the conscious acquisition of language as a meaningful system that seeks a basis in cognitive psychology and Transformational Generative Grammar (T.G.G) (Stern, 1983). It is an appeal to a broader perspective both in the psychological and linguistic fields is claimed.

From a psychologically axis, language learning started to be considered as a product of rule formation and hypothesis testing (as seen in chapter one). That is to say, when acquiring a language, the child and the learner form hypotheses about that language, test them and turn

them into rules if they are later contrasted to the incoming input. Thus, language learning was thought to be a creative process in which the learner is engaged in hypothesis construction, but not, as structuralism would say, imitation or habit formation. Cognitivists believe that language is rule governed and characterized by creativity (Diller, 1978). Knowing a language is to be able to create new sentences in that language. According to them, every child is endowed with the innate capacity which enables him to acquire a human language in a normal developmental way. The device, they refer to as the language acquisition device (LAD). According to them, this device (LAD) gives the child the ability to formulate the hypothesis concerning the various structures of the language to which he is exposed.

The second theoretical axis of the Cognitive theory came from Linguistics and the development of the Generative-Transformational (GT) and the Universal Grammars (UG). In opposition to the previous Structuralist approaches in which a description of particular languages was made, language for the UG consisted of a set of universal features, rules and transformations forming the linguistic system or grammar. Because of their belief in the universality of meanings, they taught vocabulary in isolation. They insisted that reading and writing skills should be given priority over listening and speaking skills (Williams, 1990). The method emphasizes the conscious learning of the grammar of ES/FL, which will enhance learners' competence (Stern, 1983). one of the major objectives of the cognitive learning method is the absolute control of the language in all its manifestations as a coherent and meaningful system through a consciously acquired linguistic competence, which the learner can then put to use in real life situations (Carroll, 1996). Thus, the goal is the acquisition of linguistic competence through the conscious control of phonological, grammatical and lexical patterns of ES/FL.

The cognitive approaches have extended on this view, according to Newby (2000), in the following ways: there is a focus on grammatical meaning which gives theoretical support

to the notional grammar found in CLT; an analysis of the cognitive processes which underlie learning gives a theoretical foundation that can be fed into the design of grammar tasks; and the cognitive stage model has the potential of bridging the gap between competence and performance. With influence from cognitive psychology, the supporters of a cognitive approach to grammar believe that language learning is a stagewise progression (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Newby, 2010). However, the stages in the cognitive approach are described differently because they take the pupil's rather than the teacher's perspective and focus on the tasks that must be accomplished in the mind in order for grammar to be internalised (Newby, 2010).

2.2.3. The Acquisition based Approach to Grammar Teaching

The empirical research into the identification of L1 and L2 learning and the attempt to apply these notions to L2 classroom (Nunan, 1991), together with the principles already developed in the previous mentalist framework, led to the development of two methods: The Natural Approach (NA) and the Total Physical Response (TPR). Both methods share some theoretical beliefs that language is considered a creative process of rule formation and hypothesis testing. Thus, the search for learning and language universals and the notion of language as a creative process constitute the two main arguments that led to the study of the similarities in L1 and L2 learning at the core of both methods. The two attach great importance to input as a source to trigger learning and they try to imitate the way children learn their mother tongue.

2.2.3.1. The Natural Approach

Krashen's SLA influential theory constitutes the theoretical background of the Natural Approach, together with Terrell's school experience (Krashen & Terrell, 1983) The Natural

approach considers language as communication, so meaning, rather than grammar. Communication goals are described in terms of situations, functions and topics, which are most likely to be useful and interesting for beginners. Communication goals are described in terms of situations, functions and topics, which are most likely to be useful and interesting for beginners ((Krashen & Terrell 1983, p. 55-67).It rejects explicit grammar instruction and the organization of the syllabus around grammatical categories. It can be viewed as a method that "emphasizes comprehensible and meaningful practice activities, rather than production of grammatically perfect utterances and sentences" (Richards & Rodgers 2007, p. 190).

Hence, this method focuses on providing comprehensible input and a classroom environment that cues comprehension of input, minimizes learner anxiety, and maximizes learner self-confidence. Pictures and other visuals are often used in classrooms based on the Natural Approach as well as games. The activities have in common that they should provide learners with a flow of comprehensible input and provide the necessary vocabulary, appropriate gestures, context, repetition and paraphrase to make sure that students understand the input (Richards & Rodgers 2007, p. 186-190). Due to its selection of activities and its focus on meaning, rather than form, we can consider the natural approach the origin of the notional-functional approaches that led to the Communicative move.

2.2.3.2. Total Physical Response

The TPR goes back towards structuralist and grammatical positions in its notion of language –considered as a set of structures and vocabulary- and learning –regarded as an association of stimulus and response through physical action. Although there is a structured psychological basis behind this method which is similar to that of the Natural approach, its linguistic orientation differs from that of Krashen and Terrell's, and can be said to be based on a structuralist or even grammatical position (Sánchez, 1997), as input is selected using

grammatical and lexical criteria. The TPR, though popular in our days as a classroom procedure or technique, proved to be very demanding on teachers, provided a very limited range of materials and procedures, and made teaching difficult structures nearly impossible.

In the Natural approach, it is essential to eliminate affective filters such as anxiety or stress, which could impede acquisition. The goal is to provide an enjoyable learning experience with minimum stress. Students do not have to speak before they are ready for it. Meanings of words are made clear through actions. This association between movement and language facilitates spontaneous acquisition because of the association between stimulus and response. In this sense, this model has a clear audiolingual orientation. While the majority of class time is spent on listening comprehension, the goal of the method is to develop oral fluency. Lessons are organized around grammar, and in particular around verbs. The teacher gives commands based on the verbs and vocabulary to be learned in that lesson. Grammar is not explicitly taught, but is learned from the imperatives of the teacher.

2.2.4. The Humanistic Approaches to Grammar Teaching

The humanistic approaches to grammar include three major learned centered methods: the Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia and the Silent Way. Though different in their classroom implementation, the three share a common framework. On one hand, they focus on the affective and emotional factors within the learning process. On another hand, they all originated from theories of language and SLA research studies. The role they attach to affect and feeling forms part of what has been termed the humanistic tradition, represented by Curran (1972), Gattegno (1972) and Lozanov (1978), Stevick (1982), among others. Humanism departs from audio-lingual habit theory and cognitive code learning and emphasizes the learner's affective domain.

2.2.4.1. Community Language Learning

The question of how adults learn L2 is at the core of this method. It is designed for adults, rather than children or teenagers. The Community Language Learning, with its absence of syllabus, and the lack of conventional materials, is hard to put into practice. Translation by the teacher of what L2 learners say is used. Students repeat the sentences, which are recorded, revised and commented on subsequently. Group work has an important function, and these interactions are also recorded and transcribed by the teacher. Learners must then analyze their production and self-correct, if possible. Students decide what and when to learn according to their needs. The teacher must sometimes discover those needs. The classroom is organized following a u-shape, so that participants can really communicate among themselves. According to Curran (1972), adults show more inhibitions, and tend to analyze what they learn in a conscious way, and have a fear of making mistakes. Thus, the teacher is always behind the group to help solve linguistic problems, doubts and hesitations, and to eliminate negative feelings of anxiety or failure. It focused on building a warm and supportive 'community' among learners, gradually moving from dependence on the teacher to complete autonomy.

2.2.4.2. The Silent Way

Gattegno (1972) developed a method partly based on mentalist notions of learning, and took into account the way children acquire their MT. According to him, learning was considered as an active, creative problem-solving process in which the use of physical cues was essential. Silence attached to the teacher constitutes one of the most well-known techniques of the method. Linguistically speaking, the Silent Way had a structuralism foundation, with language being considered as a set of structures and vocabulary, but with a focus on its oral aspects. However, the social function of language was not yet taken into

account. The Silent Way is also harder to implement with small children, who tend to need more verbal directions on the part of the teacher and are less autonomous.

Though humanist in its general considerations, the Silent Way has an implementation different from the Community Language Learning approach. It has a very uniform classroom procedure; first sounds, then words and afterwards sentences are taught through colored rods of different shapes, which have been previously associated to the different linguistic items. The teacher pronounces each element and asks for its repetition. He/she can use mime to guarantee or check comprehension or to indicate slight changes in content. Thus, the teacher directs the classroom but has an indirect role, because he/she has to be silent most of the time, giving an active role to the learner. In general, the method follows an audiolingual perspective, as translation is avoided at all costs. However, it also follows mentalist accounts, because self-correction and learner autonomy are promoted.

2.2.4.3. Suggestopedia

Lozanov (1979) developed a teaching method based on the idea that the learner, given the appropriate conditions, is capable of prodigious feats (Nunan, 1991). He based his ideas on Yoga, Soviet psychology and the use of music. From Yoga he took some techniques of relaxation, concentration and deep breathing. From Soviet psychology he borrowed the idea that learners can acquire anything, provided they do it in a deep state of concentration bordering hypnosis, and using the non-conscious and non- rational powers of their mind. Even though this method had a sound psychological basis, Lozanov did not have a linguistic theory, although he did have a notion of the language to be taught: he focused on L1-L2 pairs (Cerezal, 1996; Sánchez, 1997) and their memorisation, but did not attach a meaningful context to these linguistic items.

The classroom, following Suggestopedia, starts with the relaxation of the students through the appropriate music, breathing techniques, classroom furniture and voice of the

teacher. Then, students listen to texts and represent different roles using the L2. Translation is also used to foster comprehension. Students are flooded with oral input which they have to learn in an inductive way, and the activities are designed so that they involve the students' interests in such a way they do not provoke mental blocks. Interaction is also employed so that learners are able to use what they have unconsciously acquired. However, Suggestopedia requires the same efforts because of different reasons: achieving complete relaxation in the students is no easy feat. Also, both are designed for adults, rather than children or teenagers.

2.2.5. Communicative Language Approach to Grammar Teaching

The origins of the Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can be traced to the 60s, as a reaction to previous methodological principles, such as those underlying Audiolingualism or Grammar-Translation. Hymes pointed out that "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless" (1971, p. 278). These rules depend on the roles and relationships of the participants, the physical setting, the psychological scene, the topic, the purpose, the attitudinal key, the channel of communication, the code of language variety, the norms of interaction, the physical distance, the norms of interpretation and the genre. Another strong contributor to the CLT is Wilkins (1976), with his proposal of a notional syllabus, incorporated by the Council of Europe in its attempt to facilitate the teaching of European languages in the Common Market.

The objectives of the CLT extend beyond mere grammatical competence: "Language learning is learning to communicate" (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983, p. 91). Howatt distinguished between a "weak" or "shallow-end" version of CLT and a "strong" or "deep-end" version of CLT (Howatt, 1984, p. 279). The weak version "stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language

teaching". On the other hand, the strong version "advances the claim that language is acquired through communication", so that language ability is developed through activities simulating target performance and which require learners to do in class exactly what they will have to do outside it. Yalden (1987, p.61) summarized the essence of CLT as follows:

> It is based on the notion of the learners as communicators, naturally endowed with the ability to learn languages. It seeks to provide learners with the target language system. It is assumed that learners will have to prepare to use the target language (orally and in written form) in many predictable and unpredictable acts of communication which arise both in classroom interaction and in real-world situations, whether concurrent with language training or subsequent to it.

Hence, the primary goal of CLT is to develop communicative competence, to move "beyond grammatical and discourse elements in communication" and probe the "nature of social, cultural, and pragmatic features of language" (Brown, 1994, p. 77). Consequently, learners are expected, not so much to produce correct sentences or to be accurate, but to be capable of communicating and being fluent. As a matter of fact, CLT appeals to those who see a more humanistic, interactive, and communicative approach to teaching.

Grammar is taught inductively: learners are not presented with a list of grammatical rules that they have to learn by heart, but rather, the teacher provides them with examples from which the learners will have to infer the rules by them. Rutherford (1996) called this inductive way of teaching consciousness-raising. The teachers make the learners relate the new grammatical concepts to other grammatical information that they already have, both from other grammatical concepts in the TL or even from grammatical information which appears in their L1. Grammar, in communicative grammar language is seen as a means of communication in actual contexts (Newby, 1998). Meaningfulness and contextual appropriacy are stressed, while formal correctness is given less prominence.

However, although CLT syllabuses are organized according to categories of meaning or functions, they still have a strong grammar basis (Thornbury, 1999, p. 23), that is to say, the functions into which CLT syllabuses are organized are connected with their correspondent grammatical points. when explaining the role of grammar specifically in CLT, Thornbury stated that Communicative competence involves knowing how to use the grammar and vocabulary of the language to achieve communicative goals, and knowing how to do this in a socially appropriate way (2000, p. 18). All the grammar and vocabulary that pupils learn follow from the function and the situational. However, this does not mean that CLT eclipsed attention to grammar. Spada (2007) argued that the thought that "Communicative Language Teaching means an exclusive focus on meaning" is a myth or a misconception (p. 275). As soon as the initial enthusiasm has passed, CLT has been criticized on some of its central claims have been called into question and come to be known as the post-communicative or post-methodology era.

2.2.6. Eclecticism

The eclectic approach to language teaching and learning in the real sense of the word is not a language teaching methodology. This is because unlike the well known established methodology, it has no set of assumptions or principles upon which to base its position with regards to language teaching and learning (Williams, 1990). It is based on all the previous methods. Eclectic theory believes strongly that language learning is basically a combination of mental activities and the imitation of adult speech. They argue for instance that the children's ability to form and understand sentences not heard before can only be explained by the creative nature of human language.

The eclectic method, while accepting the developmental nature of language acquisition, also agrees that external conditions influence language mastery. Language

teachers must seek to create the best condition for learning to take place in the classroom. In teaching, language skills are to be introduced in the following order: speaking, writing, understanding and reading. Eclectic methodologists believe that understanding should be taught simultaneously with speaking, writing and reading. Classroom activities in an eclectic environment include the oral practice of carefully selected and graded language samples. Reading aloud of passages as well as questions and answers are frequently used to induce students into speaking. There should be limited exposure to translation exercises during which students translate passages in the TL into the L1 or vice versa. Grammar is taught and learned in a deliberately planned manner by the deductive process. According to this compromise method, audio-visual aids are employed extensively to concretize learning.

2.2.7. Recent Approaches to Grammar Teaching

In this post-communicative era, some other methods and pedagogical approaches to FL teaching continue to proliferate (Rodgers, 2001, p. 2) who considered many of them "off-shoots" spawned by CLT. They include the Task-based Language Learning (TBA), the Lexical Approach, the Cooperative Learning (CL), and Content-Based Instruction (CBI).

2.2.7.1. The Task-based Language Learning

Psychologically speaking, TBA arises from the development of cognitive theories originated with the notions of declarative and procedural knowledge (Anderson, 1985) and the study of cognitive processes such as memory, attention, and recall. It also takes into account the advances of psycholinguistic research and bilingualism. All these developments had started to be taken into account in the CLT era. Linguistically speaking, the view of language as communication from previous periods evolved towards the inclusion of disciplines such as

Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis, which study the social aspects of language, and Computational Linguistics, which uses databases to examine real samples of language.

According to Cerezal (1996, p.183), the TBA can be defined as "how a learner applies his or her communicative competence to undertake a selection of tasks". A task is a procedure or set of procedures which can take one or more lessons and can be oriented towards communication or towards learning the linguistic rules. They involve problem-solving activities with a single or with several solutions -closed or open-ended tasks-, they are developed taking as starting point a specific socio-linguistic authentic situation (i.e. going shopping) and include processes such as listing, sorting, ranking, ordering, gap-filling, etc. Perhaps a clearer definition should involve what tasks are not (Skehan, 1998, p. 95). They are not completion exercises involving transformation or meaningless repetition, or question-and-answer strings with the teacher, and they are not oriented towards analysis of linguistic structures, though enabling tasks focus on language. Examples of tasks include going shopping, completing someone else's family tree, or solving a riddle, among others. Thus, many activities from a Communicative approach could be reorganized to become tasks.

2.2.7.2. The Lexical Approach

The Lexical Approach differs from the remaining methods in its interest in the nature of the lexicon. Specifically, it considers the group of up to eight words, that is, the lexical chunk (also termed lexical phrase, holophrase, composite, gambit, prefabricated routine, patterned phrase, frozen form, routine formula, or formulaic expression), as "the ideal unit which can be exploited for language learning" (Nattinger and DeCarrico, 1992, p. 1). Lewis (1993, 89) went straight to the point when he wrote:

> The Lexical Approach can be summarised in a few words: language consists not of traditional grammar and vocabulary but often of multi-word prefabricated chunks". Or, to use one of his seminal sentences, "Language consists of grammaticalised lexis, not lexicalised grammar.

The Lexical Approach assigns a main role to grammar; in defending the renewed importance of lexical phrase drills in maintaining that lexis can well be learnt de-contextualized; in insisting on training in pedagogical chunking; or in emphasizing input through extensive reading and listening, but always combined with a direct approach to vocabulary teaching. Input is indeed priorized in the Lexical Approach, so that it is considered beneficial to increase teacher talking time as a valuable source of input and to correct errors through reformulation rather than formal correction. Such input, in order to ensure its effectiveness, must obviously be comprehensible. Receptive skills (especially listening) are also accorded more weight than productive ones. Lewis stresses throughout his works that these methodological shifts are far from being revolutionary; rather, he prefers to view them as small but significant. And they are indeed not novel, as they point back to key principles of GTM, Audiolingual Method, the Natural Approach, or CLT (1993, 1997a, 1997b, 2000).

2.2.7.3. Cooperative Learning

CL is an approach whereby students work together in structured groups to reach common goals. It aims to foster cooperation rather than competition and to develop critical thinking skills. The learners are thus direct and active participants in the learning process, and they must work collaboratively with other group members on tasks assigned, and must learn to monitor and evaluate their own learning. Teachers' roles become the facilitator of learning and are responsible for the creation of a highly structured and well-organised teaching environment which promotes successful group-based learning. This approach has been proved to be an effective method for increasing L2 acquisition. Nonetheless, CL has also been found

to present problems in its implementation (Chafe, 1998; Richards and Rodgers, 2001; Troncale, 2002; Naughton, 2004).

2.2.7.4. Content-Based Instruction

CBI is an approach to language teaching which integrates language instruction with instruction in the content areas. The focus is thus on meaning of the content that is being taught, with language learning being a by-product of such a focus on meaning. The target language is used as the medium of teaching the subject matter. It is based on the premises that people learn languages more successfully when they engage in meaningful activities (Curtain, 1995) and when the information they are acquiring is seen as interesting, useful, and leading to a desired objective (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). CBI also addresses students' needs and builds upon the learners' previous experience, connecting it to the new information they receive (Madrid Fernández and García Sánchez, 2001). It involves learning by doing, something which implies the assumption of an active role on the part of the students. The teachers are not only required to master the TL, but must also be knowledgeable in the subject matter.

However, despite its many advantages, CBI also has acknowledged shortcomings (Richards et al., 2001; Amaya, 2001; Troncale, 2002; Alameda Hernández, 2002; Kavaliauskiene, 2004). They are summarized as follows:

1. CBI can pose a greater cognitive challenge. Learners may feel confused and may also have limited time to achieve an adequate academic level.
2. CBI is a challenge for teachers. Not only, they have to master the target language, but also have knowledge of the subject matter content.
3. CBI needs a collaboration and coordination between L1 content teachers and TL content-based programme.

4. the overuse of the students' mother tongue is a potential danger.

5. Little material adapted to the students' level is available on the market.

6. Assessment is made more difficult, as both subject matter and language skills need to be taken into account.

In spite of these possible problems, CBI is currently considered *"one of the most promising present and future trends in language teaching and learning"* (Madrid Fernández and García Sánchez, 2001, p. 129). As Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 220) put it, "we can expect to see CBI continue as one of the leading curricular approaches in language teaching."

2.3. Sources of Grammatical Difficulties in Second Language Acquisition

Grammatical rule is among other difficulties found in the process of learning L2. DeKeyser (2005) ascribed grammatical difficulty to three factors: problems of meaning, problems of form, and problems of form-meaning mapping). the meaning expressed through a grammatical form can be difficult to learn due to its "novelty, abstractness, or a combination of both" (DeKeyser, 2005, as cited in Shiu, 2011, p. 6). The English modal verb is an example of a form that is difficult to learn due to its multiple meanings. The form itself can also constitute a source of difficulty. DeKeyser (2005) noted that learners may have difficulty for example to use correctly L2 morphological features because of, "the number of choices involved in picking all the right morphemes and allomorphs to express [these] meanings and putting them in the right place" (2005, pp. 5-6).

2.3.1. Inherent Complexity of Rules

It is frequently assumed that grammatical difficulty is dependent on complexity inherent in the acquisition of grammar rules. This means that the more complex the rules of a grammar form are, the more difficult it is for L2 learners to learn (Hulstijn, 1995 as cited in

Shiu, 2011, p.6). however, there is no agreement on the standard upon which the complexity of rules can be measured, and therefore it makes it difficult to characterize grammatical difficulty. (de Graaff, 1997; Housen et al., 05). Definitions of the complexity of rules have been provided with respect to what "rules" refers to, how "complexity" is defined, and how the complexity of rules is determined. Regarding the first issue, two types of rules have been distinguished: linguistic rules or "linguistic structure," and pedagogical rules (Housen et al., 2005).

Linguistic rules refer to, "the symbolic constructs postulated by linguists to denote or model observable linguistic phenomena (e.g., patterns of structural co-variance and form-function mappings) and/or their underlying mental representations" (Housen et al., 2005, 238-239). Linguistic rule complexity can be further categorized into functional and formal complexity (DeKeyser, 1998; Doughty & Williams, 1998). The functional complexity concerns form-function mappings, whereas formal complexity concerns the (morpho) syntactic constitution of a form (Shiu, 2011, p.6). The English modal verbs are an example of this functional complex form due to its multiple functions (as clearly described in chapter three). Pedagogical rules, on the other hand, refer to, "a metalinguistic description of the explicit cognitive procedure" involved in producing a target linguistic rule (housen et al., 2005, p.329). Pedagogical rules are instrumental in nature; they serve as tools for facilitating the learning of linguistic rules. It is this sense of rule that Housen et al. (2005) has used in their investigations of complexity and L2 learning (shiu, 2011, pp.7-8).

2.3.2. Explicit Instruction on Second Language Learning

Hulstijn and de Graaff (1994) defined the complexity of L2 rules as "the number (and/or the type) of criteria to be applied in order to arrive at the correct form" (p. 103). In her study of the effects of explicit instruction on L2 learning, de Graaff (1997found out that the

operationalized complexity is the total number of formal and functional grammatical criteria involved in the process of noticing, comprehending, or producing a given form. Basically, the fewer criteria required, the less complex the form. Another study of Spada & Tomita (2010) examined the effects of implicit and explicit instruction on the acquisition of simple and complex structures. They also used the Hulstijn and de Graaff's (1994) definition of complexity. Using their criteria, the authors characterized "wh-questions as object of a preposition" more complex than the simple past tense because the former requires seven transformations while the latter requires only one.

2.3.3. The Learner

Housen et al. (2005) defined pedagogical complexity in terms of "the number of steps the learner has to follow to arrive at the production of the intended linguistic structure, and the number of options and alternatives available at each step" (p. 241). In line with this definition, the researchers suggest that pedagogical rules for the formation of a target structure can be more or less complex depending on the degree of elaboration with which the target structure is formulated.

House et al. (2005) investigated the effects of explicit instruction on L2 learning in relation to the issue of complexity. In their study, complexity is defined in terms of *functional markedness*, a concept advanced by Givon (1991, 1995). Givon's model of functional markedness comprises three major components: structural complexity, frequency and distribution, and psycho-cognitive complexity. According to Givon's model, one grammar form is considered to be more structurally complex than another if (1) producing the form requires more transformations of its underlying base form, (2) the form is not as frequently available to learners, (3) the use of the form is more strictly constrained by its syntactic and/or semantic context, and/or (4) acquisition of the form involves higher-level cognitive ability.

Following Givon's criteria, Housen et al. concluded for the purpose of their study that the French passive voice is more complex than French sentence negation.

2.3.4. The Salience of a Grammar Form in the Input.

Many researchers like Doughty, 2001; Swain, 2005; Long, 1996, 2007; Lyster, 2007) advocated that progress in L2 development requires attentional allocation to language forms in the input. This idea is not shared by researchers such as Krashen (1981, 1982, 1985, 1994) and Reber (1989), who claimed that learning can be both conscious and unconscious, and that the latter is responsible for most L2 production. L2 researchers argue that the more *salient* a form is, the more likely it is to be noticed and processed, and consequently acquired. Salience of a grammar form is often discussed with reference to the "accessibility" and "availability" of the target form; the former is primarily contingent upon various linguistic attributes of the form, while the latter concerns the frequency of the form in the input to which learners are exposed (Skehan, 1998; Goldschneider & DeKeyser, 2005; Collins, et al., 2009 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p. 8). In their meta-analysis of the determinants of the natural order of L2 morpheme acquisition, Goldschneider and DeKeyser (2005 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.9) posited that salience is determined by five components: *perceptual salience*, *semantic complexity*, *morphological regularity*, *syntactic category*, and *frequency*. A grammar form is more salient if the form is phonetically sonorous or stressed, semantically straightforward, morphologically predictable, and belongs to a syntactic category that is more easily recognized (Shiu, 2011, pp.9-10).

SLA literature assumes that input frequency influences L2 learning. At a theoretical level, the frequency-based view of SLA is closely linked to the connectionist theory of language acquisition, which conceptualizes language knowledge as a network of interconnected nodes, positing that the creation and strengthening of the connections in the

network largely depend on the learner's experiences with and sensitivity to input frequency (Ellis, 2002 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.11). Thus, the more frequently a form appears in the input, the more likely it is to be noticed, and thus acquired (Goldschneider & DeKeyser, 2005 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p11).

Furthermore, researchers also note that for L2 learning to occur, input frequency operates in conjunction with other factors, such as the learner's L1, the learner's innate constraints on language learning, and linguistic attributes of the form in question (Ellis, 2009; Gass & Mackey, 2002; Goldschneider & DeKeyser, 2005 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p 11). Salience is also attributed to factors such as the position of a language feature in a sentence or its communicative force (VanPatten, 2002). He argued that a grammar form positioned at the beginning or the end of a sentence gets more attention from the learner than one positioned in the middle of a sentence. In addition, a feature that communicates essential information is more salient than a form conveying "redundant" information (Shiu, 2011, p.12).

Finally it is important to mention that relating grammatical difficulty merely to salience is inadequate. As VanPatten (2007, p.178 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.12) put salience "is often after the fact (e.g., something may not be salient if it is difficult to acquire)", and that it is, "vaguely defined to begin with and there is sometimes disagreement on just what the properties of salience are". What is missing therefore is the lack of a systematic understanding of, *inter alia*, what makes one grammar form more salient than another, and whether a grammar form is equally salient for L2 learners with different language proficiency levels, or for L2 learners with different L1s (Shiu, 2011, p.12).

2.3.5. Communicative Force of a Grammar Form

Also related to the issue of grammatical difficulty is the communicative force of a grammar form. According to VanPatten's view (1996, 2004), "the communicative force of a

form depends on whether the form itself is semantically self-contained, and whether the form is semantically redundant at the sentence level" (Shiu, 2011,p.12). "However, a form may have different levels of semantic redundancy depending on the context in which it is used and the other forms it is used with" (Harrington, 2004). Shiu (2011) illustrated VanPatten's criteria as follows:

> The sentence *It is raining*, which indicates that there is an event in progress by the progressive aspect marker *–ing*. Therefore, *–ing* is not a communicatively redundant feature in this sentence. In the sentence *I walked to work*, the verb inflection *–ed* is semantically important because it indicates the past tense. However, when the past tense is captured by a temporal adverbial (for example, *I walked to work yesterday*), the verb inflection *–ed* is semantically redundant and thus less communicatively useful (p.12).

