Difficulties Encountered by EFL Learners at Secondary Level when Dealing with the English Main Modals in Written Discourse:


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July 2015
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Dedication

This humble work is dedicated to:

the soul of Ustaz Babikir Al-Haj Al-Bilali, who was more than an inspiring teacher.

my parents, my wife, my supportive brothers and their beloved children. I wish them health and longevity.

my dearest uncle Ahmed Mahmoud Ali, who has kept encouraging me.

my friends and colleagues, who are part of me.
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Yassir Ahmed Khojali Babikir

Abstract

The English modals as a branch of verb, are one of the most important elements of English language that enable their users to communicate and to express proposition, and its degree of truthfulness from the speaker’s viewpoint as they contain grammar functions such as possibility, probability, ability, deduction and others, which are contextually determined. Thus the modals are a mirror that reflects the inside of the speaker. The study aimed at investigating difficulties encountered by EFL learners at secondary level when dealing with the English main modals in written discourse; a case study of Al-shambata secondary school for girls. The study used the descriptive analytical approach. The questionnaire and the diagnostic test were used as tools for data collection. A random sample of (50) students, (37%) of the study population was selected to carry out the diagnostic test. And (20) EFL teachers which represent (30%) of the EFL teachers at secondary schools in East Sinnar locality. The data were analyzed by using simple percentage. The study reached many findings; that most EFL learners (65%) encounter difficulties when dealing with the English main modals in written discourse, and (70%) of the students confuse the modals’ functions, besides (78%) of the EFL learners face difficulty in expressing deduction using modals, and (65%) of the EFL teachers agree that the English modals do not enjoy adequate attention in the syllabus of the secondary level. On the light of the findings, the study provides some recommendations; raise EFL teachers and learners awareness of the importance of the modals for communication, students should carry out group and pair work activities that are based on modals. The study recommends that presenting the modals in everyday situations is the best way of teaching them, and also early preparation of the learners to use the modals in different contexts, and to provide more space for the modals in the syllabus. The study suggests more investigation in the English modals concerning their teaching techniques and their effects especially on the presidential speeches.
الصعوبات التي يواجهها طالب اللغة الإنجليزية بالمرحلة الثانوية بوصفها لغة أجنبية عند تعاملهم
تحريرياً مع أفعال الصيغ المساعدة الرئيسية: دراسة حالة طالبات مدرسة الشمباتة الثانوية – محلة

ياسر أحمد خوجلي بابكر

ملخص الدراسة

تعد أفعال الصيغ المساعدة بوصفها فرع من فروع الفعل من أهم عناصر اللغة الإنجليزية التي تمكن مستخدميها من التواصل و التعبير عن الخبر و اتجاه مفاهيمه من وجه نظر اللغة، مما يجعلهم جزءاً من النحو مثل الإمكانية والاستطاعة، والاستنتاج و غيرها من المعاني التي يحملها السياق. فهي بذلك مراة تعكس حتى اتجاه الفكر وتوجيه المحادثة. هدفت الدراسة إلى دراسة الصعوبات التي يواجهها دارسي اللغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية بالمرحلة الثانوية عند التعامل مع أفعال الصيغ المساعدة تحريرياً حيث أخذت مدرسة الشمباتة الثانوية بنات كحالة لإجراء الدراسة. اتبعت الدراسة النهج الوصفي التحليلي. استخدمت الدراسة الإستبانة و الإختبار التشخيصي بوصفها أدوات لجمع البيانات. تم اختيار عينة عشوائية بلغت (50) طالبة تمثل (37%) من مجتمع الدراسة لإجراء الاختبار و (20) معلمًا تمثل (30%) من معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية بالمدارس الثانوية بمدينة شرق سنار ولاية سنار. تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام النسب المئوية البسيطة. دفعت الدراسة إلى عدة نتائج أهمها أن (65%) من الطلاب يعتنقون أفعال الصيغ المساعدة بوصفها ضرورية، (70%) من الطلاب لا يميزون بين وظائف أفعال الصيغ المساعدة في تعبيرهم، كما أن (78%) من الطلاب لا يجدون صعوبة في التعبير عن الاستنتاج باستعمال أفعال الصيغ المساعدة. (65%) من معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية بالمرحلة الثانوية يوافقون على أن أفعال الصيغ المساعدة لاتاعتبر من الاهتمام المناسب في منهج اللغة الإنجليزية بالمرحلة الثانوية. وعلى ضوء هذه النتائج، توصي الدراسة بضرورة أن يكون أفعال الصيغ المساعدة في التواصل لطلاب و معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية بالمرحلة الثانوية، كما توصي الدراسة بضرورة قيام الطلاب بانشطة تواصلية تحتوي على أفعال الصيغ المساعدة في مجموعات أو أزواج، مع بعض التمارين التوجيهية. كما توصي بضرورة أن يكون استخدام أفعال الصيغ المساعدة في سياقات متعددة مع زيادة المساهمة لهذه الأفعال في منهج اللغة الإنجليزية بالمرحلة الثانوية. تتلخص هذه الدراسة اجراء المزيد من الدراسات عن أفعال الصيغ المساعدة فيما يختص بطريق تدريسها وكذلك دراسة أثرها في الخطاب خاصة الخطب الرئاسية.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1-0 Background

English modals are considered as one of the types of the verbs in English language. They are those verbs that are used to express possibility, intention, obligation etc. According to Palmer (1988:33), modal verbs are one of the ways that express and mark modality. It has been said that English has a set of modal verbs which can formally be identified, they are (can, may, must, ought, will and shall) and some of them are considered as marginal, they are (might, would, could and should). It is argued that the modals are members of a larger set of auxiliary verbs that exhibit what is called NICE properties – their occurrence with negation, inversion, code and emphatic affirmation. These properties are shared with other auxiliaries. But the modal verbs have their own distinctive features; first they do not co-occur, secondly, there is no –s forms for their third person singular, also, they do not have non-finite forms (* I hope to can come tomorrow), besides, they have no imperative forms. For dealing with modals as auxiliary verbs, Palmer (1974: 95) says ‘The idea of treating modals as auxiliary verbs was based initially upon their functions with negation, inversion, code and emphatic affirmation.’

The modals are classified into different types based on different criteria. According to Palmer (1974:100), modal verbs in terms of orientation can be classified into subject-oriented modals and discourse-oriented modals. The former relates semantically to some kinds of activity, quality, and status of the subject of the sentence. Whereas the latter relates rather to the part played by one of the participants in the discourse (speaker or hearer) e.g. ‘John shall come tomorrow’ it is the speaker who grantees that John will come. Based on the uses of English modals, they are classified into epistemic and non-epistemic. e.g. ‘He couldn’t be there yesterday’ such sentence is considered as non-epistemic since it refers to lack of ability in the past and the modal itself is marked for tense. The following example is epistemic as the modal indicates a function – impossibility, ‘he can’t have been here yesterday’.
1-1 Statement of the study

It has been noticed that EFL learners at secondary level encounter difficulties when dealing with the modals in written discourse. They provide incorrect answers to the questions that require suitable modal verbs, and they are not aware of the main English modals and their properties, hence the researcher has decided to find out these difficulties and provide some solutions.

2-1 Objectives of the study

1-2-1 To find out the difficulties that are faced by EFL learners at secondary level when dealing with the English main modals in written discourse.

1-2-2 To reveal the most problematic main modals for EFL learners at secondary level.

1-2-3 To suggest solutions that help EFL learners at secondary level to deal successfully with the main modals in written discourse.

1-3 Questions of the Study

1-3-1 To what extent do EFL learners at secondary level face difficulties when dealing with the main modals in written discourse?

1-3-2 What are the most problematic main modals for EFL secondary level learners when dealing with the modals in written discourse?

1-3-3 What are the most effective solutions that enable EFL secondary level learners to deal successfully with the main modals in written discourse?

1-4 Hypotheses of the Study

1-4-1 Most EFL learners at secondary level face difficulties when dealing with the main English modals in written discourse.

1-4-2 Modals that express deduction (must, cannot and could not) are the most problematic modals for EFL learners at secondary level in case of written discourse.

1-4-3 Syllabuses at secondary level do not provide adequate attention to the English main
1-4-4 Intensive exercises of the main modals will help EFL learners at secondary level to deal successfully with them in written discourse.

1-5 Significance of the Study

Knowledge of modal verbs is of vital importance especially to EFL learners at secondary level, it enables them to express English modality, and helps the EFL learners to communicate properly inside and outside classrooms. So this study is expected to be very useful to EFL learners at secondary schools and especially in Sinnar state, and also for EFL teachers at secondary level, besides the EFL syllabus designers.

1-6 Methodology

The Descriptive analytical method will be adopted to carry out the study. A sample of (20) EFL teachers and (50) students will be selected purposefully from east Sinnar locality secondary schools. Two tools will be used to collect the data required for carrying out the study. A written diagnostic test for (50) EFL students at Al-Shambata secondary school for girls, and a questionnaire for (20) EFL teachers. For the data analysis, the simple percentages are used.

1-7 Limits of the Study

The study will be limited to the difficulties that encountered by EFL learners at secondary level when dealing with the main English modals in written discourse. The sample of the study will be (50) secondary third level students from Al-Shambata secondary school for girls, besides (20) EFL teachers will be selected from east Sinnar locality secondary schools. The study will be conducted in 2014 – 2015.

The following chapter will discuss the literature review and the previous studies.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2-0 Introduction

As the study entitled “Difficulties encountered by EFL learners at secondary level when dealing with main English modal verbs”, it is justifiable that the scope of this chapter is to be confined to the discussion of the theoretical part concerning English modals. It includes the historical background of the English modals, definition and the scope of modality. In addition, the previous studies which have been carried out in the same field, will be covered.

2–1 Historical Background

With respect to the history of modals, Perkins (1983: 6), states that, Aristotle was the first one to commit to writing his ideas of what is now referred to as modality. The central notions of Aristotle discussion about modality are necessity, possibility and impossibility, beside the relation that stands among them. However, Court and Denison in (www.humaities.manchester.ac.uk), provide a different point of view that, though the modals have the semantic meanings as Aristotle mentions, but they are prototype category of verbs, some of which are main modals while others are marginal. According to Warner (1990), cf (www.hunnaities.manchester.ac.uk), the category of modals evolved over many hundreds of years, they possibly became a basic category in a rapid burst of change, in late 16th century. He goes further providing that, the modals had become fully recognized as auxiliary system by the end of the 18th century, and ever since, the category of modals continues to be sharply delineated. Similarly, Lightfoot (1979) cf Rissanen et al (1992:287), argues that, the modals in the Old English, were treated as main verbs, and that a series of independent changes in the course of the Mediaeval English result in modal auxiliaries in the 16th century. However, Van Kemenade in Rissanen et al (1992: 287), opposes the idea of changing, providing that, the pattern of the two categories is more similar on the surface. A different perspective in the history of the modals, is provided by Charles Bally (1932), cf (http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen), who suggests that, in the mediaeval English, proposition used to be decomposed into modus and dictum, the modus corresponds to propositional contents, whereas the dictum stands for the speaker’s subjective attitudes towards the modus. Thus, as modality is incorporated in dictum, the modals could be interpreted as implicit morphological manifestation of modality.
2 – 2 Definition and scope of modality

Concerning the definition of modality, Bybee (1994:177) says: “Mood and modality are not so easily defined as tense and aspect... in fact, it may be impossible to come up with a succinct characterization of the notional domain of modality and the part of it that is expressed grammatically.” Thus, the idea of finding out a comprehensive unquestionable definition of modality is not easy. However, attempts are shown as a touch to feel the surface of the notion of modality without navigating deep into its logical and philosophical domain.

Palmer (1986:14) states that a number of different criteria have directly or indirectly been proposed so as to arrive at a reasonable definition of modality. Some of these criteria are about the content of the sentence, and others are about the proposition the sentence expresses. Both groups hope to distinguish them from the opinions and attitude of the speaker, this distinction is said to be between the proposition and modality. So modality is concerned with the speaker’s opinion and attitude. Rescher (168:24) cf Palmer (1986:12) goes in the same direction, providing that a proposition if taken as a whole is in itself a complete statement and it is either true or false, and any further qualification results in a proposition, and this qualification is said to be modality.

