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**Investigating Problems in Encountering Sudanese Secondary
Schools' Students in Understanding and using Modal Verbs**

تقصي المشكلات التي تواجه طلاب المرحلة الثانوية السودانية في فهم واستخدام الأفعال
المساعدة

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the
Requirements of M.A. Degree in English (Applied linguistic)**

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قال تعالى:

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صدق الله العظيم

Dedication

To my parents, brothers, sisters and friends.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, my deep thanks to Allah who helped me to accomplish this study.

Secondly, the researcher would like to express her profound gratitude to her thesis supervisor, **Dr. Yosuf Altiraifi Ahmed**, for his guidance and patience throughout of this thesis.

Finally, I would like to that all teachers in Sudan University of Science and Tecnology for their encouragement and help.

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the problems of using modal verbs in English Language which encounter secondary schools' students in first and second levels.

The study adopted the descriptive analytical method of research. The researcher designed a test on modal verbs for the students, in addition to a questionnaire for English Language teachers. The modal verbs test aimed at measuring the students' abilities in dealing with the problems posed by the modal verbs. The test was administrated to a total sample of 30 students. The English Language teachers' questionnaire, on the other hand, aimed at assessing the English language teachers' views on the relevance of modal verbs to English Language curricula in this secondary school (SPINE series) and to the teaching contexts. The questionnaire was administrated to a total sample of 25 English Language teachers from the same secondary schools in Omdurman Locality. The above mentioned tools used satisfied the criteria of validity and reliability. The findings of the study revealed that students are facing problems in understanding and using modal verbs. Based on the findings the researcher recommended paying modal verbs more practice. . Finally, the researcher suggested the following; Investigating the problems of Using Modal Verbs in English Language Facing universities students. An analysis of errors of using modal verbs in Secondary Schools' syllabus.

المستخلص

يهدف هذا البحث لدراسة المشكلات التي تواجه طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الثانوية في استخدام الأفعال المساعدة في اللغة الإنجليزية.

تبينت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي، حيث قامت الباحثة بتصميم أدوات البحث المتمثلة في اختبار الأفعال المساعدة للطلاب بالإضافة إلى استبانة لأساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية. هدف اختبار الأفعال المساعدة لقياس قدرات الطلاب في معالجة المشاكل التي تتصل بهذه الأفعال المساعدة لقياس قدرات الطلاب في معالجة المشاكل التي تتصل بهذه الأفعال المساعدة، وقد تم إجراؤه لعينة بعدد 30 طالب، أما الاستبانة والتي أجريت بعدد 25 من أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الثانوية، فقد هدفت إلى تقويم آراء هؤلاء الأساتذة حول مشكلات الأفعال المساعدة بمناهج اللغة الإنجليزية في هذه المدارس (سلسلة الإسباين)، وكذلك علاقتها بتعلم وتدريس اللغة. كما تم التأكد من مطابقة هذه الأدوات لمعايير الصدق والثبات. بناءً على هذه النتائج، أوصى البحث بإعطاء الأفعال المساعدة اهتماماً أكثر. أخيراً، قام الباحث باقتراح التالي: تقصي المشكلات التي تواجه طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعات في استخدام الأفعال المساعدة فسي اللغة الإنجليزية. تحليل الأخطاء في استخدام الأفعال المساعدة بمناهج اللغة الإنجليزية في المدارس الثانوية.

Tables of contents

Subject	Page no
Verses	II
Dedication	III
Acknowledgements	IV
Abstract	V
Abstract (Arabic)	V
Table of contents	VII
List of tables	X
List of Figures	XI
Chapter One Introduction	
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Context of the study	1
1.2 The statement of the problem	1
1.3 Research questions	2
1.4 Research hypotheses	3
1.5 Research objectives	3
1.6 Research significance	3
1.7 Research Methodology	4
1.8 Research Limits	4
Chapter two Literature Review	
2.0 Introduction	5
2.1 Definition of modal verbs	5
2.2 Primary modals	6
2.3 Can meaning	6
2.4 May meaning	8
2.5 Must meaning	9
2.6 Will meaning	10
2.7 Shall meaning	12

2.8 Secondary modals	13
2.9 Some general remarks	14
2.10 Could meaning	16
2.11 Might meaning	17
2.12 Would meaning	18
2.13 Should meaning	20
Part Two: Previous studies	21
2.14 Jenny's study	21
2.15 UmiKalthom's study	22
Chapter Three Methodology	
3.0 Introduction	23
3.1 Population of the study	23
3.2 Instrumentation	23
3.3 The modal verb test	23
3.4 The teacher's questionnaire	23
3.5 Validity and reliability of the research tools	24
3.6 Reliability of the test	24
3.7 Validity of the questionnaire	24
3.8 Validity and reliability	25
3.9 Summaries	25
Chapter Four Data Analysis, Results and Discussion	
4.0 Introduction	26
4.1 Statistical method used	26
4.2 Data analysis and results	26
4.3 Summary	49
Chapter Five Conclusions , Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies	

5.0 Inroduction	50
5.1 Summary	50
5.2 Conclusions	51
5.3 Recommendations	55
5.4 Suggestions for further studies	52
References	53
Appendicess	57

List of tables

Title	Page
Table (4.1) Secondary school's students are facing problems in using English modal verbs.	27
Table (4.2) The problems of using English modal verbs in secondary schools might be due to the difficulty of idiomatic expression.	28
Table (4.3) One of the possible causes of facing problems might be due to the lack of early instruction of secondary school's students.	29
Table (4.4) There is no sufficient specialized material on using modal verbs in secondary school's syllabus (SPINE series).	30
Table (4.5) Secondary school's students always predict the meaning of modal verbs from the context of the speech.	31
Table (4.6) The problems of using English modal verbs might be due to the complexity of understanding of modal verbs itself.	32
Table (4.7) The background of the students him/herself as a second language learner might affect his/her understanding of English modal Verbs.	33
Table(4.8)One of the possible solutions of these problems could include modal verbs in the English language (SPINE series).	34
Table(4.9) One of the possible solutions of these problems is provide sufficient training teachers in the field of teaching English modal verbs.	35
Table(4.10) One of the possible solutions of these problems is provide a sufficient training for student in modal verbs.	36

List of Figures

Figure (4.1)	27
Figure (4.2)	28
Figure (4.3)	29
Figure (4.4)	30
Figure(4.5)	31
Figure (4.6)	32
Figure (4.7)	33
Figure(4.8)	34
Figure (4.9)	35
Figure (4.10)	36

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Background

This chapter provides a theoretical framework for the study. Specifically, it provides a description of the context of the study and gives short account of the history of English Language in Sudan. It also provides a description of the study problem and formulates the questions and hypotheses of the study. The significance of the study shows. The chapter also specifies the scope and limitation of the study. Finally, it unfolds the methodology to be adopted for conducting the empirical part of study.

1.1 context of the study problem

During the British colonial period of the Sudan (1898- 1956), English language was the official language of the state. It was the medium of instruction in the educational institutions established by the British administration during that period. It is worth mentioning that most of the teachers at that time were native speakers of English and that allowed a wide exposure to English language for Sudanese students. Later after Sudan gained its independence in 1956, Arabic language began gradually to replace English as a medium of instruction. Consequently, English language came to be taught as a foreign language.

The current status of this language in the context of Sudan shows that it is declining and losing its significance in the educational environment in this country because the purposes of learning this language have been changed.

Upon considering its characteristics, English is a language which is rich in what are called modal verbs. These modal verbs are the most frequently used types of figurative language in discourse. For Sudanese secondary school's students these guises of language (i.e., modal verbs) are difficult to deal with because they are relevant to the culture of the target language. Furthermore, modal verbs are almost a neglected variable in ET in secondary school's environment.

1.2 The statement of the problem

Since modal verbs are expressions peculiar to a language, their perception is often not a great challenge to the native speakers of that language because they form a manner of speaking that is natural to that speaker. But for non-native speakers it may be a difficult task. As far as English language is concerned one need to consider the modal verbs of this language. The cause of combination of words to be a modal verb is due to non- linguistic factors such as the social, historical, and cultural factors relevant the use of language. It adds a distinction to the quality of the expression. A learner should grasp these peculiar characteristics of the modal verbs. The nature of modal verbs and the reasons that give rise to such guises of language are responsible for the problems they make in the field of language learning and teaching. First, modal verbs are not literal. They do not mean what they say because it depends on some structural characteristics (Rawdon Wyatt, 2006:4). Second, modal verbs seem to defy regular rules of syntax and semantics, that cannot always be analyzed like lexical and semantic items and thus EL learners would find problems in identifying their grammatical properties. A third factor that contributes to the problems of learning and teaching of modal verbs that teaching materials in secondary schools almost neglect them.

This negligence of modal verbs in ELT environment would not give learners opportunities to encounter them or deal with them as English Language Learners.

This study aims at investigating the way secondary schools' students perceive the English modal verbs. It specifically aims at investigating the structural and semantic problems that secondary schools might encounter when using English modal verbs.

1.3 Research questions

- 1- What are the possible causes behind the problems of using modal verbs for secondary schools?
- 2- Why do secondary schools' students face these problems?
- 3- To what extent does English language syllabus (SPINE series) cope with modal verbs?
- 4- What are the possible strategies for teachers to solve these problems?

1.4 Research hypotheses

- 1- The problems of using English modal verbs in secondary schools' students might be due to the lack of early instruction of secondary schools' students.
- 2- There are no sufficient specialized materials on using modal verbs in secondary school syllabus (SPINE series).
- 3- Including the modal verbs in the English language syllabus (SPINE series), in addition to a sufficient training for teachers of English language and students.

1.5 Research objectives

This study aims at achieving the following objectives:

- 1- To investigate the possible problems of using English modal verbs facing the students in secondary schools.
- 2- To find out some possible solutions to solve these problems mentioned above.

1.6 Research significance

This study is being done because it deals with a domain of speech that represent one typical characteristic of spoken English. The significance of this study is that it tries to investigate this aspect of language which is particularly dominant in speech.

Also this study is significant for learners because it tries to find out some possible solutions for the problems of using English modal verbs which might face them. The findings of this study provide useful information to certain groups involved in the language learning process such as teachers, scholars, syllabus designers, and publishers.

1.7 Research methodology

The researcher used the descriptive analytical method in conducting this study. Samples of some secondary schools' students will randomly be selected, given a test containing a list of questions to be answered by those students. The answers will be statistically analyzed.