VanPatten (2002) claimed that the communicative value of a grammatical form is more likely to be noticed, and thus, "get processed and made available in the intake data for acquisition" (p. 760 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.12). This argument constitutes part of what VanPatten referred to as *"the primacy of meaning principle"* which posits that, due to processing capacity limitations, the learner's attention is prioritized toward semantic information before grammatical information while processing a linguistic input string (Shiu, 2011, p.12).

2.3.6. Input Processing Strategies in Second Language Learning

The use of inappropriate psycholinguistic processing strategies in L2 learning may also result in increased grammatical difficulty (VanPatten, 2002 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.13). his model of *"input processing (IP)"* recognizes the role of "attention" in L2 learning, and maintains a single, limited capacity view of working memory. The latter refers to, "the structures and processes that humans use to store and manipulate information" (Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 250 as citd in Shiu, 2011, p.13). The IP model assumed that a learners'

processing capacity is limited during real-time comprehension so that they have to be selective in processing an input string, and that input processing taking place in the course of comprehension is likely to result in form-meaning mappings (Shiu, 2011, p.13).

The IP model attempted to address the mechanisms that the learner uses to deal with novel input and the conditions favouring accurate input processing (Harrington, 2004 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.13). However, the IP model was highly criticised by many researchers as DeKeyser, Salaberry, Robinson & Harrington, 2002; Harrington, 2004 Shiu, 2011, p.13) in relation to the lack of definitional precision (i.e., multiple uses of the terms *meaning*, *form*, and *processing*) (Harrington, 2004 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.14-15) and a lack of clear accounts of what gets processed in the input (DeKeyser, et al., 2002 as cited in Shiu, 2011, pp.14-15).

2.3.7. Second Language Learner's Developmental Readiness

A major criterion determining the acquisition, of grammar is L2 learners' "developmental readiness". Based on the view that the acquisition of certain grammar features takes place in predictable stages, Shiu (2011, p.16) explained that some researchers have investigated the developmental sequences that L2 learners traverse in their learning of a certain target feature, for example, English question forms (e.g., Mackey, 1999; Mackey & Philp, 1998; Spada & Lightbown, 1993); relative clauses (e.g., Ammar & Lightbown, 2005; Y. Izumi & Izumi, 2004; Mellow, 2006); and English third person possessive determiner (e.g., Ammar, 2008; White, 1998; White, et al., 2007).

SLA Research suggests that many forms are learned in predictable stages. Studies of negation (Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982), studies of pronouns (e.g., Zobl, 1985), studies of relative clauses (e.g., Pavesi, 1986), studies of possessive determiners (White, 1998; White, Munoz, & Collins, 2007; Zobl, 1985), studies of tense and aspect (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig, 2000;

Shirai, 2004), and perhaps most compelling of all, the work of Pienemann and his colleagues (e.g., Meisel, Clahsen, & Pienemann, 1981; Pienemann, 1989; Pienemann, Johnson, & Brindley, 1988) investigating the acquisition of word order in German and several morphological and syntactic features in English (Shiu, 2011, pp.14-15).

The acquisition of tense and aspect has been explained from the perspective of the Aspect Hypothesis (e.g., R. Anderson & Shirai, 1996 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.15). The latter assumed that in the early stages of acquisition, the development of grammatical aspect markers is constrained by the temporal semantic meanings of verbs to which the markers are attached. This hypothesis was favored by a number of empirical studies (see R. Anderson & Shirai, 1996; Bardovi-Harlig, 2000).

> Typological explanations such as the Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy (NPAH) (Keenan & Comrie, 1977) have been employed to predict the acquisition orders of relative clauses. The NPAH suggests an implicational and unidirectional relationship among relative clause types. The NPAH has been supported by a number of studies of European languages (e.g., Doughty, 1991). However, studies of L2 Asian languages have not supported it, which makes its claims of universality less than convincing (Shirai & Ozeki, 2007) (Shiu, 2011, p.15).

In his study of the grammatical development of German and English, Pienemann (1998, 2003) proposed Processability Theory (PT). PT premised that language learners pass across a series of predictable stages in their language development, and that learners' psycholinguistic processing abilities moderate their progress through the developmental stages (Shiu, 2011). Pienemann (1998, pp. 73-86 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.15) proposed a hierarchy of five language generation stages: (1) word/lemma access, (2) category procedure (lexical category), (3) phrasal procedure (head), (4) S-procedure, (5) subordinate clause procedure. Pienemann argued that in the process of language production (acquisition),

learners start from stage (1) and proceed sequentially. No skipping of stages is possible; each stage is a prerequisite for the next: access to higher-level procedures necessitates mastery of the procedures below. The processing sequences postulated by PT are strongly supported by Pienemann's own research in German, and moderately supported by research in other languages such as English, Scandinavian languages, Italian, and Japanese (Devitt, 2000 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.16).

2.3.8 Interference of the Mother Tongue

The effect of "L1 transfer" resulting in grammatical difficulty can be traced back to the 1960s. The notion of "hierarchy of difficulty" in light of the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (Lado, 1957) was proposed by Stockwell, Bowen, and Martin (1965). It assumed that "the degree of difficulty corresponds to the degree of difference between the TL and the learners' native language, and that the more differences there are between the two languages, the more difficult the TL will be for L2 learners" (Shiu, 2011, p.16). Thus, grammatical difficulty is determined by L1-L2 differences. Language transfer has long been a focus of discussion in the literature (e.g., Kellerman & Sharwood-Smith, 1986; Gass & Selinker, 1992; Selinker & Lakshamanan, 1992; Odlin, 1989, 2003;), and the impact of L1 transfer on L2 learning has been a point of investigation in FFI studies (White, 1991, Spada & Lightbown, 1999; Lightbown & Spada, 2000, Izquierdo & Collins, 2008).

The studies of language transfer indicate that L1 transfer may moderate the rate of L2 learning. In their English morpheme studies, Luk and Shirai (2009 as cited in Shui, 2011, p.16), further suggested a plausible L1 transfer effect on the developmental sequence of English morphemes. Accordingly, the authors argue that Krashen's (1982) "natural order" hypothesis should be used with caution due to the fact that it is primarily based on the analysis of Spanish learners' data."Negative transfer" resulting from L1-L2 differences may cause a

certain degree of difficulty in L2 grammar learning. Therefore, the learning of English modals is challenging for many L2 learners, given the great differences between English and Arabic modals.

2.3.9. Language Aptitude

In SLA research, grammatical difficulty is sometimes associated with individual differences in language aptitude. L2 learners "with a stronger ability to learn languages maybe better equipped to deal with grammatical difficulty in the L2 than learners with weaker aptitude" (Shiu, 2011, p.18). Language aptitude contributes most to explanations of the considerable variation in "rates" and levels of attainment in L2 acquisition (Sawyer & Ranta, 2001 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.18). Skehan's model (1998, 2002) "is characterized by an attempt to link components of aptitude to the L2 processing involved in L2 grammar learning. He advanced a reconceptualization of aptitude with three major components: auditory ability, language analytic ability, and memory capacity" (Shiu, 2011, p.18). Shiu, (2011,) added that:

> Skehan maps out stages of L2 processing along with their attendant postulated processing demands and links them to specific aptitude components. Robinson's (2002, 2005) model of aptitude includes not only the cognitive abilities underlying the aptitude construct, but also the possible interaction between aptitude and other variables such as task demands and learning conditions (p. 18)

Both Skehan's and Robinson's models of aptitude suggest that aptitude is composed of multiple cognitive abilities. However, to date, not all the cognitive abilities included in the aptitude construct are well researched or well understood. Another supporting evidence of the effect of aptitude comes from the study by Erlam (2005 as cited in Shiu, 2011, p.20), which suggested that individual differences in language aptitude play a mediating role in determining the effects of the instructional methods under investigation.

Conclusion

In our age of networking and social media, the knowledge of foreign languages and the ability to communicate effectively in foreign languages is a must. The look towards grammar has witnessed fundamental changes from the one in the previous traditional methods. Meaningfulness holds an important role in both theoretical and practical investigations, which inevitably influences the treatment of grammar itself. Grammar ceases to be learned as an end in itself, at a de-contextualized sentence-level system. Novel elements are found in the current methods in which the focus on form serves some higher-order objective in the interacting dimensions of language, together with meaning and function. However, further research is needed to address a number of issues in SLA because it seems a very challenging task to integrate the teaching of grammar with meaningful communication keeping in mind the particular needs of their learners and their own linguistic, pedagogical and methodological repertoire.

Introduction

Modals are pedagogically controversial and unveil some areas of discrepancy and agreement in grammar literature. The complexity of their multi-use comprises a serious challenge to ES/FL language users. Research on modals is basically investigated in terms of modal terminologies, categories and meanings. For a thorough understanding of the concept, it is necessary to introduce some potentially confusing terminology as described by some linguists and grammarians as well as draw some boundaries between them. This is useful for the present study because it analyzes them formally and semantically. It provides a theoretical background for a clear understanding of English modal verbs in their forms, their meanings and functions.

3.1. Definition of Modality and English Modal Verbs

Modality is something that affects the meaning of the sentence as a whole. However, there seems to be no general agreement on how to define the terms modality. Questions raised mainly in two respects: the first is concerned about which category modality falls into and the second is concerned about what is comprised by the concept. Hermerén (1978, p. 12) referred to modality as the “volition, ability, various degrees of likelihood (i.e. certainty – impossibility), obligation, wishes and permission". His understanding is quite concrete in its listing of several specifications of the concept, which he also circumscribed as "modalities". It is ' the manner in which the meaning of a clause is qualified so as to reflect the speaker’s judgment of the likelihood of the proposition of the sentence being true' (Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik, 1985, p. 219). The question is, however, whether a concept like modality is just the sum of the parts mentioned.

While viewing modality as a semantic category, Huddleston classified '"mood' as a category of grammar (1984, p. 166) i.e., a morphosyntactic category and thus includes it in the concept of 'modality'. Palmer (1986) also understood modality as a semantic category, not

a grammatical one. He classified 'modality' as a category of meaning. He regarded subjectivity as an underlying feature of modality. According to him, modality "is ... concerned with subjective characteristics of an utterance" and it is "defined as the grammaticalization of speakers' (subjective) attitudes and opinions" (p. 16). Palmer (1990) saw modality as a grammatical system which its use can multiply our capability of expression of meaning, and certain meanings can be expressed by modal verbs that words on their own are barely adequate (Mindt, 1995).

Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., & Finegan, E. (1999, p. 177) commented on Palmer's definition saying that "recent cross-linguistic works [...] show that modality notions range far beyond what is included in this definition". Unfortunately, it is not revealed what is meant by "far beyond". What is however certainly missing in Palmer's understanding is the acknowledgement that modality can also be expressed by lexical or prosodic features, not only by grammatical ones. Lexical elements that can convey modality are nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs. Palmer (2001) employed the term 'modal system'. He said that "within modal systems different kinds of modality are distinguished within a single system of commuting terms" (p. 6). That is to say, modality is considered to be a semantic phenomenon, For example, in sentences as 'Kate may beat home now', 'Kate must beat home now', or 'Kate will be at home now', the English modal verbs are used to make varying kinds of truth judgments about the factual status of a proposition. These kinds of varying degrees of certainty are only possible within modal systems, and it is on these kinds of differences in meaning that the present study focuses.

English modal verbs used to express modality belong to an area that makes it difficult for linguists to draw a firm picture about them. "There is perhaps, no area of English grammar that is both more important and more difficult than the system of modals" (Palmer, 1979; preface). Dalgish (1997) used different names when addressing modals interchangeably:

‘*modal verb’*, ‘*modal*, or ‘*auxiliary’*, ‘*auxiliary modal’* in each modal entry such as ‘*may’*, ‘*can’*, and ‘*must’*. He did not classify ‘*have to’* under any part of speech, and categorized ‘*used to’* as an idiom. However, Hornby (2005) considered ‘*have to’* and ‘*used to’* as modals. Whether modals are verbs, auxiliaries, or a different part of speech is still vague to many people. In the following review, we present some approaches to classifying and identifying English modal verbs

3.2. Theoretical Approaches to Classifying the English Modal Verbs

Some linguists show inconsistency with regard to classifying and distributing modals into different categories, as well as in naming these categories. According to Quirk, et al. (1985), modals constituted most of the verbs of intermediate functions. Modals are part of a scale division called *verbs of intermediate functions*, which ranges between auxiliaries and main verbs. The division is developed from *structural implications* and *semantic aspects*. *Structural implications* mean the structure of a verb phrase such as finite or nonfinite, while *semantic aspects* involve three concepts. First, there is aspect, which could be simple, progressive, or perfective. Second, there is tense, which could be present or past. Third, there is modality, which deals with meaning such as possibility and necessity**.** They classified modals into four

1. *Central modals*, namely ‘*can’,‘could’,‘may’,‘might’,‘shall, ‘should, ‘will, ‘will not’ ‘would’, ’would not’*, and ‘*must’* being the closest to auxiliaries.
2. *Marginal modals*, namely ‘*dare’,’ need’, ‘ought to’,* and ‘*need to’.*
3. *Modal idioms*, such as ‘*had better’, ‘would rather’, ‘would sooner’, ‘be to’,* and ‘*have got to’*.

4. *Semi auxiliaries*, such as ‘*have to’, ‘be about to’, ‘be able to’, ‘be bound to’, ‘be going to’, ‘be obliged to’, ‘be supposed to’,* and ‘*be willing to’* Categories.

Swan (1995) classified modals into two categories, '*modal auxiliary verbs'* and '*like modal auxiliary verbs'*:

1. Modal auxiliary verbs, namely '*can', 'could', 'may', 'might', 'will', 'would', 'shall', 'should', 'must'*, and '*ought*. (p. 333)
2. Like modal auxiliary verbs, namely '*need'*, '*dare'*, and '*had better'*. (p. 333)

Master (1996) explained that *modals* and *modal auxiliaries* are two names of the same category because "the word *modal* was originally used as an adjective for the type of auxiliary (i.e. modal auxiliaries), but now we commonly use the word *modal* as a noun to refer to this type of auxiliary verbs" (p. 119). Yule (1998) categorized modals into two categories: *modal verbs* such as *can, may,* and *must,* and *periphrastic modal verbs* such as *able to, allowed to,* and *have to*.

Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman (1999) devoted an entire chapter to *modal auxiliaries* and *related phrasal forms*. They make a distinction between two categories. The first category does not show agreement in tense and number, while the other does. The two categories are the following:

1. Modals, namely '*can'*, '*could'*, '*will'*, '*shall'*, '*must'*, '*should'*, '*ought'*, '*would'*, '*may'*, and '*might'*.
2. Phrasal modals, namely '*be able to'*, '*be going to'*, '*be about to'*, '*have to'*, '*have got to'*, '*be to'*, '*be supposed to'*, '*used to'*, '*be allowed to'*, and '*be permitted to'* (p. 139)

Although Celce-Murcia et al. (1999) named the above two categories *modals* and *phrasal modals,* they are named *modal auxiliaries* and *related phrasal forms* respectively.

Another classification is suggested by Depraetere & Reed (2006), who classified modals as follows:

1. Central modals, namely '*can', 'could', 'may', 'might', 'shall', 'should', 'will', 'would',* and '*must'*.
2. Peripheral/marginal modals, namely *dare, need,* and *ought*. Depraetere and Reed observed that peripheral/marginal modals are not found in assertive context, whereas central modals are. '*Ought to'* is an exception because it appears in both contexts. However, it is not a central modal because it is followed by *to*. Therefore, it is classified as a peripheral/marginal modal.
3. Semi-/quasi-/periphrastic modals, namely '*have to', 'be able to', 'be going to', 'be supposed to', 'be about to',* and '*be bound to'*.

Semi-/quasi-/periphrastic modals are different from the first and second categories because they are an open-ended category and they show subject-verb agreement. In addition, some of them co-occur with central modals. Moreover, unlike other modals, *have to* needs the dummy auxiliary verb *do* in negative and interrogative structures. On the other hand,

It is worth mentioning, Quirk et al. (1985), Swan (1995), Yule (1998), Celce-Murcia et al. (1999), and Depraetere et al. (2006) did not present similar classification criteria, nor do similar categories contain the same sets of modals. For example, Depraetere et al. (2006) categorized '*be supposed to'* as a '*quasi-/periphrastic modal'* whereas Quirk et al. (1985) categorized it as a '*semi auxiliary'*. On the other hand, Swan (1995) did not mention '*be supposed to'*, '*be about to'*, '*be able to'*, and '*be bound to'* in any modal category. In sum, the search for a consistent system of modal categorization sounds like a difficult task because of variation across and within some theoretical approaches. Consequently, different names, categories, and grouping of modals are the ultimate result, a phenomenon that not only hinders perception but also may construct a pseudo conception of modals.

3.3. Criteria for Identifying English Modal Verbs

Many linguists have not yet agreed upon a particular classification, nor have they set a common semantic approach to modal verbs however, English modal verbs are usually identified formally and semantically.

3.3.1. Formal criteria for Identifying English Modal Verbs

English modal verbs as a part of auxiliary verbs share the grammatical characteristics of auxiliary verbs. It is profitable to have a closer look at the morphological and syntactic properties that are laid down to determine modal verbs. Just like '*be', 'do'* and '*have',* modals are first of all members of the group of auxiliary verbs, which share their subsequent characteristics. Huddleston designated these characteristics as NICE properties, forming an acronym out of their first letters (1976, p. 333). They can occur with 'negation', 'inversion', 'code' and 'emphatic affirmation'. Palmer (1987, p. 16) defined the characteristics of auxiliary as follows:

(1) Negation: They have a negative form and are used with the addition of the negative particle "n't" or "not". They are not added to "don't" as other verbs:

'I don't like that.'

'This can't be.'

Such expressions are not possible for full verbs:

**'She goesn't there regularly.'*

(2) Inversion: Auxiliaries can occur before the subject in statements and questions.

'Is he here again?'

'Seldom have I been more exhausted than today.'

(3) Code: An auxiliary can avoid repetition by taking up a full verb and is used in question and answer.

'He can sing and so can I.'

'May I come in? - Yes, you may.'

(4) Emphatic affirmation: An accent can be placed on auxiliaries for emphatic affirmation of a doubtful statement or the denial of the negative.

'You cán do it.' (You are wrong in thinking that you cannot)

Apart from these, modals show peculiarities that distinguish them from other auxiliaries and full verbs (Hoye 1997, p. 74-75) in term of their morphological features as:

• They do not occur in non-finite functions as, for example, infinitives or participles

** 'I like maying.'*

• They are not inflected in the third person; that is, when the subject is singular third person, no subject-verb agreement realizes in inflection. So in third person singular of the present tense, they do not take an *–s*:

** 'She cans swim'.*

With regard to syntax, the following criteria apply:

• They can only be the first element of the verb phrase

** 'They have might sold it already'.*

• Modals do not take direct objects:

** 'He can it.'*

• They are followed by the "bare infinitive"—the base form of the verb alone. In other words, after modal verbs, the infinitive without to of other verbs is used. They are followed by the bare infinitive:

** 'He can to leave soon.'*

• They can't co-occur. In other words, two modal verbs can't be used simultaneously in a verb phrase:

** 'She might will come round later on.'*

Modals furthermore exhibit abnormalities concerning tense and time:

• Although there are present and past tense forms such as *can/could, shall/should* or *may/might*, both can be used to refer to the present or the future.

'He could arrive tomorrow.'

Apart from that, it is worth noting that they have no non-finite forms—past and present participles. It is not possible to express past time with the past tense forms *might* and *should*:

** 'We might spend our last year's holidays together.'*

** 'Yesterday we should do our homework.'*

These grammatical characteristics are different from those of the main verbs. Some linguists, such as Celce-Murcia et al. (1999) think these differences might give rise to learning difficulty for students

Taking the just mentioned properties as a yardstick, the set of modals comprises the nine modals cited by Hoye (1997) and Biber et al. (1999). Palmer reaches a different conclusion because he is treating the past tense form modals *could, would, should* and *might* as variants of their present tense forms. These past tense forms can, however, convey different or additional meanings compared to their present tense counterparts. Therefore, they are worth to be listed separately. Questionable is whether *need* belongs into the category of central modals on the grounds that it can also function as a main verb. *Ought*, in contrast, cannot occur as a full verb, but needs to be followed by *to* and an infinitive instead of the bare infinitive. It therefore only marginally fits into the list of modals.

There are many more verbs and constructs that share some of the above mentioned features and can function in a similar way to central modals. Among these are according to Quirk et al. (1985: 137):

• marginal modals (*dare, need, ought to, used to),*

• modal idioms *(had better, would rather/sooner, be to, have to, etc.),* or

• semi-auxiliaries *(be able to, be bound to, be willing to, etc.).*

For the purposes of this research, nine central modals will be recognized. These are *can, could, will, would, shall, should, may, might* and *must*. Now that the considered set of modals is formally described via grammatical and syntactic characteristics, the next step is to explore these modals with a view to their meaning.

3.3.2. Semantic criteria for Interpreting English Modal Verbs

Meanings of modals are controversial, not only for L2 learners and teachers but also for native speakers when it comes to explicit explanation of their different meanings. Cook (1978) noted that the surveys of current English materials indicate that much of the information regarding the meanings of modals is either not included at all, or is not presented in a systematic way (p. 5). No wonder, then, that L2 learners and teachers would find it difficult to properly use modals. In the following, different approaches and terminologies are observed across some systems of semantic classifications. We will assist to construct an idea about different approaches to meanings of modals: epistemic and root Modality epistemic and deontic Modals, social and logical possibility, modals and non-modals, logical probability and social interaction, intrinsic and extrinsic modality.

3.3.2.1 Epistemic and Root Modality

Modality Coates (1983) classified modals into epistemic and root modality Yule (1998) categorized modals into two basic meanings; both from the speaker's perspective. Yule established a relationship between epistemic and root modality on the one hand and necessity and obligation on the other. The first is epistemic modality, which indicates the speaker's assessment of whether a situation or event is true or not. It could be interpreted on one hand as strong conclusion when it means necessity, for example, "He must be crazy = I say it is necessarily the case that he is crazy" (p. 90). On the other hand, epistemic modality

could also be interpreted weak conclusion when it means possibility, for example, "He may be crazy = I say it is possibly the case that he is crazy" (p. 90).

The second category is root modality, which is based on what is socially determined from the speaker or writer. This category reflects obligation and necessity. Root modality, is interpreted as obligation when it means obligation, for example, "You must leave = I say it is necessary for you to leave". On the other hand, root modality is interpreted as permission when it means possibility, for example, "You may leave = I say it's possible for you to leave" (Yule, 1998, p. 90).

3.2.2.2. Epistemic and Deontic Modals

English modal verbs that indicate necessity, probability, possibility or judgment are epistemic; the others that express obligation, permission, intention, or ability are deontic, or root modals (Greenbaum, 1991, p.97). Epistemic modals refer to the speaker's knowledge, judgment, or belief about the events, affairs or actions. They bind the speaker to commit to the proposition whether it is true or not in the real world. Deontic modals encompass meanings such as permission, obligation, and ability. They also reflect the subject's ability (Palmer, 1990, p.5-8; Sweetser, 1990, p.49-51; Hofmann, 1993, p.104-11; Coates, 1995, p.55; Hoye, 1997, p.42-43).

Epistemic meanings of modal verbs are related to the speaker's subjective interpretation of the real world situation, which can be roughly divided into three categories: necessity, prediction and possibility. Epistemic necessity indicates the speaker's certainty about the proposition; it is usually represented by *must*. Epistemic prediction, realized by *will*, *would* and *shall*, often present a statement of "I predict that..." made by the speaker. The other group modal verbs of '*should', 'ought to', 'may', 'might', 'can'*, and '*could'* are used to show epistemic possibility, which indicates the different levels of the speaker's uncertainty about

the proposition (Quirk et al, 1985, p. 219-31; Jackson, 1990, p. 99-101; Tang, 1992, p. 86-87).

Deontic modal verbs are associated with real world. By using them, the speaker may lay an obligation, give permission, and show his volition and ability. Modals like *must, should*, and *ought to* belong to the deontic obligation category, while *can, could, may*, and *might* belong to deontic permission. Still another group of modal verbs like *will, would* and *shall* are used to express willingness or intention about the events (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 221). According to Tang (1992, p.104), only '*shall'* does not have epistemic meaning because the speaker tends to use *will* to represent his prediction about the future. However, Quirk et al (1985, p. 229-30) considered '*shall'* has epistemic meaning, which is rarely used in present-day English.

Almost all the modals discussed in the study can be used epistemically or deontically at the same time. Groefsema (1995, p.53) noted that "these modals can often be interpreted either epistemically or deontically".

(1) (a) She can only be 14 the way she behaves.

(b) She can come with us if she likes.

(2) (a) You must be very happy now.

(b) You must be very quiet now.

(3) (a) You may win the lottery tonight.

(b) You may sit down.

In the (a) sentences the speaker utters assumptions and assesses possibilities against the background of available information or his own knowledge. Here, the speaker makes a "judgment about the truth of the proposition" (Palmer, 1990, p. 6). Language is used in a 'speculative' function (Mitchell, 1988, p. 178) and the various modals help to express degrees of certainty, probability or doubt. This use of modals is called 'epistemic modality' (Coates,

1992, p. 55). In contrast, in the (b) sentences modals are used in a 'deontic' meaning. They deal with actions, states and events that somebody can control directly. With giving or refusing permission or imposing an obligation, the speaker seeks to exert an influence on the performance of actions.

3.3.2.3. Social and Logical Possibility

Some semantic approaches to modals reveal some consistency. It is noticed that a set of different terminologies could refer to one semantic category. Necessity and obligation belong to a semantic category, namely *social obligation*, on one hand. On the other hand, probability, possibility, and certainty belong to another semantic category, namely *logical possibility*. Palmer (1990) stated that epistemic modality refers to logical probability, whereas deontic modality refers to social actions. Similarly, Master (1996) classified modality into social obligation and logical possibility. He shows relationship between some modals and degrees of obligation and certainty. Yule (1998) argued that "There is a clear parallel between the major distinctions made in both epistemic and root modality in English. That pattern is based on what is necessary and what is possible (p. 89).

Therefore, it is more constructive to separate the patterns that express speaker attitude, i.e., root modality, from those that do not, i.e., epistemic modality. Hurford (1994) stated that *nonfactual* '*may'* or *'may not'* involve speaker attitude. He presented the eight nonfactual patterns below in one block. The patterns are also applicable to modals. They present root and epistemic modality (discussed later). Therefore, it is more constructive to separate the patterns that express speaker attitude, i.e., root modality, from those that do not, i.e., epistemic modality. Hurford's patterns are the following:

1. Nonfactual, with speaker attitude:

    a. Something might be the case, but the speaker doesn't know whether it is or not, and asks the hearer to tell him/her.

b. Something is not the case, but the speaker wishes it were, and places an obligation on the hearer to make it so.

c. Something is not the case, but the speaker wishes aloud that it were, without placing any obligation on the hearer to make it so.

d. Something may or may not be the case, and the speaker wonders aloud about the possible consequences of it being so.