Rescher’s viewpoint raises arguments of others, for instance, Perkins (1983:8), who argues that possibility and necessity are not propositions to be qualified, but rather events referred to or expressed by propositions, and they are viewed as second-order entities that they occur rather than exist, and not as abstracts (propositions) which are classified as third-order entities, and hence are outside space and time. Perkins’s findings about propositions are supported by Kress and Hodge (1979:127), who ascertain that: “modality is outside temporal classification in English.” Two sentences are provided by them to make it clear:

a- John feels he is wrong.

b- *John is feeling he is wrong

The verb feel—like other perceptive verbs, behaves modally.

In response to Rescher’s views, Palmer (1986:12) argues that the definition of modality of Rescher raises a theoretical problem as modality is widely defined. However, he appreciates Rescher’s counting for other types of modality in addition to that of ‘alethic’—relating to the notion of truth itself, ‘epistemic’ which relates to the knowledge and belief, and ‘deontic’ that relates to duty, beside, ‘evaluative’ and ‘boulomiac’—relating to desire, etc.

As it is stated at the beginning of this section, the traditional view of Aristotle is that necessity and possibility are central to modality. This makes modality objective—centered and
the speaker is entirely excluded. This view is argued against by Palmer (1986:16), who expresses the view that, modality in language is essentially subjective in reference to the speaker’s opinion and attitude which are conveyed verbally and non-verbally. On the other hand, Lyons (1977:846) stresses that necessity and possibility are not normally judged as to fall within the domain of modality. Thus, modality is a state of the speaker’s mind about a proposition represented in an utterance whose core is a modal. While Lyons (1977:452), asserts that modality is mainly subjective, arguing that many adverbs in English such as (frankly, possibly, fortunately, etc) when especially occur in the initial position of a sentence can hardly be considered as syntactic constructions modifiers.

a- Frankly, he doesn’t stand a chance.
b- Fortunately, no one was hurt.
c- Possibly, it will rain.
d- Wisely, he said nothing.

The initial adverbs play an evaluative function, and are used by the speaker to parenthetically express his attitude and opinions towards the proposition. Thus, Palmer (1986:16) provides that modality could be defined as “the grammaticalization of speaker’s (subjective) attitude and opinion.” Whereas Halliday (1988:335), introduces his ideas about modality from another different perspective; “modality refers to the area that lies between yes and no – the intermediate ground between negative and positive polarity”. Depending on this, one could argue that modality is simply the state of expressing uncertainty or tentativeness of proposition utterer. And so subjectivity is clearly basic if modality concerns the attitude and opinions of the speaker and then, according to Palmer (1986:17) “only the grammatical system in which a great deal of subjectivity involves, can therefore be considered modal.”

In conclusion, it would be useful to consider the difficulty of providing comprehensive theoretical definition and explanation of modality as there is great and unexplored English varieties. Coates and Leech (1980:23), argue that, the difficulty of modal description is undoubtedly referred to the variation in usage in different varieties of English, and such variation has been neglected though its existence has been widely acknowledged.

2-3 Significance of Modality

Concerning the significance of modality, Kress and Hodge (1979:122) illustrate, ‘The degree of authority in speech is established by modality.’ Depending on that, it can be argued that modals are linguistic devices that express the power of the utterances, this can be obvious in the use of for instance, ‘can, may and must’ which show the speaker’s permission and compulsion. On the other hand, the modals are the most appropriate linguistic parts of
speeches on which critical discourse analysis can be carried out. Wang (2010:255), argues that investigating the modals in the speech of people, especially the politicians, enables us to measure the ideology and power of the speakers, and can provide a better understanding of the intended political purposes. The modals if used properly, can serve to create more peaceful atmosphere among people and nations and lessen the tension situations. Bocia in (http://mpra.ub.uni.munchen-de), comments that the modals can help alleviate illocutionary force of the directive speech of the presidents, which often contain face threatening acts, and thus, the opponents’ force will be mitigated. More than that, the use of the modals creates good communication among people. Zhuanglin (1988:313), cf Wang (2010:255) points out that, the interpersonal function of language embodies all uses of communication devices; linguistic and non-linguistic, in which the modals are main, to express social and personal relations, and perform speech acts.

Beside expressing different functions, there are other values of the modals. Krees and Hodge (1979:127), suggest that, the major content of a proposition is often to be found in the modal operation rather than in the ostensible content. They add that, not only the modals can play that role, but also any way realizes modality such as verbal, non-verbal, pauses, hesitations, stammers, etc. In addition to that, the modals are used to protect the speakers from criticism and avoid vulnerable situations, for example ‘I really would like to say that …’ . If this so, the use of modals can also help the interviewees and job seekers to do well in the interviews. Furthermore, this section cannot be ended without referring to the importance of the modals in forming polite requests and offer. As people say ‘polite words open iron gates’, the modals have the power to show politeness. Stevenson (2010:95), illustrates that, the modals ‘can, could, may, might, should and would’ are used to soften questions, instructions and offers to make them seem more polite. He adds that, they have actual meaning other than to show politeness. The following examples clarify this:

- a- Could you help me? rather than ‘help me.’
- b- Would you please finish quickly?, rather than ‘finish quickly.’
- c- May I ask you a question? rather than ‘I have a question.’
- d- How can I help? rather than ‘What do you want?’

2–4 Types of Modality

It is noted that there are semantically different classifications of modality of which the following will be discussed in detail:
Subject Oriented VS Discourse oriented Modality

The idea that some modals tend to be paired (will and shall, can and may, must and ought, dare and need) led Palmer (1974:100) to state two points; one is that, this pairing relates to subject orientation and discourse orientation, which is not at the level of modals themselves, but of their uses. The other point is that, the difference between these two types depends on whether the modals relate to some features of the subject of the sentence, or to the part played by one of the discourse participants, for if the modals relate semantically to some kind of activity, quality, status, etc. of the subject, then it is subject oriented. And it is discourse oriented if it relates to the part or role played by one of the discourse participants.

1- John will come tomorrow.
2- John shall come tomorrow.

The first example of the modal is subject-oriented as John himself agrees to come tomorrow, whereas the second example the modal is discourse-oriented because the speaker, not John, who agrees and guarantees that John will come. The modal refers to the activity of the subject (John). Considering the following examples will illustrate the point:

1- Bill can run a mile in four minutes.
2- Bill may go now.

In the first, it is Bill who has the quality that permits him to run a mile in four minutes whereas in the second, it is the speaker who permits Bill to go.

As mentioned before, this classification of modals as subject-oriented and discourse-oriented is based on the uses of the modals. Some formal distinctions from the semantic point of view are reached by Palmer (1974: 124), who provides three points of differences:

A- The subject-oriented modals alone (will, can) have past tense forms for past time, the discourse-oriented modals (shall, may) have no such forms i.e. no should or might in the discourse-oriented modals, since the participants of an utterance cannot promise or permit in the past.

It is important to state that even (will and can) in their past forms, (would and could) are not used where there is the implication that a single action in the past actually took place, with exception of denial or habitual activity, to illuminate this point, Palmer (1974:124) provides the following sentences:

1-* I asked him and he would come.
2- I asked him and he wouldn’t come.
3- Whenever I asked him he would come.
4- * I ran fast and I could catch the bus
5- I ran fast and I couldn’t catch the bus.
6- Whenever I ran fast I could catch the bus.

In the above examples (1-) and (4-) are semantically incorrect as they suggest the possibility of a single action in the past, while in (2-) and (5-) are reference to denial of the action, and in (3-) and (6-) there is reference to the habitual activity.

B- The discourse-oriented modals usually allow passivization. As Kress and Hodge (1979: 134) put it, “Passivization creates an impression of objectivity as the language is impersonalized.” It can be understood that, passivisation draws the attention directly to the action rather than to the doer. Discourse-oriented modals are characterized by accepting the state of agentless. Palmer (1974:101), provides the following examples regarding this point:

1- John shall meet Marry.
   Marry shall be met by John.
2- John may meet Mary.
   Mary may be met by John.
3- John won’t meet Marry
   *Mary won’t be met by John

It is obvious that subject-oriented modals do not accept passivity as the meaning of the modals semantically relates to the subject of the sentence, and the process of the passivity changes the subject, but of course it cannot change the intention.

However, there is an exception of the use of (can) in a sense of (may). e.g.

Children can be seen by their parents.

C- Formal negation of the modals negates the modal itself with the subject oriented modals.

This can be explained through considering the following examples of the use of can and will:

1- John will come
2- John won’t come. (is not willing)
3- John can run a mile.
4- John can’t run a mile. (is not able)
The modals in the sentences above are subject-oriented as the utterer who guarantees that John will come and John can run. So the negation takes place directly on the modals themselves. The first negated sentence can be interpreted as the speaker says that John is not willing to come, and in the second is that, John is not able to run a mile. To make it clear, one can say that the following changes are incorrect.

1- *John will (not come).
2- *John can (not run)

Palmer (1974:102), explains that, as far as discourse-oriented modals are concerned, the position of negation is more complex: with (shall) the main verb is negated, not the modal. The speaker utters that the action will not take place and the subject’s intention is not denied nor negated. i.e

He shall not go. = (He shall (not go))

But with (may) the modal is negated, bearing in mind that the meaning is – permission is not given, not that permission is given for the action not to take place. i.e. He may not go.

2 - 4 -2 Epistemic VS Non-epistemic Modality

From a semantic point of view, modality can be classified into epistemic and non-epistemic. What is to be noticed, as Palmer (1974:135), states that, there is no sharp line that separates the two classes.

According to Oxford advanced learner’s dictionary (2005:513), Epistemic relates to the knowledge, and epistemology is the part of philosophy that deals with knowledge. Lyons (1977:793), states that the term ‘epistemic modality’ should be understood according to linguistic semantics rather than in the sense of philosophers. Epistemic knowledge deals with the logical structure of statements that assert a particular proposition, or a set of timeless propositions. These propositions in turn illustrate the notion of the possible world.

Epistemic modality applies to the claims of the speakers and reflects the extent to which they are committed to the truth of the proposition, Joan et al (1994:179) point out that, as modality expresses the degree of commitment of the speaker to the truth of the statement, then this involves the commonly expressed epistemic modalities – possibility, probability, and certainty. These are denoted by will, may and must respectively.

Lyons (1977:797), distinguishes two types of epistemic modality; subjective and objective, with no absolute distinction line between them. But the difference is marked by the speaker’s degree of reservation about the factuality of the proposition. Lyons (1977:799), states that
subjectively modalized propositions are statements of opinion or tentative inference rather than statements of facts. e.g.

a- It may be raining in London.

This proposition can be reported as:

b- He said that it might be raining in London. or

c- He told me that it might be raining in London.

The proposition (a-) is interpreted as an objective epistemic modality if it is uttered by someone who is specialized in weather forecast – a metrologist. And it is acceptable to be construed as subjective modals as it is reported in (b, c and d):

d- He expressed the opinion that it might be raining in London.

This suggests that objective modals are not acts of telling and thus their illocutionary force is factive, and the authority of the proposition utterer could determine whether the statement is subjectively or objectively modalized.

Epistemic modality in English is said to be possibility-based; as an example may not and can’t can be construed within the range of possibility:

a- It may not be raining.

b- It can’t be raining.

Lyons (1977:801), explains that, the first example is understood as (it is possible that it is not raining) and the second as (it is impossible that it is raining).

Despite the fact that epistemic modals are independent of the former distinction of subject and discourse oriented modals, yet the concept of epistemic modals has some aspects of modality to share with the concepts of discourse-oriented modals, as the speaker in both who is certain or uncertain etc of what he is uttering.

a- He couldn’t be there yesterday.

b- He can’t have been there yesterday.

c- Mary may be met by John.

While the first sentence reflects lack of ability in the past, only the second and the third sentences reflect the degree of possibility of the proposition. In this respect, Palmer (1974:103), argues that the discourse-oriented modals and epistemic modals are true modals, whereas subject-oriented modals are semantically similar to other verbs of language. What is to be
noted when viewing the sentences above, in the non-epistemic modals negation marks the modals directly, whereas the full verb is marked for negation in the epistemic modals.