The researcher will also provide the following:

- 1- Description of the instruments employed in collecting the data and the procedures that will be followed.
- 2- The validity and reliability of the tools in the study will be confirmed by referring to an English language expert jury as well as statistical formula.

In the light of the results the hypotheses of the study will be confirmed or rejected.

1.8 Research limits

This study is limited to investigating the awareness of using modal verbs among secondary schools' students.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction:

One of the main problems in learning and teaching English as a second language is the complexity of the English modal auxiliary system. In the standard formal English the same modals express different notions, ranging from probability through permission to obligation. Modals are not only auxiliaries in the grammatical sense but they also appear to contribute to the semantics of communication. Since communication is an integral part of society, and the most important means of human communication is language, the mechanics of language has to be understood in terms of how it facilitates communication. This includes the knowledge of grammar as without it communication will fail as structure will be lacking.

Thompson (2002) sees modals as a complex entity and that it is not easy to package the complexity into meaningful chunks of information to be presented to students. If this were possible, that is reducing the complexity of the modals, this would make learning modals less problematic to second language learners of English.

2.1 Definitions of modal verbs:

Modal verbs are a special kind of auxiliary verbs like other auxiliary verbs, they are always used with a main verb but modal verbs express an attitude to what we say. They can express how certain or uncertain we are about an event, or how willing or unwilling we are to do something, for example. There are twelve modal auxiliary verbs, but they are used with very great frequency and in wide range of meanings. They express concepts or attitudes (they fulfill different functions) relating to recommendation, obligation, necessity, and prohibition, and refusal; possibility, expectation, probability and certainty; promise and intention, ability and willingness. There are four paired forms - can, could; may, might; shall, should; will, would. There are four single forms - ought, to, need, dare. There are no other forms, and all modals are therefore, to varying degrees, 'defective' verbs. The two verbs need and dare present special problems: dare can follow the grammatical patterns of either modal auxiliaries or lexical, 'regular' verbs; need contrasts grammatically with the regular verb "need".

The modal verbs of English are a small class of auxiliary verbs used mostly to express modality (properties such as possibility, obligation, etc.). They can be distinguished from other verbs by their defectiveness (they do not have principle or infinitive forms) and by the fact that they do not take the ending - (e)s in the third- person singular'.

The principle English modal verbs are can, could, may, might, shall, should, will and would. Certain other verbs are sometimes, but not always, classed as modals; these include, ought, had better, and (certain uses) dare and need. Verbs which share some, but not all of the characteristics of the principle modals are sometimes called "semi modal"

2.2 Primary modals:

This section focuses on the primary modals, i.e. can, may, must, will and shall. The discussion will be brief and to the point. It is useful at this stage to bear in mind. The second general point to be made is that the meanings of each modal presented below are not on an equal footing with one another. In fact, some meanings are very much more common than others, with must being. The exception that confirms the rule (Leech 2004: 73). Indeed, as Leech et al. (2009: 71 90) point out, this recent trend towards monosomy has only gained strength in recent years.

2.3 Can – meaning:

There are two meanings that are especially prominent with can:

‘Possibility’ and ‘ability’ (Mindt 1995: 73). Another less common sense is that of ‘permission’ (Leech 2004: 75). Sentences below are examples of ‘possibility’ can, ‘ability’ can and ‘permission’ can respectively.

(1) Tea has been a popular drink in Great Britain for hundreds of years, but it is important to note that the word itself can refer to something more than just the beverage.

(2) Now the river flows through taps at hand’s reach and we can wash next to where we sleep, we can eat where we have cooked, and we can surround the whole with a protective wall and keep it clean and warm.

(3) If your group accepts your explanation, you can keep going. It is tempting to

analyses the first of these meanings as epistemic, since it is apparently concerned with making “judgments about the possibility that something is or is not the case” in the way Palmer defined it. This would be wrong, however, as there is a clear distinction between the (unarguably epistemic) ‘possibilities’ *may*, on the one hand and ‘possibility’ *can* on the other. The most succinct account of this argument is that of Leech (2004: 82), who notes that *may* represents ‘factual possibility’ and *can* ‘theoretical possibility’. By way of illustration, he offers the following sentences and their paraphrases:

(4) Factual: The road *may* be blocked = ‘It is possible that the road is blocked’ = ‘Perhaps the road is blocked’ = ‘The road *might* be blocked’.

(5) Theoretical: The road *can* be blocked = ‘It is possible for the road to be blocked’ = ‘It is possible to block the road’.

Although the contexts in which these two modals appear are identical, we can see from these two sentences that the situations they depict are subtly different. Sentence (4) “describes a theoretically conceivable happening” (Leech 2004: 82), whereas sentence (5) “feels more immediate, because the actual likelihood of an event’s taking place is being considered” (ibid). Palmer (1990: 83) employs the term ‘neutral possibility’ for the ‘possibility’ meaning of *can*, and although it is perhaps unwise to mix neutrality. For this reason, the ‘possibility’ *can* cannot be considered epistemic in the same way that *may can*. Instead, the researcher follows Palmer’s example (1990: 83-85) and regard the ‘possibility’ *can* as dynamic.

Sentence (2) is an example of *can* in the ‘ability’ sense, which can be paraphrased as ‘be capable of’ or ‘know how to’. It depicts the ability of the subject of the sentence to do something (Palmer 1990: 85). As has been already noted, it is the quintessential candidate for the dynamic category: indeed, it is one of the reasons why the whole category exists.

We have, then, essentially two different senses for *can* that are dynamic. This is not wholly surprising when we consider the gradients proposed for *can*, and the researcher is not reiterate the argument here. However, Leech (2004: 75) provides an interesting explanation for the ambiguities between ‘possibility’ *can* and ‘ability’ *can* by pointing out that these two meanings “are especially close because ‘ability’ implies ‘possibility’ – that is, if someone has the ability to do X, then X is possible”. Biber et al. (1999: 491-493) essentially say the same thing when they paraphrase the ‘ability’ *can* as:

‘It is possible for me/you/him/us/them to...’ and regard it as a subcategory of the more general (dynamic) ‘possibility’ sense. They seem hesitant about this classification, however, and choose to keep the ‘ability’ sense separate in their analysis. This policy will be adopted in the present study as well.

All that remains, then, is to discuss the third meaning of can which falls under the deontic category. Sentence (3) is an example of the encroachment of can into the territory traditionally occupied by May see (2.4). It is clearly a permission granted by the speaker: in such contexts, can and May are largely interchangeable, although there are register differences (see e.g. Biber et al. 1999: 483-497). Leech (2004: 75) notes that there is still a well-known prescriptive rule that considers May to be the appropriate or more ‘correct’ modal of ‘permission’, but as we shall see, this rule hardly represents actual present-day usage.

2.4 May – meaning:

According to Mindt (1995: 103), two meanings make up the majority of cases of May: ‘Possibility’ and ‘permission’. The present study will disregard the so-called ‘quasi-subjunctive’ or ‘formulaic’ uses of may (e.g. May God grant you happiness), as these are becoming extremely rare in present-day English (cf. Leech 2004: 77-78, Leech et al -2009: 83-89) and moreover, such uses were not found in the data. Sentences (6) and (7) are examples of ‘possibility’ may and ‘permission’ may respectively.

7-You may be surprised by the amount of time people actually spend watching television.

6- “A very wise choice, sir, if I may say so.”

In terms of semantic analysis, may rarely pose serious problems. The first meaning is clearly epistemic and can be paraphrased as ‘It is possible that...’ Although both May and can sometimes be used in this context, we have already noted that there is a contrast between the (epistemic) ‘possibility’ may and the (dynamic) ‘possibility’ can, and they should not be treated as synonyms. As for the second meaning, exemplified by sentence (7), it is just as clear as the first one with the speaker either giving permission or, as in this case, asking for permission.

2.5 Must – meaning:

As a general note, there is considerable disagreement as to the titles of the

semantic respectively.

Sentences below are examples of epistemic and deontic must.

8- No dairy products? That's utterly (sic) ridiculous! Yeah, they must be nuts.

9- What about your promise? I want to go. You must show me the way.

In sentence (8) then, must is used to indicate "knowledge arrived at by inference or reasoning" (Leech 2004: 79). A useful paraphrase might be 'the only possible conclusion is that...' or 'It is necessarily the case that...' (Palmer 1990: 50).

Sentence (9) on the other hand, is an example of an obligation imposed by the speaker over the person mentioned. It is one of the most typical uses of the deontic category.

Theoretically, it would be possible to distinguish between the more 'typical' kind of deontic must exemplified by sentence (9) and a more 'impersonal' or 'neutral' 'must for which Leech (2004: 79) employs the term 'requirement'. In 'requirement', the obligation does not come from within, but instead from external sources. Palmer (1990: 113-114) sets this use of must apart and discusses it under the heading of dynamic modality. Sentences below are potential candidates for this category

10- Special precautions must be taken with food and water.

11- People's needs must be taken into consideration.

While recognizing that sentences above differ from sentence in terms of their semantics, I have chosen to disregard this distinction. My reasons are twofold.

Firstly, it is often difficult to distinguish between 'obligation' and 'requirement'. If we think of them in terms of semantic indeterminacy, we can say that "root necessity is a gradient phenomenon with no clear borderline between its intermediate stages" (Smith 2003: 242). It is a continuum with personal authority at one end and "general regulations, instructions [and] moral imperatives at the other" (Leech 2004: 79).

A second more compelling reason for discounting this distinction is that it is not pertinent to the purposes of this study. Indeed, it would be more properly dealt with in a study focusing specifically on the so-called 'obligation/necessity' modals (see e.g. Biber et al. 1999: 493-495) in which a finer line between the

members of this category (which includes both core modals and semi-modals) needs to be established. For these reasons, I will categorize all non-epistemic uses of must under (deontic) ‘obligation’.

2.6 Will – meaning:

Along with a host of school grammar book authors (see e.g. Kallela et al. 1998, Silk, Mäki & Kjisik 2003), some traditional scholars still argue for the treatment of will merely as a marker of future tense. This simplistic view is not supported here for a number of reasons. A well-rounded account of these with regard to both will and shall is that of Palmer (1990: 160-163), and I will only briefly summarize them here. He notes, firstly, that will and shall “are formally modal verbs; they belong to the modal system not to the (morphologically marked) tense system of present and past” (Palmer 1990: 160). Secondly, other core modals too can have future time reference, and thus it is not a trait restricted exclusively to will or shall. Finally, although time is clearly an issue with will and shall, they seldom (if ever) refer to a ‘pure’ future, and indeed it is doubtful whether the whole concept of ‘futurity’ can be separated from modality.