2. Nonfactual, without speaker attitude:

a. Something will happen, but is not yet *factual*, because it has not yet happened.

b. Something probably happened at some time in the past, but the evidence for it is lost or not available.

c. Something is not the case, but it ought to be.

d. Something is not definitely known to be the case, but all the evidence points in that direction. (Hurford, 1994, pp. 132-133)

Whether modals are verbs, auxiliaries, or a different part of speech is still vague to many people. Consequently, authors use different names when referring to modals. However, semantically, modals seem to fall within the category of verbs. Verbs can be classified into *factual* and *nonfactual*. *Factual* or *factive verbs* "presuppose the truth of their complement clause [for example] John blamed me for telling her," whereas *nonfactual* or *non-factive verbs* do not presuppose facts, for example, "John accused me of telling her" (Saeed, 1997, p. 98).

3.3.2.4. Modals and non-modals

Huddleston & Pullum (2005) presented a similar dichotomy between modals and non-modals**.** Modals are associated with non-factual/non-asserted meanings, whereas non-modals are associated with factual/asserted meanings. The above patterns inform ES/FL learners and teachers about some situations where one can exercise root and epistemic modals.

Swan (2005, p. 334-337) developed his book like a dictionary. Word entries are arranged alphabetically along with their grammatical and functional details, among which are modals. He classified modality into two categories. First, there are modal verbs that deal with degrees of certainty. Second, there are those that deal with obligation, freedom to act, and similar ideas. The first category is sub-classified into the following:

1. *Complete certainty* (positive or negative), for example, I shall be away tomorrow; It won't rain this evening.
2. *Probability/possibility*, for example, She should/ought to be here soon.
3. *Weak probability*, for example, I might see you again – who knows?
4. *Theoretical* or *habitual possibility*, for example, How many people can get into a telephone box?
5. *Conditional certainty* or *possibility*, for example, I wouldn't do this if I didn't have to; If you stopped criticizing I might get some work done.

The second category is sub-classified into the following:

1. *Strong obligation*, for example, Need I get a visa for Hungary?
2. *Prohibition*, for example, You can't come in here.
3. *Weak obligation*: recommendation, for example, You should try to work harder.
4. *Willingness*, volunteering, resolving, insisting and offering, for example, I'll pay for the drinks; she will keep interrupting people.
5. *Permission*, for example, Can I borrow your keys?
6. *Absence of obligation*, for example, You needn't work this Saturday.
7. *Ability*, for example, She can speak six languages.

Used to is discussed in a separate section under *other meanings*. According to Swan, *used to* means habitual behavior, whereas *would* means habitual states.

3.3.2.5. Logical Probability and Social Interaction

Celce-Murcia et al. (1999) classified modals into *logical probability* and *social interaction*. Logical probability ranges between high and low certainty. Social interaction ranges between high and low possibility, in other words, some modals range between high and low modality. The modals are, starting with the highest, '*will'*, '*must'*, '*should'*, '*can'*, '*may'*, '*could'*, and '*might'*. Each modal carries two different meanings. The two meanings belong to different semantic categories.

Celce-Murcia et al. (1999) discussed the *social interaction* in some detail. It is classified into the following:

1. Making requests, for example, "Will you help me with this math problem?" (p. 144)
2. Giving advice, for example, "You must see a doctor." (p. 146)

A third category suddenly appears under a new subtitle, namely *other meanings and uses of modals and modal-like forms*. It is categorized into the following:

1. Potential realization:
    a. Ability, for example, "I can speak Indonesian."
    b. Potentiality, for example, "The car is able to go faster with this fuel."
2. Desire, for example, "Ralph would like an apple."
3. Offer/invitation, for example, "Would you like to dance?"
4. Preference, for example, "Brad would rather study languages than mathematics." (p. 147)

Unfortunately, Celce-Murcia et al. (1999) did not show the relationship between the third category and the earlier two, namely *logical probability* and *social interaction*. It may be difficult, particularly for ES/FL learners and teachers, to integrate the three categories in one comprehensible framework.

It is commonly noticed that some linguists make weak semantic judgments about some English modals. Their weak statements make readers suspicious about the reliability of their assumptions. Usually, such statements are observed whenever authors try to make a generalization about meanings of modals in context. Context is very difficult to analyze thoroughly because it is such a vast area with a wide range of factors. Some authors realize this fact. Therefore, some linguists reduce the strength of their statements to make room for other possible assumptions. For example, '*must'* is commonly cited as a controversial modal. Celce-Murcia et al. (1999) found it difficult to describe '*must'* semantically. they stated that '*must'* is not commonly used for prediction. They justified that *"must historically was a past tense verb form and is thus not well suited for prediction, or perhaps because predictions cannot be as strong as current and past inferences"* (Celce-Murcia et al., 1999, p. 143). A third reason for not using *must* to indicate prediction appears under a separate classification, namely *necessity*: "Another reason why *must* is not used for prediction *may be* that, along with phrasal *have to*, it is often used to express necessity, which according to Palmer (1990) can be internal or external in origin" (Celce-Murcia et al., 1999, p. 144).

3.3.2.6. Intrinsic and Extrinsic modality

Quirk et al. (1985) and Greenbaum and Quirk (1990) classified modals into extrinsic and intrinsic modality. They explain, "Intrinsic modality, to include "permission, obligation, and volition, involves some intrinsic human control over events" and "extrinsic modality", to include "possibility, necessity, and prediction, involves human judgment of what is or is not likely to happen" (Greenbaum et al., 19990, p. 60). Although in some cases intrinsic and extrinsic modality can be usefully separated, modality can have both properties and may overlap (Papafragou, 1998, p. 520) as shown in figure 3.1.:

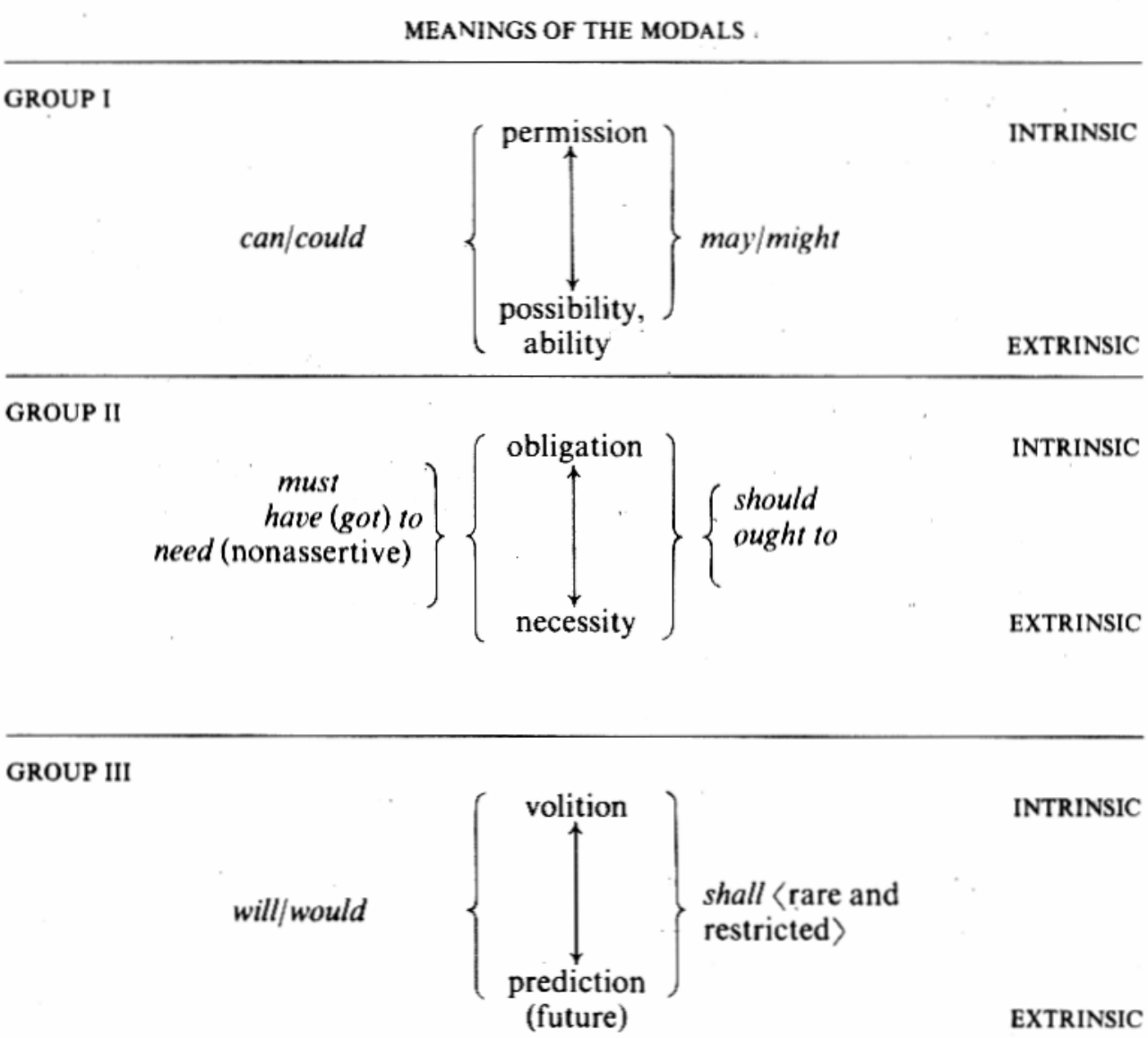

Figure 3.1 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Modality (Quirk et al., 1985)

This overlap creates additional interpretive confusion as intrinsic (root) modality (permission/obligation/volition) may be confused with extrinsic modality (possibility/necessity/prediction). For example, in the phrase 'companies must invest heavily' (Stuart, 1999, p. 30), the modal *must* represent both root and extrinsic modality, since the source of its authority is undetermined. Similarly, in the phrase 'the corporate university *will* all affect these rules' (Moore, 1997, p. 77) the modal *will* is ambiguous since we do not know if it refers to volition (intrinsic) or necessity (extrinsic). Papafragou (1998) claimed that the

ambiguity raised by this polysemy is resolved during the process of oral comprehension (p. 521). However, in written communication, the polysemy raised by root and extrinsic modality cannot be immediately resolved. This leads to an ambiguity in which modals of possibility or prediction, for example, modals of volition are confused by claims about necessity.

Depraetere et al (2006) approached modality from two angles: modality and speaker stance, i.e., mood. They construct a range of semantic modal terminologies. The terminologies range between strong necessity and weak possibility. It is also called the area of probability. In the same framework, Depraetere et al (2006) added two meanings within possibility: ability and volition. On another axis, mood is classified into epistemic and non-epistemic. Epistemic mood presents speaker judgment of the possibility or necessity that a statement is true or not. It reflects speaker objective judgment over a situation or event. Non-epistemic/root mood involves speaker subjective judgment over a situation or event. Non-epistemic mood is sub-classified into deontic and non-deontic. Deontic mood reflects speaker judgment that stems from *general circumstances*. For example, when *have to* means necessity, it could be classified as deontic mood, for example, "The fish have to be fed everyday" (Depraetere et al., 2006, p. 274). Non-deontic mood reflects the speaker's own judgment that stems from within the speaker himself/herself. For example, when *must* means obligation, it could be classified as non-deontic mood, for example, "John must go home" (Depraetere et al., 2006, p. 275). However, some linguists do not distinguish between root, deontic, and non-deontic moods. The description above thus implies that each modal verb could be epistemic or deontic depending on the speaker's/writer's opinion or attitude in a given context. Hence, precise modal interpretation requires as much background information as possible because the shorter the context, the more meanings that can be inferred.

3.4. English Modal Verbs and Scope of Negation

The form of negation in English modality system is very easy—just put a negative particle "not" after the modal verb to form the negation as mentioned in section 3.3. However, the meaning of the negative sentence is not as easy as its surface form shows. The negative sentence does not merely indicate the opposite meaning to the positive sentence—epistemically or deontically. In other words, the scope of negation may or may not affect meaning of modals. It depends on whether the negative marker *not* affects the modal itself or the main verb in a verb phrase. In the first case, modals would change meaning. In the second case, modals would maintain the same meaning of affirmative structure.

As Cook (1978, p. 7-10) put it, a sentence with modal verbs is two verb structures—the modal verb and the main verb. And, it would be a little complicated when the word "not" is put in the sentence. For the negative can negate the modal verb called modal negation or negate the main verb called main verb negation. For example (Leech, 1987, p.91):

(1) He can't be serious. (modal negation)

(2) He may not be serious. (main verb negation)

Example (1) means it is *not* possible that he is serious so it is the modal verb that is negated, while example (2) means that it is possible that he is *not* serious so it is the main verb that is negated.

The scope of negation may or may not include the meaning of the modal auxiliaries. We therefore distinguish between *auxiliary negation* and *main verb negation* [for example] You may not smoke in here … You are not allowed to smoke here [for example] They may not like the party … It is possible that they do not like the party," (Greenbaum et al.1990, p. 228).

The scope of negation affects some modals regardless of their meanings. These models are *cannot*, *can't*, *need not*, *needn't*, *dare not*, and *daren't*. *May not* also falls within the scope of negation when it means permission. Some modals fall outside the scope of negation, such

as *may not* when it means possibility, *shall not* and *shan't* regardless of their meaning, *must not*, *mustn't*, *ought not*, and *oughtn't* when they mean possibility or obligation. Greenbaum et al. (1990) further explained that *may not* could, in rare cases, fall outside the scope of negation even though it means permission, for example, "They may not go swimming [which means] they are allowed not to go swimming" (p. 230). *Cannot* is another exception to the rule. *Can* could fall outside the scope of negation even when it means possibility, for example, "I can, of course, not obey her [which means] it is possible, of course, not to obey her" (p. 230). Although Greenbaum et al. (1990) made clear statements correlating between scope of negation and meanings of modals, they also present some exceptions that work the other way around. Therefore, their assumptions would not work for all cases. When comparing the above three assumptions, it is obvious that these assumptions approach scope of negation from different angles.

Master (1996) further claimed that the scope of modal negation changes in two cases. First, it changes the meaning of modals when it presents low possibility or obligation,. Second, when it presents high possibility or obligation, negation does not affect the meaning of modals. Rather, the main lexical verb is negated. Similarly, Yule (1998) claimed that scope of negation varies between two sets of modals. The negative marker not or its contracted form *'nt* could negate either the main verb or the modal verb. On the one hand, main verb negation usually occurs with modals that mean possibility, probability, prediction, or conclusion, for example, "It won't rain. = predict (NOT rain)" (p. 109). On the other hand, it could negate the modal verbs themselves. It usually occurs with modals that mean permission, willingness, or obligation, for example, "He can't smoke here. = NOT permit (smoke here)" (p. 109).

Yule (1998) and Master (1996) approached modal negation from two differing perspectives. Yule claims that modals of low possibility or obligation change meaning when sentence structure changes from affirmative to negative. It also means that the meaning of the

modal falls within the scope of negation (Master, 1996). On the other hand, modals of high possibility or obligation do not change meaning when sentence structure changes from affirmative to negative (Yule, 1998). The above assumptions need to be discussed in more detail in order to present a more complete description about modals and scope of negation. In addition, exceptions need to be avoided as much as possible to make assumptions more reliable and valid for class instruction.

3.5. English Modal Verbs

In this section, we attempt to give a review about ten English modal verbs in regard their frequency of use and multiple meanings in English. The selection of these modal verbs is based on Celce-Murcia et al. (1999)'s classification (see section 3.3.) and adopted later in the practical part of the present study.

3.5.1. The English Modal Verb 'Can'

Most scholars like Mindt (1995), Biber et al. (1999), Römer (2004), Leech et al. (2009) considered **'can'** as one of the high-frequency modals and arrange its different meanings in order of frequency as follows: 'possibility' (very common), 'ability' (common) and 'permission' (less common). The 'permission' **can**, finally, although clearly less frequent than the other two meanings, is nevertheless a viable option especially in conversation. Despite the prescriptive rule that prefers '**May'** as the modal of permission, **'can'** is much more widely used as an auxiliary of permission than may" (Leech, 2004, p. 75).

Eg If your group accepts your explanation, you **can** keep going. (**Permission)**

Palmer (1990) employed the term 'neutral possibility' for the 'possibility' meaning of '**can'**, and although it is perhaps unwise to mix neutrality with modality, it gives an idea of the kind of possibility '**can'** elicits. For this reason, the 'possibility' **can** cannot be considered epistemic in the same way that **may** can. Instead, Palmer regarded the 'possibility' **can** as

dynamic (p. 83-85) as in ‘ Tea has been a popular drink in Great Britain for hundreds of years, but it is important to note that the word itself **can** refer to something more than just the beverage (possibility**).**

Biber et al. (1999, pp. 491-493) paraphrased the ‘ability’ ‘**can’** as ‘it is possible for me/you/him/us/them to...’ and regard it as a subcategory of the more general (dynamic) ‘possibility’ sense. They seem hesitant about this classification, however, and choose to keep the ‘ability’ sense separate in their analysis. For example, ‘Now the river flows through taps at hand’s reach and we **can** wash next to where we sleep, we **can** eat where we have cooked, and we **can** surround the whole with a protective wall and keep it clean and warm **(Ability**).

However, Leech (2004, p. 75) provided an interesting explanation for the ambiguities between ‘possibility’ can and ‘ability’ **‘can’** by pointing out that these two meanings “are especially close because ‘ability’ implies ‘possibility’ – that is, if someone has the ability to do X, then X is possible”.

Leech (2004, p. 82) distinguished **‘can’** from **‘may’** in that **‘may’** represents ‘factual possibility’ and ‘**can’** ‘theoretical possibility’. By way of illustration, he offered the following sentences and their paraphrases:

FACTUAL: The road **may** be blocked = ‘It is possible that the road is blocked’ = ‘Perhaps the road is blocked’ = ‘The road might be blocked’.

THEORETICAL: The road **can** be blocked = ‘It is possible for the road to be blocked’ = ‘It is possible to block the road’.

As clearly seen, both modal verbs appear in identical context, but the situations are subtly different. The use of ‘**may’** describes ‘a theoretically conceivable happening” (Leech, 2004, p. 82), whereas in the situation expressed by ‘**may’**, the sentence “feels more immediate, because the actual likelihood of an event’s taking place is being considered” .

From a diachronic standpoint, the status of can has remained remarkably stable while many other modals have suffered a significant decline in usage. This applies to both written and spoken registers, and in the latter there has even been a small increase (Leech et al. 2009, pp. 71-78).

3.5.2. The English Modal Verb 'May'

As a general trend, the use of **'may'** in present-day English seems to be declining sharply. Leech et al. (2009, pp.72-77) noted a significant drop in frequency in recent years. This drop is all the more steeper firstly in American English as opposed to British English and secondly in spoken as opposed to written registers. Römer (2004, pp. 186-187), who conducted her research on spoken British English, lists **'may'** as one of the low-frequency modals, surpassing only shall and ought to in the number of occurrences. Biber et al. (1999, pp. 491-492) essentially made the same point but note that there appears to be a significant discrepancy between registers: although '**may'** is admittedly rare in conversation, it is still quite common in academic prose, especially in its (epistemic) 'possibility' sense.

According to Mindt (1995, p. 103), two meanings make up the majority of cases of '**may'**: 'possibility' and 'permission' as illustrated respectively in the following examples:

Eg 1: you **may** be surprised by the amount of time people actually spend watching television.

Eg2: "A very wise choice, sir, if I **may** say so."

In terms of semantic analysis, '**may'** rarely poses serious problems. The first meaning is clearly epistemic and can be paraphrased as 'It is possible that...'. Although both '**may'** and '**can'** can sometimes be used in this context, we have already noted that there is a contrast between the (epistemic) 'possibility' '**may'** and the (dynamic) 'possibility' '**can'**, and they should not be treated as synonyms. As for the second meaning, exemplified by sentence it is just as clear as the first one with the speaker either giving permission or, as in this case, asking for permission. This kind of modality is labelled deontic.

According to Leech (2004, p. 76), "the only meaning of may which is still flourishing is the first sense of 'possibility'. He added that "there is evidence that the 'possibility' may is actually becoming more frequent in British English, and, if nothing else, it is clear that "the epistemic meaning is surviving more robustly than other meanings" (2009, p. 84). In short, **'may'** appears to be changing into a predominantly epistemic modal.

All agree, finally, that the 'permission' sense of **'may'** is much less frequent and "increasingly restricted to formal contexts where writers (or speakers) are on their best linguistic behaviour" (Leech, 2004, pp. 76-77). The more frequent 'permission' modal in present-day English is '**can'**. To a certain extent, however, '**may**' survives in writing in such formulaic expressions as If I may... (Leech, 2003, p. 234). It is also worth mentioning that 'may' has other uses called 'quasisubjunctive' or 'formulaic' uses of may (for example, May God grant you happiness), as these are becoming extremely rare in present-day English (Leech 2004, pp. 77-78; Leech et al. 2009, pp. 83-89).

3.5.3. The English Modal Verb 'Must'

'Must' is considered a middle-frequency modal, but the differences across registers are worth noting in that **'must'** is considerably less frequent in spoken than in written registers (Biber et al., 1999, Römer, 2004, Leech et al., 2009). This is particularly true of American English (Leech, 2004, p. 78). It is worth noting, however, that the use of 'obligation' **'must'** is nowadays avoided especially in spoken registers, probably because of its forcefulness. Leech et al. (2009) made the interesting claim that this maybe due to the "'democratization' trend in society" (p.88), which makes must sound too authoritarian.

All agree, however, that **'must'** can have an epistemic and a deontic meanings: (logical) necessity' and 'obligation' respectively. As in the following examples:

Eg1: Yeah, they **must** be nuts.

In this sentence, then, **must** is used to indicate "knowledge arrived at by inference or reasoning" (Leech, 2004, p. 79).

On the other hand, sentence like: What about your promise? I want to go. You **must** show me the way and, is an example of an obligation imposed by the speaker over the person mentioned. It is one of the most typical uses of the deontic category. Theoretically, it would be possible to distinguish between the more 'typical' kind of deontic must exemplified by this sentence and a more 'impersonal' or 'neutral' **'must'** for which Leech (2004, p.79) employed the term 'requirement'. In 'requirement', the obligation does not come from within, but instead from external sources. Palmer (1990, pp. 113-114) discussed it under the heading of dynamic modality. The following examples illustrate this category:

Example 1: Special precautions **must** be taken with food and water.

Example 2: People's needs **must** be taken into consideration.

3.5.4 The English Modal Verb 'Will'

Along with '**would'** and '**can'**, '**will'** belongs to the high-frequency modals (Leech et al., 2009; Leech, 2004; Römer, 2004; Biber et al., 1999) with relatively small register differences and no discernable difference when comparing American English and British English (Biber et al. 1999, p. 488). The analysis of **'will'** indicated clearly a "complex interrelationship" between its different meanings, and a great deal of ambiguity (Coates, 1983, p. 169). Biber et al. (1999) listed the two meanings 'prediction' and 'volition' as almost equally frequent with 'prediction' with only a very small margin of frequency. By contrast, most other scholars (Römer, 2004; Leech, 2004; Mindt, 1995) regarded 'prediction' as the vastly more frequent meaning of the two. However, contrarily to many other modals, Leech et al. (2009, pp. 71-76) argued that a diachronic analysis shows a small and insignificant drop in the use of will in recent years.

Although some traditional scholars still treat **'will'** merely as a marker of future (Kallela et al., 1998; Silk, Mäki & Kjisik, 2003), Palmer (1990, pp. 160-163) noted that **'will'** and **'shall'** "are formally modal verbs; they belong to the modal system not to the (morphologically marked) tense system of present and past" (Palmer, 1990, p. 160). Similarly, Leech (2004) put together the future and modal uses of **'will'**, since *"*we cannot be as certain of future happenings as we are of events in the past and present, and even the most confident prediction about the future **'must'** reflect something of the speaker's uncertainty and so be tinged with modality"(p. 56). He added that although the use of '**will'** in many cases is closer to a 'pure' or 'neutral' future than anything else in English, it is never on an equal footing with the past and present tenses and should not, therefore, be called 'future tense'. Thus, the term 'prediction' seems more convenient to covers both the idea of 'futurity' and the personal judgment that is inherent in the modal verb **'will'**.

There are many conflicting accounts of the semantic distribution of **'will'**. Meanings of '**will'** can be understood in terms of either (epistemic) 'prediction' or (dynamic) 'volition'. As in:

Eg: That means that by the age of 65 most people **will** have spent about 8 years of their lives in front of the tube (epistemic).

Eg2: Meanwhile he **will not** help me to understand how it was he came to be sleeping on the streets, which means that I am unable to show him the side of me that I wanted him to see. (dynamic)

In his treatment of **'will'**, Palmer shows different meaning related to its uses. First, the so-called 'habitual' **'will'** denotes activity that is said to be typical of the subject of the sentence as in "Beneath the trees where nobody sees, they'**ll** hide and seek as long as they please". He regards 'habitual' **'will'** as a subcategory of (dynamic) 'volition' **will** and notes that it is used to indicate the way in which objects or people *"characteristically [want to]*

behave" (Palmer, 1990: 136) which can be discerned from one another in terms of their 'strength' (Leech, 2004, pp. 85-88). Proposed labels for these are 'insistence' ('strong volition'), 'intention' ('intermediate volition') and 'willingness' ('weak volition') (Leech, 2004, pp. 87-88).

Yet, 'habitual' '**will'** can be considered as a subcategory of (epistemic) 'prediction' **'will'** (Leech , 2004; Coates, 1983) in which the speaker makes a (confident) prediction about the typical behavior of someone or something. The crucial difference between the general 'prediction' **'will'** and the 'predictability' **'will'** is that in the latter *"the speaker makes a claim about the present"* (Coates, 1983, p. 177) and thus no 'futurity' is involved.

3.5.5 The English Modal Verb 'Shall'

Little emphasis is given to the modal verb **'shall'** in our research for two main reasons. On one hand, all accounts indicate that in terms of frequency, its use has declined considerably in recent years (Leech et al., 2009; Leech, 2004; Biber et al., 1999). **'Shall'** occurs nowadays only in a few rather restricted linguistic contexts" and in virtually all of these it could be replaced by a different modal or other modal construction" (Leech, 2004, p. 88). Mindt (1995, p. 177) and Römer (2004, p. 189) put '**shall'** on top of the list of modals in interrogative contexts.

Secondly, the meanings of shall closely parallel those of **'will'**, and indeed when stylistic differences are put aside, they can in some contexts be considered interchangeable. **'Shall'** can be analyzed in the same way as **'will'** in terms of 'prediction' and 'volition'. In the former, it is considered "an alternative to will with first person subjects in more formal styles of speaking and (especially) writing" (Leech, 2004, p. 58). A sentence like" Nevertheless, he took the precaution of packing his photo album in waterproof cloth - "it being the only record of my work I **shall** be able to take, should we be compelled to take to the floe.", is an example of 'prediction' shall.

3.5.6 The English Modal Verb 'Could'

'Could' is regarded as one of the middle-frequency modals in most accounts (Leech et al., 2009; Biber et al., 1999; Mindt, 1995). Of the three uses of **'Could'**, it is the 'permission' sense that is clearly the most marginal (Biber et al., 1999; Mindt, 1995). The other two are sometimes considered equally frequent (Leech et al., 2009) or, as is more often the case, the 'possibility' sense gains the upper hand (Biber et al., 1999; Mindt, 1995). This applies especially to the spoken registers (Biber et al., 1999).