2 - 5 Linguistic Expressions of Modality in English

It deserves noting that, modality is not exclusively expressed by the use of modal verbs; there are actually other linguistic and non-linguistic means that can be used. Perkins (1983:19) argues that, modality discussion has been concerned exclusively with the syntactic class of modal auxiliary verbs, which is considered the only formally coherent class of modal expressions. However there is a wide range of other linguistic devices that are semantically qualified to be labeled as modals. But, according to Perkins, “These other linguistic devices serve as paraphrases to illuminate the meaning of the modals.” The examples below illustrate the point:

(i) it is necessary to... or it is obligatory to ...

(ii) perhaps ..., it is possible that ... or there is a possibility that ...

Kress and Hudge (1979:127), provide other linguistic group of modal operators, which can be classified as non-deliberate features – hesitation fillers such as (umm, er, etc), and deliberate systematic features which include fillers as (sort of...) or the mental processes verbs; (think, feel, understand, etc), beside intonation and tags. Most importantly, the adverbs can clearly express modality and they disambiguate modals. E.g. ‘He may come’ this sentence carries more than one interpretation, however in a sentence like ‘He possibly may come’ the adverb ‘possibly’ disambiguates ‘may’. Such a situation Lyons (1977:807), refers to as ‘modally harmonic’ for the modal verb and the adverb express the same degree of modality, whereas a non-harmonic combination however forces an interpretation in which one modal is within the scope of the other.

Pustejovsky (1996: 205), argues that some lexical verbs appear to encode the uncertainty of the resulting state which follows an action directly. The verb ‘risk’ can encode certainty and then of course modality:

1- John risks killing if he does not take care.
2- John risks breaking his leg in tennis.

2 – 6 English Modal Verbs

It has been stated in (2-5) that the main and formal part of the linguistic devices that express modality is the set of modal verbs. In this section, the aspects of English modals will be focused on.
2- 6 -1 Definition of the English Modals

Modal auxiliary verbs enjoy having different definitions, which may reflect their syntactic complexity and their role played in the meaning they carry. Boincu (2997) defines modals as \textit{implicit morphological manifestation of modality}. So they are one of different linguistic devices that express the degree of probability, possibility, etc. of an event to happen.

Leech and Savartvik (1975: 128), state that, truth and falsehood are often expressed in black-and-white terms. In other words, a proposition is either true or false; instead, they can be thought about within the scale of likelihood, which is a continuum whose extreme ends are impossibility and certainty, with other intermediate notions such as possibility, probability, improbability, etc. These notions are expressed as shown below:

a- Most importantly, by modal auxiliaries:
   You \textit{may} be right.

b- More formally, by a sentence with introductory \textit{(it)} and a \textit{(that clause)}:
   \textit{It is possible that} you are right.

c- By an adverbial such as perhaps, necessarily, etc:
   \textit{Perhaps} you are right.

Crystal (1995:212), on the other hand states that, modal verbs are one of the classes of verbs that can occur within the verb phrase. They convey a range of judgments about the likelihood of the event. They function only as auxiliary verbs. So one can say that, the set of the so-called \textit{modals}, cannot be considered as full verbs. For Crystal, the modals are \textit{(can, could, may, might, will, would, shall, should and must)}, but with a very similar function \textit{(need, ought to and used to)} are included.

2-6-2 Modal verbs vs auxiliary verbs

In the English language, modal verbs can syntactically, be distinguished from other auxiliary verbs, bearing in mind that they share common features.

Kreidler (1998:248), suggests that, though they both overlap, but they are not identical; an auxiliary precedes another verb (full or catenative), and is negated by \textit{not} immediately following, with which contraction may be formed, \textit{(isn’t)} and can occur before its subject in question. i.e. it accepts negation and inversion. This ends with modal verbs (must, may, might, can, could, shall, should, will and would) to be regarded as auxiliary verbs since they accept the criteria mentioned. They are at the same time, modal verbs as they are \textit{(with some exceptions)} the most important linguistic means to express modality.
2 - 6 - 3  Basic Features of the English modals

There are different morpho-syntactic criteria that the English modals have, and which characterize them in the discourse of the language. Huddleston (1984:136) states that modal auxiliaries are considered the central marked operators of the verb phrase, which together with other auxiliaries (be, have) are qualified to undergo the NICE properties. The same idea is suggested by Warnsby (2006:23) who adds that, all auxiliaries in English share the so-called NICE properties, namely Negation, Inversion, Code and Emphasis. Whereas, Palmer (1974:96) asserts that, the treatment of the modals as auxiliaries is based initially upon their functions with relation to negation, inversion, code and emphatic affirmation.

Huddleston (1984:137), provides the following examples to make the point clear:

Table (2-1): NICE properties with the modals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A-</th>
<th>Unmarked: positive</th>
<th>Marked: negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She must tell her</td>
<td>She mustn’t tell her</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She has arrived</td>
<td>She has not arrived</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are here</td>
<td>They are not here</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He drinks</td>
<td>*He drinks not</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B-</th>
<th>Unmarked Order</th>
<th>Marked Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject + tensed verb</td>
<td>Tensed verb + subject</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He will tell her</td>
<td>Will he tell her</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had never seen such chaos</td>
<td>Never had I seen such chaos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim was there</td>
<td>{Max was there} and so was Jim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She wants something</td>
<td>*What wants she</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>Unmarked: un-emphatic polarity</th>
<th>Marked: emphatic polarity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She can swim</td>
<td>She can swim (stressed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She has gone</td>
<td>She has gone (stressed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am ill</td>
<td>I am ill (stressed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know her</td>
<td>*I know her (unstressed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D</th>
<th>Unmarked: non-elliptical</th>
<th>Marked post-verb ellipses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He may go</td>
<td>{I am not sure he’ll go}, but he may</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed could have seen her</td>
<td>{I certainly saw her} and Ed could have too</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I have been a member since May 
Ed enjoyed the concert too

{He didn’t realize I was a member}, but I
Have been since May.
{*We enjoyed the concert} and Ed too.

Source: Huddleston (1984:137)

Huddleston (1984:126) and Swan (1980 :388), argue that, the English modal verbs do not
have the power of inflection for person, number or time i.e. they lack contrast in the present
tense between 3rd person singular and other forms, and they are followed by bare infinitive.
Thus the following expressions are grammatically incorrect:

3- * He cans run.
4- * He can runs.
5- * He can ran.

Further than that, Kress (1979 :123), shows that, the English Modals have less precisely
indications of time reference. The following examples illustrate the point:

6- You must be the thief.
7- You may fly.

The first sentence is interpreted as an inference made in the present or a command that will
be fulfilled in the future. The second sentence can be construed as either a permission made in
the present, or reference to a possibility in the future. On the other hand, Huddleston (1984 :
126) adds that out of auxiliary verbs in English, only the modals occur as the first verb in the
main clause of an unreal conditional construction. e.g.

8- If Ed comes tomorrow, we can play chess.
9- If Ed came tomorrow, we could play chess.

2 - 6 – 4 English Main Modals

In this section, the researcher will show the English main modals and the context in
which they appear. focusing on their syntactic construction. But before investigating this area,
there are two points that deserve mentioning. The first one is that the meaning of the modal
is governed by the context in which it is used, and its meaning is also affected through the
course of the time. Kreidler (1998:240), argues that, English modals have shifted semantically
throughout the history of the language, and the English speakers differ somewhat in which
modal verb they prefer for what meaning. This can be justified by using both ‘must / have to’
to express obligation, while ‘must’ is popular in British English, the Americans prefer ‘have to’. 
Another example is that, depending on the context, both ‘can / may’ can express permission. The other point is that, there is increasing importance and use of the semi-modals (quasi-modals) at the expense of the main modals. Leech et al (2009: 71) state that, “… the core modals have been significantly declining in use, whereas the semi-modals have been significantly decreasing.”. The following verbs are considered the main modals or auxiliary modals verbs or even core modals as called by e.g. Facchinetti et al (2003: vi) cf Leech et al (2009:71)

{will / would , shall /should , can/could , may / might , must /ought}. These will be treated in detail in the sections that follow.

2 -6 - 4 -1 Will and Would

With respect to ‘will’, it can be said that, there are clear separate uses of ‘will’ in which it is mainly used to meet the meaning intended. But, there is undeniable semantic similarity with other modals. According to Quirk et al (1984:228) cf Warnsby (2006:27), “‘will’ is similar in its epistemic interpretation to epistemic ‘must’ and it is rare in this sense‘. They provide the following example to make their point clear:

A: Somebody is coming.

B: Oh! That ‘will’ be the postman.

Thus, it is clear that ‘will’ can do the job of ‘must’ in situations where they both convey the speaker’s commitment to the proposition. However, Palmer (1975:108) adds that, there are other uses of ‘will’, which can be shown in the following:

1- Volition

It refers to the future and collocates with future adverbials, but, it differs from ‘will’ of futurity in some ways:

a- No association with shall.

b- Passivization is not possible.

John won’t meet Mary

*Mary won’t be met by John.

c- It regularly occurs in conditional clauses.

If he will come tomorrow.
- The past form 'would' is regularly used in tentative sense.

(i) I will do that for you. = I would do that for you.
(ii) Will you pass the salt? = Would you pass the salt?

Thus, the speaker is not certain, and hesitant about the proposition he/she utters. Another point to add is that, 'would' as past of 'will' of volition is used with executed action, but only with negative.

(i) I asked him to come, but he wouldn’t.
(ii) *I asked him to come, but he would.

As a result of what has just been mentioned above, it is justifiable to say that, the second sentence is incorrect since the action of 'volition' is agreed on and carried out in the past. It is worth noting that 'will' of volition is used in pseudo–passive:

This shirt won’t iron.
This shirt wouldn’t iron.
This door won’t open.

2- Insistence

Palmer (1975:111) states that, 'will' is used to express insistence, and it is always accented.

He will act the fool.
If you will do these things.

The action here is deliberate and willed, the meaning is attributed to the accent. It agrees with 'will' of volition on no association with 'shall' and passivization is not allowed. The major difference is that 'would' refers to a single past action e.g.

I asked him to stop but he would do it.

It is also stated that, semantically, the negative negates the main verb, not the modal, and the interpretation can be (insisted on not ...). The unaccented 'will' is restricted to the proverbial saying e.g.

Boys will be boys.
3- Characteristic

Palmer (1975:113) explains that this type of ‘will’ indicates characteristic activity of somebody, for example:

She will sit here for hours doing nothing.

It semantically refers to habitual willed activity. Added to that, futurity is not indicated and has no collocation with future adverbials.

The past form ‘would’ is used for past time reference, but in the non-negative form:

She would sit there for hours doing nothing.

It can also be replaced by the non-modal form with little or no change of meaning:

She sits there for hours doing nothing.

4- Inference

Kreidler (1998:245) argues that, ‘will’ and ‘would’ are not always interpreted as modal verbs, in other ways, they appear in particular clauses without their modality identity, they are just statement. He provides the following example to support his argument:

This summer is hot, the next summer will be hot too.

The second clause is a high probability, yet it is not a fact as the first clause, and it can be said that it is a prediction. But comparing this to what is provided by Palmer (1975:114), the picture would probably be different, as the propositions are almost equivalent to statement of fact, and no modality expressed.

Oil will float on water = (Oil floats on water)
Pigs will eat everything = (Pigs eat everything)

However, the overgeneralization is misleading as this cannot be correct with the general truth. Palmer (1975:115), provides the following sentences to make it clear:

The sun rises in the east. *The sun will rise in the east.

2- 6 – 4 – 2 Shall and Should

According to Quirk et al (1985:137), ‘shall’ and ‘should’ can be classified as central modals, they both have different uses that reflect their centrality in the modality domain. From a syntactic point of view, Huddleston (1984:174) points out that, ‘shall’ for futurity occurs with first person subjects whereas ‘will’ occurs with second and third persons.

e.g. I shall go you will go.
Palmer (1974:113) adds that, beside its futurity use, ‘shall’ can be used in obligatory sense. e.g. Shall I open the window? Yes, please do.

The same idea is confirmed by Allsop (1982:199) and Palmer (1974:114), who both view that, the obligation sense that is expressed by either ‘should’ or ‘ought to’ is not restrictive to the hearer, it is moral as there is a choice. They provide the following examples:

a- You should not drink if you intend to drive.

b- You should take up a sport.