According to Leech (2004: 56), a convincing argument for putting together the future and modal uses of will is that “we cannot be as certain of future happenings as we are of events in the past and present, and even the most confident prediction about the future must reflect something of the speaker’s uncertainty and so be tinged with modality”. Thus, although the use of will in many cases is closer to a ‘pure’ or ‘neutral’ future than anything else in English, Leech argues that it is never on an equal footing with the past and present tenses and should not, therefore, be called ‘future tense’. It is, then, the term ‘prediction’ that conveniently covers both the idea of ‘futurity’ and the personal judgment that is inherent in it. There are many conflicting accounts of the semantic distribution of will. The present study will opt for a simple two-way approach in which all meanings of will can be understood in terms of either (epistemic) ‘prediction’ or (dynamic) ‘volition’, with paraphrases such as ‘I confidently predict that...’ and ‘I am willing to...’. Sentences (12 and 13) are examples of epistemic and dynamic will respectively.

12-That means that by the age of 65 most people will have spent about 8 years of their lives in front of the tube.

13- Meanwhile he will not help me to understand how it was he came to be

sleeping on the streets, which means that I am unable to show him the side of me that I wanted him to see.

There are several points to be made. The first has to do with the overarching quality of the ‘prediction’ category which is applied to uses of will that can, it must be said, appear at first glance very different from one another. Of particular pertinence to the present study is the so-called ‘habitual’ will (Palmer 1990: 136-137) that denotes activity that is said to be typical of the subject of the sentence. Consider the following sentence.

14- Beneath the trees where nobody sees, they’ll hide and seek as long as they please.

Palmer in his treatment of will (1990: 133-142) regards ‘habitual’ will as a subcategory of (dynamic) ‘volition’ will and notes that it is used to indicate the way in which objects or people “characteristically [want to] behave” (Palmer 1990: 136). This view, although plausible, seems somewhat counter-intuitive and is thus not supported here. Instead, I will opt for the treatment of ‘habitual’ will as a subcategory of (epistemic) ‘prediction’ will. This is because ‘habitual’ will can be seen as an extension to the general ‘prediction’ meaning in which the speaker makes a (confident) prediction about the typical behavior of someone or something. The term ‘predictability’ has been proposed for this particular use of will (see e.g. Leech 2004, Coates 1983). The crucial difference between the general ‘prediction’ will and the ‘predictability’ will is that in the latter “the speaker makes a claim about the present” (Coates 1983: 177, italics by the author) and thus no ‘futurity’ is involved.

As regards ‘volition’ will, then, there are strictly speaking several kinds of ‘volitional’ uses of will which can be discerned from one another in terms of their ‘strength’ (Leech 2004: 85-88). Proposed labels for these are ‘insistence’ (‘strong volition’), ‘intention’ (‘intermediate volition’) and ‘willingness’ (‘weak volition’)

(Leech 2004: 87-88). However, as all of these are for all practical purposes concerned with the same semantic category of ‘volition’, I will again apply the notion of semantic indeterminacy. The final point involves the overlapping of meanings which, in the case of will, is of particular importance. Despite a rather

Simplified picture of the different uses of will, even such a bipolar approach is unable to prevent confusion in the analysis, with sentences that can be analyzed

either way and some that clearly have elements of both.

Consider the following sentences:

15- “I think I’ll just have a green salad,” he muttered.

16- And if my memory serves me right, Tessa will go for her favorite Chicken Korma, won’t you Tessa?

It may be argued in both cases that at least some element of ‘volition’ is involved. In sentence (14) It is, I think, particularly evident; sentence (15) on the other hand, seems to me a borderline case, a plausible reading of which might in effect incorporate both epistemic and dynamic elements. If not exactly a gradient, there is clearly a “complex interrelationship” (Coates 1983: 169) between the different meanings of will, and a great deal of ambiguity will naturally ensue. An illustrating example of this is Biber et al.’s (1999: 496) analysis of will, in which over half of all the occurrences of will were considered ambiguous.

2.7 Shall – meaning:

This section is an exception. In it, I will deal with both the semantics and the frequencies of shall. The reason why I have chosen not to devote much space to the analysis of shall is twofold. Firstly, nearly all accounts indicate that its use, never that frequent to begin with, has waned considerably in recent years (see e.g. Leech et al. 2009, Leech 2004, Biber et al. 1999). Leech (2004) notes that “shall occurs nowadays only in a few rather restricted linguistic contexts” (88) and in virtually all of these “shall could be replaced by a different modal or other modal construction” (ibid). Among the few supporters of shall are Römer (2004: 189), who found that “shall is used very frequently in questions” and Mindt (1995: 177), who puts shall on top of the list of modals in interrogative contexts. Nevertheless, the data for the present study produced only one instance of shall, and it is therefore difficult to say anything conclusive about the way it is portrayed, other than to note its virtual absence. Secondly, the meanings of shall closely parallel those of will, and indeed when stylistic differences are put aside, they can in some contexts be considered interchangeable. Shall can be analyzed in the same way as will (see Section 7.5), i.e. in terms of ‘prediction’ and ‘volition’. In the ‘prediction’ sense of shall, it is considered “an alternative to will with first person subjects in more formal styles of speaking and (especially) writing” (Leech 2004: 58). Sentence (17) is an example of ‘prediction’ shall.

(17) Nevertheless, he took the precaution of packing his photo album in

waterproof cloth - “it being the only record of my work I shall be able totake, should we be compelled to take to the floe.”

There were no examples of ‘volition’ shall in the data.

2.8 Secondary modals:

It has already been noted that secondary modals are called secondary because of their status (historically speaking) as the past tense forms of the corresponding present tense verbs. Although this can no longer be considered their primary use, it is nevertheless a useful way of avoiding needless repetition that would inevitably ensue, if we were to analyze the secondary modals semantically as a group of wholly distinct verb forms. For this reason, the present section will be considerably shorter than the previous one, and I will refer to the semantic analysis of the corresponding primary modal wherever applicable. I will begin with some general remarks that involve all the secondary modals as a group and then go on to consider each secondary modal individually.

2.9 Some general remarks:

All secondary modals can be seen as the past tense forms of the corresponding primary modals. This means, in plain terms, that all secondary modals can be used to indicate the same meanings as the corresponding primary modal but in past time. Could, then, is the past tense of can and has all the meanings attached to can and discussed with the exception that they are used to refer to past time. This is true of all secondary modals, although due to historical developments, the link is less clearly felt with may/might and is more or less non-existent with shall/should (Leech 2004: 97-98).

The secondary modals have, however, evolved past their simple tense-related uses, and it is nowadays generally felt that they are primarily employed within the present timeframe (Bybee 1995). This extension of meaning is believed to have arisen through the idea of hypothetically, which means that “the happening described is assumed to take place not in the real world, but in an imaginary world” (Leech 2004: 120)⁷. A helpful indicator of a hypothetical sentence is

either an explicit (It would be laughable if Septimus was in love) or an implicit (Would you like some peas? [...if I offered you some]) conditional clause within it.

According to Leech (2004: 122), the grammatical markers of hypothetical meaning are:

- (a) Would + infinitive (e.g. I'd love to live abroad.)
- (b) Past tense (e.g. He talks as if he was/ were my rich uncle.)
- (c) The past tense construction was / were to + infinitive (e.g. Perhaps it would be helpful if I were to say something.)

For the purposes of this paper, hypothetical meanings need concern us only to the extent to which core modals play a part in them. We can see from Leech's list that in English, would is the 'pure' marker of hypothetical meaning. There is a problem of a syntactic nature, however, which involves the fact that modals, cannot co-occur.

It is for this reason, it is thought, that hypothetical meanings are indicated in core modals by the past tense form alone. The end result is that "all the secondary modals would, could, might and should can express ... hypothetical meanings corresponding to the same meanings of the primary modals will, can, may and shall" (Leech 2004: 126) with the addition that would, "besides expressing will's meanings of prediction and volition in the hypothetical mood, can also express pure hypothetical meaning in main clauses". (ibid).

It is beyond the scope of the present study to examine hypothetical meanings in much detail, other than to say that, due to the associations of secondary modals with both past time and hypothetically, they tend to display a huge variety of meanings, which may seem perplexing even to a native speaker. To illustrate the point, I will provide Leech's (2004: 132) paradigm with examples of seven different meanings of could:

- (d) Past time equivalent of can (= 'possibility')

- Nothing could be done to stop the water flooding into the house.

- (e) Past time equivalent of can (= 'ability')

- Like every self-respecting young Victorian lady, Charlotte could paint and play

the piano; but she couldn't peel a potato to save her life.

(f) Past time equivalent of can (= 'permission')

- After the 1920 Act, women could vote, but they still couldn't become Members of Parliament.

(g) Hypothetical equivalent of can (= 'possibility')

- The house is one of the most beautiful that could be imagined.

(h) Hypothetical equivalent of can (= 'ability')

- Do you know anyone who could repair this clock for me?

(i) Hypothetical equivalent of can (= 'permission')

- I'd be grateful if I could borrow your electric drill.

(j) Tentative equivalent of may (= 'factual possibility')

- The weather has been terrible up there in the mountains. You could find climbing very difficult.

There is one more crucial point to be made. For the purposes of the present study, the distinction between what can be termed 'past time ability' and 'hypothetical ability' is not considered relevant. That is to say, although 'past time ability' and 'hypothetical ability' are distinct in meaning, both convey the idea of 'ability' in the same way that can does, albeit with a slight twist. It is for this reason, then, that I have chosen to do without these nuances and categorize both 'past time ability' and 'hypothetical ability' under general 'ability'. This policy is maintained for all other meanings of could and of other secondary modals as well.

2.10 Could- meaning:

Could is regarded as one of the middle-frequency modals, giving way only to the three high-frequency modals (i.e. will, would and can) in most accounts (see e.g. Leech et al. 2009, Biber et al. 1999, Mindt 1995). Leech et al. (2009) put could in the top four and make the arresting claim that, according to their research, will, would, can and could account for 71,9% of all modal usage (73). It is safe to say, then, that could be doing well, with increasing frequencies of use.

Could can be analyzed in the same way as can, i.e. in terms of '(theoretical) possibility', 'ability' and 'permission', with the addition that these meanings are

either ‘past time’ or ‘hypothetical’ (see Section 2.3). Sentences (17),(18) and (19) are examples of ‘possibility’ could, ‘ability’ could and ‘permission’ could respectively.

