

An Analysis of Errors Made by ESL Learners in The Use of Modal Auxiliaries in Sentences Making

Gadhe Vidhya Pandurang

Asst. Teacher
Yeshwant High school, Umri
Tq. Umri Dist. Nanded

Abstract

This research paper is aimed at obtaining clear information about level of the student's errors in using modal auxiliaries by using descriptive sampling method. The samples of this research are 30 students from X class. To collect the data writer gave a test and questionnaire sheets to know how many students make errors in using correct modal auxiliary in the sentence and what are the reasons of errors making. After conduction the research, the writer found several findings : teachers were not fully trained, there were not any language laboratories in the rural as well as urban areas, hence the students have not any scope to increase their knowledge.

The textbooks are also not sufficient for increasing students capacity . etc. The reasons why the students did errors in using modal auxiliaries are caused by context of learning in a classroom context the teacher or the textbook can lead the students to make faulty hypothesis about language. Students made mistakes because of misleading explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of a structure or word in a textbook.

Keywords : Error Analysis, ESL, Auxiliary verbs.

Introduction :

Introduction of all languages in the world, English deserves to be regarded as a world's most widely spoken language. It is a common means of communication between different nations. According to Randolph and Quirk, there are something like 250 million people for whom English is the mother tongue or first language.

It is true that English is the mother tongue of Great Briton. But only they are not the native speakers of English language. Americans, Canadians and Australians too are the British . As a colonial subject, we had no choice to learn English. Even after the independence, the language of the ruler stayed with us.

India is a multilingual nation. Its languages have been recognized in Indian constitution for an official use. In the present context, a man without the knowledge of English is considered to be illiterate in the sense of the word. The importance of English fully realized by the government and educationists of India. Therefore , much emphasis has been laid on its study either as a foreign language or as a mother tongue right from the

school stage. Thus , the importance of English language is more than that of the other language.

If we want to learn any language, we must know the grammar of that language deeply syntax is the main concern of this study. We intend to examine the English auxiliary system as found among children who learn English as a second language. The auxiliary system of English language may not of course form of the main part of it syntax.

Phenomenon such as finiteness (tense) , agreement modality, aspect etc are mediated by the auxiliary system of many languages.

In this study researcher examines the auxiliary system of non native learners learning English in the main , we seek to answer the following questions, what are the auxiliary units found in children's English as a second language ? What are the possible reasons for the deviance ? Does the mother tongue interfere with the structures of the target language are the errors produced by these learners related to the second language learning situation alone ?

We take up these questions not always. Sequentially but wherever they are found relevant in their language learning.

The deviant forms produced by the learners have for long been termed as ‘errors’. The conventional view is that errors are something harmful and therefore to be avoided. But modern research has highlighted the significance of learner errors for both the theory of language and the task of teaching. The research in the area of learner goes under the name of error analysis.

Errors are not always harmful sometimes error is needed for some purposes. Error can be used as a tool of evaluation for measuring. The mastery of language being learnt. In addition, errors can also help the teacher even the curriculum designer to improve the material given or designed.

In making a good writing in English, students have to know all rules in writing. The specific rule here is about sentence. To make a good sentence. Students have to pay attention that a sentence which is constructed by a complete aspect like subject, verb and complement. A construction is not named as a sentence if it has no verb or to be.

When students learn verbs, one of the categories of the verb that they will learn is modal auxiliaries those are : can , could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, have to, must, ought to, need to , dare to. There auxiliaries are added to the verb a special component such as expressing ability, possibility permission, advice, necessity, lack of necessity, prohibition, asking form assistance, making logical conclusion, giving instructions, making suggestion and stating preferences.

In the process of learning a foreign language, students may find many new language characteristics that are different from their mother tongue, in which there is no denial leading students to make errors. Moreover, it is very important for the teachers to be able to know and analyse the errors, and it will help the students to reduce the same errors . Hence, the purpose of this research paper is to know the reasons behind the errors made by the students in the use of modal auxiliaries in that specific sentences which were given to the students in the test paper by the researcher. To collect the data relating to various uses of modal auxiliaries by the students from ESL school learners for this study the researcher has prepared a question paper consisting of 12 questions on 12 auxiliaries. Each question consists a single blank which is asked to be filled by choosing an appropriate auxiliary which is given below at the end of the sentence in the bracket. 30 ESL students has

selected for this purpose . It is because the learners learning English from the rural school’s come from very adverse linguistic background , therefore it is a challenge for the teachers to teach them the foreign language like English and another grammatical units like modal auxiliaries . Most of the students don’t know what are the modal auxiliaries and what are the functions of these auxiliaries hence, they are not able to use the correct auxiliaries in the sentences, they made so many mistakes which are known as errors. The collected data tabulated in the following table.

Distribution of errors In The use of Appropriate Modal Auxiliaries

Sr. no.	Appropriate Auxiliaries	No. of errors	Percentage
1	Must	11	33.66%
2	Needn’t	08	20.00%
3	Should	09	30.00%
4	Ought to	16	53.33%
5	Can	00	00
6	Could	03	10.00%
7	Be able to	13	43.33
8	May	01	03.33%
9	Might	10	33.33%
10	Will	12	40.00%
11	Shall	08	26.66%
12	Dare to	23	76.66%

The above table shows us the no. of errors or mistakes made by the respondents in the use of modal auxiliaries in that specific sentences and the percentage of that errors are also mentioned in the table.

After overlooking the result, the researcher comes to the point that most of the students were unable to use the correct modal auxiliary in the specific sentence. There were so many reasons behind the errors made by the students. If they want to learn foreign language , like English effectively, they have to give their attention towards the verbs. As well as the auxiliaries use in the language.

Conclusions :

This study aims at investigation the errors in the use of modal verbs by ESL learners students from Yeshwant Highhschool Umri. It is clear that most of the students could not able to use correct modal auxiliaries in the given sentences. Students performance in grammar and using modal verbs accurately is very poor as reflected in their low scores in the test . It was found that students had difficulty deciding on the appropriate modals with appropriate functions : most modals have more than one function hence they get confused and used wrong modal auxiliaries.

Suggestions for future Research :

Based on the result of this study, the writer would like to offer some suggestions to minimize the students errors dealing with modal verbs

- 1) When teaching English, the teachers should give clear explanations about modal verbs.
- 2) Teachers and curriculum designers should raise students awareness to the importance and negative results of misusing modals.
- 3) Teachers must emphasize modal auxiliary verbs in order to develop better comprehension and understanding among students to use modals appropriately and more frequently.
- 4) Textbook writers need to be in line with the English language syllabus so that the necessary modals will be stated in the syllabus.
- 5) For lower level students, teachers can design activities that allow students to explore and familiar with the formal properties of modals and semi modals.
- 6) The students should do more writing exercises and should be encouraged to use correct forms of modal verbs.
- 7) More research is needed to investigate students ability in using modal verbs.
- 8) Future researcher should expand the sample size to include students of public and private schools.

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