Another form of obligation that is expressed by ‘should’ is provided by Thomson and Martinet (1986:138), who say that, ‘should’ like ‘must’, is used in formal notices and on information sheets etc to express the obligation more gently, as in:

a- Candidates should be prepared to answer questions on ...

b- Intending travellers should be in possession of the following ...

C- On hearing the alarm bell, hotel guests should leave their rooms.

Another important use of ‘shall’ is that stated by Huddleston (1984:175) and Allsop (1982:183), who observe that, ‘shall’ is used in constitution, regulations and in legal and semi-legal documents to describe what must and must not happen in accordance with the law. The following examples which are taken from the latter, clarify the point:

a- The committee shall consist of the head of department and

b- The purchaser shall return or pay for the goods within thirty days.

Leech and Svartvik (1975:127), add a crucial point that concerns the use of ‘should’ which is similar to the use of ‘will’ in the previous section, that is beside its use in tentative conditionals, it can be used neutrally, to represent neutral ideas rather than facts, and in such cases, it is called putative ‘should’:

a- The fact is that the railways should be improved.

b- I know that the railway should be improved.

c- The idea is that the railway should be improved.

d- Someone is suggesting that the railway should be improved.

It is obvious that, a- and b- are facts, whereas c- and d- are just ideas. However both types enjoy occurrence with that clause in which ‘that’ can be omitted. In addition to that, ‘should’ is
spotted in questions and exclamations. The following examples by Leech and Svartvik (1975:127), provide good support for this:

a- How should I know?
b- Why should he resign?
c- Who should come in but the mayor himself.

Moreover, Palmer (1974:114) states that, with all discourse oriented uses, ‘should’ does not refer to past time, but rather to the unreal conditional constructions. The following example in which ‘should’ is not in its historical past tense meaning, best expresses this:

If I continued to spend at this rate, I should soon have nothing left.

Thomson and Martinet (1986: 149) suggest that ‘should’ is used to express assumption about present or past action. The same idea is possible by using ‘will’, but the difference is that ‘should’ is less confident.

The best way to end this part of the main modals, is to adopt the comment of Allsop (1982:193), who says ‘Modals are subject to changes of fashion.’ And thus, modals’ use and interpretation, vary according to the English varieties and speakers’ culture and attitudes.

2–6–4–3 Can and Could

To start with, it is justifiable to say that ‘can’ and ‘could’ are one of the backbones of the modality. i.e. they are widely noticed in situations where modals expressions are needed. Thus, as Quirk et al (1985:137) confirm, they are central modals. ‘Can’ and ‘could’ serve different functions. e.g. Palmer (1974:115) argues that ‘can’ is used to express ability. This is the most familiar use of ‘can’. The following examples by Thomson and Martinet (1986:136) clearly illustrate this:

a- He can lift a hundredweight.

b- I can read Greek.

c- Can / are you able to type?

‘Could’ is said to be the past form of ‘can’ with the past time reference. e.g. When he was young, he could lift a hundredweight. Palmer (1974:117) believes that, ‘was able’ is also possible for past ability. e.g. When I was young, I was able to climb any tree in the garden. But for a particular action, only ‘was able’ is possible. Thomson and Martinet (1986:135), provide the following examples:

a- Although the pilot was badly hurt, he was able to explain what had happened.
(he could and did explain)

b- The boat capsized quite near the bank so the children were able to swim to safety.

(they could and did swim).

For future ability only ‘be able’ is used e.g. When he is older he will be able to lift a hundredweight. However, Allsop (1982:194) argues that, ‘can’ is possible for future event which depends on present facts. To support this, he provides the following example, in which the boss saying is the present fact: The boss says that we can have next Tuesday off.

The negative ‘can’t’ negate the modal which means inability to act. e.g. He can’t lift a hundredweight.

Palmer (1974:116), adds that, passivization in the use of can is only possible with no or unspecified agent. The following examples illustrate the point:

a- *A ton can’t be lifted by John.
b- A ton can’t be lifted by anyone.
c- A ton can’t be lifted.

This can be referred to the fact that discourse-oriented modals as the b- /c- examples above, accept the state of agentless. See (2 – 4-3).

Swan (1980:130) and Thomson and Martinet (1986:135), think that, ‘Could’ is used as a very good way of introducing a request. It is an alternative to ‘Would you?’ and a little more polite.e.g.

a- Could you wait for an hour?
b- Could you please send me an application form?
c- Could I ask you something if you are not too busy?

Concerning the point mentioned above, Murcia and Freeman (1983:84) say ‘that, many ESL / EFL students, even at the advanced level do not recognize that they are often perceived by native speakers of English as being abrupt and aggressive with their requests’. Thus, it can be argued that the historical past-tense forms of the modals are more appropriate linguistic devices for request situations.

With the reported speech, Thomson and Martinet (1986:273) show that, ‘could’ for future ability and conditional sentences is reported similarly, it can remain unchanged or reported by ‘would be able’.
a- ‘I could do it tomorrow ’ he said
b- He said that he could do it tomorrow . or
c- He said that he would be able to do it tomorrow .

But for present ability ‘could ’ is not changed in the reported speech :

a- ‘I can’t / couldn’t stand on my head .’
b- He said that he couldn’t stand on his head .

2- 6- 4- 4 May and Might

Regarding ‘may’ and ‘might’ as modals , Swan (1980:130) argues that ‘may’ and ‘might ’ are used to express permission and possibility . Similarly , Allsop (1982 :203) , illustrates that , grammarians recommend the use of ‘may’ for permission and possibility .

a- We may be moving to London next week .
b- May I have some wine ?

Palmer (1974:118) and Coates et al (1980:27) , point out that , ‘might’ never represents past tense or any tentative sense, except in questions . e.g.

a- Might I come in ?
b- *You might come in now .
c- *You might come to see him yesterday .

Considering the first sentence , one can argue that , ‘might’ is used in a tentative sense , whereas in the other two sentences , it can neither be construed as past form of ‘may’ nor any kind of tentative sense . However , ‘might’ is considered to suggest a smaller probability , the following example which is provided by Swan (1980:377) shows this clearly :

I might get a job soon . yes, and pigs might fly .

Swan (1980 :376) states that , both ‘may’ and ‘might’ are used in a formal way , but ‘might’ carries the sense of hesitation and doubts of the utterer. e.g. I wonder if I might have a little more cheese ?

It is also noticed that , ‘might ’ is used in indirect speech to report permission given to someone . e.g. The manager said that I might look round .

29
The use of ‘may’ or ‘might’ in conditional sentences indicates possible result instead of certain result of ‘will or would’ Thomson and Martinet (1986:132) provide the examples:

If he sees you, he will stop. (certain)  If he sees you, he may stop. (possible)

It is argued that ‘may’ is not used for asking about possibility, instead other expressions are used. Depending on this fact, it is incorrect that someone asks ‘May it rain?’ but it is acceptable to hear ‘Is it likely to rain do you think?’. Most important, Swan (1980: 378) points out that ‘May’ is used to construct wishes utterances:

a- May the new year bring you all your heart desires.
b- May she rest in peace.
c- May God be with you.
d- May you both be happy.

Concerning the negative form, Palmer (1974:118) assures that, ‘may not’ negates the modal. It means that (a refusal of permission). The full verb is negated only when ‘not’ is accented, which means (permission not to act). e.g.

You may not go. ( permission to go is refused )
You may not go. ( permission not to go is given )

Comparing ‘may’ to ‘can’, Palmer (1974:119) and Perkins (1983: 38) point out that, the relation between ‘may’ and ‘can’ is similar to that of ‘will’ and ‘shall’ but with no common use like futurity in the case of the latter pair, that is to say, the two pairs are possible to be used interchangeably, but with subtle difference in meaning. e.g. ‘may’ is more polite and formal than ‘can’:

You may go. and May I come in? are more polite than:
You can go. and Can I come in?

Lebrun (1965) cf Coates et al (1980:27) supports the idea of the similarity between ‘can’ and ‘may’ to the extent that they are synonyms, though they overlap, and can interchangeably be used. However, ‘can’ is not used instead of ‘may’ in epistemic possibility, which is the main function of the modal ‘may’ as shown in the following example:

I may not get back there today, it depends on the work here.
It is worth noting that, ‘may and might’ represent core modality as the speaker himself has the authority that enables him to issue the permission or to state the possibility of the proposition. According to Murcia and Freeman (1983:83), possibility is considered as logical probability, e.g. *It may rain tomorrow*. Whereas in a sentence like *You may leave the room*, the speaker has the power to permit, thus it represents a form of social interaction in which the speaker selects the appropriate modal for his message.

2 – 6- 4- 5 Must and Ought

According to Thomson and Martinet (1986:137), and Swan (1980:394), ‘must’ is used for obligation or to give strong advice or order, beside its use for deduction.

a- I really *must* stop smoking. (obligation or strong advice)

b- You *must* be here by 8 o’clock. (obligation)

c- You *must* be a doctor. (deduction)

Palmer (1974: 120) points out that ‘ought’ is also possible for obligation, and without considering it as tentative form of ‘must’ e.g.

I *must* go now = I *ought* to go now.

For deduction ‘must’ reflects that the speaker is sure about something, because it is logically necessary. e.g.

Mary *must* have some problems, she keeps crying.

According to Swan (1980:394), for question and negative deduction ‘can’ and ‘can’t’ are used. e.g.

That *can’t* be the postman, it is only seven o’clock.

What do you think the letter *can* mean?

Thomson and Martinet (1986: 138) adds that, both ‘must’ and ‘ought’ are used to express advice, but for more emphatic advice ‘must’ is preferable:

You *ought to* read this. It is very good.

You *must* read this. It is marvellous.
It can be added that ‘should’ in some cases plays the same role. Leech and Svartvik (1975:127) comment that, ‘should’ is sometimes difficult to be distinguished from ‘ought to’. They provide the following example:

He has urged that private firearms should be banned.

Palmer, (1974:120) also argues that, the negative forms ‘mustn’t’ and ‘oughtn’t’ negate the full verb. (=duty not to act). But to negate the modal ‘needn’t’ or ‘may not’ can be used:

I mustn’t go now. I oughtn’t go now. (full verb is negated)

You needn’t go. You may not go. (modal verb is negated)

Palmer (1974:121) demonstrates that, the state of negation carried out on ‘must’ and ‘ought makes them closer than any other modal pairs, for there is no single form that regularly negates both ‘will and shall’ or ‘can and may’.

Furthermore, ‘have to’ is used similarly to ‘must’ with some difference in the source of obligation. Thomson and Martinet (1986:140), say that, ‘must’ expresses obligation imposed by the speaker, whereas in the case of ‘have to’ the obligation is external. e.g.

You must wipe your feet when you come in. (BrE)

I have to wipe my feet when I come in. (AmE)

2–6–5 Semi-modals

Regarding the semi – modals in English, the most frequent examples of them are {dare, need, used}. It can be argued that, they are called semi or marginal as they have not the force and flexibility which enable them to represent modality as the main modals do, though they behave as modals and they share with them some characteristics. The same point is illustrated by Leech et al (2009:72), who demonstrate: ‘the semi – modals share in some measure the syntactic properties of the core modals, yet their meanings do not primarily belong to modality’. Each of them will be discussed below:
A- Dare

Syntactically, ‘dare’ in the affirmative, is conjugated as ordinary verb, and in this respect it is more common. Thomson and Martinet (1986:150) consider ‘dare’ a semi-modal as it can work as an auxiliary verb. It accepts negation and inversion. e.g.

*dare* not ... *dare* you ...?

On the other hand, dare can work as full verb as in the question and negative formation the auxiliary ‘do’ is used. e.g.

He doesn’t *dare* (to) say anything.

Did you *dare* (to) to criticize me?

It is noted that ‘*dare*’ is not common in the affirmative, except in the idiomatic expression which carries two meanings:

I *daresay* there will be a restaurant car on the train. (=I suppose)

Traveller: But the watch was given to me; I didn’t buy it.

Custom Officer: I *daresay* you didn’t, but you’ll have to pay on it all the same.