17-The park could be twice as large as Hardangervidda in Norway, currently the biggest national park in Europe.

18 - She was at her first race before she could crawl.

19- I could never play with my friends or basically do anything that the other neighborhood kids my age did on Saturdays.

There is no need to provide paraphrases for these meanings, as this was already done for can. The categories, moreover, are the same as with can: dynamic for ‘possibility’ and ‘ability’ and deontic for ‘permission’. As both Leech (2004: 127) and Palmer (1990: 185-187) point out, however, could is potentially also used to mark epistemic, i.e. ‘factual possibility’ in the same way that may and might are, and in fact, sentence (17) is a candidate for this category. This is a very fine-grained distinction that, for the purposes of the present study, is not considered pertinent. All occurrences of ‘possibility’ could will, then, be categorized under general ‘possibility’. Of the three uses of could, it is the ‘permission’ sense that is clearly the most marginal (see e.g. Biber et al. 1999, Mindt 1995). The other two are sometimes considered equally frequent (Leech et al. 2009) or, as is more often the case, the ‘possibility’ sense gains the upper hand (Biber et al. 1999, Mindt 1995). This applies especially to the spoken registers (Biber et al. 1999).

2.11 Might-meaning:

Might is a slightly special case in that it is not as flexible as other secondary modals and, most notably, is not used as the past tense of May to quite the same extent as, for example, could is. As a general trend, might is used mainly as a (hypothetical) ‘possibility’ modal in present-day English (Biber et al. 1999: 492), and the past time uses of might are rare or even non-existent.

Might is usually listed among the middle-to-low frequency modals (Leech et al. 2009, Leech 2004, Römer 2004, Biber et al. 1999). Its use, although not that frequent to begin with, has nevertheless remained remarkably consistent, and it is nowadays considered more frequent than its primary modal counterpart may (Leech et al. 2009: 71-76). In spoken registers, it is almost twice as frequent as

both May and must (Leech et al. 2009: 77). The two different meanings ('permission' and 'possibility'), however, are not on an equal footing with one another.

Leech notes (2004) that the 'past time permission' might "is now rare and old fashioned, chiefly BrE" and that the 'hypothetical permission' might also "rarely occurs" but that it is a possible alternative in very polite requests. This may just as well be so, since there were no occurrences of 'permission' might in the data. Other scholars have reported similar trends (see e.g. Biber et al. 1999, Römer 2004, Mindt 1995).

Instead, it is the 'possibility' sense of might that is thriving, although Leech (2004) notes that the 'past time possibility' is a "virtually unused" (98) meaning of might. We are left, then, with the hypothetical present time meaning of might to account for nearly all of its present-day uses. Sentences below are examples of 'possibility' might:

18- While this figure might seem encouraging, it's somewhat lower than the rest of Europe.

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

Sentences 18 and 19 are examples of 'factual possibility' which one might expect given that might are the past tense of May. Thus, as was the case with May, 'possibility' might is epistemic in meaning.

2.12 Would-meaning:

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

As with will, I have opted here for a simplistic two-way approach to the semantic

distribution of would. It can be understood, then, in terms of epistemic ‘prediction’ and dynamic ‘volition’, with the addition that these meanings are either ‘past time’ or ‘hypothetical’ (see Section 2.8). Sentences below are examples of ‘prediction’ would and ‘volition’ would respectively.

20- She was convinced there was a place out there somewhere where she could be completely happy. She would find it.

21- Would you consider converting to a different religion in order to be able to marry the person you love?

Sentence 20, then is clearly the past time equivalent of ‘prediction’ will. In the words of Leech (2004: 111), it “shows the backshift of future will to a ‘reported past future’ would”. Sentence (21) on the other hand, is the hypothetical form of ‘volition’ will, which, according to Coates (1983: 211), is characterized by an animate subject and a paraphrase with ‘willing to’ (i.e. Would you be willing to...). As becomes clear from these two examples alone, ‘volition’ would is not an easy one to spot, and the distinction between the two, as was the case with will, is extremely blurred. Moreover, we discussed in Section (5.2.) the so-called ‘habitual’ or ‘predictability’ will, for which would serves as the past tense form. As with will, this use will be categorized under ‘prediction’.

There is, however, an additional complication in that would, as we have already seen, is used as a general or ‘pure’ hypothetical marker denoting “unreal conditions when the corresponding real condition would have simple present tense” (Coates 1983:213). In a sense, this is the same problem that we encountered with regard to will, which many purport to be the general marker of future tense (see Section 2.5). This argument was countered with the introduction of the semantic category of ‘prediction’, but this solution seems less appropriate with would. From a semantic viewpoint, then, would as the general marker of hypothetical meaning is a slightly problematic issue, and linguists have been unsure what to make of it. In the present study, I will follow Coates’s (1983:213) example who notes that although it is true to say that WOULD is not just the hypothetical marker of WILL (=‘Prediction’), in the vast majority of cases ... this is WOULD’s function. I therefore propose to call this usage of WOULD ‘Epistemic’; this will also serve to distinguish this usage from [hypothetical ‘volition’ will].

The so-called ‘pure’ hypothetical would will, then, be categorized under ‘prediction’.

This apparently is the policy adopted by Biber et al. (1999) as well, although they make no explicit mention of it.

In terms of frequencies, most studies (see e.g. Römer 2004, Coates 1983) report much This apparently is the policy adopted by Biber et al. (1999) as well, although they make no explicit mention of it. In terms of frequencies, most studies (see e.g. Römer 2004, Coates 1983) report much higher frequencies for ‘prediction’ would than for ‘volition’ would. Biber et al. (1999) are an exception: for written registers, they report roughly similar frequencies for both meanings. Interestingly, they have not resorted to the ‘ambiguous’ category at all for would, which is surprising considering the fuzziness of its different meanings.

2.13 Should –meaning:

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

22 - “What about your promise? I want to go. You must show me the way.”

23 - You should never bribe a horse to get a response.

We can see from these examples, then, that “the tone of must tolerates little argument” (Leech 2004: 100-101), whereas the use of should weakens the ‘obligation’ to something like ‘desirability’ or ‘advice’. Likewise, should is used as a weaker equivalent of ‘logical necessity’ must to indicate “that the speaker has doubts about the soundness of his/her conclusion” (Leech 2004: 101). Sentence below are examples of must and should in their ‘logical necessity’ sense.

24- Talking to you two is like talking to a pair of overgrown schoolboys. Must be all that protein we eat.

25- According to the map, there should be a bridge here but it has collapsed.

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

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

Part two:

2.14 Previous Studies:

A comparison of the use of modal verbs in research articles by professionals and non-native speaking graduate students (2000)

Prepared by: Jenny Marie Hykes

Iowa State University

MASTER OF ARTS

Suggestions for further Research:

The direct instructional applications of this research suggest the importance of further research into the use of modal verbs. The research questions in this study have not been addressed to any significant extent in the past, and thus the needs of future research are extensive. As was mentioned earlier, similar studies are done with a larger learner corpus and with a corpus of learner writing which more closely matches the subjects in the professional corpus. Further studies must also address the questions of topical influence on modal verb use. Research should also be done comparing the lexical verbs and the agents co-occurring with the modal verbs. The initial findings indicate students tend to use more personal pronouns with modal forms, suggesting a more conversational or involved tone an achieved at least in part through modal verb use, but again, further work must be done. Related studies concerning the predominance of active and passive voice in modal verb use would also be helpful. Additionally, many applied linguists have studied the role of other modal forms, modal adverbs, adjectives, and lexical verbs and nouns that imply modality, including hedging, and such research should also be done on the leaner use of these forms.

Comment:

The above study agrees with the current study that students should care about the use and understand modal verbs in terms of lexical verbs and agent co-occurring with modal verb.

ESL LEARNERS USE OF ENGLISH MODALS IN NARRATIVE
COMPOSITIONS: SYNTACTIC AND SEMANTIC ACCURACY (2008)

Malachi Edwin Vethamani University Putra Malaysia

Umi Kalthom Abd Manaf

MARA Headquarters

Recommendations:

The following recommendations are proposed in reference to the learning and teaching of modal verbs:

(1) In order to enhance understanding, teachers must consider teaching modals in a structured way. The findings have shown that modals are acquired by students not only in the classroom but also elsewhere. However, it was found that the modals of ability were used the most by the students.

(2) Meaning must be clear when modals are taught so that usage will be clear. Therefore, any ambiguity to the meaning presented by each modal must be explicitly explained to the students so that they can comprehend and be able to use modals accurately.

(3) Explicit teaching of the five different structures mentioned earlier is important so that students are able to see the different verb forms used in the five different structures so that they have a better understanding and are able to apply the knowledge in their writing, even though the other structures were rarely used.

(4) The modals would and shall must be incorporated into the syllabus since the usage was found in the students writing. These modals were also identified in textbooks used by the students with explanation of usage, thus, it should be part of the syllabus since other grammatical items also require the use of would (conditional structures, for example) in the structures.

Comment:

This study shares some point of view in using and understanding modal verbs.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

Chapter Three

Methodology

3-0 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the methodology of the study. A detailed description of the subjects, the design of the instruments, procedures of data collection, and the method of data analysis will be provided. Validity and reliability of the tools (test and questionnaire) will also be presented in this chapter.

3.1 Population of the study

The population of this study were first and third year students in some secondary schools in Omdurman. They came from different backgrounds and shared similar experience. Their age from (14-17) years old. 30 students, both males and females participated in this study. They were randomly selected. Additionally, 25 teachers were selected from different secondary schools.

3.2 Instrumentation

To collect the data required, a test and questionnaire were used.

3.3 The modal verb test

This instrument consisted of three parts of questions; the first part consists of three items. The first part attempted to examine the students' knowledge about modal verbs in English. In the second part, the participants were required to select appropriate modal verb to put in the gaps, in order to determine how secondary school's students would deal with the modal verb expressions. The last part of questions was designed to show to what extent those secondary schools' students were aware of the phenomenon of modal verbs in English. The questions of the test were comprehension type. They included short questions and multiple choice questions.