'Could' can be analyzed in the same was as can in terms of '(theoretical) possibility', 'ability' and 'permission' as follows:

Example 1: The park **could** be twice as large as Hardangervidda in Norway, currently the biggest national park in Europe (Possibility).

Example 2: She was at her first race before she **could** crawl (ability could).

Example 3: I **could** never play with my friends or basically do anything that the other neighborhood kids my age did on Saturdays (permission could).

'Could' has similar meanings of **'can'**: dynamic for 'possibility' and 'ability' and deontic for 'permission'. As both Leech (2004, p. 127) and Palmer (1990, pp. 185-187) pointed out, however, **'could'** is potentially also used to mark epistemic, i.e. 'factual possibility' in the same way that **'may'** and '**might'** are (Example 1).

3.5.7. The English Modal 'Might'

'Might' is usually listed among the middle-to-low frequency modals (Leech et al. 2009; Leech, 2004; Römer, 2004; Biber et al. 1999). Its use, although not that frequent to begin with, has nevertheless remained remarkably consistent, and it is nowadays considered more frequent than its primary modal counterpart may (Leech et al., 2009, pp. 71-76). **'Might'** is a slightly special case in that it is not as flexible as other secondary modals and, most notably, is not used as the past tense of '**may'** to quite the same extent as, for example,

could is. As a general trend, **'might'** is used mainly as a (hypothetical) 'possibility' modal in present-day English (Biber et al., 1999, p. 492), and the past time uses of **'might'** are rare or even non-existent.

The two different meanings ('permission' and 'possibility'), however, are not on an equal footing with one another. Leech (2004) argued that the 'past time permission' **'might'** *"is now rare and old fashioned, chiefly BrE"* (p. 94) and that the 'hypothetical permission' might also "rarely occur[s]" (p. 126) but that it is a possible alternative in very polite requests. However, other scholars have reported similar trends (Biber et al., 1999; Römer, 2004; Mindt, 1995). Instead, it is the 'possibility' sense of **might** that is thriving, although Leech (2004) noted that the 'past time possibility' is a "virtually unused" (p. 98) meaning of **might**. We are left, then, with the hypothetical present time meaning of **'might'** to account for nearly all of its present-day uses.

Sentences (1) and (2) are examples of 'possibility' **might**:

(1) While this figure **might** seem encouraging, it's somewhat lower than the rest of Europe.

(2) Amid a water shortage, a plague of flying ants, and frightening rumours that the beer supply **might** actually run dry, Britain has once again proved that it is just as ill-equipped for an August heat wave as it is for any other kind of extreme weather.

The above examples Sentences (1) and (2) are examples of 'factual possibility', which one might expect given that might is the past tense of **'may'**.

3.5.8. The English Modal Verb 'Would'

Most studies (Coates,1983; Römer, 2004) report much higher frequencies for 'prediction' would than for 'volition' **would**. Biber et al. (1999) are an exception: for written registers, they report roughly similar frequencies for both meanings. Interestingly, they have not resorted to the 'ambiguous' category at all for would, which is surprising considering the fuzziness of its different meanings. **'Would'**, historically the past tense of '**will'**, has moved

well beyond its past time limitations. It is semantically one of the most complex modals because of its evolution in many different directions. It is nowadays considered one of the most common modals in present-day English (Leech et al., 2009; Römer, 2004; Biber et al., 1999; Mindt, 1995), with many studies putting it at the top of the list. It is especially common in spoken registers, where its frequency has had a significant boost in recent years, while many other modals are on the decline (Leech et al., 2009; Römer, 2004).

It can be understood, then, in terms of epistemic 'prediction' and dynamic 'volition', with the addition that these meanings are either 'past time' or 'hypothetical'. The below sentences (1) and (2) are examples of '**could** and **'would** respectively.

Example 1: She was convinced there was a place out there somewhere where she **could** be completely happy. She **would** find it. Here, would expresses prediction', i.e., the past time equivalent of 'prediction' will. In the words of Leech (2004, p. 111), it *"shows the backshift of future will to a 'reported past future' would"*.

Example 2 **Would** you consider converting to a different religion in order to be able to marry the person you love? is the hypothetical form of 'volition'. According to Coates (1983, p. 211), it is characterized by an animate subject and a paraphrase with 'willing to' (i.e. Would you be willing to…).

As becomes clear from these two examples alone, 'volition' **would** is not an easy one to spot, and the distinction between the two, as was the case with **will**, is extremely ambiguous Moreover, would serves as the past tense form of will, it will be categorized under 'prediction' as we the so-called 'habitual' or 'predictability' as discussed earlier. There is, however, an additional complication in that would, as we have already seen, is used as a general or 'pure' hypothetical marker denoting "unreal conditions when the corresponding real condition would have simple present tense" (Coates, 1983, pp. 67-213). From a semantic

viewpoint, then, **would** as the general marker of hypothetical meaning is a slightly problematic issue, and linguists have been unsure what to make of it.

3.5.9. The English Modal Verb 'Should'

'Should' is considered one of the middle-frequency modals by most scholars (Leech, 2004; Römer, 2004; Biber et al., 1999) with higher frequencies in conversation than in written registers (Biber et al. 1999, p. 488). Although should is still faring relatively well, it is nevertheless showing a slight decrease in use. Leech et al. (2009, p. 86) noted that should *"mirrors ... the trend towards monosemy found in the analysis of may, except that here deontic rather than epistemic meaning is in the ascendant"*. It is the 'weak obligation/advice' sense of should, then, that has gained the advantage: this is corroborated by other studies as well (Biber et al., 1999).

Along with **'might',** '**should'**, too, has nowadays little connection with its so-called present time counterpart 'shall'. Leech et al. (2009, 80) noted that "there is virtually no case nowadays for arguing that should is the past tense of shall". Instead, it is best understood as a weaker equivalent of **'must'** "except that [should] expresses not confidence, but rather lack of full confidence, in the fulfillment of the happening described by the main verb" (Leech, 2004, p. 100). The following sentences identify describe **'must'** and **'should'** in their 'obligation' sense:

Eg 1:"What about your promise? I want to go. You **must** show me the way."

Eg 2: You **should** never bribe a horse to get a response.

We can see from these examples, then, that "the tone of must tolerates little argument" (Leech, 2004, pp. 100-101), whereas the use of should weakens the 'obligation' to something like 'desirability' or 'advice'. Likewise, **'should'** is used as a weaker equivalent of 'logical necessity' '**must'** to indicate "that the speaker has doubts about the soundness of his/her

conclusion" (Leech, 2004, p. 101). Sentence (3) and (4) are examples of **'must'** and **'should'** in their 'logical necessity' sense.

Eg 3: Talking to you two is like talking to a pair of overgrown schoolboys. '**Must'** be all that protein we eat.

Eg4: According to the map, there **should** be a bridge here but it has collapsed.

It goes without saying that, as with must, 'weak obligation' or 'advice' is considered deontic and 'logical necessity' epistemic.

3.5.10. The English Modal Verb 'Ought to'

Like Depraetere et al. (2006), Celce-Murcia et al. (1999) explained the controversy over **'ought to'**. They argued:

> The form ought to is intermediate between a true modal (it doesn't inflect) and a phrasal form (it takes to); one can classify it either way. Historically, ought is a past form of owe; in current usage ought may lose its to in negative sentences and look more like a true modal, but this does not work for all speakers of North American English: You oughtn't (to) do that. We ought not (to) stay longer (p. 159).

They realized that '**ought to'** is different from other modals. While Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman classified '**ought to'** within the first category, Depraetere et al. (1999) classified it within the second category.

Conclusion

Theoretical approaches to modals are basically investigated in two areas: on the one hand, modal categories and terminologies, and meanings of modals on the other. Both areas showed some salient discrepancies. Discrepancies are observed in categorizing, naming, and interpreting modals. Indeed, modals are pedagogically controversial. Many linguists have not yet agreed upon a particular classification, nor have they set a common semantic approach to modals. Modals are difficult to grasp because as modal and modality are rarely explained to

an ES/EFL student, the form of modals does not follow the conventional rules of grammar, and there are so many meanings of modals that students often get confused about which modal to use. Many of them are not aware of the subtle shades of meaning that are found within the meaning of a modal and that are found within the meaning of a modal and that is due to the most common way to teach modals in a list.

Introduction

In research, it is important to employ appropriate methodology in order to answer the questions that the researcher wants to answer. Crotty (2003, p.3) explained that the research methodology is "the strategy, plan of action, process or design lying behind the choice and use of particular methods and linking the choice and use of the methods to the desired outcomes". Methods are "the techniques or procedures used to gather and collect data related to some research questions or hypotheses" (Crotty, 2003, p.3). In other words, the research questions determine what methods to be adopted. The aim, thus, is to describe, evaluate and justify the use of particular methods. The methodology of the current study is of an exploratory nature through which we thoroughly examine the phenomenon under investigation. This provides insights into the comprehension and production of English modals as encountered by Algerian students.

When conducting this research, we aim to answer six research questions, and check two hypotheses: Algerian university learners would fail to use the modal verbs if they were engaged to express modality in English; and the students' lack of knowledge of the semantic and pragmatic use of English modal verbs would be the reason behind that. Two major research instruments are used: a students' questionnaire and a test. This mixed research method is used to refer to any research study that integrates one or more qualitative and quantitative techniques for data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2003). This chapter was devoted to the description and analysis of the questionnaire, whereas the description and analysis of the test are left to Chapter Five.

4.1. Population and the Sample

The selection of an appropriate sampling strategy is essential to all qualitative researchers (Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K.., 2007; Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L., 2007). The sampling strategy used in the current study is of two types: probability and

non-probability (Cohen et al., 2007). Probability sampling is based on the principle of randomization where every entity gets a fair chance to be part of the sample; non-probability sampling relies on the subjective judgment of the researcher and on the assumption that the characteristics are evenly distributed within the population, which makes the sampler believe that any sample so selected would represent the whole. In this regard, Saumure, K., & Given, L. M. (2008) highlighted that convenience sampling is used when the participants are accessible and consequently relatively easy for us to exploit. Thus, the non-probability sampling strategy is used for convenience.

In order to investigate our topic, we have taken a sample of 116 students from the whole population of 360 second year Master students of English of Applied Languages at the University of "Frères Mentouri", Constantine 1, during the academic year 2016-2017. These students were chosen for two reasons. First, they have been studying English from the secondary school to university for at least 10 years, and second, they are available at the time when the study was undertaken. Thus, these students would provide a useful picture of the development of our students' L2 competence and their acquisition of English modal verbs.

4.2. The Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire is one of the most widely used and useful instruments for collecting data in L2 research, being easy to construct, extremely versatile and uniquely capable of gathering large information quickly in a processable form (Dornyei, 2003; Gillham, 2007). The use of the students' questionnaire is of great importance for this research in order to gather information about the participants concerning their knowledge and attitudes about the subject under investigation. The main objective of the students' questionnaire is to obtain a general understanding of Algerian learners of English's perception of the difficulty in learning English modals. We designed and administered a questionnaire because it helps to gather a

large amount of information within a short period of time and provides results that are easily quantified and analyzed.

4.2.1 Description of the Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire consists of four sections including 16 items (see Appendix I). Section One: The Students' Language Background (from Q1 to Q3) comprises 3 questions and asks the participants about whether they have ever taken any English course out of the classroom (Q1), and whether they have additional opportunities to be exposed to English or to use English out of the English classes (Q2) and if "yes" to specify the reasons why (Q 3). Section Two: The Students' Opinion about their Use of English (from Q4to Q 9) comprises 6 questions and seeks to investigate the students' opinion concerning their practice of English. It starts to investigate their attitudes to English language (Q4) and (Q5). Then, it helps to discover whether the students have experienced any difficulties when using English outside the classroom (Q6), (Q7), (Q8), and (Q9). Section Three: The Students' Opinion about their Use of English Modal Verbs (from Q 10 to Q 15) includes 6 questions identifying the students' attitudes toward English grammar in general and English modals in particular. First, it aims to identify the students' perceptions of the usefulness as well as the difficulty to learn English grammar (Q10) and (Q 11) respectively. Then, it asks about the students' level in grammar (Q 12). It also asks the students to explain their assessment of the difficulty of the selected grammar feature; i.e., English modal verbs through (Q 13), (Q14) and (Q15) explores possible reasons for or difficulty of learning English modals from Algerian learners' perspectives. Finally, Section Four: Further Suggestions (Q 16) required the students to add any comment they feel important to mention.

4.2.2. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results of the Students' Questionnaire

116 questionnaires are administered to our sample to obtain information on areas the test could not properly cover. On average, the students took from 20 minutes to 40 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The students' responses were analyzed and interpreted in order to obtain information on their attitudinal disposition towards English grammar and English modal verbs.

Section One: The Students' Language Background

1. Have you ever taken any English course out of the classroom?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Option	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Yes	45	38.80
No	71	61.20
Total	116	100

Table 4.1.: The Students' Opportunity to Study English outside the Classroom

The aim of this question is to find out whether our students have got the same background knowledge of English language. The majority of our students (61.20%) said that they have not taken any course out of classroom, maybe in private schools or with private teachers. This implies that the students have the same education and similar opportunity of learning English. This again indicates that our sample is homogeneous.

2. Do you have additional chances to be exposed to English or to use English out of the classroom?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Option	N	%
Yes	90	77.59
No	26	22.41
Total	116	100

Table 4.2.: The Students' Exposure to English outside the Classroom

The majority of the students (77.59 %) reported that they have additional chances to be exposed to English or to use English out of the classroom. This implies that our students have many opportunities available for them to practise English outside the classroom, and they consequently benefit from them.

3. If "Yes", is it because: (you may choose more than one answer)

a. You have travelled to an English speaking country ☐

b. You communicate online in English (in chat rooms or with an email to your contacts) ☐

c. You often talk or text in English ☐

d. You listen to English records/CD ROMs ☐

e. You read books, reviews, newspapers, or magazines in English ☐

f. You watch English TV programs and films ☐

g. Other: Please, specify:……...……

Option	N	%
A	0	0
b	0	0
c	0	0
d	0	0
e	0	0
f	0	0
g	0	0
cdf	14	15.56
acdf	11	12.22
bcdf	25	27.78
cdef	12	13.33
bcdef	18	20.00
abcdef	10	11.11
Total	90	100

Table 4.3.: The Students' Use of English outside the Classroom

The students' answers to question 3 helped to gain information about the students' practice of English outside classroom. As indicated in Table 4.3., our students take advantage of almost all available resources to use the English language. They communicate online in English in chat rooms or with an email to your contacts. They often talk or text in English, and listen to English records/CD ROMs. They read books, reviews, newspapers, or magazines in English and they watch English TV programs and films. This was expected to be found, since our students had been taught to be specialized in English.

Section Two: The Students' Opinion about their Use of English

4. Do you like English?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Option	N	%
Yes	114	98.28
No	02	01.72
Total	116	100

Table 4.4.: The Students' Attitude to English

Almost all the students (98.28%) claimed that they like English, which reflects that our sample hold a positive attitude towards English. In learning L2 or FL, positive attitudes towards it is a key factor of success, and these results show that our students are highly motivated to study English.

5. Please, justify your answer.

The students' attitudes to English are important in SLA process. Almost all students (98.28%) hold positive attitudes to English language. and show high motivation to study English. A great number of the students (68,42%) expressed their love for the English language and the English culture. They wrote the following answers:

- Learning English is enjoyable. I like speaking it, listening to music and watch American movies.
- I feel happy when I understand speakers of English.
- I enjoyed learning English. I find myself in a comfortable way while speaking it.

- English is used all over the world. It is prestigious and Algerian people don’t speak English.
- Since I was a kid. I enjoyed watching cartoons in English and even at school I always preferred English than French.
- I was a fan of English songs. So when I studied English, it was easy to me to understand them and liked English more.
- I grew up watching TV shows and movies in English and I become fonder of it as I learn more over the years.
- Surely I like English. I am a student of English and this is my dream.
- I liked English because of an old song I learnt in middle school.
- English is my love. It opens me the door to explore the world in order to know new friends with different personalities and cultures.
- It is a prestigious language. I want to be a fluent speaker and a teacher of English.
- The language of my favorite place London.
- I liked English since I was young, I liked it from watching English TV programs, and I think it makes special to speak such beautiful language.
- Simply, I love it.
- It is beautiful and easy language.
- I think I liked it because it is easy to learn and it has something sweet in its learning.
- I like English, because I find that it is a very flexible language that allows change and new words easily and it can be gender-neutral.
- It is a foreign language and I like to discover the foreign cultures.
- It is a more flexible language than other language.
- I love foreign languages.
- English is the language of nowadays world

- It is the language of the whole world. It is a fancy and classy language
- I do like this language, because I prefer to talk it and also I communicate with foreign people using English language.
- I like English because I grew up in a place where a lot of Americans work (the South of Algeria).
- I can express myself in English more than my mother tongue language.
- I like English because I find myself invested in and because it is my childhood.
- When I was young , I decided to study English.
- I like English because from my childhood I was exposed to this language from watching TV programs and films.
- I am fond of English since childhood, because my elder sisters used to talk with me English.
- I am fond of English since childhood, because my elder sisters used to talk with me English.
- I found pleasure when I use it.
- I like English because I do like the way its words are pronounced.
- It was my dream to study English from my childhood and I want to be a good teacher of English.

31.58 % of the students who have a positive attitude to English referred to its importance as an essential mean to provide opportunities to get a job and as wide spreading language in nowadays world. They gave the following answers:

- English is the language that is spoken mostly all over the world.
- English is an international language. I have to learn it.
- It is the language of power.
- I love it because it is the language of science and technology and communication.

- English is everywhere in all the disciplines: economy, business and politics English is the language that gives opportunities to communicate with people all over the world.
- I like English because I feel enjoyed when learning it. Also due to its importance.
- It is necessary to express myself wherever I am.
- It is the most popular language in the world.
- Nowadays everything is in English.
- It is the L1 in the world and also the language of the new generation.
- The language of the world. I can use it everywhere with any person in the world.
- It is the language of science and by using it. I can speak with other people from all over the world.
- It is an easy and popular language and it is the language of science.
- It is so easy to study English and communicate with it.
- I like English because it creates opportunities for me to find a job.
- I like English because it is a worldwide language, and you can use it anywhere in the world.
- It is an international language. you need it when travelling also because it is the language of the new generation.
- I like English because it is an easy language that may open doors to people.
- It is an international language and mastering it in a very important thing. It allows you to communicate with people from all over the world.
- It is the L1 in the world. We could use it in my country.
- English is the L1 in the world. I need it to develop the new science and modern technology.
- I want to work as a tourist guide.

- It is an international language and also you can express yourself freely through the English language.
- I like English because it is the language of the world and I enjoy when I study speak English.
- I chose to study, because it has an easy grammar, and because it gains prestigious place in the world.

Out of 116 students, the two students (01.72%) who answered "No" have expressed their dislike of English. They gave the following statements:

- I didn't like t because I have many difficulties in speaking and writing it.
- I didn't like it and my dream was to become a doctor. I'm studying it just to work.

6. Do you think that you can run a conversation with a native speaker?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Option	N	%
Yes	72	62.07
No	44	37.93
Total	116	100

Table 4.5.: The Students' Ability to Run a Conversation with a Native Speaker

As clearly indicated in Table 4.5., the majority of the students (62.07 %) claimed that they can hold a conversation with a native speaker. Through undertaking conversations with native speakers either orally or through writing, these students have the ability to practise the English language. 44 students (37.93%) said 'no'. The latter is still a considerable number that

needs to be investigated to find out the reasons behind that. This can be discovered through the analysis of the following question's results.

7. If "No", is it because of: (you may choose more than one answer)

a. Linguistic problems ☐

b. Lack of cultural knowledge ☐

c. Psychological factors like self-confidence ☐

d. Other: Please, specify ……

Option	N	%
a	05	11.37
b	05	11.37
c	10	22.72
ab	05	11.37
ac	02	04.54
bc	13	29.54
abc	04	09.09
Total	44	100

Table 4.6.: Reasons behind Students' Difficulties to Run a Conversation with a Native Speaker

According the results shown in Table 4.6., many students (29.54 %) related their difficulties to handle a conversation with native speakers of English mostly to the lack of cultural knowledge and the psychological factors like self-confidence. The first factor was confirmed by 11,36% of the students, while the second factor was confirmed by other students (22.72 %). This demonstrates that our students were aware of the importance of

English culture in communicating with a speaker of English. Besides, ES/FL learners' psychology is important when communicating in English appropriately with native speakers.

8. Have you ever experienced a case of misunderstanding when using English?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Options	**N**	**%**
Yes	71	61.20
No	45	38.80
Total	116	100

Table 4.7.: The Students' Difficulties when Using English

More than the half of the students (61.20%) said that they have experienced cases of misunderstanding when they used English. However, 45 students (38.80 %) claimed that they did not. This justifies the importance of identifying what causes such difficulties in the use of English in regard English modal verbs.

9. If "Yes", how did you find your listener or reader?

Among the 71 students who answered "Yes" to the previous question, 55 of them provided an answer. They claimed that they have serious problems in English that may cause misunderstanding when they use the English language. They said that they found their listeners and readers very often confused and in many cases they found them both confused and harmed. They wrote the following answers:

- When I chat with a foreigner, he/she often misunderstands me.

- He is lost.
- He asks me always to clarify.
- He tried to understand me and all the time he asked me to give him an explanation.
- Sometimes, I found him laughing.
- Sometimes, when I write to a foreigner, I feel he was hurt. What I said was wrong.
- There are many times when an English speaker told me he cannot understand me and asked me to repeat.
- It happened to me that English speakers feel embarrassed because they do not understand me.
- I want to visit London, but I fear to say something that may create problem to me, if they misunderstand me.
- It is sometimes difficult to talk with an American friend. He often tells me what?
- English speakers find difficulty to understand me when I write to them in English.
- They feel confused.
- He is sometimes misled because of my wrong pronunciation.

Section Three: The Students' Opinion about their Use of English Modal Verbs

10. English Grammar is important in order to learn English.

Yes ☐

No ☐

Option	N	%
Yes	113	97.41
No	03	02.59
Total	116	100

Table 4.8: The Students' Attitude to Grammar Learning

As illustrated in Table 4.8., 113 students (97. 41%) agreed that English grammar is important in order to learn English. This shows that the students have no doubt towards the importance of grammar in the mastering of English.

11. English grammar is difficult.

Yes ☐

No ☐

Option	N	%
Yes	55	47.41
No	61	52.59
Total	116	100

Table 4.9.: The Students' Opinion Concerning the Difficulty of Grammar

The results in Table 4.9. indicate that there is a disagreement among students concerning the difficulty of English grammar. 61 students (52. 59%) found it not difficult and hold a positive attitude towards English grammar, and this again is important in learning it. 55 students (47.41%) found it difficult. The latter is still a considerable percentage that should not be neglected.

12. The score you used to get in grammar examination is:

a. Below the average ☐

b. Average ☐

c. More than the average ☐

Scores	N	%
a	17	14.65
b	96	82.76
c	03	02.59
Total	116	100

Table 4.10.: The Students' Scores in Grammar

The results shown in Table 4.10. indicate that 96 students (82.76%) were used to get the average in English grammar examination. Only 03 students (02.59%) were used to obtain below the average, while 17 students (14.65 %) were used to get more than the average. This implies that the majority of our sample has a good level in English grammar and thus confirming the results of the previous question.

13. Do you think that English Modal verbs are difficult to use?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Option	N	%
Yes	46	39.66
No	70	60.34
Total	116	100

Table 4.11.: The Students' Attitude Concerning the Difficulty in Using English Modal Verbs

The results in Table 4.11. show that most of the students (60.34%) believe the contrary. Our students did not consider modal verbs as a complicated aspect of English grammar confirming the results of question 11, where students did not see grammar of English difficult. The following question is intended to identify aspects of difficulty related to their use

14. If "Yes", is it because of the: (You may choose more than one answer)

a. Present/past tenses ☐

b. Affirmative, negative, and interrogative structures ☐

c. Meanings ☐

d. All of them ☐

Option	N	%
A	7	15.22
B	0	0
C	24	52.17
D	5	10.87
ab	5	10.87
ac	5	10.87
Total	46	100

Table 4.12.: Factors Underlying the Difficulty of English Modals' Use

As shown in table 4.12., among the 46 students who considered modal verbs difficult to use, 24 of them (52.17 %) claimed that the semantic features of modal verbs are the major factor underlying this difficulty. This implies that ES/FL students should be exposed to the different meanings of modal verbs to avoid any confusion that may occur when expressing modality.

15. You misuse English modal verbs because of:

a. The difficulty inherent in modal verbs themselves ☐

b. Lack of practice ☐

c. Lack of knowledge about the rules of usage ☐

d. The influence of the mother tongue ☐

e. All of them ☐

Option	N	%
a	04	08.70
b	02	04.35
c	05	10.87
d	14	30.43
e	02	04.35
ab	01	02.17
ad	02	04.35
ac	04	08.70
bd	01	02.17
cd	07	17.39
abc	01	02.17
acd	01	02.17
bcd	01	02.17
Total	46	100

Table 4.13.: The Sources of the Students' Modal Verbs' Misuse

As summarized in Table 4.13. the results indicate that 14 students (30.43%) emphasized that mother tongue as a the sole source of students' misuse of English modal verb. Besides, 17.39% of the students attributed this difficulty not only to the mother tongue, but also to the difficulty inherent in the modals themselves. It is important to add that all the selected reasons have been mentioned by the students and all of them altogether are considered as the sources of difficulty in the use of modal verbs.

Section Three: Further suggestions

16. Please, add any comment or suggestion

The students' comments include three main points, concerning the difficulty of using the English modals verbs, the importance of practising and including them in grammar curriculum.

First, 33 students referred to the problems they found when using the English modal verbs with reference to their meanings and sometimes to their formal features. They wrote the following comments:

- The difficulties that I have in using modal verbs are that they have near meanings to each other. So, we confuse which one to use. I think that teachers play an important role to make us understand them.
- I face difficulties when we use modal verbs because of the little use of these modals. Sometimes they have the same meaning and to make those modals easy you should use them in simple sentences.
- Sometimes, it is difficult to differentiate between the different functions of English modals. Teacher must provide enough practice of English modals.
- I have difficulty in how to use modals in reported speech and how to use the appropriate modal in order to express request and orders.

- I suffer from choosing the appropriate modal especially when I have to use them if I write an essay.
- Using modals is very difficult. I found difficulty to find the appropriate modal in context.
- I feel confused between some modals. They seem to me the same and I feel confused when choosing the appropriate one in a specific context.
- I am always confused when using between could and would in formal and polite situations.
- It is sometimes very difficult to use them. We lack practice.
- Using English modals seem to me difficult. I don't know what modal to use and in which tense.
- I find always difficulties with English modals, I don't know why. I am always confused them in their meaning and their tense when using them.
- In my opinion, the difficulty of modal verbs is due to the influence of mother tongue. I suggest that teachers make a comparison between modality in our mother tongue and English.
- I think that the issue with modal verbs is mostly cultural. Using 'can', 'will' and 'may' is fairly easy, but they become problematic in polite requests mostly as students are not very familiar with the way British and American natives use them. Also, most people watch American TV shows and they tend to be less formal. 'Could' and 'would' might be difficult to use.