(= I accept what you say, but it doesn’t make any difference)

*Dare* can be used to mean challenge, (only to deeds requiring courage) and in this case it is an ordinary transitive verb. e.g.

Mother: Why did you throw that stone through the window?

Son: Another boy *dared* me to throw it.

B- Used to

‘Used’ is in the past tense with no present form. It is followed by full infinitive. It is used to:

a- Express a discontinued habit or past routine that contrasts with the present.

1- I used to smoke a cigarette, now I smoke a pipe.
2- She used to dislike Tom, but she quite likes him now.
b- Express a past routine. But without contrast, and it is replaceable by ‘would’. The following example is provided by Thomson and Martinet (1986:151), to support the point:

Tom and Ann were a young married couple. Every morning Tom used to/ would kiss Ann and set off for work. Ann used to / would stand at the window and wave goodbye. In the evening she used to / would welcome him home.

One can notice that, the actions in the above example happened routinely, and in such situations used to is replaceable by would, though it is misleading for EFL learners, even those who are advanced levels. It is also noticed that, ‘used’ can be used as an adjective that is preceded by (be/get/become) and it means accustomed. e.g.

a- I am used to noise.

b- I am used to working in a noisy room.

c- You will soon get used to typing on an electric typewriter.

C- Need

According to Allsop, (1982:200), the verb need, which is technically speaking, not a modal, is regular in all tenses and takes the construction (To + Verb). He adds that, need expresses necessity:

I need to go

On the other hand it is stated that, ‘need’ is a semi-modal, but it is rare in affirmative contexts. It can be both ordinary verb and an auxiliary verb, in the respect of the latter, it is a semi-modal. e.g.

I needn’t wear a coat. Or I don’t suppose I need wear a coat.

‘needn’t’ expresses absence of obligation in present and future. Whereas ‘mustn’t’ expresses negative obligation:

1- You needn’t make two copies, one will do.

2- You needn’t strike a match. I can see well enough.

3- You mustn’t repeat this to anyone.

4- Visitors must not feed the animals. (A notice in the zoo)
Considering the statements (1, 2), there is clear absence of obligation, which indicates an apparent permission for the action not to be performed. i.e. the action is not necessary. Whereas in sentences (3,4) there is a negative obligation in a form of warning not to perform the action.

‘Need’ as full verb means require, it has normal regular forms.

e.g. I need to know the exact size. Your hair needs to be cut / needs cutting.

A crucial point to consider is that, even if it is possible to use ‘need not’ for a future habitual action, it is not possible for expressing the same meaning in the present. The following example illustrates this point:

I am retiring. After Monday, I need never go to the firm again.

2–7 Functions of Modals

Bybee et al (1994:195), argue that mood and modality can best be understood through viewing the set of the related functions and their grammatical meaning, and to consider to what extent they overlap or differ. These functions include: possibility, probability, obligation, necessity, ability, prediction, certainty etc.

2-7-1 Possibility { can, may, could, might }

Possibility is commonly considered as epistemic-expressed modality, as it indicates the possibility degree of the proposition. Kreidler (1998:242), states that, it is important first to recognize that possibility is presupposed by probability, because nothing is likely to be true unless it can be or it is true, and nobody can do something without being able to. To put it quite simply, possibility contains probability with its different degrees. He provides the following table to illustrate this:

Table No (2-2) The degrees of possibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible</th>
<th>Impossible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apparently</td>
<td>improbable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highly</td>
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<td>fairly</td>
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<td>slightly</td>
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<td>true</td>
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<td>probable</td>
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<td>probable</td>
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<td>probable</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Leech and Savartvick (1975 :128), identify two major kinds of *possibility*:

1- Possibility of the fact *(factual)*
   - The railway *may* be improved.
   - It is *possible that* the railway will be improved.
   - *Perhaps/* possibly / *maybe* the railway will be improved.

2- Possibility of the idea *(theoretical)*
   - The railway *can* be improved.
   - It *is possible that* the railway is to be improved.

This could be similar to Murcia and Freeman (1983:83) observation, that modals perform two functions, logical which corresponds to the factual statement, and interactional function, that is the same as theoretical, in which the speaker utters his opinions and expresses his attitude. Kreidler (1998 : 243), states that if the potential for an action is entirely in the subject, *can* is used. But when the potential rests in another person’s authority, *may* is the preferred verb. However, *can* (theoretical possibility) is generally considered as weaker than *may* (factual possibility) – Thus the sentence (*the railway can be improved.*) can be construed as:

*The railways are improvable*, whereas the sentence, (*the railway may be improved*) can be interpreted as: *there are actual plans for improvement.*

This leads to the assumption that ‘*can*’ takes the meaning of *sometimes*, i.e. modals modify the truth, they state a possible fact without comment on its probability. The following examples explain this point:

a- Lighting *can* be dangerous.

b- Lighting is *sometimes* dangerous.

c- Driving in a heavy rainstorm *can* be dangerous.

d- Driving in a heavy rainstorm is *sometimes* dangerous.

Swan (1980 : 377), states that, both ‘*may*’ and ‘*might*’ are means of expressing possibility, however ‘*might*’ is not a past form of ‘*may*’, but a mild possibility i.e. it suggests a smaller (present or future) probability:

e- We *may* go climbing in the Alps next summer = *perhaps we will go*...

f- I *might* get a job soon. *Yes*, *and pigs might fly.*
Leech and Savarvik (1975:129), provide two examples that support the above, that could and might, in their hypothetical sense, are often used to express tentative possibility, i.e. to talk of something possible but unlikely:

  g- He could / might be telling lies.  (= it is just possible that he is telling lies.)
  h- Could you have left your purse in the bus?  (= is it just possible ...)

(i) Negation of possibility

For negating possibility, (= impossibility), can not / can’t are used but not may not.

The contracted negative form is common with mightn’t/ can’t but very unusual with mayn’t.

Swan (1980:375), introduces the following examples to explain the idea:

  1-He can’t be working at this time. = It is impossible that he is working...
  2-He may not be working ... = it is possible that he is not working ...

(ii) Question of possibility:

It is stated that, can but not may, is acceptable to be used in interrogative sentences i.e. can accepts the inversion to form a question about possibility:

  Can he be working? = is it possible that he is working?

Swan (1980:377), suggests alternative expressions to be used in the sense of may in questions e.g.

  Is it likely to rain, do you think?

  *May it rain?

  Do you think she is with Lilly?

  *May she be ... ?
2 – 7 – 2 Probability

McCarthy and O’Dell (2002 :120), suggest that, probability ranges in a scale between “cannot happen to has to happen” . More appropriately , it can be , impossible – unlikely – possible – probable – certain – inevitable ( 1-2 -5).

Thus probability is an epistemic- expressed modality. It indicates a greater likelihood that the proposition is true than possibility does . For Leech and Savarvik (1975 :131) , probability is expressed by { ought to and should}, beside other linguistic devices , however ’ ought to’ and ‘should’ are considered as weaker equivalent of ‘must’ (=certain), and ‘should’ is more frequent :

1-Our guests must be home by now. 
 (= I am certain)
2-Our guests ought to / should be home now. 
 (= They probably are but I am not certain )

Other ways of expressing probability are that provided by McCarthy and O’Dell (2002: 62) and shown below :

1- It is quite probable / likely that he didn’t receive the letter. 
2- He is probably the best chess player in the country .
3- The concert is likely to finish late .
4- The odds are he will get the job . (= it is unlikely that...) 
5- The odds are against her passing the exam. (= it is unlikely that...) 
6- They are bound to get married in the end . (= almost certain to)
7- In all probability we will get the job finished on time .
8- The chances are small that people will be living on the moon in the next decade 
9- There is every likelihood that the price of petrol will rise soon .

(i) Negation of probability

According to Leech and Savartvik (1975 :131) , improbability can be expressed by shouldn’t / ‘oughtn’t to . Or it is improbable / unlikely that .They provide some examples among which are the following :

1- There shouldn’t / oughtn’t to be any difficulty. 
2- It is unlikely that there will be any difficulty. 
3- It is improbable that there will be any difficulty .
Despite the fact that question of probability are rare, Leech and Savartvik (1975:131) state that probability is questioned by *should*. e.g:

*Should there be any difficulty in getting tickets?*

### 2- 7- 3 Obligation

Obligation is expressed in English by ‘have (got) to’ and ‘must’. It can be understood as state of being forced to do something, because it is one’s duty, or because of the law or other rules. e.g.

*She did not feel under any obligation to tell him the truth.*

It is also defined as a count noun as something that you must do because you have promised. ‘Committed’ is considered as its synonym:

We have a moral obligation to protect the environment.

Lyons (1977 834) sees that obligation has some connexion with commands, but without any commitment to the existence of obligation in transmitted commands. e.g.

1- You *must* open the door.
2- Open the door.

Though in practices, therefore, statements that transmit or report commands, cannot be easily distinguished from statements that assert obligation existence. This double-interpretation of both obligation and commands for some statements in certain situations can be taken as a model for children’s early understanding of deontic, i.e. non-epistemic statements. Lyons (1977:835) proposes some examples to illustrate this:

1- Come in and have your bath. mummy said.
2- Mummy says “you have got to come in and have your bath.”

It is suggested that, the existence of deontic proposition to that of obligation, and both are to be understood in terms of authoritative acts of saying, the source of authority is undoubtedly, powerful. Kress and Hodge (1979:122) say: “modality in general establishes the degree of authority of an utterance, and *may, must etc* perform this function.”. Lyons (1977 :838) argues that in some situations commands can appear as obligation, they can be understood as permission. e.g. “*come in!*” is interpreted as a case of granting permission of entering a room. The same idea receives attention from Quirk et al,( 1985 : 831), who link between illocutionary acts and imperative forms as they both share illocutionary force, which depends on the relative authority of the speaker and hearer of an utterance.
Kreidler (1998 : 242) , on the other hand, suggests that, obligation expresses the necessary truth or factuality of a proposition or propositions. “You must train very hard” for instance can be paraphrased as “it is necessary for you to train very hard.” i.e. must here is used in a deontic sense, it is about the necessity of an individual to act in a particular way. More example to support Kreidler’s suggestion are provided by Thomson and Martinet (1886:137), on the use of ought to:

3- I ought to write to him today.
4- You ought to put in central heating. Yes, I suppose I should.

Obligation is said to be mainly expressed by both must and have (got) to, though their meaning is quite different, and the source of the obligation determines which one to use. Swan (1980:285), illustrates that, must is often used to express an obligation that depends on the utterance participants, whereas have (got) to, is used for an obligation that comes from outside, i.e. an outsider, society rules, an agreement, law, etc. The following examples explain this:

1- I must stop smoking. (I want to)
2- I must make an appointment with the dentist. (I have got a toothache)
3- You have got to go and see the boss. (he wants you to)
4- Catholics have to go to church every Sunday. (their religion tells them so)
5- I have got to see the dentist tomorrow. (I have an appointment)

Another point of view is raised by Keidler (1998 :141), who ascertains that, obligation in English can be expressed in several modals, according to the situation or the speaker and the hearer position and authority, also, the difference in verity should also be considered as seen in the following instances:

1- We must leave immediately.
2- We have to leave immediately / We have got to leave immediately.
3- We need to leave immediately.
4- We ought to leave immediately.
5- We should leave immediately.

These modal verbs express different degrees of obligation; ‘must’ is considered the most forceful statement of obligation and somewhat formal, ‘have to’ and ‘have got to’ are more colloquial and not as strong as ‘must’. Need is nearly as strong as ‘have to’ whereas ‘ought to’ expresses a weaker obligation, but it is still stronger than ‘should’. Generally, different speakers of English may well have a different ranking. Actually, the use of modals for obligation can be subject to factors such as situations, style, region, etc.
'Must' in questions asks about wishes of the person one is speaking to:

Do your homework. “Oh, must I?”

It is worth noting, that ‘must’ has no past form, past obligation is expressed by ‘had to’. e.g.

1- When I was younger, I had to get up at five, everyday.
2- We had to complete the documents before 5 o’clock.
3- We didn’t have to complete the documents that day.

But, According to Swan (1980:286), there is an exception of using (must) for the past obligation when reporting a speech, e.g.

The boss told us we must complete the document before five o’clock.