3.4 The teachers' questionnaire

This instrument was used to measure the awareness and attitudes of teachers towards teaching modal verbs in secondary schools. It consisted of ten statements, which were concerned with if secondary schools students face

problems in using English modal verbs, and to what extent English syllabus (SPINE series) cope with modal verbs and the possible solutions of these problems. The questionnaire was designed on a scale of five degrees:

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3.5 Validity and Reliability of the research Tools

Validity and reliability are important aspects of the tests and questionnaire, because they ensure the quality of the instruments which were used throughout this study. So, the validity and reliability of the research tools were confirmed in this chapter as follows:

3.6 Reliability of the test

To grantee validity and reliability of the test the following steps were followed:

A- The test was judged by two experienced university doctors. The questionnaire and the test were first given to Dr Yusuf Altiraify, and Dr Tag Alsir Bahasoum who are staff members in Sudan University of Science and Technology

B- The researcher piloted the subjects of the study.

C- The test was practical, it contained eleven items.

D- The total number of the students who sat for the test was thirty.

3.7 Validity of the Questionnaire

To test questionnaire validity, it was checked by two university doctors' judges. The questionnaire reliability was calculated by SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences).

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Stability means that measure gives the same results if used more than once under similar conditions.

Reliability is defined as the extent to which a questionnaire, test, observation or any measurement procedure produces the same results on repeated trials.

Validity is defined as the extent to which the instrument measures what it purports to measure. And calculate in many ways represents the easiest being the square root of the reliability coefficient

$$\sqrt{\text{Reliability}} = \text{Validity}$$

Researcher calculates the reliability coefficient of the scale used in the questionnaire by alpha equation and the results as follows:

Reliability and Validity:

Questionnaire	
reliability coefficient	Validity coefficient
0.2645	0.52

Source: prepared by researcher, using SPSS, 2015

Notes from the results table that all validity and reliability coefficients for questionnaire is greater than (50%) and close to the one, this indicates that the questionnaire is characterized by high reliability and validity, and makes statistical analysis acceptable.

3.9 Summaries

This chapter described the subjects who participated in this study, how they were chosen, and where they were investigated. The chapter also described the tool used in this study (students' test and teacher's questionnaire), and the procedures followed to prepare and distribute it.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data analysis, Results, and Discussions

Chapter Four

Data Analysis, Results and Discussions

4.0 Introduction:

The aim of this chapter is to analyze, discuss and state the results and findings arrived at. The data which will be analyzed and discussed as mentioned in the previous chapter was gathered by two instruments (students' test and teachers' questionnaire).

4.2 Statistical methods used:

To achieve the objectives of the study and to verify hypotheses, statistical methods were used the following:

- 1 - charts.
- 2 - frequency distribution of the answers.
- 3 - percentages.
- 4 - alpha equation, to calculate the reliability coefficient...

To get results as accurate as possible, has been used SPSS statistical software, which indicates a shortcut to Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

4.3 Data Analysis and results :

The following tables display the results of data analysis obtained by the questionnaire and the test.

Statement (1)

Secondary school students are facing problems in using English modal verbs:

Table (4.1)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	17	68%
Agree	8	32%
Neutral	0	0.0%
Disagree	0	0.0%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	25	% 100

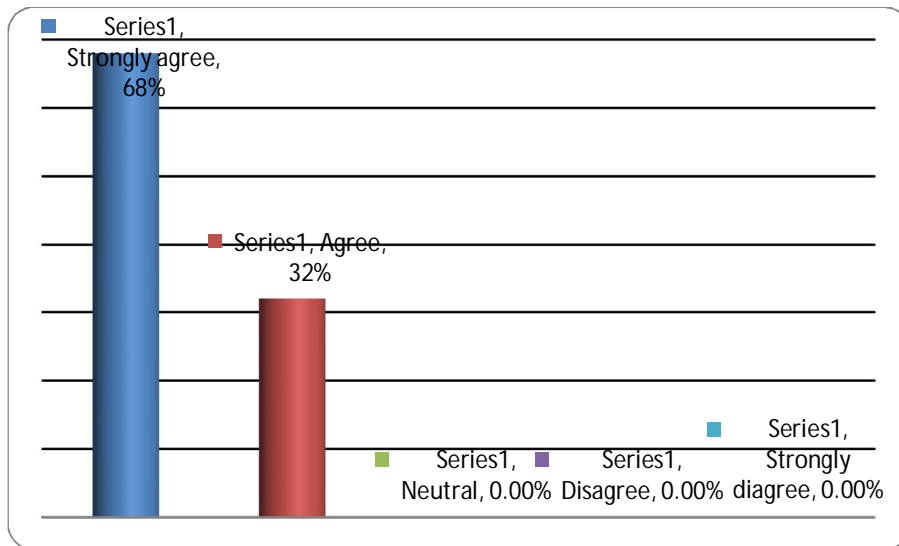


Figure (4.1)

In this figure (4-1) and table (4-1) 17 of the teachers are (Strongly agree) and (68%) is a high percentage that assert secondary school students are facing problems in using modal verbs.

Statement (2) - The problems of using English modal verbs in secondary schools might be due to the difficulty of idiomatic expression :

Table (4. 2)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	8%
Agree	8	32%
Neutral	8	32%
Disagree	5	20%
Strongly disagree	2	8%
Total	25	% 100

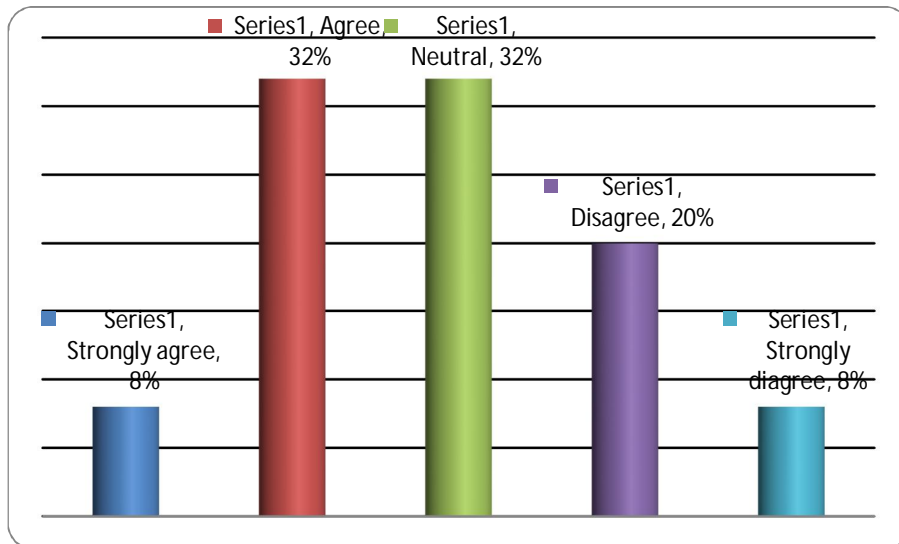


Figure (4.2)

It is clear from the figure (4-2) and table (4-2) 8 of the teachers (32%) agree and 8 of the teachers (32%) neutral and 5 teachers (20%) disagree and 4 from the teachers (8%) are strongly agree and strongly disagree the percentages are vary.

Statement (3) One of the possible causes of facing problems might be due to lack of early instruction of secondary schools students:

Table (4.3)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	6	29%
Agree	9	36%
Neutral	7	28%
Disagree	2	8%
Strongly disagree	1	4%
Total	25	% 100

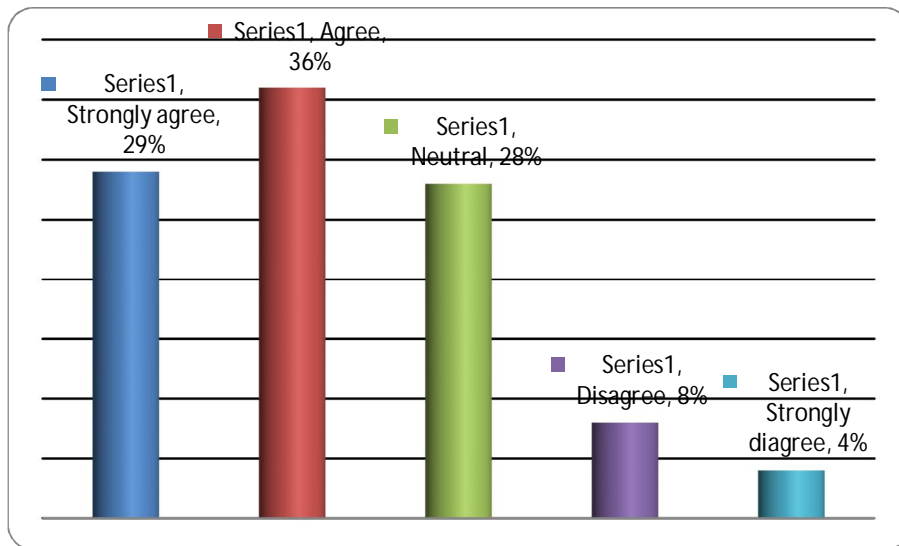


Figure (4.3)

From table (4-3) and figure (4-3) above the results revealed that most of the expert teachers agreed that the lack of early instruction of secondary schools students could be considered as one of the causes of English modal verbs problems.