Second, many students (55) emphasized the importance of context to understand and produce the appropriate modal verb. They emphasized the need of practicing them in real life situations:

- I think that the only way to teach modal is to get students use them in their speaking, and put them in real life situation so that they can distinguish between those which are close in meaning.
- Teaching English modals in context will give the learners clear situation to be understood.
- English modals need more practice and the use of authentic texts.
- Using modals appropriately needs more practice.
- Pragmatic competence is needed as well as knowledge of English collocation and idiomatic expressions when using modals.
- When you did not practise in English language, you cannot develop your skills. It is my case.
- In order to learn a language, you need to practise it in speaking and writing.
- English modals are difficult. I find difficulties to put the right modals in a particular situation. In some cases, I don't know which modal I put because they are similar in meaning.
- English modals are very difficult but if we practice them more frequently on one hand and allot more time to grammar session we can easily use them in our speech.

Third, 26 students expressed the need to give more importance to grammar and modal verbs in English sessions. The students' comments and suggestions are provided below:

- In my opinion, grammar courses should be taught along the learning process since it is vital in learning English.
- I guess we fail to use modals because we do not practice them in class.
- I have not enough practice in grammar in general this is why I have problem in modals
- In teaching English modals, there should be more practice, and teachers should remind their students of their uses every time.

- I would suggest providing more practice for modals and giving much importance to modals since they are a part of a foreign language.
- Modals should be taught inductively, because the way I have been taught was just exercises and it is not very useful. The most important thing when it comes to using them is their meanings.
- Through Reading and writing, I become gradually able to use modals unconsciously. It is better to provide students with texts that include modals. For me, reading and writing are key to develop students' ability to use modals appropriately.
- Teachers should find new techniques to teach English modals to clarify their use.
- I think that English modals will be easily learned if we don't just learn its rules of usage, but use them in conversations. Teachers should use audio media to teach them.
- Teachers should provide more practice of English modals in various contexts.
- I don't use English modals when speaking or writing in English. Even my teachers don't do it.
- Teachers should provide various activities to teach English modals and advise their students to use them in their daily life communication.
- I think we must learn modal verbs or grammar in general by using other techniques maybe games are useful more than lessons.
- I think that it would be preferable to teach more grammar.
- Teachers of grammar must deal a little more with teaching modals , because a lot of students have a lack of knowledge of it.
- I think as a student of English language that minister of education should change the programs. First, the focus on grammar should be from the Middle schools. Second, the teachers' methods should be more different and bases on applying the rules not on theoretical way. Finally, the time allocated to teaching grammar should be more.

- Students should practice them frequently and teachers should find simple methods to teach them.
- Concerning teaching English modal verbs, I think that the way we taught is a good one with Pr. Farida ABDERRAHIM. It was the best way of teaching.
- It is interesting topic; but sincerely I think that questionnaires couldn't provide enough information concerning the difficulties we face in using the modal verbs.
- Much time should be devoted to grammar and especially the use of modals and prepositions

Finally, two students wrote remarkable comments concerning the importance of undertaking the present research. The first student wrote *"Thank you for choosing this topic to investigate. This is because most of English students find it difficult to deal with modal verbs*". However, the second student added the following statement: "It is interesting topic; but sincerely I think that questionnaires couldn't provide enough information concerning the difficulties we face in using the modal verbs".

4.2.3. Overall Analysis of the Results of the Students' Questionnaire

Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages were employed to measure second year Master students' perceptions of the difficulties they face in the use of the modal verbs. All students answered all the questions of the questionnaire. They provided clearly their attitudes towards their knowledge of English language, and their opinions towards the importance and difficulty towards grammar learning on the one hand and the use of modal verbs on the other hand. Important findings were inferred from examining the students' responses to the questionnaire.

A clear picture about the students' language knowledge was presented. All the students had got the same education and similar opportunity of learning English. 61.20% said

that they had not ever taken any English courses out of the classroom. 77.59% of the students asserted that many opportunities were available for them to be exposed to English and they consequently benefited from them. Concerning their attitudes towards English, almost all the students (98.28%) claimed that they like English; only 2 students (01.72%) showed negative attitudes to it. In SLA, positive attitudes towards learning a language are a key factor of success. This implies that our sample is highly motivated to study English. Although 62.07 % of students claimed that they can hold easily a conversation with a native speaker, and 44 students (37.93%) stated they cannot, the latter is still a considerable number that needs to be investigated to find out the reasons behind that. 29.54 % of the students related their difficulties to handle a conversation with native speakers of English mostly to the lack of cultural knowledge. 22.73 % of them added to that the psychological factors like self-confidence as another major hindrance facing them.

Although the majority of the students admitted that they can run easily a conversation with a native speaker of English, we noticed a contradiction in their responses when they were asked to express what was their listener or reader's reaction to their English. All students answered Q8 and the great number (61.20%) admitted that they have experienced cases of misunderstanding when they used English. Many of them (55 students) claimed that they found them confused and very often harmed or both confused and harmed. This implies that indeed most of the students experience difficulties when using English in communicating with native speakers.

In regard the usefulness of learning grammar, 97.41% of the students agreed with no doubt that it is important, and useful to study grammar in order to learn English. However, there is a disagreement among the students concerning the difficulty of English grammar. 47.41 % of the students found it difficult, while 52.59 of the students found it not difficult. This can be explained by the fact that they have an average level in grammar, since almost all

of them 82.76 % said that they were used to get between 10 and 15 out of 20 in grammar examination. With reference to modal verbs, the results showed that most of the students (60, 34%) found them not difficult to use, while 39.66% of the students said the contrary. 52.17% of them claimed that the various meanings of modal verb were the major elements underlying this difficulty. 15.52 % of the students attributed the modal verbs' difficulty to the present and past tenses, but not to their affirmative, negative, and interrogative forms. Finally, the analysis of the students' comments and suggestions in the last section of the questionnaire further revealed that more than of the half of the students (55) emphasized 'practice' in order to learn the English modal verbs

Conclusion

The analysis of the results of the students' questionnaire reflects some of the most common problems and difficulties the students struggle with when using the modal verbs. On the one hand, the semantic complexity of modal verbs and the multiplicity of meanings that a single modal verb can express, and on the other hand, the lack of an equivalent modal verbs system in the students' mother tongue render this grammatical category a challenge for L2 learners. The findings of the questionnaire emphasize also the importance that should be given to context and practice to teaching the English modal verbs. Further findings conclude that our students were not aware of their difficulties. The results therefore justified our concern to study the use of modal Verbs in SLA context.

Introduction

After completing the questionnaire, the same students of Second year Master were asked to respond to a test. Its aim is to collect data for the purpose of answering the research questions and test the two hypotheses. It attempts to investigate whether Algerian university students of English face difficulties in the comprehension and the production of English modal verbs in different social contexts. The study also aims to find out the major reasons behind the students' misuse of English modal verbs and the strategies they use to compensate these deficiencies in order to express modality in English. The main objective is to provide suggestions and recommendations that may enhance better the teaching and learning of English modal verbs. Data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively for the purpose to assess the research hypotheses: Algerian university learners would fail to use the modal verbs if they were engaged to express modality in English; and the students' lack of knowledge of the semantic and pragmatic use of English modal verbs would be the reason behind that.

5.1. Description of the Test

The test was administered to 116 second year master students of English at "Frères Mentouri" University, Constantine 1. The purpose is to assess the students' knowledge of the English Modal Verbs. The test includes four parts: Part One: Writing Activity, Part Two: Multiple Choice Activity, Part Three: Fill in the Blanks Activity and Part Four: a Cloze Procedure Activity. We explained the purpose and instructions to the students and asked them to write down their responses. We told them also that these activities are about the English modal verbs except for the writing activity where they were given no direction to use them. Furthermore, the students were asked not to write their names and they were told not to discuss it with others. Each activity was administered during a class session and they were free to spend as long as they wished to answer it.

In Part One: Writing Activity, the students were provided with nine situations that require the use of nine English modals. In each question, there is a description of the situation given between brackets in order to help students find the appropriate modal verb. The students were asked to write down their responses to the situations in one sentence. The reason behind that was to allow us focus on the use of modal verbs rather on the students 'difficulties in writing. Our major aim was to assess the frequency of the students' use of modal verbs while expressing themselves in English. This is why students were given no direction to employ the modal verbs in their written production. Then, Activity Two is Multiple Choice Activity where the students are provided with thirteen (13) situations and asked to choose among the suggested modals the appropriate one. The aim is to measure their ability to distinguish between the different modal verbs in terms of form, function and use.

The two last activities include Fill in the Blanks Activity and a Cloze Procedure Activity. The Fill in the Blanks Activity includes eight situations where in the students are required to complete sentences with the appropriate modal verbs based on hints written between brackets to provide context. The aim was to evaluate the students' understanding of the different functions of modals. In the last activity, the students are asked to provide the 7 appropriate modal verbs to complete a text (adopted from practice your Grammar2+key). The aim of these last activities was to assess the students' recognition and production of the English modals at sentence and discourse levels.

5.2. Analysis and Interpretation of the Results of the Test

5.2.1 Part One: Writing Activity

The Writing Activity was completed during class time. Most students finished the activity in almost 45 minutes. Data were collected and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively per situation to assess the students' use of modal verbs as follows:

Situation One: You are going to Algiers for a weekend. Make suggestions about things to do there.

Students' Production	**N**	**%**
With modal verbs	74	63.79
Without modal verbs	42	36.21
Total	116	100

Table 5.1.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation One

In responding to the first situation (as shown in Table 5.1), the large number of students (63.79%) produced sentences with English modal verb, while 36.21% students provided no English modal verbs. This indicates that many students avoided using English modal verbs due to their complexity which was explored throughout the study. Students who used no English modal verbs replied to Situation One through:

- The planned future like "am going to" to express their intention as in:

Eg: "I **am going to** visit Makam El - Chahid and I **am going** to spend a lot of time in Bab El Zouar Mall".

- Or verbs like **"I want"** or **"I visit"** as in:

Eg1: I **visit** my family there, then try to profit from the sea and many places such as the garden of Al Hamma.

However, those students (63.79%) who used the modal verbs in response to situation one rarely used them appropriately, and very often inappropriately as seen in Table 5.2.:

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	02	02.70
Used inappropriately	72	97.30
Total	74	100

Table 5.2.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation One

Table 5.2. shows that only 02.70 % of the students used the English modal verb and produced sentences with the English modal verb **'should'** and **'could'** to express the function of high '**probability'** as in:

Eg1: I **should** see Makam Al Chahid.

Eg2: I **could** visit historical places and my family there.

The majority of the students (97.30%) though used modal verbs, chose other modal verbs to express other different functions in responding to the situation as summarized in Table 5.3.:

English Modal Verbs	Function	Frequency	%
Will	**Intention**	53	73.61
Would	**Probability**	16	22.22
May	**Possibility**	01	01.39
Need	**Necessity**	01	01.39
Can	**Ability**	01	01.39
Total	_____	72	100

Table 5.3.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation One

Among the students who used inappropriate modal verbs as a response to Situation, a large percentage of students (73.61**%**) used the modal verb 'will' to express their intentions when they visit Algiers and wrote sentence like:

Eg1: "I **will** do shopping and try to discover the most beautiful places there"

Eg 2: I '**ll** pass my weekend in Algiers, I will visit Alkasba and Almodjahed.

An important proportion (22.22%) used the modal verb **'would'** expressing probability.

Eg1: "I **would** visit the famous places and watch the sunset in the beach".

Eg2: I'**d** visit beaches and parks, probably I' **d** take walks randomly

The remaining students used modal verb **'may'** expressing weak probability, **'need to'** expressing necessity and **'can'** expressing ability as illustrated in the following examples respectively:

Eg1: "I **may** visit an old teacher I knew in y childhood".

Eg2: "We **need to** visit jardin d'essai , then we **may** go to the zoo".

Eg3: "We **can** visit the most beautiful places".

The analysis of the results firstly shows the students' failure to use the modal verbs **'could' or 'should'** as required for Situation One. Secondly, it indicated the students' preferences for the modal verb **'will';** they used it to express their intention as they visit Algiers.

Situation Two: You start school in September. Make suggestions about what to buy for school.

Students' Production	N	%
With modal verbs	77	66.38
Without modal verbs	39	33.62
Total	116	100

Table 5.4.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Two

The results in Table 5.4. indicate that only 33.62% did not use modal verbs, whereas a great percentage (69.38 %) chose to use them. These students produced sentences as follows:

Eg1: "It is very important to buy the school staff".

Eg2: "I buy new furniture and new dresses".

Eg3: "I am going to buy a dictionary and a laptop".

Since the majority of the students used the modal verbs to respond to Situation Two, this indicates that they knew that a modal verb is required in such situation. However, this did not mean they used the modal verb expected in this situation **'have to'** (see Table 5.5).

English modal Verbs	N	%
Used Appropriately	07	09.09
Used Inappropriately	70	90.91
Total	77	100

Table 5.5.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Two

The results in Table 5.5. show that only 7 (09.09 %) students used '**have to'** in order to express **'obligation'**. They produced sentences like: "I have to buy clothes and some

books". The great majority (97.30%) of those who produced modal verbs used them inappropriately in order to express various functions different from the expected one in this context. They used modal verbs including **'need', 'will', 'would', 'must' and 'should'** as classified Table 5.6.:

English modal Verbs	**Function**	**Frequency**	**%**
Need to	Necessity	29	41.43
Will	Intention	28	40.00
Would	Probability	07	10.00
Must	Strong Obligation	04	05.71
Should	Weak Obligation	02	02.86
Total	_____	70	100

Table 5.6.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Two

As shown in Table 5.6. **'need'** and **'will'** seem to be the most preferred by the students in Situation Two. 41.43% of the students chose **'need to'** and produced sentences like:

Eg1: I **need** a pen, a copybook, and a lap top.

Eg2: I **need** to buy new clothes, scholar articles and have a perfect hair cut.

40.00 % of those students who used modal verbs used **'Will'** to express the function of **'intention'**. They produced sentences such as:

Eg: I **will** buy new clothes, a bag and a new copy book.

The modal verbs **'should'** and **'must'** seemed the least preferred ones in this context as illustrated in the following examples:

Eg: We **should** be ready for study by buying things that help us.

And,

Eg: I **must** buy a new school bag.

Situation Three: Your sister speaks different languages. What does this suggest to you?

Students' Production	**N**	**%**
With modal verbs	40	34.49
Without modal verbs	76	65.51
Total	116	100

Table 5.7.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Three

In Table 5.7. , the results show that only 34.49 % used modal verbs in response to Situation Three. However, most students (65.51%) did not. They produced sentences as:

Eg1: "My sister has a talent of speaking different languages."

Eg2: "My sister masters three languages Spanish, German and English".

Eg3: "My sister never uses our mother tongue at home, I always find a difficulty to understand her".

Contrarily to the previous situations, 34.49% of the students who used modal verb to respond to this situation succeeded to use it appropriately as illustrated in Table 5.8.

English modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Used appropriately	29	72.50
Used inappropriately	11	27.50
Total	40	100

Table 5.8.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Three

The results shown in Table 5.8. indicate that the majority who used modal verbs (72.50%) used them appropriately. All of them provided the appropriate modal verb **'can'**:

Eg: "My talented sister **can** speak French, English and also Chinese as fluent as natives".

However, those students (27.50%) who provided inappropriate modal verbs chose different modal verbs to respond to Situation Three.

English Modal Verbs	**Function**	**Frequency**	**%**
Is able to	**Physical Ability**	09	81.81
Could	**Ability (past)**	02	18.18
Total	**_____**	11	100

Table 5.9.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Three

The results in Table 5.9. show that the students used **'is able to'** to express ability. They wrote sentences like:

Eg: "My sister is **able to** speak different languages fluently".

Two students used the modal verb **'could'** which didn't fit this context as in:

Eg1: "She **could** speak Italian, Turkish and Chinese languages".

Eg2: "My sister is a talented woman. She **could** express herself in all ways".

Both '**is able to'** and '**could'** were inappropriate; the former was used to express physical ability and '**could'** was used in the past which is again inappropriate.

Situation Four: A friend has invited you to a party. You are not keen to go, but there isn't anything else to do, so you think you should go. What would you tell your friend?

Students' Production	N	%
With modal verbs	57	49.14
Without modal verbs	59	50. 86
Total	116	100

Table 5.10.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Four

In Table 5.10., the results show that 49. 14 % of the students used modal verbs, whereas more than the half of them (50.86 %) chose not to use them. They produced sentences as follows:

Eg1: I am not in the mood to go for the party, but I just come for you.

Eg3: I am going to come to your party and enjoy myself since there is nothing else to do.

The present simple and present continuous tenses were used to express modality. Besides, similar to the two first situations, the students who used for modal verbs failed to use them appropriately to respond to this situation. The results were gathered in the Table 5.11:

English modal verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	01	01.75
Used inappropriately	56	98.25
Total	57	100

Table 5.11.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs: Situation Four

As clearly shown in Table 5.11., among the students who used modal verbs, almost all of them (98.25 %) failed to use them appropriately. Only one (01.75%) student used **'might'** to express himself in this context. Instead of **'might',** students used other different modal verbs which were classified from the most used to the least used ones in Table (5.12.).

English Modal Verbs	**Function**	**Frequency**	**%**
Will	**Intention**	39	69.64
Should	**Obligation**	08	14.29
Would	**Probability**	06	10.71
Can't	**Inability**	03	05.36
Total	**----------**	56	100

Table 5.12.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Four

As shown in Table 5.12., students used various modal verbs to denote different functions to express modality. **'Will'** was the most preferred modal verb with 69.64 % who wrote sentences like:

Eg2: "I am not that kind which enjoys parties, but I **will** come just to please you".

Eg2: "I have nothing to do. So I guess, I' **ll** come".

In addition to, '**should'** was chosen in the second place by 14. 29 %

Eg1: "I have nothing to do this night. So, I **should** go".

Eg2: "I am not interested about going to the party, but I **should** go".

'Would' was chosen by 10.71 % of the students. They wanted to show that there is '**weak probability'** to come to the party. Sentences as the following were produced:

Eg1: "I **would** apologize to you because I am not in a good mood".

Eg2: “I **would** go to the party and have fun and talk with my friends”.

Finally, the results show also that few students (05.36 %) used **‘can’** in the negative form (‘**can’t’**) in order to express their **‘inability’** to attend the party. They wrote sentence like:

Eg: “Sorry, I have a meeting; I **can’t** come to the party”.

Situation Five: Your friend has got a headache and a congested nose. Give him/her some advice about how to deal with this problem.

Students’ Production	**N**	**%**
With modal verbs	54	46.55
Without modal verbs	62	53.45
Total	116	100

Table 5.13.: Frequency of the Students’ Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Five

The results in Table 5.13. show that 53.45 % of the students preferred not to use modal verbs to give **‘advice’** to their imaginarily ill friend. They expressed their advices through lexical words such as: **‘advise’** as a verb or **‘advice’** as a noun, as in the following examples:

Eg1: “I **advise** you to drink hot water with lemon and get some rest”.

Eg2: “My **advice** for you is to go see a doctor”.

Many students used the imperative and produce sentences like:

Eg1: “Stay at home and drink some cup of tea and take a medicine”.

Eg2: “Don’t rush to the doctor, infusions with honey and lemon help”.

Moreover, the results indicated that 46, 55 % used modal verbs, yet not all of them succeeded in their choice. The results in Table 5.14. illustrate the frequency of the students’ appropriate and inappropriate use of modal in this context.

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	37	68.52
Used inappropriately	17	31.48
Total	54	100

Table 5.14.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate or Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Five

As the results indicate in Table 5.14., most students (68. 58 %) provide the appropriate modal verbs, '**should'** and '**ought to'**; the latter was used only one time with a student (Eg2). The following sentences were written by the students:

Eg1: "You **should** take some pills and drink hot tea".

Eg2: "You **ought to** see the doctor".

The results also indicated that 31, 48 % of the students who used modal verbs used other modal verbs including **'have to'** and **'must'** but not to express advice as asked in this situation as illustrated in table (5.15.).

English Modal Verbs	Function	Frequency	%
Have to	Obligation	12	70. 59
Must	Strong obligation	05	29. 41
Total	_____	17	100

Table 5.15.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Five

In Table 5.15., the analysis of the results show that **'Have to'** seemed to be the most preferred by the students. 70.59 % of the students produced sentences to express the function of **'obligation'** as in the following sentences:

Eg1: You **have to** take 2 pills of Rhumafed and sleep.

Eg2: You **have to** go to the doctor.

'Must' is less preferred than **'have to'**. 29.41 % of the students wrote sentences like:

Eg1: "You **must** take a rest and take Aspirin".

Eg3: "You **must** drink hot tea and Paracetamol".

Situation Six: You want to borrow your uncle's car. Ask for permission politely.

Students' Production	**N**	**%**
With modal verb	106	91.38
Without modal verb	10	08.62
Total	116	100

Table 5.16.: Frequency of the Students' Use of Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Six

Table 5.16. illustrating the frequency of students' use of modal verbs in this context indicate encouraging results. Opposite to previous situations, almost modal all students (91.38 %) used modal verb in their written responses and only few students did not. Many sentences of this kind were produced:

Eg1: "Dear uncle, I wonder if you do me a favor. Please, borrow me your car".

Eg4: "Give me your car without any barney".

Eg5: "Is it possible to borrow your car, please?"

In order to respond to situation six**, 'Can'** or **'may'** fit to express the function of polite **'request'**. Almost all students (80.19%) used the modal verbs appropriately as illustrated in the Table (5.17.):

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Used appropriately	85	80.19
Used inappropriately	21	19.81
Total	106	100

Table 5.17.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Six

As clearly shown in Table 5.17., 80.19 % of the students used **'Can'** or **'may'** to express the function of **'request'**. They wrote sentences like:

Eg: "Uncle, **Can** I borrow your car. I need it?"

Eg2: "I am wondering, if you **can** borrow me your car this evening".

And they wrote sentences including **'may'** as in:

Eg1: "**May** I borrow your car, if you don't mind?"

Eg2: "**May** I take your car?"

The results also indicate that 19.81 % of the students' responses including modal verbs did not fit this context. Students used inappropriately the modal verbs in their written production as shown in Table 5.18.:

English Modal Verb	**Function**	**Frequency**	**%**
Could	Request (little more polite)	19	90.48
Must	Obligation	02	09.52
Total	_____	21	100

Table 5.18.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verb in Part One: Situation Six

As shown in Table 5.18., the results illustrate the students' preferences for the modal verb **'Could'** to express polite **'request'**. 90.48% of the students who chose it wrote a sentence as: "Uncle, **could** you please borrow me your car?"

The remaining students (09.52%) who used **'must'** in this context produced this sentence:

Eg2: you **must** give me your car.

Situation Seven: You have found out that your close friend has lied to you. Tell him/her you are very upset about this.

Students' Production	**N**	**%**
With modal verbs	26	22.41
Without modal verbs	90	77.59
Total	116	100

Table 5.19.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Seven

The results in Table 5.19. show again that the majority of the students (77.59 %) used no modal verbs whereas 22.41 % did. Those students who did not use modal verbs in response to Situation Seven produced sentences like

Eg 1: "I have never expected that you lie to me; you have really disappointed me".

Eg 2: Don't do that ever again because in friendship there is no place for lies.

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	01	03.85
Used inappropriately	25	96.15
Total	26	100

Table 5.20.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs Part One: Situation Seven

In order to respond to situation seven, **'shouldn't have' / 'ought to' / 'could have'** were required in this context. However, the results in Table 5.20. show that only one student (03.85 %) succeeded to provide the appropriate modal verb **'should'** in the perfect form. S/He wrote:

Eg: "You **shouldn't** have lied on me".

Almost all the students (96.15%) failed to provide the modal verb required in this context. Their answers were gathered and summarized in Table 5.21.:

English Modal Verbs	Function	Frequency	%
Shouldn't	Obligation	08	32.00
Could	Ability	04	16.00
Wouldn't	Probability	03	12.00
Should	Obligation	03	12.00
Will not	Volition	03	12.00
Cannot	Inability	02	08.00
Mustn't	Prohibition	02	08.00
Total	_____	25	100

Table 5.21.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Seven

As clearly shown in Table 5.21., **'shouldn't'** is the most preferred modal verb. Most students (32.00%) used it to express **'obligation'**. The following examples were taken from the students' answers to Situation Seven:

Eg1: You **shouldn't** do that on me, I've always trusted you.

Eg2: I discovered that my best friend who I trust him the most you lied to me. You **shouldn't** do that.

16 % of the students chose **'could'** in order to express **'ability'** of this friend to lie on him. They wrote sentences of this kind:

Eg: How **could** you do that? I am very disappointed.

12 % of the students, for each of these modal verbs; **'wouldn't'**, **'should'**, and **'will not'**, were chosen also by students to express **'probability'**, **'obligation'** and **'intention'** respectively. Two examples for each modal verb were taken from the students' responses as follows:

Eg1: I feel really disappointed; you **wouldn't** do that if you consider me a friend.

Eg2: It is unbelievable; you **wouldn't** do that.

Eg3: Friends **should** trust each other.

Eg4: I am very angry; you **should** tell me the truth.

Eg5: Shame on you; you are a liar and I **won't** trust you again.

Eg6: This is not fair, I **will not** forgive you.

Finally, the results also show that **'cannot'** and '**mustn't'** were the least used modal verbs with 08 % for each. **'Cannot'** was used to express inability to accept the apology as in:

Eg1: I **cannot** accept your apology, because you are my close friend.

Eg2: We are supposed to be honest with each other; I **can't** believe you lied to me.

The modal verb **'mustn't'** is used to express prohibition as illustrated from the students' written productions. For example:

Eg: You **mustn't** lie to me; it's not a good thing at all.

Situation Eight: You are on the train. You have a seat, but a pregnant lady is standing. Offer her your seat.

Students' Production	**N**	**%**
With modal verbs	58	50.00
Without modal verbs	58	50.00
Total	116	100

Table 5.22.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Eight

When responding to Situation Eight, the students were asked to write a sentence to express the function of **'offer'**. The results summarized in Table 5.22.indicate that half of the students used modal verbs, whereas the other half did not. They produced sentences as:

Eg1: Lady! Come and sit.

Eg2: Have my seat please!

However, again using modal verb did not necessarily mean it was appropriate. The students' use of modal verbs was analyzed and results were gathered in Table 5.23.:

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Used appropriately	16	32.00
Used Inappropriately	42	68.00
Total	58	100

Table 5.23.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Eight

As indicated in Table 5.23., 68.00 % of the students used modal verbs which didn't fit the context. Yet, 32.00 % successfully produced sentences including the appropriate modal verb **'would'** as it is expected in this situation**:**

Eg1: **"Would** you please have my seat".

Eg2: **"Would** you like to take my seat".

In Table 5.24., we attempted to examine the different functions expressed by the students who used other modal verbs than would.

English Modal Verbs	**Function**	**Frequency**	**%**
Can	**Ability**	29	69.05
May	**Possibility**	10	23.81
Should	**Obligation**	01	02.38
Could	**Ability**	01	02.38
Have to	**Obligation**	01	02.38
Total	**_____**	42	100

Table 5.24.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Eight

The analysis of the results found out that **'can'** and **'may'** seemed to be the most preferred modal verbs by 69.05 % and 23.81 % of the students respectively. However, '**should'**, **'could'** and **'have to'** were the less used modal verbs with 2.38 % for each. Examples of the students' responses were as follows:

Eg1: "You **can** take my seat".

Eg2: "You **may** sit in my place".

Eg3: **"Could** you take my seat?"

Situation Nine: You want someone to hold the door open for you. Ask him/her to do it for you.