(i) Negation of Obligation

As most of modal auxiliaries only ‘must’ is directly negated; negativity is attached to the embedded proposition, whereas the picture is different in negating the other forms.

1- You mustn’t tell George. = it is necessary not to tell George.
   i.e it is obligatory not to tell George.
2- You don’t have to tell George. = you can if you like to, but it is not necessary.
   i.e you are not obliged to.

Swan (1980:399) states that ‘needn’t’ can be used instead of don’t have to / haven’t got to especially in British English i.e

You needn’t try to explain. = you don’t have to try to explain.

2 – 7 – 4 Certainty

For Leech and Savartivk (1975:130), certainty is a logical necessity. It is expressed by {must, have to, shall, shan’t, will, won’t, can’t, couldn’t}. Swan (1980:389), suggests the examples below:

1- There must be some mistakes
2- I shall see you tomorrow.
3- I shan’t be late.
4- Things will be all right.
5- It won’t rain this evening.
6- You must be tired.
7- That can’t be John, he is in Dublin.
8- I knew it couldn’t be John.
9- This child would one day rule all England.
10- I told you that you wouldn’t be able to do that.

Other ways of expressing certainty provided by Leech and Savartivk (1975:130) are as follows:

1- Many people will certainly lose their job.
2- Many people are certain / sure to lose their job.
3- It is certain that the bombing will stop soon.
4- Inevitably, some changes will take place.

Leech and Savartivk (1975:126) add that people often tend to impersonalize certainty by using the (a wh-clause) in which the speaker assumes neither the truth nor the falsehood of a statement. e.g. I know what his answer will be.

A point of contrast between certainty and possibility can be displayed here through two examples:

1- His father can’t be alive. This statement can be paraphrased as:

   It is impossible that his father is still alive.

2- His father must be dead. This sentence can be interpreted as:

   It is certain that his father is dead.

Two types of certainty can be distinguished:

A- Certainty in past time

1- Someone had to lose the game. (= it was necessary ...)
2- John must have missed the train. (= it is certainly that...)

B- Hypothetical certainty (have to)

If God didn’t exist, someone would have to invent him.

(= it would be necessary for someone to invent him)
2-7-5 Ability (can, be able to, etc)

According to Leech and Savartvik (1975: 130), ability is a notion that is also expressed by modals, especially ‘can’ and it is closely related to the theoretical possibility. The following examples will support the idea:

1- He can speak English fluently

2- He is capable of keeping a secret when wants to.

3- She knows how to type and take shorthand.

4- Will you be able to meet us in London tomorrow?

For negating ability can’t / unable to / be incapable are used:

5- He can’t speak German very well.

6- He is incapable of driving a car.

For expressing ability in the past could is used, and it refers to a permanent or habitual ability in the past:

7- He could play the piano when he was five.

8- Einstein couldn’t speak until he was eight years old.

However, ‘was / were able to …’ often combine the ideas of ability and achievement.

9- We were able to buy a house by the sea. (= we could and we did)

(i) Hypothetical ability

10- I am so hungry, I could eat a horse. This statement is not real, it is exaggerative

2-7-6 Prediction

Prediction could be construed as a statement of what is thought that will happen or take place. It is usually expressed by the use of ‘must’ and ‘will’ to express a degree of certainty which is not observed, but about which a conclusion is made from evidence. Leech and Svartvik (1975:131), maintain that, – on hearing the phone ring, it might be said that “That’s my wife” could possibly mean ‘I know that she is due to phone at this time’. And therefore he concludes she is phoning now. Will is said to be used similarly for both present and future, whereas must is only for present. The following examples best display the concept of prediction in modality:
1- John **will** have arrived by now.
2- John **will** have arrived by tomorrow.
3- John **must** have arrived by now.
4- *John **must** have arrived by tomorrow.*

This sort of prediction with **will** is argued that it can occur with conditional sentences:

5- If litmus paper is dipped in acid, it *will* turn red.

It is also used in a habitual sense to express the idea of predictability or characteristic behaviour. e.g.

6- Accident **will** happen
7- A lion **will** only attack a human when it is hungry.

It is worth noting that **would** is used for past predictability. e.g.

8- He **would** wait for her outside the office everyday.

Leech and Svartvik (1975: 86), state that, **would** is a typical narrative style of spoken English.

2 – 8 **Modality and Negation**

The relationship of negation and modality has received much attention, for where the negative particle to put or what part of the proposition negated, affects the meaning. Palmer (1986:220) argues that the most noticeable feature of this relationship is that it provides some difference between epistemic and non-epistemic modality. Huddleston (1984:168) stresses the same point, showing that both types of modality interact somewhat differently with negation. Thus, negation is considered as vital to interpret an utterance message. But according to Palmer (1986:220), the problem is that there is often no formal way of deciding whether it is the modal that is negated or the residue (= **what is left of the meaning expressed in an utterance of the clause apart from modality**). Whereas Huddleston (1984:168), expresses the view that, negation can be internal or external, the difference based on what part of the utterance is negated. When the residue is negated, then negation is internal, and it is external when the negation is applied to the modal. The following examples provided by Thomson and Martinet (1986:129), support the point:

a- You can’t eat sandwiches in the library. What is negated is the permission, so it is external negation.

b- She may not have known him. It may be the case that she did not know him, so it is internal negation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table No (2-3)</th>
<th>Negation of modals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epistemic</strong></td>
<td>Internal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>External</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deontic</strong></td>
<td>Internal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>External</td>
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</table>

Source: Huddleston (1984:169)

“(...) is used to show the link between (not and go) in ‘e’ and there should be a phonological break between may and not, i.e. the residue is negated. Whereas the break in ‘g’ is after not, to indicate that the modal is negated. Thus, the paralinguistic devices such as (intonation, stress, etc) play an important role to express modality.

2 – 9 Modality and English Conditionals

It has been noted that, the conditional sentences both real and unreal, frequently use modal auxiliaries in both clauses. This reflects the strong affinities between English conditional and the modals, a heavy presence of modality in conditionals exists. Thomson and Martinet (1986:1997), propose the following examples:

1- If he runs, he *will* get here in time. (real)
2- If someone tried to blackmail me, I *would* tell the police. (unreal)

Palmer (1986: 189), points out that, conditional sentences have unique characteristics in their both main clause and subordinate clause, is that the truth of the proposition depends upon the truth of the other. However, Bybee (1994:258) says that “Considerable evidence suggests that it is not the domain of truth or fact that is the relevant domain for mood, but rather the domain of assertion and non-assertion that is relevant.”. That is to say the speaker himself who guarantees the degree of assertion which reflects his / her attitude, and this is the core idea of modality. It is argued that, the form in both clauses in the real conditional is declarative, the proposition expresses fact. And the verb in the main clause is in a present not
a future tense, though the declarative is not the strongest indicator of the speaker commitment of truth of the proposition, as the point is not to test the degree of fact but rather the degree of possibility, etc. Palmer (1986:191), adds that, the unreal conditionals are traditionally distinguished as improbable conditions in the future and impossible and counterfactual one in the present or past. They are expressed by a variety of devices that include past tense, subjunctive, modal verbs and particles. He goes on saying that there is some complexity in the relationship of unreal conditionals and modality. It can be observed in ‘could’ has two possible interpretations:

1 - He could have jumped six feet, if he had trained hard.
2 - He could have jumped six feet, if he had wanted to.

It is suggested that ‘He could have’ can either be a past indicative or past conditional. In its indicative sense, applies to the second sentence, and the subjunctive sense applies then to the first as training would have produced ability. The same can apply to ‘could’ in:

1 - He could jump six feet, if he trained hard.
2 - He could jump six feet, if he wanted to.

Palmer (1986:196), also states that the essential point is that the second of each of the pairs of examples, the ability indicated by ‘could have’ and ‘could’ is not conditional. Palmer adds that subjunctive is not used exclusively. Epistemic ‘must’ can be used in unreal conditions, though it was suggested unacceptable:

- If he had stayed in the army, he must have become a colonel.

Palmer (1986:198), comments that it could be construed as ‘It is possible that he would have become a colonel if ...’ and not ‘it would have been possible...’

2 – 10 Futurity and Modality

There are strong affinities between modality and futurity as the English modals are used to express future. Leech and Svartvik (1975:71), state that, there are five ways of expressing the future in English verb phrase. The most important future constructions are those which use will / shall and be going though this is not the only use of will and shall. Palmer (1986:104), states that, ‘shall’ occurs only with the pronouns (I, we) especially in American English and the other pronouns (you, he, she, it, they) accompany will. Thomson and Martinet (1986:188), argue that ‘will’ is used for intention, whereas ‘shall’ for action, where the subject’s wishes are not involved:
1 - I will wait for you. = I intend to wait for you.
2- I shall be 25 next week.

‘shall’ is still found in formal English, but less common in conversation. e.g.

I will be 25 next week.

However ‘I shall’ is reported by ‘He will’ and ‘He will’ is reported by ‘I will’.

‘I shall see the doctor tomorrow’. Is reported as:
He said that he will see the doctor.

Leech and Svartvik (1975:71), suggest that, future prediction can be expressed by ‘will and shall’: Tomorrow the weather will be cold and cloudy.

Palmer (1986:142), holds that, it is common in the main clause of a sentence with an if-clause or another conditional adverbial ‘will’ is used. e.g.

If it rains, the match will be cancelled.

Thomson and Martinet (1986:181), state that, ‘Will + infinitive’ is used to express intention at the moment of decision i.e. there is no previous preparation to carry out the action. e.g. (1,2) and to express probable future e.g. (4,5)

1 - The phone is ringing. – I will answer it.
2 - To the waiter ‘I will have the steak, please’.
3 - It will probably be cold.
4 - Tomatoes will be expensive this year.

2 – 11 Modality and Passivization

Palmer (1986:133), asserts that, the idea of passivization and modality is dependent on the distinction between discourse and subject orientation. Thus it is only the discourse oriented modals that can be passivized, and it is not possible for the case of subject-oriented modals, because modality is linked to the subject of the sentence. He introduces the following sentence to illustrate what he means:

1 - John shall meet Mary.

Mary shall be met by John.
2 - John won’t meet Mary.

*Mary won’t be met by John.

The last sentence is semantically not acceptable, as the modal relates to the characteristics of the subject, which is changed in the process of passivization. Thus, if the speaker guarantees that John will meet Mary, he also guarantees that Mary will meet John. Passivization is possible for ‘can’ in the sense of ‘may’. Considering the following example, the point will be clear:

Parents can visit children at any time. = Children can be visited by parents at any time.

2 - 12 Differences Between British and American Modals

The differences between American and British English nearly cover most of the language parts and fields such as vocabulary, spelling, sound etc. The English modals have also been used differently. However, it is useful to know that there is an increasing use of non-modal linguistic devices to express modality at the expense of modal verbs. Leech et al (2009:71) say: “the overall picture of the modal auxiliary in gradual decline, is unquestionable.” They continue providing the reason, saying:

“... American speech is popularly supposed to be the most influential source of innovation in the language ... the ratio of core modals to semi modals is much smaller in American conversation data. ... American spontaneous speech assumed to have an influence on both speech and American writing”.

It is clear that the main modals face competition from the rival semi-modals, which are increasing in frequency.

However, some light can be shed on the difference of the use of some modals. Coates and Leech (1980:30), assert that, there are some modals where a significant difference between American and British usage emerged. These modals are ‘should and ought to’, ‘must and have to’ and ‘shall, can, and may’ and others.

‘Should’ is less frequent in British than in American English. Coates and Leech (1980:30), refer the reason to the relative frequency of ‘ought to’ in British English and ‘should’ is used formally, and ‘Might’ in British English is used in polite requests:

1- Might I use your telephone?
2 - If I might just say something ...

‘Shall’ is superseded by ‘will’ for the first person form of the ‘will’ paradigm in American English. Coates and Leech (1980:31). This shows that will is used for all
persons in American English. In British English it is fairly common to use shall with the first person to talk about future.

1 - I will / shall never forget this flavor. (BrE)
2 - I will never forget this flavor. (AmE)

Further, Thomson and Martinet (1986:208), explain that, in British English ‘shall’ is used in an obligatory sense in legal contexts, whereas it is rare in American English. e.g.