Statement (4) There is no sufficient specialized marterial on using modal verbs in secodary schools syllabus (SPINE series):

Table (4.4)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	13	52%
Agree	8	32%
Neutral	1	4%
Disagree	2	8
Strongly diagree	1	4%
Total	25	% 100

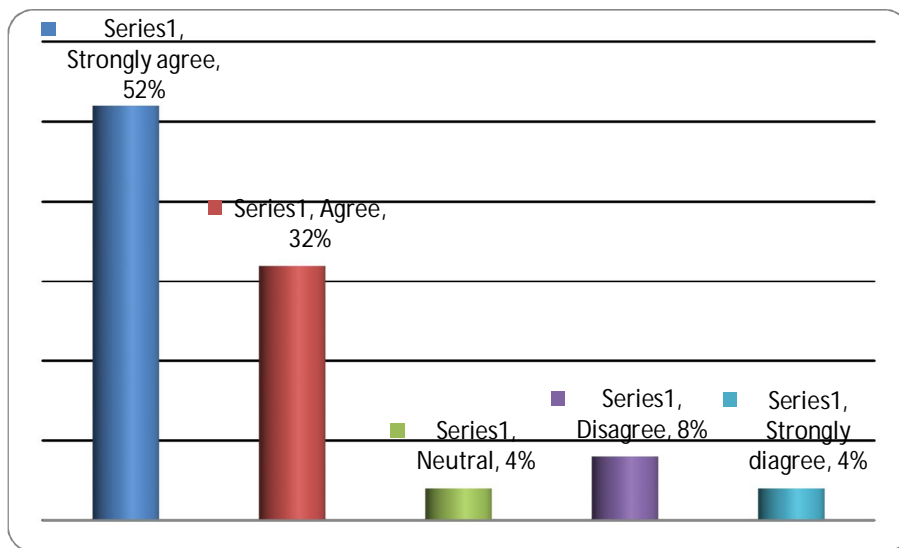


Figure (4.4)

From table (4) and figure (4) we note that most of the individuals study are (Strongly agree) by (13) and with (52%)

5- Statement (5) Secondary schools students always predict the meaning of modal verbs from the context of the speech :

Table (4.5)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	2	8%
Agree	9	36%
Neutral	7	28%
Disagree	5	20%
Strongly disagree	2	8%
Total	25	% 100

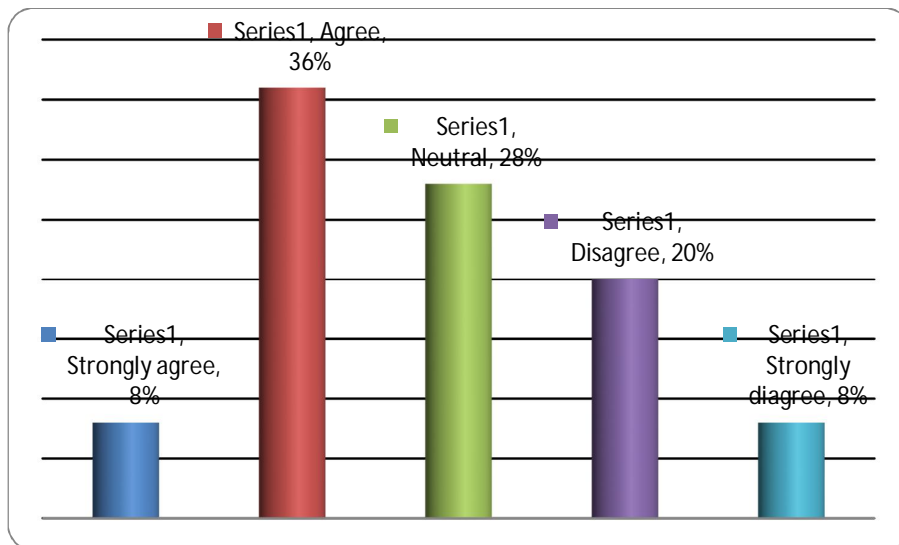


Figure (4.5)

From table (4-5) and figure (4-5) it is clear that (36%) from the teachers agree answers of the students it is a prediction with meaning of modal verbs.

Statement (6) The problems of using English modal verbs might be due to the complexity of understanding modal verbs :

Table (4.6)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	20%
Agree	6	24%
Neutral	5	20%
Disagree	8	32%
Strongly disagree	1	4%
Total	25	% 100

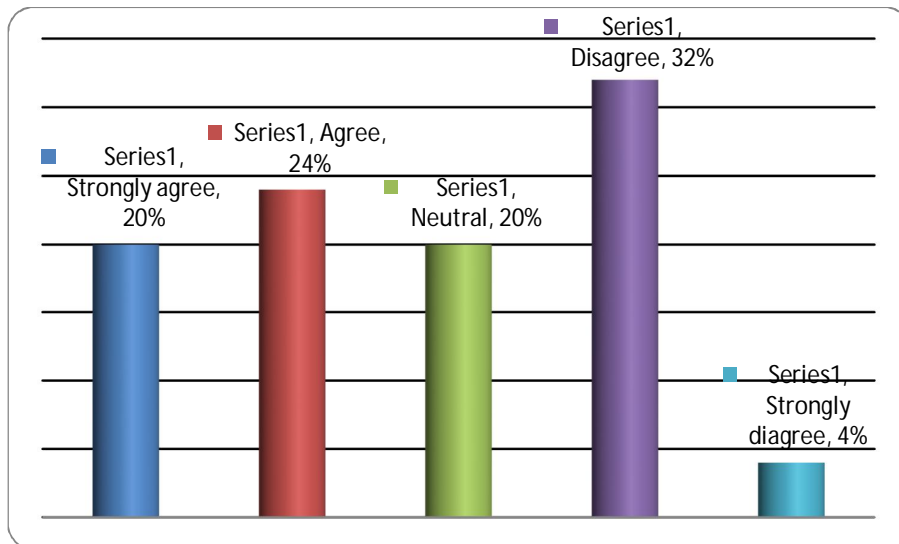


Figure (4.6)

From table (4-6) and figure (4- 6) the highest percentage is (32%) from the teachers are disagree about the complexity of the modal verbs and the others were vary in their opinions.

Statement (7) The background of the students as a second language learner might affect his/her understanding of English modal verbs:

Table (4.7)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	6	24%
Agree	10	40%
Neutral	2	8%
Disagree	6	24%
Strongly disagree	1	4%
Total	25	% 100

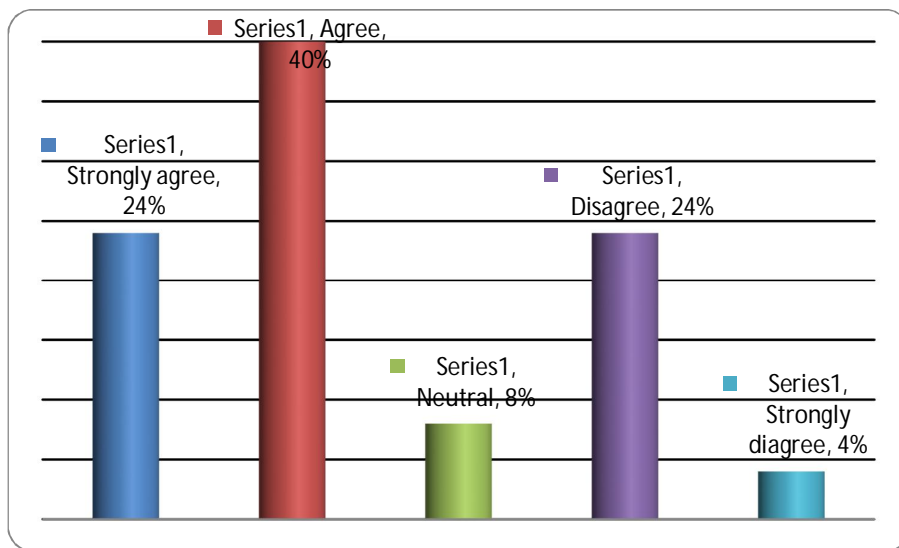


Figure (4.7)

From table (4- 7) and figure (4-7) (24%) from the teachers are strongly agree and the same percentage are disagree, but (40%) are agree that the background of the students him/ herself as a second language learner might affect his/her understanding of English modal verbs.

Statement (8)- One of the possible solutions of these problems is including modal verbs in the English language syllabus:

Table (4.8)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	7	28%
Agree	10	40%
Neutral	5	20%
Disagree	1	4%
Strongly disagree	2	8%
Total	25	% 100

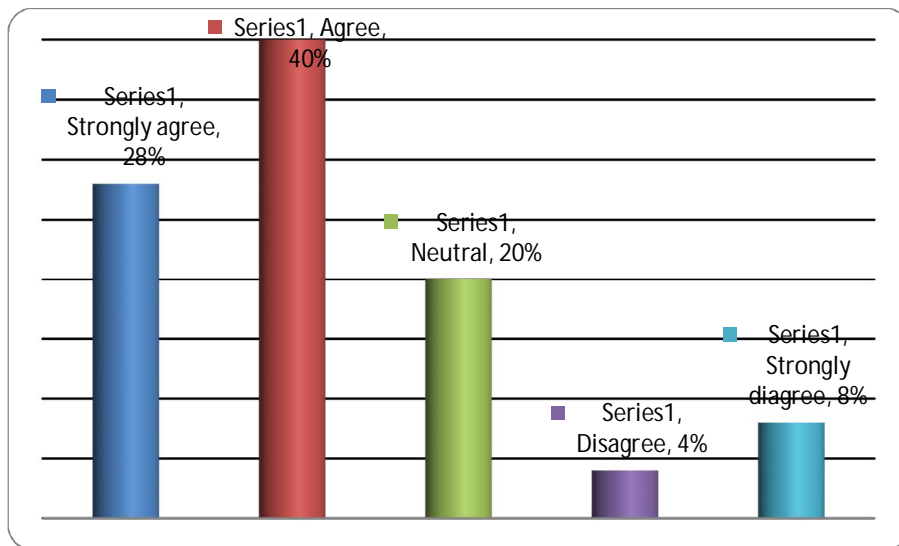


Figure (4.8)

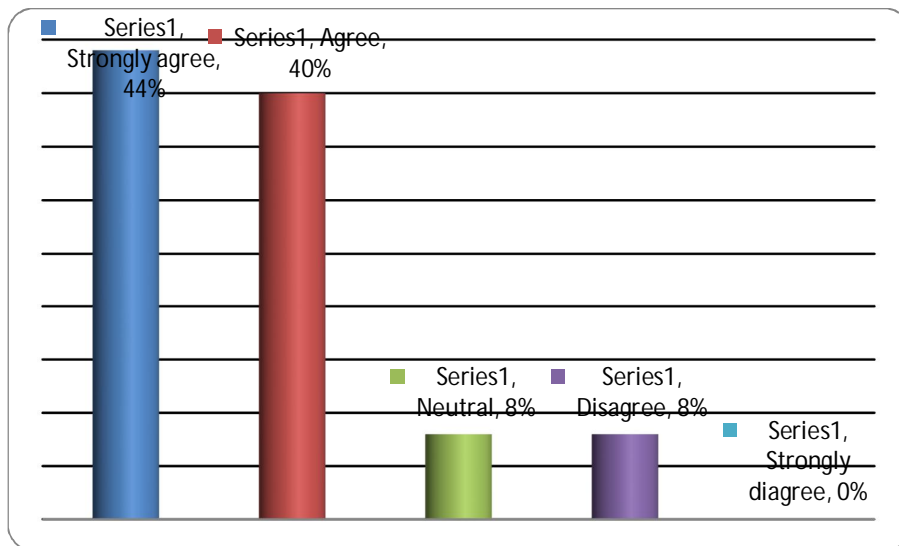
From table (4-8) and figure (4-8) the percentage were vary put the high percentage was (40%) for agree.