Students' Production	N	%
With modal verbs	94	81.03
Without modal verbs	22	18.97
Total	116	100

Table 5.25.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Nine

The results in Table 5.25. indicate that that the great majority of the students (81.03 %) used modal verbs in their writing production. Only 18.97 % produced sentences without them as in the following sentences:

Eg1: "Keep the door open for me, please!"

Eg2: "Let the door open."

Eg3: "Please, hold the door?"

In addition to that, the students' use of modal verbs was analyzed to identify their functions in the sentences they produced. They were illustrated in table (4. 26.):

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	41	43.61
Used inappropriately	53	56.39
Total	94	100

Table 5.26.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Nine

'Will'/ 'would' were expected to be used by the students to respond to this situation. 43.61 % of the students used **'would'** in this context. They all produced sentences of this type:

Eg1: "Please, **would** you let the door open?"

However, the examination of the students' answers to Situation Nine found that 56. 39 % of the proportion of the students who used modal verbs failed to produce the expected modal verbs.

English Modal Verb	**Function**	**Frequency**	**%**
Could	Ability	24	45.29
Can	Ability	27	50.94
May	Possibility	02	03.77
Total	_____	53	100

Table 5.27.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Situation Nine

As shown in Table 5.27., the students preferred to use **'could', 'can'** and **'may'** to respond to this situation instead **of 'will'/ 'would'. 'Could'** was used by 45.29% of the students**; 'can'** was used by 50.94 % of them, whereas '**may'** was used only by 03.77 % of them. The following sentences were taken from the students' answers to illustrate their responses to situation nine.

Eg1: **"Could** you hold the door open to me, please?"

Eg2: **"Can** you open the door, please?"

Eg3: **"May** you hold the door, please?"

The analysis of the all the results concerning the students' responses to the Part One: Writing Activity were summarized to provide an oveall picture of the participants' use of the modal verbs (see Table 5.28:

Situations	With Modal Verb	Without Modal Verb	Total
Situation One	**63.79**	**36.21**	**100**
Situation Two	**66.38**	**33.62**	**100**
Situation Three	34.49	65.51	100
Situation Four	49.14	50.86	100
Situation Five	46.55	53.45	100
Situation Six	**91.38**	**08.62**	**100**
Situation Seven	22.41	77.59	100
Situation Eight	**50.00**	**50.00**	**100**
Situation Nine	81.03	18.97	100

Table 5.28.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Writing Activity

As clearly shown in Table 5.28., the participants preferred to use modal verb. Out of the nine situations, modal verbs were used in five situations. On one hand, they were used by the majority of the total participants in situation one (by 63.79%), situation two (by 66.38%), in situation six (by 91.38%), and in situation nine (by 81.03%). On the other hand, they were chosen by the half of the students participating in the activity in situation eight. As a matter of fact, this implied that the participants were aware of need to use modal verbs while expressing themselves in English. However, this doesn't mean that they have successfully used them as noticed in the table below which summarized the appropriate and inappropriate use of modal verbs in the situations provided in the writing activity:

Situations	Appropriate Use	Inappropriate Use
Situation One	02.70	97.30
Situation Two	09.09	90.91
Situation Three	72.5	27. 50
Situation Four	01.75	98.25
Situation Five	68.52	31.48
Situation Six	80.19	19.81
Situation Seven	03.85	96.15
Situation Eight	32.00	68.00
Situation Nine	43.61	56.39

Table 5.29.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part One: Writing Activity

The results as indicated in Table 5.29. were satisfactory. Out of the nine situations, students appropriately used the modal verbs in only three situations, whereas they failed in all others respectively; in situation one (by 97.30%) of the students, in situation two (by 90, 91% of them), in situation four (by 98. 25% of them), in situation seven by 96.15% of them, in situation eight by 68% of them, in situation nine by 56.39 % of them. However, in the remaining situations three, five and six, the participants have showed good performance in their written productions.

The majority of the students under investigation used the expected modal verb **'can'** in situation three (by 72.50 %), and in the expected modal verb **'should'/'ought to'** in situation five (68.52 %). In the former situation, the situation said: "Your sister is a very talented woman. Talk about her ability to speak different languages". The participants found no

difficulty to express the function of **ability**. Besides, they also didn't find it difficult to respond to the latter situation to express **obligation**: "Your friend has got a headache and a congested nose. Give him/her some advice about how to deal with this problem."

In Table 5.30., all the results driven from the students' responses to the test were summarized. We aim to identify the most recurrent modal verb in the students' written responses to the ninth situations. Then, we analyzed the results per modal verb in relation to the percentage of occurrence.

Situations	Possible Modals	Preferred Modals	Frequency	Use
Situation 1	Should/could	Will	73.61	Inappropriate
Situation 2	Have to	Need to	41.43	Inappropriate
		Will	40.00	Inappropriate
Situation 3	Can	Is able to	81.81	Inappropriate
Situation 4	Might	Will	69.64	Inappropriate
Situation 5	Should/ ought to	Have to	70.59	Inappropriate
Situation 6	Can/ may	Could	90.48	Inappropriate
Situation 7	Should have/ ought to/ Could have	Shouldn't	32.00	Inappropriate
Situation 8	Would	Can	69.05	Inappropriate
Situation 9	Will/ would	Can	50.94	Inappropriate
		Could	45.29	Inappropriate

Table 5.30.: Distribution of the Students' Preferred Used Modal Verbs in Part One: Writing Activity

The modal verb '**will'** conveys a lower degree of modal meaning. It expresses futurity (epistemic). It can also express volition (determination) or willingness as it may express

unwillingness to do something (Huddleston, 1995; Azar, 2000). The results showed that this modal verb was highly chosen by the participants in the study. They occur in four situations: situation one, two, four, and with its negative form will not in situation seven with less percentage. . It is worth mentioning that this doesn't mean they used it appropriately, since it was not the expected modal in theses contexts.

In situation one *"We are going to Algiers for a weekend. Make suggestions about things to do"*, '**will'** was the most used by the students. 73.61 % of the total participants used it while the expected modal in this context were '**could**' or '**should'**, which expresses possibility/ability (Biber, Douglas, Susan Conrad, and Geoffrey Leech, 2002). Students wrote sentences like the following examples "I **will** do shopping and try to discover the most beautiful places there". It was also used by a great number of students in situation two: *"We start school in September. Talk about the necessity to buy things.",* when 40% of the total participants used it instead of **'have to'** expressing necessity. They answered "I **will** buy new clothes, a bag and a new copy book". A larger number of the students **(**69.64 %) also chose it in situation four instead of the modal verb **'might'** in order to express possibility: *"A friend has invited you to a party. You are not very keen to go but there isn't anything else to do, so you think you should go. What would say?"*. An example of students' productions was "I am not hat kind which enjoys parties, but *I will come just to please you".*

The modal Verb '**would'** can express whether a speaker feels something is permissible **(**Swan, 1985; Azar, 2000).**).** According to swan (1985), it cannot refer to past refusal. It is used rather to express instruction or order for more polite request (p.185). In this study, this modal verb occurred several times in students' productions. The modal verb **'would'** was used by 22. 22 % of the students instead of '**could**' or '**should'** needed to express suggestions in situation one. They provided sentences as "I **would** visit the famous places and watch the sunset in the beach", and "I **would** spend it visiting my uncle". 10.71% of students used it

also instead of **'might'** required to express probability in situation four. Students instead provided sentences such as "I **would** apologize to you because I am not in a good mood", or "I **would** go to the party and have fun and talk with my friends". Worth noting **'would'** seems to be highly preferred by sour sample.

The modal verb **'should'** can express whether a speaker feels something is advisable (Azar, 1995; Biber, 2002) as it can be used to express an obligation or necessity (Huddleston ,1995) However, in this study, **'should'** was used instead of '**might'** by 14. 29 % in situation four which required probability: *"A friend has invited you to a party. You are not very keen to go but there isn't anything else to do, so you think you should go. What would say?"*. Students provided sentences like: "I have nothing to do this night. So, I **should** go", and "I am not interested about going to the party, but I **should** go". Additionally, this modal was used in its negative form '**shouldn't'** in situation seven where in '**should have'/ 'ought to'/ 'could have'** were needed to express disappointment: *"You found out that your close friend lied to you. Tell him/her you are very upset"*. 32 % of the students used sentences as: "You **shouldn't** have lied on me".

The modal verb '**have to** expresses speakers' necessity towards something (Swan, 1995; Azar, 2000). It was among the most preferred modal verb in situation five: *"Your friend has got a headache and a congested nose. Give him/her some advice."*. The majority of the students (70. 59%) chose it rather than the expected modal verb '**Should'/ 'ought to'** required to express advice in this context. Sentences like "You **have to** take 2 pills of Rhumafed and sleep", and "You **have to** go to the doctor" were written. However, they failed to provide it to express necessity as expected in situation two.

The modal Verb **'Could'** can be used to express something permissible by the speaker (Swan, 1995; Azar, 2000). It is used in more formal context to request permission. Many students used it to reply to the test. It was used instead of **"Can/ may"** by many students

(90.48%) in situation six which request permission: *"**can** you give me your car uncle!"*. In situation seven, it was chosen in the second place after '**shouldn't'** by 16% of the participants in order to express disappointment instead of '**should have'/ 'ought to'/ 'could have'**, and instead of '**will'/ 'would'** expressing order/instruction by 45. 29% in situation nine: *"You want someone to hold the door open for you. Ask him/her to do for you"*.

'Can' is commonly used in speech to ask permission, especially in questions and negative sentences in less formal context. **'Can'** was used instead of **'Will'/ 'would'** by more than the half in situation nine. 50. 94 % of the participants chose it in the first place instead of the expected modal verb. The participants wrote sentences of this kind **"Can** you open the door, please?"

In brief, the modal verb discussed above were the most used modal verbs by the participants in the present study. Other modal verbs **'must'**, **'ought to'**, **'may'**, **'might'**, **'ought to'**, **'should have'** and **'could have'** seem to be less preferred by them in regard their few occurrence (see table 3). Results showed that our students preferred '**have to'** more than '**ought to'** express advisability. They have fewer tendencies to use '**must'** and **'ought to'** which expresses weak advisability. Besides, the results revealed that '**may'** and **'might'** which express permission/possibility//ability were less used by the participants in comparison with '**can'** and '**could'**. Important to add, '**should have'** and '**could have'** (perfect form verb) which expresses a failure to meet a social norm or expectation in a past situation were not used by our participants.

5.2.2. Part Two: Multiple Choice Activity

The Multiple Choice Activity was also completed during class time. Most students finished the activity in almost 15 minutes. Data were collected and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively per sentence to assess the students' ability to recognize the appropriate modal verbs at the sentence level as follows:

Sentence One: My son _____ be home by now. Where can he be?

a. would

b. should

c. could

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	94	81.03
Used inappropriately	22	18.97
Total	116	100

Table 5.31.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence One

In Table 5.31. the results show that a great number of the students' answers (81.03%) were appropriate. The students found the appropriate answer **'should'** to complete Sentence One in order to express '**probability'**. Only 18.97% fail to recognize it among the two other inappropriate modal verbs given to them as demonstrated in Table 5.32.:

English Modal Verb	Frequency	%
Would	05	22.73
Could	17	77.27
Total	22	100

Table 5.32.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence One

As the results indicate, the students chose the modal verbs **'would'** and **'could'**. Most of them (77.27 %) preferred **'could' which is** which though expresses possibility it is not

appropriate. **This choice is probably due** to its corresponding Arabic equivalent **'kan bi istita9atihi'**. The interference of Arabic is apparent as the students negatively transferred from Arabic.

Sentence Two: I think your thumb is broken. You _____ go to the emergency room.

a. might

b. could

c. ought to

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	**91**	**78.45**
Used inappropriately	25	21.55
Total	116	100

Table 5.33.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Two

The results indicate that the majority of the students (78.45%) selected the appropriate modal verbs **'ought to'** expressing **'obligation'**. Our students have no difficulty with modal verbs of **'obligation'** as witnessed many times when administering the test. The students who picked inappropriate modal verbs are shown in Table 5.34.:

English Modal Verb	Frequency	%
Might	20	80.00
Could	05	20.00
Total	25	100

Table 5.34.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Two

Among the wrong answers, 80.00% chose **'might'** and it used to express **'possibility'** in the past which does not fit this context.

Sentence Three: If you are interested in losing weight, you_____ try this new diet.

a. mustn't

b. could

c. had to

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Used appropriately	60	51.72
Used inappropriately	56	48.28
Total	116	100

Table 5.35.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Three

As indicated in Table 5.35., there was a slight difference between the appropriate and inappropriate answers of the students. While 51.72% of the students succeeded to find out the right modal verb 'could' to express theoretical possibility, 48.28% of them did not. The latter chose either 'mustn't' or 'had to' as presented in Table 5.36.:

English Modal Verb	**Frequency**	**%**
Mustn't	02	3.57
Had to	**54**	**96.43**
Total	56	100

Table 5.36.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Three

When asked to complete Sentence Three with the appropriate modal verb, 96.43% of the students selected **'had to'** expressing strong obligation similar to its equivalent in Arabic **'yajibou'**. Again the influence of the students L1 is apparent as a reason behind their misuse of the modal verbs in this context.

Sentence Four: John's fallen down the stairs! I _____call an ambulance!

a. may

b. will

c. might

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Used appropriately	63	54.31
Used inappropriately	53	45.69
Total	116	100

Table 5.37.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Four

In sentence Four, the appropriate modal verb is 'will'. As shown in Table 5.37., more than the half of the students (54.31%) succeeded to recognize the appropriate modal verb **'will'** to express **'certainty'**. 45.69% of the students failed and selected one of the two other suggested modal verbs '**may'** and **'might'** as demonstrated in Table 5.38.:

English Modal Verb	Frequency	%
May	23	43.40
Might	30	56.60
Total	53	100

Table 5.38.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Four

The results show most students ((56.60%) wrongly chose the modal verb **'might'** expressing theoretical possibility which does not fit the context.

Sentence Five: Children _____be accompanied by an adult at the zoo.

a. ought to

b. must

c. would

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	102	87.93
Used inappropriately	14	12.07
Total	116	100

Table 5.39.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Five

The results in Table 5.39. show that almost all the students found the appropriate modal verb 'must'. They know that they should use the modal verb 'must' in order to express

strong advice (external obligation and sounds like an order) in this context. Those students who failed chose **'ought to'** and **'would'** as seen in Table 5.40.:

English Modal Verb	Frequency	%
Ought to	07	50.00
Would	07	50.00
Total	14	100

Table 5.40.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Five

The students who provided the wrong modal verb to complete sentence six equally selected the modal verbs **'ought to'** and **'would'** by 50.00% for each. Though **'ought to'** expresses advice but it is not appropriate because it is less strong than must

Sentence Six: You _____ talk during tests. It's forbidden!

a. must not

b. could not

c. ought to

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	79	68.10
Used inappropriately	37	31.90
Total	116	100

Table 5.41.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Six

In sentence Six, **'mustn't'** should be used to express **'prohibition (direct order)'**. 68.10% of the students succeeded to do so. The remaining students (31.90%) opted for only one modal verb **'ought to'** as seen in Table 5.41.:

English Modal Verb	Frequency	%
Couldn't	00	00
Ought to	37	100
Total	37	100

Table 5.42.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Six

All the inappropriate answers included the modal verb **' ought to'**. They know it expresses **'obligation'** but it is not so strong as the context required.

Sentence Seven: I can feel the heat. We _____ be near the fire.

a. have to

b. would

c. must

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	36	31.03
Used inappropriately	80	68.97
Total	116	100

Table 5.43.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Seven

The results in Table 5.43. reveal that the students have a difficulty to recognize the appropriate modal verb **'must'** expressing **'certainty'** in this context since 68.97% of the answers were incorrect and only 31.03 % were correct. Table5.44. demonstrates the students' tendency to use the modal verb have to express high **'certainty'**.

English Modal Verb	Frequency	%
Have to	45	56.25
Would	35	43.75
Total	80	100

Table 5.44.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Seven

'Have to' seems to be the most preferred modal verb even though it is wrong in this context. 56.25% of the students picked it. This implies that these students did not understand the meaning of this sentence.

Sentence Eight: They _____ hear him because he was whispering.

a. wouldn't

b. mustn't

c. couldn't

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	109	93.97
Used inappropriately	07	06.03
Total	116	100

Table 5.45.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Eight

In Sentence Nine as shown in Table 5.45 almost all students (93.97%) recognized the appropriate modal verb **'couldn't'** to express **'physical ability'**. This implies that they have no problems with modal verbs of ability.

English Modal Verb	**Frequency**	**%**
Wouldn't	04	57.14
Mustn't	03	42.86
Total	07	100

Table 5.46.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Eight

The inappropriate answers to Sentence Nine included approximately equal tendency towards **'wouldn't'** and **'mustn't'** with 57.14% and 42.86 respectively.

Sentence Nine: You've never heard of Britney Spears? You _____ be serious!

a. will not

c. cannot

d. should not

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Used appropriately	**83**	**71.55**
Used inappropriately	33	28.45
Total	116	100

Table 5.47.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Nine

In sentence Nine the appropriate modal verb is **'cannot'** to express '**negative deduction'**. The majority of the students (71.55%) recognized it. Only 28.45% of the students picked will not and should not as seen in Table 5.48.:

English Modal Verb	**Frequency**	**%**
Will not	07	21.21
Should not	26	78.79
Total	33	100

Table 5.48.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Nine

The majority of the incorrect answers (78.79%) were **'shouldn't'**. these students confused between **'can' and 'should'**. They show their lack of knowledge of the use of modal verbs.

Sentence Ten: _____ you like to have dinner with me tonight?

a. Could

b. May

c. Would

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Used appropriately	109	93.97
Used inappropriately	07	06.03
Total	116	100

Table 5.49.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Ten

The results in Table 5.49. reflect to what extent our students are aware of the use of **'would'** to express **'polite invitation'**. Very few (06.03%) failed as demonstrated in Table 5.50.:

English Modal Verb	Frequency	%
Could	07	100
May	00	00
Total	07	100

Table 5.50.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Ten

All incorrect answers were the modal verb **'could'**. This denotes that our students overgeneralize the use of this modal to make **'invitation'** or **'offer'**.

Sentence Eleven: You _____ let him hear about the party tomorrow. It's a surprise!

a. wouldn't

b. mustn't

c. couldn't

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	78	67.24
Used inappropriately	38	32.76
Total	116	100

Table 5.51.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Eleven

In Table 5.51 most students (67.24%) found the appropriate modal verb **'mustn't'** to express prohibition (direct order). The remaining students **(**32.76%) selected **'wouldn't'** and **'couldn't'** as seen in Table 5.52.:

English Modal Verb	**Frequency**	**%**
Wouldn't	26	68.42
Couldn't	12	31.58
Total	38	100

Table 5.52.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Eleven

Most students (68.42%) picked incorrectly the modal verb **'wouldn't'.** This shows these students' lack of knowledge of the rule modal verbs use

Sentence Twelve: _____ I speak to the Chief Councellor, please?

a. Must

b. May

c. Would

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Used appropriately	**105**	**90.51**
Used inappropriately	11	09.49
Total	116	100

Table 5.53.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Twelve

The results in Table 5.53. indicated that almost all the students(90.51%) found out the correct answer. This implies that our students are aware of the use of **'may'** to express **'formal request'**. Very few failed and picked the incorrect answer.

English Modal Verb	Frequency	%
Must	00	00
Would	11	100
Total	11	100

Table 5.54.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Twelve

All the students who chose the inappropriate modal verb opted for **'must'** which implies their ignorance of use of modal verbs to express request.

Sentence Thirteen: He has arrived late. He _____have missed the bus.

a. must

b. should

c. could

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	40	34.49
Used inappropriately	76	65.51
Total	116	100

Table 5.55.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Thirteen

In sentence fourteen the modal ‘must’ fits the context to express **‘strong possibility’** in the past where there is a high degree of cetainty. A great number of the students (65.51%) found it. Yet an important number of them failed and needs to be identified.

English Modal Verb	**Frequency**	**%**
Should	59	77.63
Could	17	22.37
Total	76	100

Table 5.56.: Distribution of the Students’ Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two: Sentence Thirteen

Among the total incorrect answers, **‘should’** presented 77.63%. Modal verbs of **‘obligation’** seem to be highly used by the students; even though they do not fit the context.

The multiple choice activity attempted to identify the students’ ability to differentiate between the modal verbs. As said before, thirteen sentences were provided including different modal verbs in different forms; simple, perfect, affirmative, negative and interrogative. The results were calculated and summarized in Table 5.57. as follows:

Answers	Appropriate		Inappropriate		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sentence 1	94	**81.03**	22	18.97	116	100
Sentence 2	91	**78.45**	25	21.55	116	100
Sentence 3	60	**51.72**	56	48.28	116	100
Sentence 4	63	**54.31**	53	45.69	116	100
Sentence 5	102	**87.93**	14	12.07	116	100
Sentence 6	79	**68.10**	37	31.90	116	100
Sentence 7	36	31.03	80	**68.97**	116	100
Sentence 8	109	**93.97**	07	06.034	116	100
Sentence 9	83	**71.55**	33	28.45	116	100
Sentence 10	109	**93.97**	07	06.03	116	100
Sentence 11	78	**67.24**	38	32.76	116	100
Sentence 12	105	**90.51**	11	9.49	116	100
Sentence 13	40	34.49	76	**65.51**	116	100

Table 5.57.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modals in Part Two: Multiple Choice Activity

The results show that the students performed well in the multiple choice activity, apart from sentence 7 and 13, when the students answered wrongly. In sentence 7, 31.03 % of the students chose the right modal verb, while 68.97 % of the students chose wrong ones. Similar results gained from students' answers to sentence 13. While only 34.49% of the sample succeeded to find out the appropriate modal verb and 65.51% of it failed. As a result, we may conclude that the students under investigation were able to differentiate between modal verbs.

When provided with them, they succeeded to guess the appropriate modal verb missed in the blank.

5.2.3. Part Three: Fill in Gap Activity

In part three, the students took approximately 55mn to complete eight (8) sentences referring to 8 situations that require the use of modal verbs. The context was provided to guide them find out the appropriate answer in order to denote the extent of their success or failure to use the modal verb in different contexts. The students' answers were analyzed per situation as follows:

Situation 01: I… …….not know what to say to him if he showed up.

(I am unprepared to speak him).

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Not Used	40	34.48
Used Appropriately	10	08.62
Used Inappropriately	66	56.90
Total	116	100.00

Table 5.58.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English modal Verb 'Would'

In table 5.58., the results indicate that 34.48 % of the students didn't use modal verb although the direction was to fill the gap with a modal verb. They all used auxiliary **'to do'.** Among those who used model verbs, almost all of them (56.90%) answered with a wrong modal. 66 students used other modal than **'would'.** This implies that the students have difficulty in the use of the English modal verb **'would'**. In Table 5.57, the students' answers

were summarized to identify what modals the students used inappropriately to replace 'would'.

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Can	23	34.85
May	17	25.76
Could	15	22.73
Must	03	04.55
Will	03	04.55
Might	03	04.55
Should	01	01.52
Cannot	01	01.52
Total	66	**100**

Table 5.59.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of the English Modal Verb 'Would'

The results in Table 5.59. show that the modal verbs **'can'**, **'may'** and **'could'** were highly used instead of '**would'** by 34.85%, 25.76% and 22.73% of the students respectively. In this situation, **'would'** in the negative form expressed the function of inability.

Situation 2: It is company policy; you … …….do it this way or your expenses won't be reinforced. (The company requires that this procedure be followed for expense reimbursements.)

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Not used	13	11.21
Used appropriately	15	12.93
Used inappropriately	88	75.86
Total	116	100

Table 5.60.: Frequency of the Students' Use of the English Modal Verb ' Have to'

Table 5.60. summarizes the students' answers to situation 2. Almost all the students (75.86%) used inappropriate modal verbs instead of the appropriate modal **'have to'**. Some students (11.21%) fail in this case and provided no answer. This indicates the failure of our participants to use the modal verbs **'have to'** to express obligation. The students' inappropriate answers were summarized in Table 5.61.:

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Must	45	51.14
Should	24	27.27
Can	08	09.09
Would	05	05.68
Need to	03	03.41
Will	02	02.27
May	01	01.14
Total	88	100

Table 5.61.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of the English Modal Verb ' Have to'

In situation 2, the modal verbs **'Must' and 'Should'** were used respectively by 51.14% and 27.27% of the students in order to express the function of obligation. This is due to the fact that obligation in Arabic is expressed by **'yajibou' and 'labouda'** whose equivalents in arabic are **'must'** and **'should'** respectively.

Situation 03: I'm in terrible shape! I … …….exercise more! (I have decided that more exercise is an absolute necessity for me)

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Not used	03	02.59
Used uppropriately	42	36.20
Used inappropriately	71	61.21
Total	116	100

Table 5.62.: Frequency of the Students' Use of the English Modal Verb 'Must'

In situation 03, most students (51.14%) didn't succeed to find out the appropriate modal verb **'must'.** 02.59% of the sample didn't answer. Again, they showed low performance in expressing obligation. They provided other modal verbs as shown in Table 5.63.:

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Should	27	38.03
Have to	25	35.21
Need to	09	12.68
Cannot	04	05.63
Will	02	02.82
Would	02	02.82
Ought to	01	01.41
Should have	01	01.41
Total	**71**	**100**

Table 5.63.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of the English Modal Verb 'Must'

The modal verbs **'should'** and **'have to'** appear frequently in the students' responses. **'Should'** was used by 38.03%, while **'have to'** was used by 35.21%. Again, the influence of mother tongue of the students seems to have a great influence on them in expressing obligation. The students transfer negatively from Arabic as they express obligation through '**labouda'** and **'yajibou'** corresponding to **'should'** and **'have to'** respectively.

Situation 04: … …….you get this report done for us by tomorrow morning? (Are you willing and able to prepare this report by tomorrow if we ask you?)

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Not Used	01	0.86
Used Appropriately	22	18.97
Used Inappropriately	93	80.17
Total	116	100

Table 5.64.: Frequency of the Students' Use of the English Modal Verb ' Could'

Similar results were obtained in situation 04. As clearly shown in Table 5.64., almost all students (80.17%) did not provide the appropriate modal verb **'could'.** They failed to express the function of request. They used many other modal verbs with special emphasis on the modal verbs **'can'**, **'would'** and **'will'** as seen in table 5.65**.**

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Can	34	36.56
Would	33	35.48
Will	21	22.58
May	04	04.30
Should	01	01.08
Total	**93**	**100**

Table 5.65.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of the English Modal Verb 'Could'

The modal verbs **'can'**, **'would'** and **'will'** were used by 36.56%, 35.48% and 22.58% respectively. Here, the students have difficulty in expressing a formal request. In this context, the modal Verb **'Could'** is the appropriate modal.

Situation 5: … ……you handle this much work on a regular basis? (Do you have the capacity to handle this much work regularly?)

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Not Used	03	02.59
Used Appropriately	**60**	**51.72**
Used Inappropriately	53	45.69
Total	116	100

Table 5.66.: Frequency of the Students' Use of the English Modal Verb ' Can'

In situation 05, slightly more than the half of the students 51.72% succeeded to find out the appropriate modal **'Can'**. Though the number was not big, but still indicates the students' knowledge of the function of ability as expressed by **'Can'** in this context.

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Could	38	71.70
Would	10	18.87
Will	04	07.55
Should	01	01.88
Total	53	100

Table 5.67.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of the English Modal Verb ' Can'

'Could' appears as the most preferred modal verb by our sample, since it was used by the majority (71.70%) of the students' wrong answers. The slight difference between **'can'** and **'could'** is one of the major difficulties facing our students. They are unable to decide between them.