Members shall enter the names of their guests in the book provided.

Concerning ‘have to’ and ‘must’, Coates and Leech (1980:32), state that American speakers and writers prefer to use ‘have to’, whereas the British tend to use ‘must’. ‘Must’ is only used in American English in formal situations.

In conclusion, one can say that, the two varieties of English language and on the course of adopting and identifying themselves from each other, speakers and writers have different style of using modals, in both the use of modals is contextually governed.

2-13 Teaching Techniques of Modals

Teaching modals can be a challenge, especially to beginning teachers who do not have enough experience. Regarding the importance of modals as linguistic components in utterances, scholars provide different views about the most appropriate approaches and teaching techniques of teaching the modals. Perkins (1983:26) for instance, who adopts the monosemantic approach, suggests that, the contextual factors can be used to illuminate the meaning of the modals, especially, those are semantically similar, e.g. ‘can, may, must and have to’. The following are some of useful teaching techniques of modals:

a - Grouping modals

Cowan (2008:321), illustrates that, grouping modals according to their meaning and the function they serve, is one of the most effective techniques that help learners understand and practice the modals. However, this technique could be misleading in some ways especially to the beginners, as there are nuances among the modals themselves, yet it provide good opportunities to master other communicative skills through question and answer activities. e.g.

A: ‘What can a pilot do?’ B: ‘a pilot can fly a plane.’
b- **Dramatization**

Presenting language in a way that is similar to the learners' life is of great value. Drama provides lifelike situations and activities. The teacher exposes the learners to a listening material in which modals are used for request, offer, asking direction or any interaction context, then students perform the role of the participants. Broadhead and O’Dell (2012:28), comment that, providing students with listening source of contexts in which people offer or request favour, would represent a great chance for the learners’ interaction and keep them engaged.

c- **Conceptual drawing**

It is one of the activities that provide fun and joy to the process of learning, but requires active and creative teachers, and the internet can provide ample of drawings in which modals of certainty and deduction; *may, might, could, must*, etc can be practiced. In the figure (2-1) for example, the teacher asks:

‘What do you think this picture could be?’ , the learners' response after thinking:

S1: It *can* be a vase.
S2: It *might* be a cup.
S3: It *could* be two faces.

![Figure (2-1): A conceptual drawing](image)

*Source: Cowan (2008:322)*

d- **Songs**

In the field of teaching English as a foreign language, songs have become a worldwide teaching technique, and they are accepted by the EFL learners of different levels. Grunert (2009:3), points out that ‘It is an anthropological constant that interest is almost automatically aroused when word come with music’. It is clear that the message is far better understood when there is a natural interest and motivation which can be
encouraged by music. Thus, the modals can be presented for instance, in an integrated lesson plan based on a song, the learners are asked to carry out a comprehension activity by filling blanks e.g. (with infinitives), then, they listen, take notes and discuss. They can create their own songs with local familiar tune.

e- Problem solving

One of the most common activities to practice modals such as ‘should, ought’, are situation in which people ask for advice, and many newspapers have agony aunt column for such purpose. EFL teachers can make use of such activities to encourage learners, and organized in groups to play the role of an adviser for selected problems which is are real or imaginary created the learners themselves, so they are expected to respond actively.

2 – 14 How Modals are Introduced in Secondary Schools

Concerning the way English modals are taught in secondary schools, it is important to say that not all of modals are displayed in the syllabus, and those which are included they are found without their different meanings and situations they are expected to be used in. It has been noticed that none of the techniques mentioned in (2-13) is adopted in teaching modals. In addition to that, EFL teachers do not make use of classroom situations to introduce the modals.

2 – 15 Previous Studies

The researcher has surveyed some libraries for previous studies relevant to the topic of the current study. Only two studies were found.

Ahmed Mohammed Khair Abd allah, conducted a study in (1999). It was entitled ‘Modals and Modality in English – A general review’. The main objectives were:

1- To provide semantic aspects of modal auxiliaries.
2- To reveal the differences in meaning that might exist between equivalent modals.
3- To realize the extent to which learners at university level are aware of the use of the English modals in spoken language.

Concerning the findings of the study, it can be said that there are no clear findings that depend on the tool used in the study. But, he concludes that the modality still has no clear cut definition, and the interest of the linguists has rarely extended beyond the modal auxiliaries. He goes no further than providing a theoretical highlight on the area of modality, as he states. The recommendations suggested by the study are:
1- Adoption of the descriptive method not the prescriptive in teaching grammar.

2- Developing students’ communicative skills through providing ample use of modals by the English instructors inside the classroom.

The other study which is not directly connected to the present study, but it touches the area of modal verb, since it is entitled ‘Problems facing EFL learners at university level when employing English auxiliary verbs.’ The study was carried out by Hanan Mohammed Freaha in (2005). In this study, the English modals were not treated as a separate linguistic part, just as a type under the umbrella of auxiliary verbs. The main objectives of this study were as listed below:

1- To investigate EFL learners’ ability in recognizing and producing the English auxiliary verbs.
2- To find out the causes of such deterioration in mastering the auxiliaries.
3- To draw EFL teachers’ attention to the deficiencies in order to increase their effort to remove them.
4- To focus on the most effective techniques for treating problems that EFL learners encounter when employing the English auxiliaries.

The study reaches the following findings:

1- The students do not possess sufficient knowledge to enable them either to recognize or produce the English auxiliaries.
2- The absence of the auxiliary verbs in the learners’ native language, contribute to the problem that the learner confront, when employing the English auxiliaries.
3- Early teaching methods are also responsible for these problems.

The recommendations are as follows:

a- Auxiliary verbs should be taught in situations.
b- Syllabus should provide adequate space to the auxiliary verbs at both secondary and university level.
c- Objectives of the lessons should be clear, and the EFL teachers should exert effort to provide the learners with adequate exercises and remedial work.
d- Conversations in English language should be encouraged.

With respect to the first study, the dissertation carried out by Khair (1999), it can be said that its linguistic area of investigation is of the same concern of this study, however, there is obvious difference: while it focuses on modals and modality in the spoken discourse, the current study concentrates on the modals in written discourse. Also, the dissertation was carried out at university level, whereas this study is carried out at secondary level. However,
both studies aimed at revealing the difficulties that the learners face when using the English modals, and both illustrated the semantic differences between the modals. Most importantly, in this study the difference of modals between British English and American English and its causes will make this study quite good addition to the field of modals and modality.

With regard to the second study, that was by Hanan Fareha, as it dealt with the auxiliary verb as a whole, it was noticed that the modals were viewed as just auxiliaries, without deep semantic investigation as was to some extent, done in this study. Both studies displayed the syntactic aspects of the modals. One major difference is that, the sample for the present study is from the secondary students and Hanan Fareha took university students as a sample.

There is a third study which was written by Joanne Close and Bas Aarts. University of Leeds and university college London. They provided a study under the title ‘current change in the modal system of English. A case study of must, have to and have got to’. This research was carried out as part of the project (The changing verb phrase in present day British English) at the Survey of English Usage, funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council. The researchers took the variations between the modals mentioned above as a window through which they viewed the changes in the modal system in the Present – Day English (PDE) (1960s – 1990s). The results show a dramatic decrease in frequency of the core modal ‘must’ and a significant increase in frequency of the semi-modal have to. The same point is mentioned in the part of the British and American English difference of modals.

A forth recent study was written by Dirk Noel, and published in 2015 by John Benjamins. It was about the changes in the core modals and the quasi-modal in the Hong Kong, British and American press. The results show that The Hong Kong use of modals are similar to that of British English. Though this point was not included in the present study, but one can suggest that the resemblance between the two English users is due to the idea that Hong Kong had been ruled for long decades by the British country.

Another MA online research that, was spotted on (www.degruyter.com), was under the title “Arab EFL learners’ Acquisition of Modals”, at Sharjah university 2009. The main focus of this research was on evaluating to what extent that the learners at university level were able to identify and produce modals. Depending on a test and a questionnaire, as this study will do, the findings show that the standard of the students’ performance is quite low. Thus, one can say that modals are a problematic area for EFL learners. In addition to that the study established a hierarchy of difficulty and identified the major causes of this difficulty in the use of modals.

A PHD thesis, university of Manchester by David Denison was entitled ‘The category of modals: A moving target’. This thesis concentrates on the diachronic change in the modals’
system and as this study does, Denison views the modals in terms of their syntactic structure and meaning. What is interesting is that, he provides a historical information about the development of the modals through history (2-1), that the year 1600 represents a turning point in the identity of modals which became a separate part of verbs and purely auxiliaries. However, he concludes that there is no a wholly satisfactory prototypical modal in respect to the idea that, the modals are on move, and then they are apt to lose their identity.

The following chapter will be devoted to the methodology of the study.
Chapter Three

The methodology of the study

3–0  Introduction

This chapter is devoted to discuss the procedures adopted to conduct the study. It deals with sampling and tools for data collection and analysis. In addition, the study design follows.

3–1  The Study Design

To conduct the study, the researcher adopted the descriptive analytical approach. The sample was selected from the population of the study in a way that is expected to give a real picture of the problem as it stands at the present time.

3–2  Sampling

The data was purposefully selected from a sample consisting of two groups. The first group consisted of (50) EFL learners from El-Shambata secondary school for girls. The second group comprised a sample of (20) EFL teachers from the secondary schools in East Sinnar locality.

3–3  Tools For Data Collection

The researcher chose two tools to collect the data: a diagnostic test and a questionnaire. They were designed to elicit the data required for carrying out the study.

3–3–1  The Diagnostic Test

The test was made up of four questions to measure the EFL learners performance in the English main modals. In question one, the testees have to select from multiple choices the suitable alternative (a modal) that fits the meaning of each sentence. Whereas, in question two, the testees have to underline the suitable verb form or phrase that fits the meaning of the sentence with the aim of measuring the learners’ ability of using the correct form of modals in different tenses. In respect to question three, the learners have to select the best word that represents a function of the modal used, and to put it in the brackets, this question tests directly whether the learners are able to determine the function of modals in a specific context. Concerning question four, it tests the learners’ awareness of the modals that are used for deduction. The testees have to select the modal that fits the meaning of the sentence.
3–3–1–1 The Reliability Of The Test

To measure the test reliability, the researcher adopted the method of test and retest. The correlation process to the learners’ scores was carried out.

3–3–1–2 Validity of The Test

The face validity of the test was checked by members of the staff of University of Gezira, Faculty of Education, Hantoub, Department of English Language, and the test was approved as a tool to achieve its objectives.

3–3–2 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire aimed at investigating the difficulties that encountered by the EFL learners at secondary level when dealing with the English modals in written discourse, from the EFL teachers’ point of view. It consists of nine statements and one open-ended question.

Concerning the first statement, it was designed to find out whether the EFL teachers at secondary level agree, agree to some extent or disagree that EFL learners encounter difficulties, when dealing with the English modals in written discourse. The second statement sought if the EFL teachers agree, agree to some extent or disagree that, the secondary level EFL learners are not aware of the modals’ function. Whereas statement number three, was for knowing whether EFL teachers agree, agree to some extent or disagree that, most of the secondary level EFL learners face difficulties when expressing the modals in the past time. Concerning the fourth statement, it aimed at finding out if the EFL teachers agree, agree to some extent or disagree that, most EFL learners are not aware that modals are followed by infinitives. In addition, the fifth statement aimed at finding out whether EFL teachers agree, agree to some extent or disagree that, the modals of deduction are the most problematic area faced by the EFL learners at secondary level when dealing with modals. The statement of number six was directed to the respondents to measure if they agree, agree to some extent or disagree that they present the English modals monosemantically. Whereas statement number seven, was introduced to find out if the EFL teachers at secondary level agree, agree to some extent or disagree that they are required to enrich their knowledge of the English main modals in order to help the secondary level EFL learners. The statement number eight, aimed at investigating whether the EFL teacher agree, agree to some extent or disagree that the English modals receive little attention in the syllabus at the secondary level. The final statement aimed at finding out if the EFL teachers agree, agree to some extent or disagree that the English modals require more attention in the syllabus at secondary level. The questionnaire was concluded by an open-ended question which was designed to investigate the suggestions of
the of the EFL teachers about the most effective techniques that can enable the EFL secondary learners to deal successfully with the English main modals in written discourse.