Statement (9) - One of the possible solutions of these problems is to provide sufficient training of teachers in the field of teaching English :

Table (4. 9)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	44%
Agree	10	40%
Neutral	2	8%
Disagree	2	8%
Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
Total	25	% 100

Figure (4.9)



From table (4 -9) and figure (4-9) it is clear (44%) from the teachers are Strongly agree and (40%) agree it is high percentage it implies most of the teacher agree to apply this solution. But (8%) are neutral and (8%) are disagree.

Statement (10)- One of the possible solutions of these problems is to provide a sufficient practice for students in modal verbs:

Table (4-10)

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	13	52%
Agree	10	40%
Neutral	0	0.0%
Disagree	1	4%
Strongly disagree	1	4%
Total	25	% 100

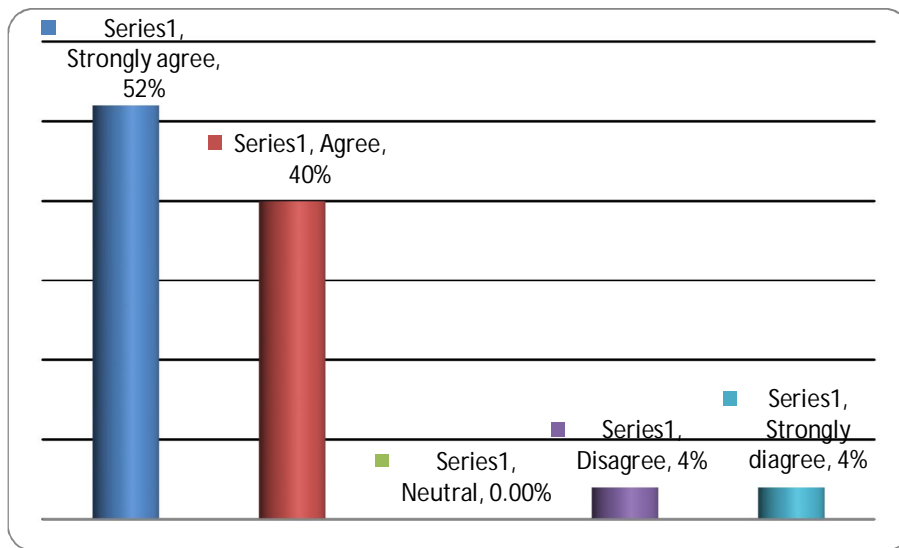


Figure (4-10)

From table (4 -10) and figure (4-10) it is clear (52%) from the teachers are Strongly agree and (40%) agree it is high percentage it implies most of the teacher agree to apply this solution.

4.3 Summary

According to the above tables, this percentage shows that the hypotheses of the researcher are correct. This means that secondary schools' students face problems in using and understanding modal verbs that point which the researcher wants to prove.

Test analysis

Put the verbs in their correct forms:-

1- When I was thirteen years old I..... (Can) run fast, but now I can't

Table (4-11)

answer could)	Frequency	Percentag
True	4	13.3%
False	26	86.7%
Total	30	100%

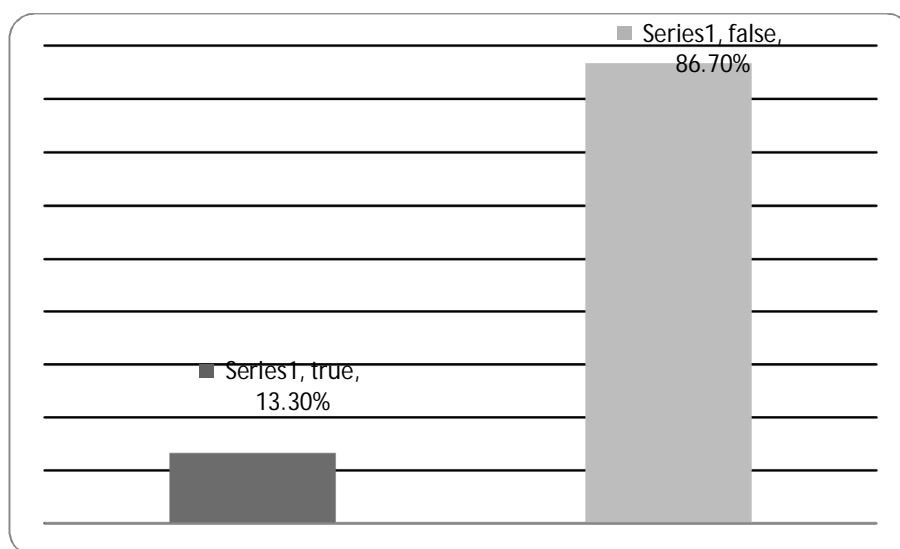


Figure (4.11)

Table and Figure (4-11) above represents the distribution of the students' answers of question 1-1. The results revealed that (13.3%) of students were answered the question correct and (86.7%) most of the students were answered incorrect.

2- If you run fast you..... (Catch) the bus.

Table (4-12)

answer(will)	Frequency	Percentag
True	10	33.3%
False	20	66.7%
Total	30	100%

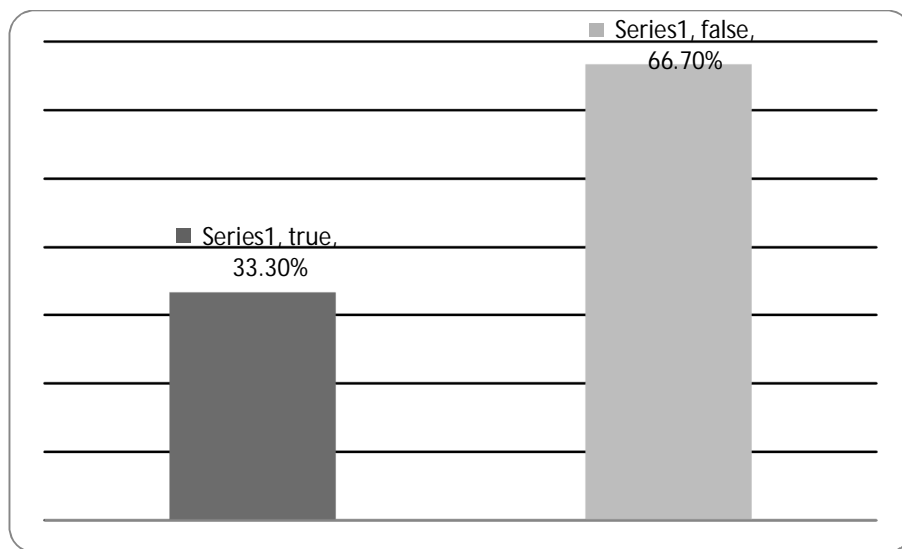


Figure (4.12)

The results of question(1-2) table and Figure (4-12) revealed that (66.7%) most of the students were answered incoreect and (33.3%) were answered correct.

3- If I met him, I..... (Tell) him the truth:-

Table (4-13)

answer(would told)	Frequency	Percentag
True	2	6.7%
False	28	93.3%
Total	30	100%

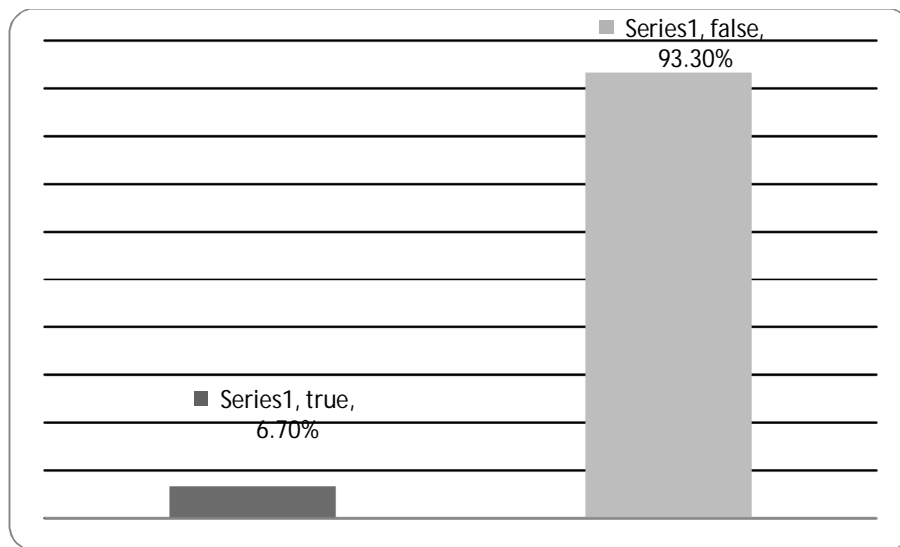


Figure (4.13)

It is clear from table and Figure (4-13) that most of the students answered incorrect (93.30%) is considered high percentage, and (6.70%) of the students were answered correct.

4-.....you open that window please?

Table (4-14)

answer (can)	Frequency	Percentag
True	12	40%
False	18	60%
Total	30	100%

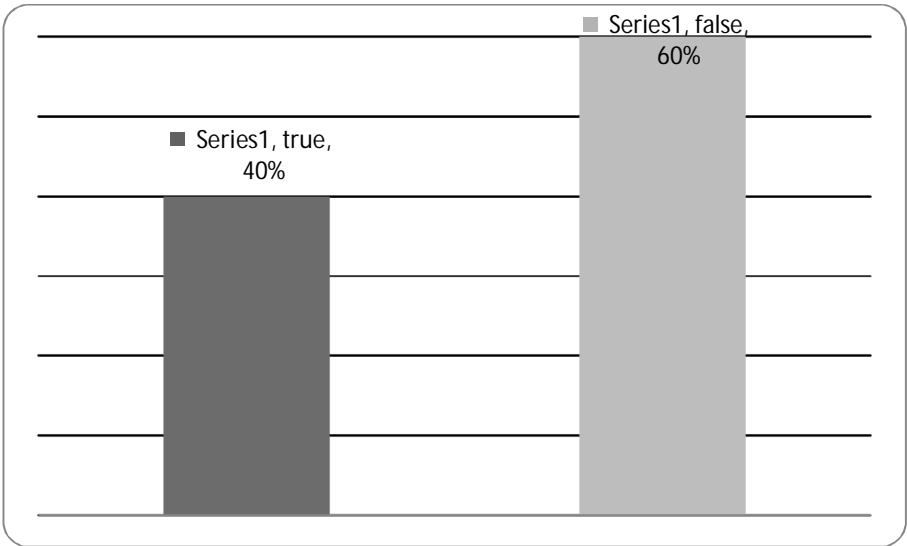


Figure (4.14)

The results above revealed that (60%) of the students were answered incorrect and (40%) of the students were answered correct.