Situation 6: We were worried about you. You … …….have called us as soon as you knew you would be late. (Calling someone when you will be late is a good idea, in my opinion.)

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Not Used	04	03.45
Used Appropriately	67	57.76
Used Inappropriately	45	38.79
Total	116	100

Table 5.68.: Frequency of the Students' Use of the English Modal Verb 'Should'

As the results indicate in Table 5.68., more than the half of the students (57.76%), succeeded to find out the appropriate modal verb **'Should'.** This implies that the students understood that **'should'** is required in this context to express necessity. 38.79% of them failed and provided different modals as summarized in Table 5.69. :

English Modal Verbs	N	%
May	12	26.67
Could	11	24.44
Would	08	17.78
Must	06	13.33
Can	03	06.67
Might	03	06.67
Will	02	04.44
Total	45	100

Table 5.69.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of the English Modal Verb 'Should'

The students' inappropriate responses swing from **'may'** to **'could'.** 26.67% of the students chose **'may'**, while **26.67%** chose **'could'.** These students used **'may'** to express the possibility and they used **'could'** to express ability corresponding to their equivalents in Arabic **'bi imakanika'** and **'bi istitaatika'**. Thus, the students' failure to use the appropriate modal should maybe due to their limited knowledge concerning the different uses of should or the influence of their mother tongue.

Situation 7: You … ……..want to think a little more carefully about that before trying it next time. (I think you were stupid not to think more carefully about it)

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Not Used	17	14.66
Used Appropriately	11	09.48
Used Inappropriately	88	75.86
Total	116	100

Table 5.70.: Frequency of the Students' Use of the English Modal Verb 'Might'

In situation 7, the expected modal verb is **'might'** to express probability. The majority of the respondents (75.86%) failed to use the appropriate modal. Again, the results revealed that the students face difficulty in the use of modal verbs. Their inappropriate responses are gathered in Table 5.71.:

English Modal Verbs	N	%
May	26	29.54
Should	23	26.14
Must	18	20.45
Would	13	14.77
Will	03	03.41
Could	02	02.27
Need to	01	01.14
To be Able to	01	01.14
Ought to	01	01.14
Total	88	100

Table 5.71.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of the English Modal Verb 'Might'

Among the students' inappropriate responses to situation 7, 29.54% of the students used **'May'**, 26.14% of them used **'Should'** and 20.45% of them used **'Must'**. This maybe due to the fact that might is not frequently used in modern English.

Situation 8: Ellen … ……be sent to London this summer, if the board decides that the situation there allows it. (The trip is certainly possible, but whether or not she goes depends on the boards' preference.)

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Not Used	05	04.31
Used Appropriately	30	25.86
Used Inappropriately	81	69.83
Total	116	100

Table 5.72.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English Modal Verb 'May'

The results in Table 5.72 demonstrate the students' responses to situation 08. The latter required the use of modal verb **'may'** in order to express probability. The majority of the students (69.83%) failed to provide the appropriate modal verb and 04.31% of them provided no answer. Only 25.86% of the students succeeded to find out the appropriate modal. This again confirms the results gained from the previous situation that the students encounter difficulty in the use of English modal verbs. The inappropriate modal verbs used by the students inappropriately are summarized as follows in Table 5.73.:

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Will	26	32.10
Might	21	25.93
Could	12	14.81
Would	08	09.88
Should	07	08.64
Must	04	04.94
Can	02	02.47
To be able to	01	01.23
Total	81	100

Table 5.73.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of the English Modal Verb 'May'

As clearly indicated in table 5.73., the students provide wrong answers, when responding to situation 08. The modal verbs were the most frequent. **'Will'** represented 32.10% of the total inappropriate use, and '**might'** represents 25.93% of the total inappropriate answers.

Important conclusions are drawn from the analysis of Part Three: Fill in Gap Activity gathered in table 5.74 as follows:

Answers	**Not Used**		**Appropriate**		**Inappropriate**		**Total**	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Situation 1	40	34.48	10	08.62	66	56.90	116	100
Situation 2	13	11.21	15	12.93	88	75.86	116	100
Situation 3	03	02.59	42	36.20	71	61.21	116	100
Situation 4	01	0.86	22	18.97	93	80.17	116	100
Situation 5	03	02.59	60	**51.72**	53	45.69	116	100
Situation 6	04	03.45	67	**57.76**	45	39.79	116	100
Situation 7	17	14.66	11	09.48	88	75.86	116	100
Situation 8	05	04.31	30	25.86	81	69.83	116	100

Table 5.74.: Frequency of the Students' Use of English Modals in Part Three: Fill in Gap Activity

As clearly shown in Table 5.74., the results were not satisfactory. The students have shown poor achievement in this activity. Among the eight provided situations, they succeeded only in situation 5 and 6 and failed in all remaining situations despite the fact that the context was specified to guide them. In sentence 5, the appropriate answer was "**can** you handle this much work on a regular basis?" 51.72 % of the participants provided the appropriate modal verb **'can'** to express the function of obligation in the interrogative form. Moreover, most students found no difficulty to respond to sentence 6. 57.76 % of the students provided the

correct answer as follows: “We were worried about you. You **should** have called us as soon as you knew you would be late”**.**

However, the participants failed in the remaining situations. Instead of the appropriate modal verbs, they used the inappropriate ones. In Table 5.75., the most preferred modal verbs are summarized:

Situations	**English modal**	**Preferred Modals**	**Frequency**	**Use**
Situation 1	Would	Can	34.85	Inappropriate
		May	25.76	
		Could	22.73	
Situation 2	Have to	Must	51.14	Inappropriate
		Should	27.27	
Situation 3	Must	Should	38.03	Inappropriate
		Have to	35.21	
Situation 4	Could	Can	36.56	Inappropriate
		Would	35.48	
		Will	22.58	
Situation 5	Can	Could	71.70	**Appropriate**
Situation 6	Should	May	26.67	**Appropriate**
		Could	24.44	
Situation 7	Might	May	29.54	Inappropriate
		Should	26.14	
		Must	20.45	
Situation 8	May	Will	32.10	Inappropriate
		Might	25.93	
		Could	14.81	

Table 5.75.: Distribution of the Students’ Preferred English Modal Verbs in Part Three: Fill in Gap Activity

The answer to situation 1 was: "I **would** not know what to say to him if he showed up". Only few of them (08. 62 %) found the answer (Table 5.58). We witnessed that some students (40) provided no answer, while some others provided other modal verbs specially '**can', 'may'** or **'could'** which were incorrect. Similarly, in situation 2, few students (12.93%) answered correctly in order to express the function of obligation as follows "It is company policy; you **have to** do it this way or your expenses won't be reinforced**"** (Table 5.60.). They inappropriately chose rather other modal verbs as **'must'** and **'should'** in particular. In case of situation 3, again only 36.20% of the students wrote the correct answer "I'm in terrible shape! I **must** exercise more! " they used instead modal verbs like '**should'** and **'need to'** (Table 5.62.). The same case was for **s**ituation 4, while 18.97 % wrote the possible answer "**Could** you get this report done for us by tomorrow morning?" (Table 5.64.). Modal verbs like '**can', 'would' and 'will'** were the most frequently used as a response to it.

Concerning the last two situations, we got similar results. While answering situation 7, only **0**9.48% of the students provided the suggested answer: "You **might** want to think a little more carefully about that before trying it next time." (Table 5.70.). Instead they provided modal verbs '**may'** and '**should'** in particular. Finally, again though the answer to situation 8 was **"**Ellen **may** be sent to London this summer, if the board decides that the situation there allows it**."** Just 25.86 % of the students used **'may'** to express possibility (see Table 5.72.). They used rather '**might'** (21 students), and '**will'** (26 students) as already seen in Table 5.73.

5.2.4. Part Four: Cloze Procedure Activity

The sample of students took longer time when responding to the last activity (1h30). The students were asked to complete 7 empty blanks with the appropriate modal verbs to see to what extent they are able to use the English modal verbs at the discourse level. Their answers were as analyzed as follows:

Blank 1

Vincenzo's parents had to migrate to the United States of America because of poverty. His parents can't remember exactly, but they say he (1)_____ (be) any older than six at the time, since he still had his baby teeth.

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	05	04.31
Used inappropriately	111	95.69
Total	116	100

Table 5.76.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 1

The results in Table 5.76 show that almost all the students provided inappropriate answers to fill Blank 1. Instead of **'couldn't have been' and can't have been'**, 95.69% of the students put wrong modal verbs. We summarized their answers in Table 5.77.:

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Can	09	08.11
Could	20	18.01
Could not	09	08.11
Will	09	08.11
Would	11	09.91
Would not	12	10.81
Would have been	10	09.01
Had to	10	09.01
Must	10	09.01
Should	11	09.91
Total	111	100

Table 5.77.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Two in Part Four: Blank 1

As clearly shown in Table 5.77., the modal verb **'could'** seems to be the most preferred among those students who fail to provide the appropriate modal verb in Blank One. These modal verbs are inappropriate not only in terms of function but also their correct form. In almost all cases they just put modal verbs without changing and conjugating the verb. This implies that these students are not used to perfect form of the modal verbs.

Blank 2

His father was worried that Vincenzo (2)_____ (learn) English ……..

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	01	0.86
Used inappropriately	**115**	**99.14**
Total	116	100

Table 5.78.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 2

When filling in Blank Two, 99.14% of the students failed. The possible answers are **'might not be able to'** or **'wouldn't be able to learn'**. Only one student wrote **'wouldn't be able to learn'**. This argues that the students misunderstood the context.

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Will	**19**	**16.52**
Must	**18**	**15.66**
Cannot	10	08.70
Could	10	08.70
Could not	10	08.70
Wouldn't	09	07.83
Should	08	06.95
Can	08	06.95
Will not	08	06.95
Would	08	06.95
Had to	07	06.09
Total	**115**	**100**

Table 5.79.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 2

'Must' and **'will'** seem to be the most preferred modal verbs. 15.652% of the students used modal verb of obligation '**must'** as they probably understood that Vincenzo was obliged. 16.521% of those who used the modal verb of certainty **'will'**, are certain he will learn English.

Blank 3:

…….. , so he (3)_____ (Vincenzo/not speak) Italian even at home.

He needn't have worried because Vincenzo was fluent in English before his tenth birthday, which he celebrated with his friends from school.

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	04	03.45
Used inappropriately	**112**	**96.55**
Total	116	100

Table 5.80.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 3

The results in Table 5.80. show that almost the majority of the students (96.55%) failed to provide one of the possible appropriate answers **'did not let'** or **'would not let Vincenzo speak'** . they couldn't get from the context the appropriate answers. Only 4 students (03.45%) answered correctly but they did not use a modal verb as asked to do and wrote **'did not let'**. The wrong answers are summarized in Table 5. 81. As follows:

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Couldn't	24	**21.43**
May	10	08.93
Will	09	08.03
Can not	09	08.03
Could	08	07.14
Must not	08	07.14
Should	07	06.25
Can	07	06.25
Had to	06	05.36
Must	06	05.36
Shouldn't	06	05.36
May not	06	05.36
Would	06	05.36
Total	**112**	**100**

Table 5.81.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 3

As clearly shown, the students prefer the modal verbs listed in Table 5.81. with approximately equal use except for the modal verb couldn't which was chosen by 21.43% of the students. They used modal verbs of **'obligation'** as **'must'** and **'should'**. They also used modal verbs of probability as for example **'could', 'will'** and **'may'**. However, these modal verbs do not fit this context neither in function nor in form.

Blank 4:

His mother, on the other hand, was worried that he (4)_____(lose) his Sicilian identity.

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	04	03.45
Used inappropriately	112	96.55
Total	116	100

Table 5.82.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 4

The results in Table 5.82. indicate again the students' failure to provide correct answers in blank 4. The latter requires just one possible answer **'might lose'.** 96.55% of the answers were incorrect. The students' answers are gathered in Table 5.83. as follows:

English Modal Verbs	N	%
May	12	10.714
Will	**89**	**79.47**
Could	05	04.464
Would	05	04.464
Must	01	0.92
Total	**112**	**100**

Table 5.83.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 4

The modal verb 'will' constitutes most of the wrong answers (79.47%). Blank 4 required **'might' expressing theoretical possibility** but instead students used wrongly the modal verb of **'certainty' 'will'.**

Blank 5

You (5)_____(see) him in his own house now to understand what I mean.

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	36	31.03
Used inappropriately	**80**	**68.97**
Total	116	100

Table 5.84.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 5

The results in Table 5.84. argued that our students fail to use modal verbs in appropriate context. 68.97% o f the students provided inappropriate modal verbs, while few of them (31.03%) did. Blank 5 may be filled in by either of the following answers: **'should'**, **'must'**, **'would have to see'** and **'have to see'**. The inappropriate answers are summarized in Table 5.85.:

English Modal Verbs	**N**	**%**
Will	**32**	**40**
Would	02	02.50
Could	02	02.50
Can	**42**	**52.50**
May	02	02.50
Total	**80**	**100**

Table 5.85.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 5

Among the wrong answers, 40% were the modal verb **'will' a**nd 52.50% were the modal verb **'can'**. In the first case the students used **'will'** to express the future simple tense, and in the second case the students used **'can'** to express 'ability'. In both cases, these modal verbs do not fit the context.

Blank 6

"At the very beginning, it (6)_____(be) quite a challenge for you," I say.

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	03	02.59
Used inappropriately	113	97.41
Total	116	100

Table 5.86.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 6

As indicated in Table 5.86. almost all the students (97.41%) provided wrong answers. Only 02.59% of them found the correct answer **'must have been'.** This denotes our sample inadequate knowledge of modal verbs as seen in Table 5.89.:

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Would	89	78.76
Will	07	06.20
Must	03	02.65
Should	04	03.54
May	02	01.77
Can	04	03.54
Might	02	01.77
Could	02	01.77
Total	113	100

Table 5.87.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 6

The results show the students' tendency to use the modal verb **'would'** to fill in Blank 6. It is 78.76% of the total wrong answers. **'Would'** of **'probability'** was inappropriate since the speaker was sure and therefore **'must'** in past perfect is more appropriate.

Blank 7

Then you (7)_____ (really/understand) how I am still struggling to keep my cultural identity."

English Modal Verbs	N	%
Used appropriately	79	68.10
Used inappropriately	37	31.90
Total	116	100

Table 5.88.: Frequency of the Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 7

A big number of students (68.10%) succeeded to fill in Blank 7 with an appropriate modal verb. In this context, the possible answers are **'can really understand'**, **'will'** and **'would really be able to understand'**. However, these students used only **'can'** and **'will'** and none of them used **'would be able to'**.

English Modal Verb	N	%
Must	06	16.21
Have to	07	18.92
Should	10	27.03
Could	07	18.92
Would	07	18.92
Total	37	100

Table 5.89.: Distribution of the Students' Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Blank 7

The speaker in Blank 7 expresses the speakers' certainty to be understood. However, almost all wrong answers were modal verbs expressing obligation with for example **'must'** with 16.21% of total wrong answers, or probability as through **'would'** with 18.92%.

The students' responses to the cloze procedure activity showed the poor achievement of the students as illustrated in the table 5.90.:

Blanks	Appropriate		Inappropriate		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Blank 1	05	04.31	111	95.69	116	100
Blank 2	01	0.86	115	99.14	116	100
Blank 3	04	03.45	112	96.55	116	100
Blank 4	04	03.45	112	96.55	116	100
Blank 5	36	31.03	80	68.97	116	100
Blank 6	03	02.59	113	97.41	116	100
Blank 7	79	**68.10**	37	31.90	116	100

Table 5.90.: Students' Appropriate and Inappropriate Use of English Modal Verbs in Part Four: Cloze Procedure Activity

The results in table 5.90. show that the majority of the students failed in this activity except when they completed Blank 7. The latter required either '**can'**, **'will'** or **'would be able to'**. 68. 10 % of the total participants provided the appropriate answer. This confirmed the other activities' results, i.e., the students' acquisition of modals deontic modal verbs in order to express the functions of obligation and intention. Moreover, it is worthy to add that we witnessed many empty blanks left by the students on one hand and many modal verbs left without conjugating them. Furthermore, we found out some mistakes of form . This implied not only our students couldn't find the modal verb in the appropriate context, but also they failed to put it in the appropriate tense. Consequently, we concluded that our students faced serious difficulties in the modal verbs on discourse level.

5.3. Overall Analysis and Interpretation of the Results of the Test

Major conclusions became apparent throughout the findings obtained from the students' responses to the test we administered to Second year master students of English at "Frères Mentouri" University, basically connected to how these students use modal verbs. First of all, we noticed the students' lack of use of modals which indicate their actual inability in using them. This has resulted in the use of compensation strategies to indicate modality in their responses to Part One: the writing activity and Part Two: the fill in gap activities, as analyzed in this research.

Alternatives were found to be used by the students to overcome their limitations in the use of modal verbs in English. They expressed modality by means of other phrases; like it is possible, it is necessary, it is probable; or words like **'perhaps'**, **'maybe'**, '**necessarily'**; non-modal verbs like **'be able to' and 'be allowed to'**. The students also used main verbs such as **'think'**, **'believe'** and **'predict'**, **'want'**, **'prefer'**, and **'desire'**. The sample used compensation strategies in order to overcome limitations in the TL, particularly on modality. This may be due to their uncertainties or their preference in the use of modals. The findings

have also indicated that some modals are frequently used by these students like '**will'** and '**can'**, while other modal verbs like '**must'**, **'ought to'**, **'may'**, **'might'**, **'ought to'**, **'should have'** and **'could have'** seem to be less preferred by them in regard their few occurrences.

Conclusion

The results indicate that the difficulty of modal verbs is due to their semantic and pragmatic features. The students' responses to the test help to gain further insight about ES/FL learners' difficulty in the use of modal verbs on sentence and discourse levels. Thus, the two research hypotheses of the present study are confirmed: Algerian university learners would fail to use the modal verbs if they are engaged to express modality in English; and the students' lack of knowledge of the semantic and pragmatic use of English modal verbs would be the reason behind that. Finally, this research as well has clearly shown the importance to identify what are the difficulties students have when using the English modal verbs.

Introduction

The current study attempted to explore the students' difficulties and their perceptions associated to the learning and teaching of English modal verbs. Results were obtained from the test and the questionnaires of 116 second year master students of English at the University 'Frères Mentouri Constantine1 in order to answer the six major questions and to test the hypotheses of the study. This chapter brings the research into conclusion. It presents a summary and a short discussion of the findings of the six questions posed at the beginning of the study. It also attempts to explain and interpret the results gained from the selected research instruments and in light of the reviewed literature. Finally, it ends with some objective recommendations in a form of pedagogical implications for students, teachers, course designers and instructors, as well as suggesting some significant areas to be dealt with for further study.

6.1. Discussion of the Findings

The use of mixed method to undertake our research attempted to illustrate more effectively the complex and multi-faceted nature of the learning of English modals in FL classroom. Many insights would emerge. The use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches in classroom-based research inevitably reveals more about language learning than either approach could do singularly. The results of this mixed method helped to support the hypotheses stated at the beginning of this dissertation. They were not competent sociolinguistically and pragmatically. It can be recommended to apply a more pragmatic and discourse approach to teach English modal verbs.

6.1.1 Findings Related to Hypothesis One

The students' questionnaire provided insights on their perceptions of these difficulties and the reasons behind that. The test aimed to evaluate nine English modal verbs; **'will'** , **'would'**, **'shall'**, **'should'**, **'may'**, **'must'**, **'have to'**, **'can'**, **'could'**. The responses reflected

the students' difficulties in the use of English modal verbs in terms of type and frequency. It was found that students do face difficulty when deciding on the appropriate modals with appropriate functions; since most modals have more than one function. Major conclusion drawn from the research is that our learners use compensation strategies to compensate their deficiency in the use of English modals. Most students do not like to use modal verbs to express their modality. The students' responses to activity one have revealed that the majority of the students avoid using English modals and the few of them usually use **'can'** and **'will'**. The reasons why students seldom use modal verbs and why they use **'can'** and **'will'** in particular so often are worthy to be found out for English teachers. If English teachers can make out the problems, they can figure out some solutions to help their students.

The results of the study confirmed the first hypothesis **"Algerian university learners would fail to use the modal verbs, if they are engaged to express modality in English**. The findings of our study show that the students do not possess adequate knowledge of English modal verbs. Jacobs and Roderick (1995), who argued that modal verbs cause difficulties for non – native speakers, confirm this result. In other words, they do not know which modal to use in a particular context. This was discovered in the test administered to them. This may be due to the inherent difficulty in the modals verbs themselves and the students' avoidance strategies in the use of English. The idea is therefore, there is the need for practice on the topic under study to improve the TL use of the learners.

6.1.2. Findings Related to Hypothesis Two

The results of the study confirmed the second hypothesis**: the lack of knowledge of the semantic and pragmatic use of English modal verbs would be the reason behind the students' misuse of them.** After analyzing all the students' usages of modal verbs in the test, we realized that the difficulties in students' learning modal verbs. The main difficulty does not lie in modal verbs' surface forms, but in the meaning and function aspect. In addition,

students are also confused with the subtle differences among modal verbs. Even if students understand every usage and meaning of modal verbs, they still have difficulty in using modal verbs in the right situation. From the test analysis, it is also found that almost all of the students did not use any modal verbs in their responses although they were asked to do (see Part Four: Cloze Procedure activity). the results further showed the students' tendency to use **'can'**, '**will'**, **'could'**, and **'would'** are used most often(see Part One: Writing Activity).

From the analyses of the students' difficulties in the use of modal verbs, we concluded that there are four factors behind this failure. The first one is misunderstanding of modal verbs, which means that students only remember some of modal verbs and use them in every situation they encounter in communication. The second one is the oversimplification of modal verbs. Students learn some meanings of modal verbs but they only remember one of them. In other words, they think each modal verb only has one meaning. The third factor is the effect of some fixed idiomatic expressions, such as "*Would* you…". Since students are used to this idiom, they tend to over-generalize its use. The last but not the least important factor is the interference of students' native languages.

6.2. Pedagogical Implications

The results obtained from both means of the present research have emphasized the great importance of EA studies and pragmatics in teaching English modal verbs in ES/FL context. Error studies have to be taken into account since it has been proven to be a very useful tool to help both teachers and learners to measure the level of learning achieved. It is a way to help them to be aware of the most difficult aspects of the TL as well as the causes of errors. Being aware of the type and nature of students´ errors from a pragmatic perspective might also facilitate their prevention and the design of proper teaching methodology and material. In this section, some key pedagogical implications to help learners and teachers to comprehend the issue of modality in language teaching research will be suggested.

6.2.1 Importance of Error Analysis Studies

Ravem (1974:154) pointed out that *"the more we know about language learning the more likely we are to be successful in our teaching of a second language"*. Errors tend to be viewed negatively in L2 teaching and learning. They are usually considered to be a sign of inadequacy of the teaching and learning. However, it is now generally accepted that error making is a necessary part of learning and language teachers should use the errors with a view of improving teaching. One of the measures teachers should take is to create an environment where students are not embarrassed or frustrated by errors they make (Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982). Students should be told that the process of acquiring the TL is universal and systematic irrespective of the personal background and also some mistakes made by them could also be found among native learners (Ellis 1997). They are inevitable in language acquisition.

Lightbown and Spada (2000:176-192) argued that errors occur frequently and it is useful for teachers to bring the problem to the students' attention. The significance of this study is, therefore, to inform teachers, educators and syllabus designers about the kind of errors that the TL learners make. Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe (2002:44) stated that *"research adds power to everyday observations ..."* If teachers, educators and study material developers become conscious of likely problem areas that face specific ethnic groups, they will be in a better position to put appropriate intervention strategies into place. Studying the errors made by Second year Master students of English when using modal verbs helps understand why students make errors and how they make those errors. Their errors should thus be treated positively, and regarded as evidence of their language development and a stage of the learning process. After spotting the errors, we should diagnose what types of errors they are and try to find out what problems our students are encountering. Then, different and revised teaching methods can be adopted.

6.2.2. Implications for Learners

The research findings showed that the students' performance in the designed test was characterized by being a medium or, even, below average level of achievement. Certainly, such trouble might arise from the fact that those students had not mastered enough knowledge of grammatical rules across their different learning stages. Students should be well prepared and directed to think that they are the real responsible for the duty of improving their grammatical skills so as to ensure acceptable standards of achievement. More obviously, Algerian learners need to keep studying grammar on a regular basis which is believed to have a tremendous impact on their overall L2 language competence. In so fulfilling, it seems that the learner-oriented method of instruction will be a solid foundation of developing students' grammatical skills.

Student-centered orientation involves that students should become self-sufficient language performer. In other words, they have to transfer themselves from being passive receivers of grammar, to rather active producers of it by processing the grammatical knowledge they have learned using certain relevant rules into actual communicative contexts. Students have to participate actively in self-learning process by availing any possible opportunity to develop self-control methods rather than merely submit to teachers' control. By doing so, students will have enough chance to develop their creativity and critical thinking, because when students link themselves into a learner-centered curriculum, teachers normally focus on what their students can do rather than what they cannot do which, in turn, will result positively in building students' self-esteem as well as raising their teachers' good expectations towards them. As Weaver (1990) put it, "*students in whole-language classrooms are thinkers and doers, not merely passive recipients of information. They learn to think critically and creatively and process and evaluate information and ideas rather than merely to accept them"* (pp. 26-27).

6.2.3. Importance of Pragmatics in Teaching English Modal Verbs

Richards, Platt and Platt (1985: 356-57) gave pragmatics a clear definition. Pragmatics is the study of the use of language in communication, particularly the relationships between sentences and the contexts and situations in which they are used. Pragmatics includes the study of

a. how the interpretation and use of utterances depends on knowledge of the real world,

b. how speakers use and understand speech acts, and

c. how the structure of sentences is influenced by the relationship between the speaker and the hearer.

When we acquire our L1, we also acquire the sociolinguistic and pragmatic norms with it, in other words, we produce not only grammatically correct sentences in our mother tongue, but also sentences that are appropriate in any given social context. Pragmatic competence is the ability to convey messages with intended meaning and to interpret messages with the intended meaning as well. The competence is subdivided into two sub-competences: discourse and functional competences. Discourse competence is the ability to organize written and spoken text coherently and cohesively. The ability to use written or spoken discourse in communication for serving specific functional goals is called functional competence. Sociolinguistic competence refers to the knowledge and skills involved in using the language in an appropriate way in terms of social norms and customs. Therefore, it deals with issues such as differences in register, dialects and accents, rules of address, politeness, and expressions of folk-wisdom among others. The key factors in developing the students' sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences are the means of teaching such as a textbook, the language curriculum and the teachers.

6.2.3.1. Developing Students' Pragmatic Performance

In learning L2, we are taught grammar rules, vocabulary, pronunciation and other aspects of the language form. L2 classroom is usually the only place where students are exposed to the TL and when the students are not taught sociolinguistic and pragmatic aspects of the language even in class, we get speakers of English language who are not communicatively competent to use language in real life situations. The findings of the present research have a number of pedagogical implications for the importance of pragmatics for both classroom pedagogy and curriculum design.

First, teaching practices should focus on the sociolinguistic and pragmatic rules of L2 and expose learners to adequate and authentic input in the classroom. Uso-Juan (2007:225) pointed out that *"natural language use is far more complex than simply realizing functions with suitable exponents as presented in textbooks"*. Learners' exposure to rich and contextually appropriate input is a prerequisite for the development of their pragmatic competence in the TL (Kasper, 2001; Kasper & Roever, 2005). Exposure in terms of the amount and type of input seems to be able to reduce transfer. One accessible source of input can be the L2 media, such as film, radio, or online listening resources.