3 – 3 – 2 – 1 Validity of the Questionnaire

Before handing-out the questionnaire to the intended respondents, it was judged by experienced staff members of University of Gezira, faculty of education, Hantoub, department of English. Their comments and remarks were taken into consideration, and the suggested adaptation was carried out accordingly.

3 – 4 The procedures of the test and the questionnaire

The researcher himself administered the diagnostic test in its two sessions (test and retest) which lasted (40) minutes for each. The questionnaire was distributed to (20) teachers of secondary schools in East Sinnar locality. It consisted of (9) statements and one open-ended question.

3 – 5 Data Analysis

The data collected by the diagnostic test and the questionnaire were analyzed by using the manual descriptive statistical analysis. Both the test and the questionnaire were analyzed by frequency and percentages.

The following chapter will display the results of the data analysis and the discussion of these results in relation to the hypotheses of the study.
CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis, Presentation and Discussion

4-0 Introduction

This chapter includes the presentation, analysis and discussion of the data collected from the test for the learners and the questionnaire for EFL teachers at secondary schools in East Sinnar locality.

4-1 The Questionnaire

The following tables represent the responses to the statements of the questionnaire given by the (20) EFL teachers at East Sinnar locality schools. Each statement will be treated separately.

4-1-1 Difficulties faced by EFL learners in dealing with English modals in written discourse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>85 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to some extent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 4-1-1 the majority of the EFL teachers at secondary level, (85 %) agree that the learners at secondary level encounter difficulties in dealing with the English modals in written discourse, and only (15 %) of them agree to some extent that, the learners face difficulties in using modals in written discourse.
4-1-2 Learners’ unawareness of the functions of the English modals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to some extent</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering table 4-1-2, it is clear that (75 %) of the respondents agree that most of the EFL learners are not aware of the functions of the English modals, while (20 %) agree to some extent and only (5%) disagree.

4-1-3 Difficulties of expressing modality in past time in written discourse.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>65 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to some extent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 4-1-3 above (65 %) of the EFL teachers at secondary level agree that EFL learners at secondary level face difficulties in expressing modality in the past time in written discourse, whereas (25 %) agree to some extent, and only (10 %) disagree.
4-1-4 EFL learners’ awareness of the modals and infinitives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to some extent</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 4-1-4, (50 %) of the EFL teachers see that EFL learners lack the awareness that the English modals are followed by infinitives. (30 %) agree to some extent, and (20 %) disagree.

4-1-5 EFL learners’ performance using modals for deduction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to some extent</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>50 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-1-5 shows that only (20 %) of the EFL teachers agree that modals express deduction are the most problematic area of English modals that face the EFL learners at secondary level. (50 %) agree to some extent, whereas (30 %) disagree.
4-1-6  EFL teachers’ presentation of modals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to some extent</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table 4-1-6, (40%) of the EFL teachers agree that most of them present the English modals monosemantically. (35%) of them agree to some extent, and (25%) of them disagree.

4-1-7  Enriching EFL teachers’ knowledge of the English main modals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>80 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to some extent</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-1-7 reveals that (80%) of the EFL teachers at the secondary level agree that they are required, as EFL teachers, to enrich their knowledge of the English main modals. (20%) of them agree to some extent. No one disagrees.
4-1-8  **Attention paid by syllabus designers to the modals at secondary level**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>65 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to some extent</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 %</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concerning table 4-1-8, it is clear that (65 %) of the EFL teachers agree that the main English modals do not receive adequate attention in the syllabus at secondary level, whereas (30 %) agree to some extent, and (5 %) disagree.

4-1-9  **Intensive exercises help the EFL learners deal successfully with the modals in written discourse**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>95 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree to some extent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 %</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 4-1-9, it is obvious that (95 %) of the EFL teachers at secondary level agree that intensive exercises of the English main modals will help the EFL learners at secondary level to deal successfully with the English modals in written discourse. only (5 %) agree to some extent. No one disagrees.
4-1.10 The open-ended question

Respondents’ opinions about the most effective techniques that enable EFL learners at secondary level to deal successfully with the English main modals in written discourse.

The views given by the respondents to the above question are not the same. Though (4) teachers (20%) of the respondents did not provide a clear idea in responding to this question, (6) respondents i.e. (30%) believed that group and pair work is the best way to help EFL learners at secondary level to cope with the difficulties of modals in written discourse. While (3) respondents, (15%) recommended intensive drills and activities. In addition, contrastive analysis has witnessed supporters in this issue, that (2) respondents advised that English modals should be taught with explanation of their meaning in the learners’ mother tongue. Whereas (5), (25%) recommended that more attention and space should be provided in the syllabus at the secondary level.

4-2 The Results of the Test

The test consists of four questions, they are designed in a way that helps in recognizing the problems faced by the EFL learners at secondary level when dealing with the English modals in written discourse. Ten marks were allocated to each main question. The results are shown in the following tables.

4-2.1 Table (4-2-1) Choice of the correct modals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Passed</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table (4-2-1) illustrates that (20) students i.e. (40%) of them succeeded in answering the question, whereas (30) students (60%) failed.
4-2-2 Table (4-2-2) Underlining the suitable verb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Passed</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering table (4-2-2), it is clear that (26) students (52%) did not succeed in answering the question, whereas (24) students (48%) passed.

4-2-3 Table (4-2-3) Writing the correct words in the brackets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Passed</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table (4-2-3) above, it is obvious that (35) students (70%) failed to provide the correct answers to the question, and only (15) student, that about (30%) succeeded.

4-2-4 Table (4-2-4) Underlining the suitable modals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Passed</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As table (4-2-4) illustrates, it is obvious that only (11) students, i.e. (22%) succeeded in answering question C, whereas (39) students, that about (78%) failed.
4-3 Summary of the results of the test

Table (4-3-1) Results of question A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table above which concerns question (A) of the test, (6) students (12%) scored the zero mark. (17) students, (34%) of them scored (2) marks, and (6) students (12%) scored (4) marks. About (14) students (28%) scored (6) marks out of (10). Besides, there is only one student (2%) scored (8) marks. The full mark i.e. ten out of ten is scored by (6) students, (12%).

Table (4-3-2) Results of question B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concerning the table that displays the results of question B, (3) students, (6%) scored the zero mark out of ten. (7) students (14%) scored (2) marks. (4) were scored by (16) students (32%). For (6) marks, about (13) students (26%) scored it. And (10) students (20%) scored (8) marks. But only one student (2%) got the full mark i.e. ten out of ten.

Table (4-3-3) **Results of question C**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table above 6 students, (12%) scored the zero mark. (15) students, (30%) got (2) marks. And (14) students, (28%) scored (4) marks. (6) marks were scored by (11) students i.e. (22%). No one got (8) marks. Whereas (4) students, (8%) got (10) marks out of (10).

Table (4-3-4) **Results of question D**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table D shows that (2) students (4%) scored the zero mark. (21) students (42%) scored (2) marks, whereas (16) students (32%) scored (6) marks, and only one student (2%) scored (8) marks, the same can be said about the (10) marks.
4-4 Testing The Hypotheses of the study In Relation To The Results

In this section, the results of the diagnostic test and the questionnaire will be discussed in relation to the hypotheses of the study.

4-4-1 Hypothesis One

The first hypothesis is ‘Most of the EFL learners at secondary level face difficulties when dealing with the English main modals in written discourse.’

According to table (4-2-1), (4-2-2), (4-2-3) and (4-2-4) it has been noticed that, the majority of the EFL learners, (60%), (52%), (70%) and (78%), did not perform well. Besides, table (4-1-1) assures that (85%) of the respondents to the questionnaire confirmed that the EFL learners at secondary level face difficulties when dealing with the English main modals. Thus the results of the test and the questionnaire verify hypothesis one.

4-4-2 Hypothesis Two

The second hypothesis is ‘Modals that express deduction are the most problematic area of modals for the EFL learners at secondary level in case of written discourse.’

Table (4-2-4), shows that (78%) of the EFL learners failed to choose a suitable modal that matches the meaning of the sentence that expresses deduction. On the other hand, based on table (4-1-5), it is found that unexpectedly only (20%) of the respondents confirmed that modals of deduction are the most problematic area of the English modals for the EFL learners at secondary level. But (50%) of the respondents agreed to some extent that, the modals of deduction, are the most problematic area of modals for the learners. Hence, hypothesis two is strongly verified.

4-4-3 Hypothesis Three

The third hypothesis is ‘The syllabus in the secondary level does not provide adequate activities of the English main modals.’

Referring to table (4-1-8), it is clear that (65%) of the respondents confirmed that the syllabus at the secondary level does not provide adequate activities of the main English modal verbs. Whereas (30%), agreed to some extent. So, the results of the questionnaire verify hypothesis three.
4-4-4 Hypothesis Four

The fourth hypothesis is ‘**Intensive exercises of the main modals will help EFL learners at secondary level to deal successfully with them in written discourse**’

Depending on table (4-1-9), the majority of the respondents (95%) agree that intensive exercises of the English main modals will help the students to deal successfully with the English main modals, and (5%) of the respondents agree to some extent, whereas no one of the respondents disagrees. Thus hypothesis four is strongly verified.

The following chapter will be dedicated to the conclusion, findings and the recommendations of the study.
CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion, Findings and Recommendations

5-1 Conclusion

The present study aimed at investigating the difficulties encountered by EFL learners at the secondary level when dealing with the main English main modals in written discourse. The main objective of this was finding out the difficulties that were faced by EFL learners at secondary level when dealing with the main English modal verbs in written discourse. The descriptive analytical method was adopted. Two tools for data collection were used; a diagnostic test was administered to (50) learners at El-shambata secondary school in East Sinnar locality, and a questionnaire which was distributed to (20) experienced EFL teachers at the secondary schools in the same locality. The data was collected and analyzed manually. The study has revealed the following findings:

5-2 Findings

After analyzing the performance of the learners in the diagnostic test and the EFL teachers’ views, the following findings have been reached:

1- Most EFL learners at the secondary level, (65%) encounter difficulty when dealing with the English main modals in written discourse.
2- The majority of the EFL learners at the secondary level (70%), confuse the functions of the English main modals.
3- Great numbers of the EFL learners, (78%) as table (4-2-4) illustrates, face problems in providing the correct modal of deduction.
4- The syllabus at the secondary level provides inadequate space for the English modals, (65%) of the EFL teachers agree that, the modals are neglected.
5- Collaborative work – pair and group work, is one of the vital techniques that can be adopted to help the EFL learners to deal successfully with the English modals.

5-3 Recommendations

Based on the results and the findings, the following are the recommendations of the study:

1- Both EFL teachers and learners should raise their awareness of the importance of the English modals for communication.
2- Communicative and modal – based activities and drills should be practiced by the EFL learners at secondary level.
3- English main modals will better be construed if they are presented in different situations to reflect their different meanings.

4- Modals of deduction need special attention on the part of the EFL teachers as they are confusing for the learners.

5- It is recommended that the syllabus at the secondary level is to provide more suitable space and activities that will enable the EFL learners to deal successfully with the modals in written discourse.

6- Pair and group work is highly recommended to be adopted in English classes when teaching the English modals.

7- EFL learners should be made aware as early as possible of the logical and social interaction functions of the English modals, and should be given some effective guidance in working with the systems of these functions.

5-4 Suggestions for further studies

Because of the importance of the topic of modality and modals, further studies should be carried out in the same area in order to raise EFL learners and users awareness of the modals. The researcher suggests the following further studies:

a- Effective techniques of teaching English modals at the basic and the secondary level.

b- Investigating the role of the English modals in discourse analysis, with special reference to some presidential speeches.
References

- Quirk, R ;Greenbaun ,S ;Leech,G ; and Svartvik,J.(1973).*University grammar*. Longman group . UK.

**Web Sites**

1- [www.hummaities.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.hummaities.manchester.ac.uk)
2- [www.hummaities.manchester.ac.uk](http://www.hummaities.manchester.ac.uk)
4- [www.httt:// mpra.ub.uni.munchen -de)](http://www.httt:// mpra.ub.uni.munchen -de)
5- [www.degruyter.com,](http://www.degruyter.com,)