Second, teachers need to facilitate learners' understanding and knowledge of areas of the convergences and divergences between L1 and L2 as well as universal pragmatic and discourse systems. Rose and Kasper (2001) argued that adult learners have mostly developed a mature system of pragmatic knowledge, as they get a considerable amount of L2 pragmatic knowledge for free because some pragmatic knowledge is universal. Therefore, when it comes to the L2 learning and use, learners naturally fall back on their well-formed universal and L1 pragmatic and discourse system of knowledge and utilize the available sources of knowledge in their repertoire. It is important for teachers to point out that certain strategies

and formulae are not to be overused in all situations, and instead, they go along with their social functions.

Thus, teachers need to implement the teaching of pragmatics. They should use materials that are well contextualized and meaningful to learners. Teachers should simulate real-world social contexts in their pedagogic activities designed in richly contextualized discourse and introduce the relationship between discourse patterns, interactional contexts, coping strategies as well as interactional outcomes. Additional research might be needed in order to find out effective method to teach English modal verbs in Algerian context. It is vital that L2 teachers should periodically update and enhance their sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences, and in general, their overall communicative competence; and to impart this valuable knowledge to their L2 students with the modern methods of teaching English in this way making their classes truly communicative and improving their teaching outcomes by achieving higher degree of proficiency in learners.

6.2.3.2. Teaching English Modal Verbs

It is very clear to find that pragmatics has much to do with communication, which is the purpose of using language. English modal verbs are used to express the speakers' attitudes toward something. One modal verb may have different meanings in different contexts, which involves pragmatics. In other words, modal verbs should be connected with pragmatics because they are used to express speakers' attitudes when communicating with each others. Besides, the principle that the different meanings of modal verbs used in different contexts coincide with pragmatic consideration. Therefore, the concept of pragmatics should be put into the process of teaching.

If pragmatics is not put into modal verb instruction, students will not learn authentic English. Students may learn that using '***can'*** to ask a person of his ability, but they will not know the real intention of using **'*could'***. For example, when a speaker asks the question "*Can*

you drive", there is a high certainty that the hearer has the ability to drive. If the speaker uses ***'could'*** to ask the question, there is no certainty of the hearer's ability. Nevertheless, in the real world, "*Can* you drive" is a question to ask a person's ability, while "*Could* you drive" is to represent your intention in asking him to take over the wheels. This is a specific example of pragmatics. This pragmatic issue should be included in the instructional practices and receive more emphasis. The following are some of recommendations reached on the basis of analysis of both the test and questionnaire:

Students showing poor proficiency in English should be instructed in the use of formal modal verbs ('**would'** and **'could')** for making formal requests, considering that the frequency of these modal verbs in their responses was significant. Students could be instructed in the use of the modal verb **'may'.** They should be trained to differentiate informal expressions from formal expressions and to be able to decide on the use of formality/informality on a given occasion. To help L2 learners become aware of the existence of the formal and informal usage in English and the necessity to use language showing appropriate features of formality/informality to suit an occasion, teachers could concentrate their efforts on two aspects. First, students could be made aware of the formal/informal nature of different occasions by noting contextual elements related to a request including for example, the background of the addressee (age, gender, L1, social position) and the force of imposition of the request. Second, the formality level of expressions appearing in different genres, (e.g., song lyrics, news in English, conversations in TV programs) could be explained to students, since it may not be within L2 learners' knowledge that idioms, phrasal verbs and conversational words used in these genres are generally regarded as informal by native speakers of English. It would be also interesting to investigate how modality is expressed through different varieties of English. Future research could examine speech acts described in different varieties of English. Comparisons could be made to see whether there are significant

differences between native speakers of British English and American English as major varieties of English through providing learners with samples.

6.2.3.3. Presentation of Modal Verbs in Different Contexts

When teaching modal verbs, first, the typical usage and meaning of each modal verb should be clarified, and then, extend the basic meaning into other meanings of each modal verb. After students learn that modal verbs have different meanings and usages, the subtle differences of different modal verbs should be introduced and compared. Besides the presentation of each modal verb, different contexts where each modal verb occurs should be introduced. Teachers should give students some real world situations to make them acquainted with the different usages of modal verbs. This part can be combined with pragmatics. An understanding the variety on the patterns of each modal verb can be a useful instrument for the EF/SL student, who needs a feeling for these patterns but lacks the opportunity to become acquainted with the individual form of the modals in the context of daily life. As a result, teachers should provide students with this tool by combination of different teaching methods and the theory of pragmatics.

Since modal verbs have different usages and meanings in the different contexts, students should understand that choice of modal verbs for a given function depends on their basic meaning, not just their position on a scale of probabilities, and there is a principle of "social distance" related to epistemic distance. Bowen and McCreary (1977) mentioned in their study that "when the various functions of the perfect modals are isolated and presented in the highly precise contexts in which the native speaker regularly uses them, the student will learn. A series of mini-situations, set by a sentence or two of context, can be used to present each discrete use in turn (p.290)." They point out that a precise context is necessary and important.

It is also worth recommended that students should be given the exact context that each modal verb is used. Then they will know how to use modal verbs correctly. Similarly, Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) also gave teachers the same suggestion. When presenting English modal verbs, teachers should be aware of the relevant features or environments that the modal verb occurs. Cook (1978) pointed out that teachers must first know some basic facts about modals and then can present the modals to students. In order to teach modal verbs to L2 students of English, the teacher should be aware of the basic facts about modal verbs in term of type; epistemic or root modal, negation form, and tense, passive, progressive, perfective. The main objective is to provide clues which, in most cases will determine the precise meaning of a particular modal in context (p.15). Cook was trying to give teachers a way to understand the nature of each modal. Teachers not only should understand the meanings of each modal verb, but they should also realize the relative part, such as tense or negation (Cook, 1978; Hubbard, 1984). Only when teachers understand the basic characteristics of modal verbs, they will know how to present the modal verbs to students.

It can be concluded from what the linguists have proposed that it is very important for teachers to understand different aspects of each modal. Only after all the various uses have been treated individually in class can the teacher safely offer the student a context where they are grouped together. For example, modals are frequent in a discussion or written description of job openings that need to be filled. Both Ur (1988) and Thewlis (1997) suggested exploiting this situation by asking students to describe a suitable candidate for a particular job, possibly after examining some advertisements from newspaper. Students could also write their own want ads or job descriptions. He then asked students to discuss why any of the jobs would not interest them (p.154). They suggested that teachers should give some real-life situations to ask students to practice the use of modal verbs.

Besides, teachers should separate epistemic meaning and deontic meaning. They are significantly different. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) said that when modals are used for social interaction, the person using them must take into account the relevant features of the social situation. For example, in "You may leave the room," the speaker should have sufficient status and authority to be able to grant permission to the interlocutor(s). Furthermore, the situation should be formal rather than informal, or the speaker would have used "can" instead of "may" for granting permission (p.141). From the example, it can be seen that knowing all the relevant features of participants, time, and place of the social situation allows the speaker to select the appropriate modal verb in any given interaction. Before students are given different contexts to use modals, it is necessary for them to know when and where each modal will appear. The different modal verbs will be associated with certain syntactic or semantic features as mentioned by Ney (1981):

a. In general, the root interpretation is excluded by the progressive and perfect. (p.3)

b. Epistemic modals occur with state, process and action verbs, but root modals occur with action verbs only. (p.4)

c. Root modals do not occur with the progressive or with the perfect tense markers in English (p.10).

Teachers may not explain these principles to students, but they need to be equipped with this kind of knowledge to judge grammaticalness and appropriateness in their teaching.

6.3. Limitations of the study

The findings of this study must be interpreted in light of several limitations with regard to the research design and the research instruments used. Some critical uncontrolled variables might have affected the validity and reliability of the current study findings and conclusions. "Individual study findings, regardless of how big the sample size or how complex the research design, cannot by themselves provide trustworthy answers to research

questions in a given domain, because of the multiple sources of error possibly influencing observations within a single study."(Norris and Ortega, 2001:163).

The study has covered only a small sample of students at one university, which is not representative of the huge population in Algeria. This may have limited the kind of individuals who were sampled, in terms of socioeconomic status or English studying experience. It may not be reliable to draw on major conclusions. If more subjects can be involved and if subjects from different forms can be involved, a more holistic picture can be created. Using various different universities may have made data more generalized. In addition to that, the reliability of the results might be affected by some students' unwillingness to complete the test. We witnessed some students felt tired due to having to complete the four activities to evaluate their ability to use the English modal verbs.

An important factor that is likely to affect the study's results is related to the choice of the test applied. The test used to assess the students knowledge of English modal verbs. Only a few categories of English modal verbs were investigated. Although four different activities were chosen to assess L2 proficiency, listening and speaking components were not included is the test. This limits its ability to produce a full assessment of learners' knowledge and ability to use the TL. As a matter of fact, it would have been preferable to have administered an oral production and discourse completion tasks targeting the different real life situations that would help the researchers get more information and more natural data. With more error types, more data can be obtained which benefits in analyzing and understanding L2 learners' mastery of English modal verbs.

6.4. Suggestions for Further Studies

Despite the above-mentioned limitations, the study can still bring some insightful implications for further research. As recognized along the journey of this study, we attempted to explore L2 learners' grammatical difficulty in the use of English modal which will

contribute to the literature of SLA and l2 instruction as discussed above. However, further points for extra research in relation to learners' use of modals are to be seriously considered for deeper investigation, since it is difficult to cover all the problematic and researchable areas with regard to the use of modal verbs in Algerian context.

We have only touched upon a small portion of the modal auxiliaries. We suspect that there are still many interesting aspects of the use of modals by L2 learners as waiting to be explored. We chose to focus on *the nine English modals* as representatives of the modals, which gave us the opportunity to investigate their use to a certain depth. We have not, however, been able to give any conclusive answers, as further investigations would be needed to do so. As many errors were identified in the students' responses to the proposed test, further research is clearly needed on English modality in the Algerian context. More useful, then, would be to study how modality is portrayed in our textbooks.

In addition, an even more promising object of future studies would be to include at least some of the semi-modals that were intentionally excluded. At least ***'have to', 'dare to'*** **and *'need to'*** should be included, and we would even advocate the inclusion of ***'be able to'*** to complete the list. The list could be supplemented with more semi-modals from the top of the frequency list, such as '***be going to'***, ***'be able to'***, ***'want to'*** and '***be to'***: these are all showing high frequencies especially in spoken registers (Leech et al. 2009: 97). Moreover, it would be interesting to see more detailed analyses of all English modal verbs. We feel that some of the nuances are lost that might well be the object of further research.

Because of the high influence of L1 on the acquisition of L2 syntax, comparative studies of syntactic structures in Arabic and English are suggested to help L2 learners overcome the influence of L1. The cross-linguistic differences between English and Arabic must be taken into consideration when pedagogical schemes are devised for English instruction. In order to overcome L1 influence, instructors must find out how L1 influences

the acquisition of L2. Teachers could provide learners with correct forms in all semantic contexts and emphasize what the corresponding wrong forms are. If contrasts are made when teaching every grammatical structure, confusion may occur. Perhaps, we need not mention the similarities but it is worthwhile pointing out the difference between Arabic and English to the students to arouse their consciousness of the differences in order to minimize the interlingual errors. This is what CA has been aiming at.

As noted earlier, the findings of the current study may not be applicable to other L2 learner populations, and the findings cannot be generalized to grammar features. Replication studies could also respond to some of the limitations of the current study with regard to the research instruments. For example, there is a need for a comparison of teachers' and students' perceptions of grammatical difficulty. Furthermore, from our investigation we discovered that our subjects generally have poor knowledge of them and their functions. In view of that, we recommend that further research is required concerning other areas such as the English tenses; grammatical concord; the English irregular verbs; phrasal verbs; and the English.

Finally, it is worth mentioning, studies of this kind would greatly benefit EF/SL language teaching field. We have shown along this study that English modality is an intriguing concept which poses many distinctive problems in an EF/SL setting. Teachers, learners and textbook authors alike should be made well aware of the intricacies involved in it. We would argue, moreover, that longitudinal studies with more subjects of different levels are suggested to collect more comprehensive data. By analyzing their language development and learning process, we can understand why and how they make errors and how these errors should be dealt with.

Conclusion

One of the primary goals of SLA teaching should be making the learner competent. L2 learners most often complained of having to difficulties in the use of some English modals. A

number of them would appreciate having more opportunities to practice them. The results bring some of the most common problems and difficulties the students struggle with, as well as some valuable feedback and suggestions for possible improvements. Acquiring English modal verbs is essential to achieve successful communication in L2. Further research is clearly needed on English modality in the Algerian context as modality is seldom an object of study. More useful, then, would be to study how modality as portrayed in our textbooks. An even more promising object of future studies would be to include all modal verbs and all their functions as used in real life situations. Moreover, it would be interesting to see more detailed analyses of all English modal verbs.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

This study has aimed at gaining insight into second/foreign language grammar acquisition. It studies the production and comprehension of English modal verbs at the university level and it responds to the lack of research dealing with English modal verbs particularly in Algeria. It investigates whether Algerian university students of English face difficulties in the comprehension and the production of English modal verbs in different social contexts, what are the major reasons behind the students' misuse of English modal verbs, and what are the strategies they use to compensate these deficiencies in order to express modality in English. The major aim is to provide suggestions and recommendations that may enhance better the teaching and learning of English modal verbs.

In order to achieve these aims, this research set out to critically examine the nature of competence of the target language in advanced language students, using a qualitative and qualitative case study method. The primary purpose was to find out the pragmatic competence of 116 Second Year Master students of English in the use of English modal verbs. Pragmatic competence is realized in terms of how learners comprehend and apply them when communicating in English. Data were gathered through two means of research: a students' questionnaire and a test. The students' responses were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively for the purpose to assess the research hypotheses: Algerian university learners would fail to use the modal verbs if they were engaged to express modality in English; and the students' lack of knowledge of the semantic and pragmatic use of English modal verbs would be the reason behind that. Findings in this study showed that the students under study have difficulties in the use of modal verbs due to their semantic and pragmatic features. They failed to use them appropriately when they are asked to respond to the test. Students prefer to use compensation strategy to avoid using them.

A number of implications can be drawn from the findings of the study. First, it would be interesting to measure the students' difficulty in the use of English modals and how they perceive this grammatical difficulty and how their perceptions of grammatical difficulty would relate to their overall proficiency and performance in English. Second, the findings with regard to students' responses to the test have implications for the measurement of knowledge of the target language. Third, methodologically, the present study demonstrated the advantages of the research instruments adopted allowing for multi-level analysis of the research problem investigated and increasing the validity of research outcomes. In addition, the research not only enhances our confidence in the validity of findings, but provides several implications that are useful for teachers of English in general and in this research context in particular. The finding that learners face grammatical difficulty on semantic and pragmatic levels suggests that it is essential to be aware of the level of learning difficulty that they are referring to. Therefore, the findings in this study hope to arouse more interest and attention of learners, teachers and educational professionals in this area. The findings will be of some benefit for both the teachers and the students, at least in that they will realize that English modal verbs and their practicing in language learning cannot be underestimated, and that building and improving one´s communicative competence in learning a second/foreign language is definitely worth every effort.

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APPENDIX I

The Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire. Your answers are very important for the validity of our research that attempts to assess Second Year Master students' use of English modal verbs at the Department of Letters and English Language, Frères Mentouri University, Constantine 1.

Please, put a tick next to your answer and a full statement when necessary. We appreciate your precious collaboration and the time devoted in filling out this questionnaire. May I thank you in advance for your collaboration.

Miss Salima SELMEN

Department of Letters and English Language

Faculty of Letters and Languages

University " Frères Mentouri", Constantine 1

Section One: The Students' Language Background

1. **Have you ever taken any English course out of the classroom?**

   Yes ☐

   No ☐

2. **Do you have additional chances to be exposed to English or to use English out of the classroom?**

   Yes ☐

   No ☐

3. **If "Yes", is it because: (You may choose more than one answer)**

   a. You have travelled to an English speaking country ☐

   b. You communicate online in English (in chat rooms or with an email to your contacts) ☐

   c. You often talk or text in English ☐

   d. You listen to English records/CD ROMs ☐

   e. You read books, reviews, newspapers, or magazines in English ☐

   f. You watch English TV programs and films ☐

   g. Other: Please, specify:……...……

Section Two: The Students' Opinion about their Use of English

4. **Do you like English?**

   Yes ☐

   No ☐

5. Please, justify your answer

……

……

6. Do you think that you can run a conversation with a native speaker

Yes ☐

No ☐

7. If "No", is it because of: (You may choose more than one answer)

a. Linguistic problems ☐

b. Lack of cultural knowledge ☐

c. Inability to use linguistic expressions appropriately ☐

d. Psychological factors like self-confidence ☐

e. Other, Please specify …….. ……..

8. Have you ever experienced a case of misunderstanding, when using English?

Yes ☐

No ☐

9. If "Yes", how did you find your listener or reader?

……

……

Section Three: the Students' Opinions about their Use of English Modal Verbs

10. English Grammar is important in order to learn English

Yes ☐

No ☐

11. English grammar is difficult

Yes ☐

No ☐

12. The score you used to get in grammar examination is:

a. Below the average ☐

b. Average ☐

c. More than the average ☐

13.Do you think that English Modal verbs are difficult to use?

Yes ☐

No ☐

14. If "Yes", is it because of the: (You may choose more than one answer)

a. Present/past tenses ☐

b. Affirmative, negative, and interrogative structures ☐

c. Meanings ☐

d. All of them ☐

15. Do you misuse English modal verbs because of: (You may choose more than one answer)

a. The difficulty inherent in the modals themselves ☐

b. The Lack of practice ☐

c. Lack of knowledge about the rules of usage ☐

d. The influence of your mother tongue ☐

e. All of them ☐

Section Three: Further suggestions

16. Please, add any comment or suggestion

……

……

……

……

……

……..

APPENDIX II

The Test

Part one: Writing Activity: Write one sentence about the following situations.

Situation One: You are going to Algiers for a weekend. Make suggestions about things to do there.

……

Situation Two: We start school in September. Make suggestions about what to buy for school.

……..

Situation Three: Your sister speaks different languages. What does this suggest to you?

……..

Situation Four: A friend has invited you to a party. You are not very keen to go but there isn't anything else to do, so you think you should go. What would you tell your friend?

……..

Situation Five: Your friend has got a headache and a congested nose. Give him/her some advice.

…….

Situation Six: You want to borrow your uncle's car. Ask for permission politely.

……..

Situation Seven: You found out that your close friend lied to you. Tell him/her you are very upset. ……..

Situation Eight: You are on the train. You have a seat but a pregnant lady is standing. Offer her your seat?

……

Situation Nine: You want someone to hold the door open for you. Ask him/her to do it for you. ……

Part Two: Multiple Choice Activity: Circle the appropriate English modal verb in the following sentences.

1. My son _____ be home by now. Where can he be?

a. would
b. should
c. could

2. I think your thumb is broken. You _____ go to the emergency room.

a. might
b. could
c. ought to

3. If you are interested in losing weight, you_____ try this new diet.

a. mustn't
b. could
c. had to

4. John's fallen down the stairs! I _____call an ambulance!

a. may
b. will
c. might

5. Children _____be accompanied by an adult at the zoo.

a. ought to
b. must
c. would

6. You _____ talk during tests. It's forbidden!

a. must not
b. could not
c. ought to

7. I can feel the heat. We _____ be near the fire.

a. have to
b. would
c. must

8. They _____ hear him because he was whispering.

a. wouldn't
b. mustn't
c. couldn't

9. You've never heard of Britney Spears? You _____ be serious!

a. will not
c. cannot
d. should not

10. _____ you like to have dinner with me tonight?

a. Could
b. May
c. Would

11. You _____ let him hear about the party tomorrow. It's a surprise!

a. wouldn't
b. mustn't
c. couldn't

12. _____ I speak to the Chief Councellor, please?

a. Must
b. May
c. Would

13. He has arrived late. He _____have missed the bus

a. must
b. should
c. could

Part Three: Fill in the blanks Activity: Complete the following sentences with the appropriate English modal verb using the hints in brackets.

Situation One: I… …….not know what to say to him if he showed up.

(I am unprepared to speak him)

Situation Two: It is company policy; … …….do it this way or your expenses won't be reinforced**. (The company requires that this procedure be followed for expense reimbursements.)**

Situation Three: I'm in terrible shape! I … …….exercise more! (I have decided that more exercise is an absolute necessity for me)

Situation Four … …….you get this report done for us by tomorrow morning? **(are you willing and able to prepare this report by tomorrow if we ask you?)**

Situation Five: … …….you handle this much work on a regular basis? **(Do you have the capacity to handle this much work regulary?)**

Situation Six We were worried about you. You … …….have called us as soon as you knew you would be late**. (calling someone when you will be late is a good idea, in my opinion.)**

Situation Seven: You … ……want to think a little more carefully about that before trying it next time. **(I think you were stupid not to think more carefully about it)**

Situation Eight: Ellen … ……be sent to London this summer, if the board decides that the situation there allows it**. (The trip is certainly possible, but whether or not she goes depends on the boards' preference.)**

Part Four: Cloze Procedure Activity:
Fill in the blanks in the following text with the appropriate modal verb and the correct form of the verbs in brackets..

I went to interview Vincenzo Caleone at his home for an article in a local newspaper. Vincenzo's parents had to migrate to the United States of America because of poverty. His parents can't remember exactly, but they say he (1)_____ (be) any older than six at the time, since he still had his baby teeth. His father was worried that Vincenzo (2)_____ (learn) English, so he (3)_____ (Vincenzo/not speak) Italian even at home. He needn't have worried because Vincenzo was fluent in English before his tenth birthday, which he celebrated with his friends from school. His mother, on the other hand, was worried that he (4)_____(lose) his Sicilian identity. She was wrong also. He was able to combine the best of the two worlds. You (5)_____(see) him in his own house now to understand what I mean. "At the very beginning, it (6)_____(be) quite a challenge for you," I say. Vincenzo, a respected linguistics professor at a prestigious university, just laughs and says, "It certainly was. Nevertheless, you should talk to my children before you write your article. Then you (7)_____ (really/understand) how I am still struggling to keep my cultural identity." (Adapted from Practice your English2+key).

Résumé

Pour une communication réussie dans la langue d'arrivée il faut non seulement une maîtrise de la syntaxe, la morphologie, la phonologie et le lexique, mais aussi l'aptitude à utiliser les expressions les plus appropriées au contexte. Les apprenants de la langue d'arrivée ont toujours besoin d'acquérir des connaissances linguistiques et des compétences pour une utilisation optimale de la langue. De nombreux grammairiens et de chercheurs en linguistique appliquée considèrent les verbes modaux être les verbes les plus problématiques pour les apprenants et les enseignants à cause de leurs propriétés formelles et sémantiques. La présente étude met en examen la capacité des apprenants d'une langue étrangère ou seconde à utiliser les verbes modaux anglais et la nature des difficultés rencontrées et les facteurs affectant leur utilisation. Le but de cette étude est d'explorer l'usage des apprenants en termes de leurs stratégies de communication et de leur compétence linguistique. Avec tous les problèmes associés aux difficultés d'enseigner et apprendre les verbes modaux et le besoin de retrouver une approche qui puisse faciliter l'enseignement et l'apprentissage de ces verbes, nous avons avancé l'hypothèse suivante : les étudiants algériens seront incapables de faire un usage correct des verbes modaux s'il se trouve en besoin d'exprimer la modalité en anglais, et leur manque de connaissance sémantique et pragmatique sur les verbes modaux anglais sera la cause de cet échec . Afin de vérifier ces hypothèses, les donnés de cette recherche furent recueillies à partir de deux testes et un questionnaires adressés à un échantillon de 116 étudiants tiré d'une population totale de 360 étudiants de deuxième année master au département d'anglais à l'université des frères Mentouri- Constantine 1. Les résultats furent analysés qualitativement et quantitativement pour attester la fréquence d'utilisation de ces modaux par ces étudiants et les difficultés que ces derniers rencontrent dans l'utilisation de chaque verbe modal sélectionné sur le plan de production et de compréhension. D'autre part, l'analyse a voulu identifier les éventuels facteurs qui peuvent affecter l'usage de ces verbes modaux. Les résultats obtenus donnent une idée plus claire sur l'évaluation de l'acquisition de la modalité par les étudiants. A cet égard, nous avons arrivé à une explication plausible des erreurs commis par les étudiants et nous avons pu fournir des recommandations pédagogiques théoriques et pratiques.

Mots clés : Grammaire, verbes modaux anglais, compréhension, production, compétence, performance.

الملخص

حتى يكون التواصل ناجحا لا يكفي التحكم في التراكيب النحوية والصرفية والصوتيات والمفردات، بل لابد أيضل من القدرة على استعمال العبارات المناسبة في السياقات المناسبة. متعلمو أي لغة بحاجة دائمة إلى الاستزادة من المعارف اللغوية للتمكن من ناصية اللغة. يعتبر العديد من النحويين والباحثين في مجال اللسانيات التطبيقية أن الأفعال الناقصة هي أكثر الافعال إشكالا بالنسبة للمعلمين والمتعلمين على حد سواء بسبب الخاصيات الشكلية والدلالية لهذه الأفعال. تعد هذه الدراسة بحثا في استعمال متعلمي اللغات لهذه الأفعال الناقصة وطبيعة الصعوبات التي يواجهونها في هذا السياق والعوامل المؤثرة في استعمالهم لها. يكمن الهدف من هذه الدراسة إذا في الكشف عن الاستعمال اللغوي للطلبة من حيث استراتجيتهم التواصلية وكفاءتهم في اللغة المراد تلقينها. مع وجود كل هذه المشاكل المرتبطة بصعوبات تعلم وتلقين الأفعال الناقصة ومع الحاجة إلى ابتكار منهج يسهل تعلمها وتلقينها، نفترض أن الطلبة الجزائريين سيخفقون في استعمال الأفعال الناقصة إذا ما اضطروا إلى التعبير عن الجهة في اللغة الانجليزية ويرجع هذا الاخفاق إلى الاستعمال الدلالي والبراغماتي لهذه الافعال. وللتأكد من صحة فرضيات البحث، جمعنا المعطيات باعتماد اختبارين واستبيان وجهناهم إلى عينة متكونة من 116 طالب من أصل 360 طالب مسجل في السنة الثانية ماستر، بقسم اللغة الانجليزية، جامعة الإخوة منتوري، قسنطينة 1. تم تحليل النتائج كميا ونوعيا من أجل فحص الوتيرة التي يعتمدها الطلبة في استعمالهم لهذه الأفعال والصعوبات التي يواجهونها في استعمال كل فعل من هذه الأفعال على مستويي الفهم والانتاج، ومن جهة أخرى يهدف التحليل إلى الكشف عن العوامل المؤثرة في هذا الاستعمال. تساعد نتائج هذه الدراسة في فهم أفضل لكيفية تقييم مدى اكتساب الطلبة للمعارف المتعلقة بالتعبير عن الجهة بالانجليزية. وفي هذا السياق، تم التوصل إلى تفسير ممكن لأخطاء الطلبة وتقديم توصيات بيداغوجية نظرية وتطبيقية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القواعد النحوية ، الأفعال الشرطية لإنجليزية ، الفهم ، الإنتاج ، الكفاءة ، الأداء.