Complete the following sentences by using modal verbs :

1- He said hecome tomorrow.

Table (4.15)

answer (would)	Frequency	Percentag
True	0	0.0%
False	30	100%
Total	30	100%

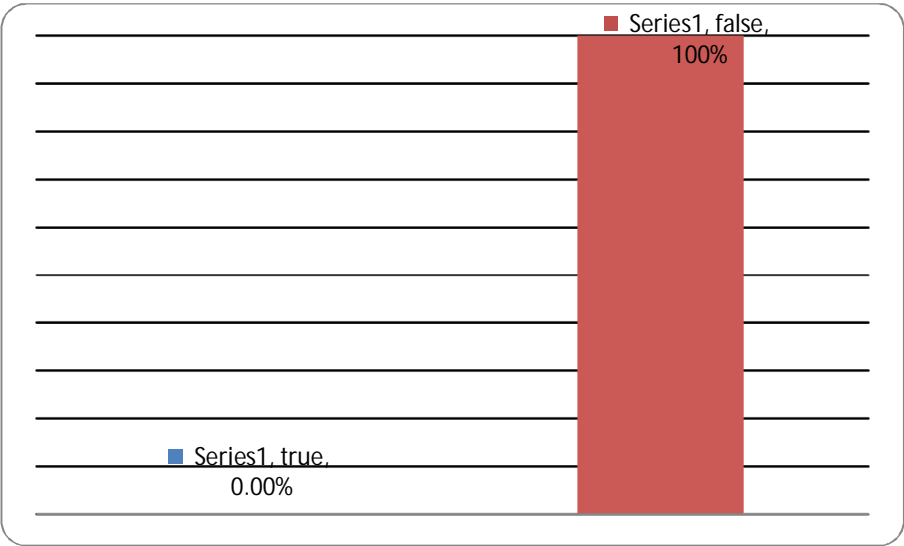


Figure (4-15)

Question two which consisted of four statements was designed to examine the ability of secondary school students in choosing the suitable answer. From the table and Figure (4-15) above it is clear that all the students answered this question(100%) incorrect it indicate the students not understanding.

2- That..... Or may not true.

Table (4-16)

answer may)	Frequency	Percentag
True	12	40%
False	18	60%
Total	30	100%

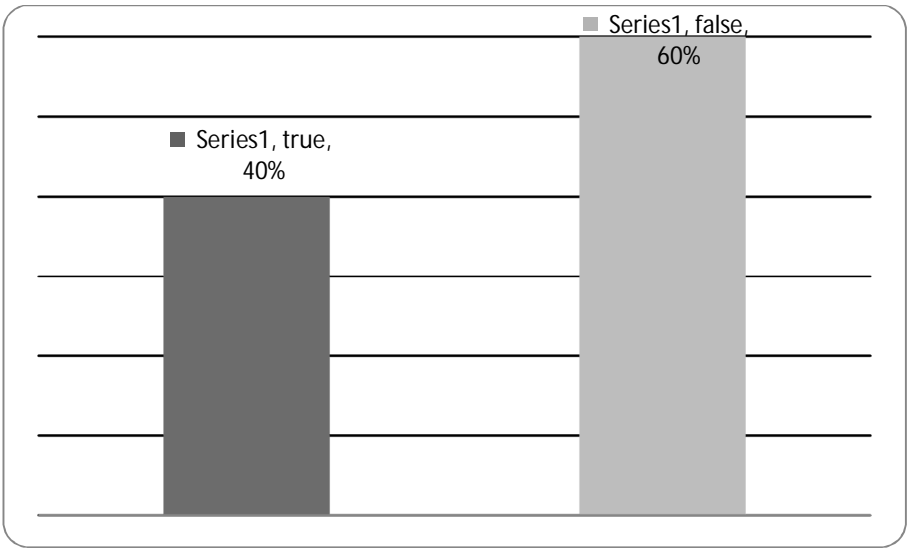


Figure (4.16)

From the table and Figure (4-16) above revealed that (60%) of the students were answered incorrect and (40%) of the students were answerd correct.

Childrenobey their parents.

Table (4-17)

Answer (must)	Frequency	Percentage
True	8	26.7%
False	22	73.3%
Total	30	100%

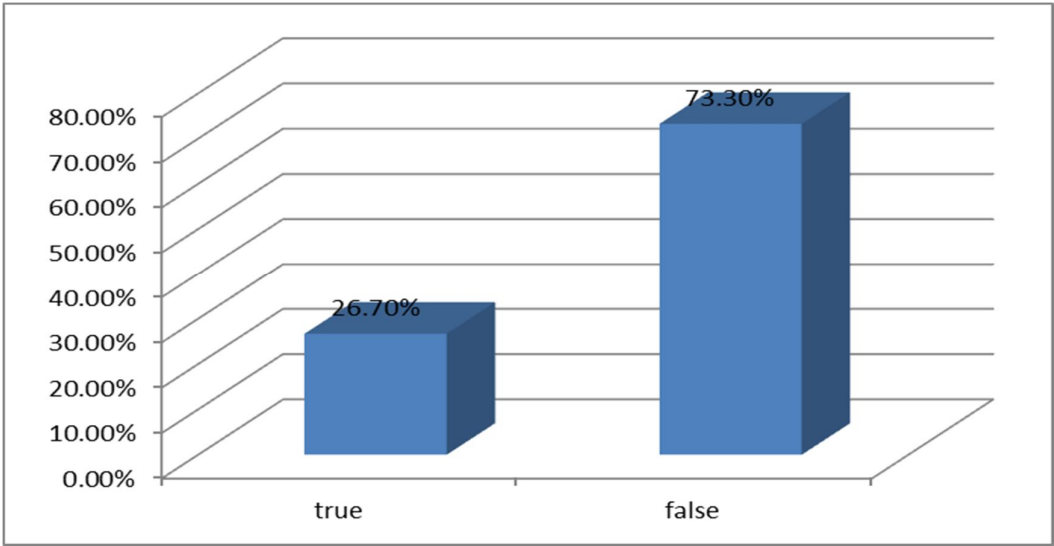


Figure (4.17)

The results of table and Figure (4-17) above revealed that (73%) of the students were answered incorrect and (26.70%)of the students were ansered corret.

4- If I had gone to school, Ihave met the teacher.

Table (4-18)

answer (should)	Frequency	Percentag
True	7	35%
False	13	65%
Total	20	100%

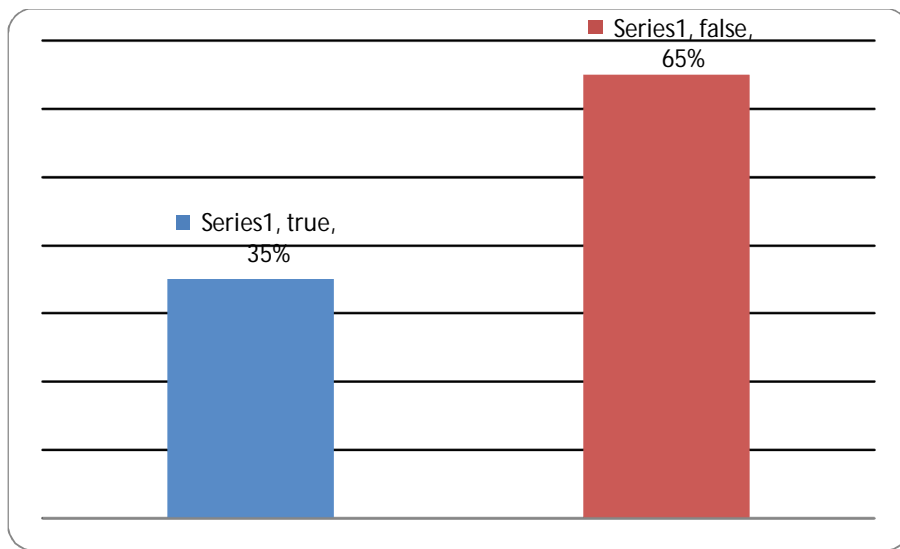


Figure (4-18)

It is clear from the table that the majority of the students answered incorrect that because more than 70% of them are not understanding .

Draw a circle:

1- Footballersnot touch the ball with their hands

Table (4-19)

answer must)	Frequency	Percentag
Must	6	20%
Should	3	10%
Can	21	70%
Total	30	100%

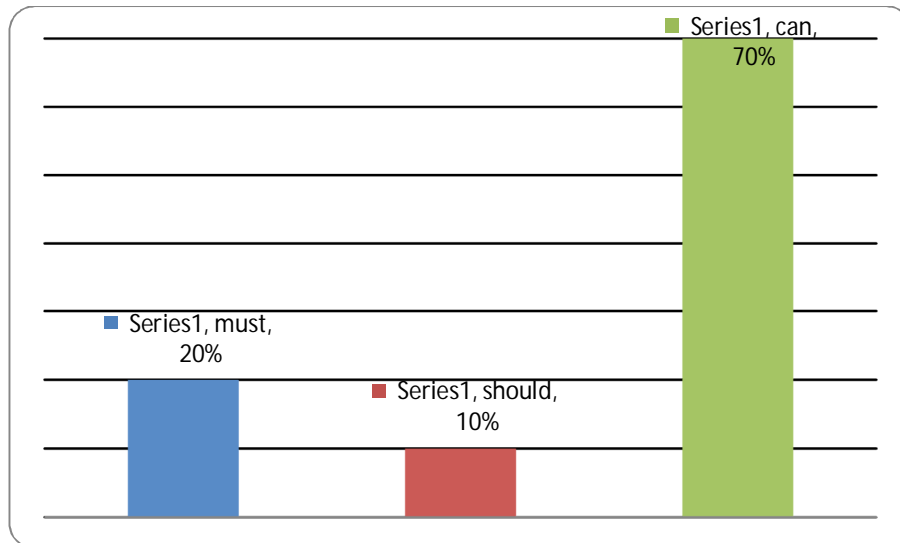


Figure (4-19)

From the table and Figure the answers of the students answered incorrect the percentage is 70%. Most of the students answered with can.

2- I am very tall. So iplay basketball:-

Table (4-20)

answer (can)	Frequency	Percentag
Must	6	20
Can	19	63.3%
Should	5	16.7%
Total	30	100%

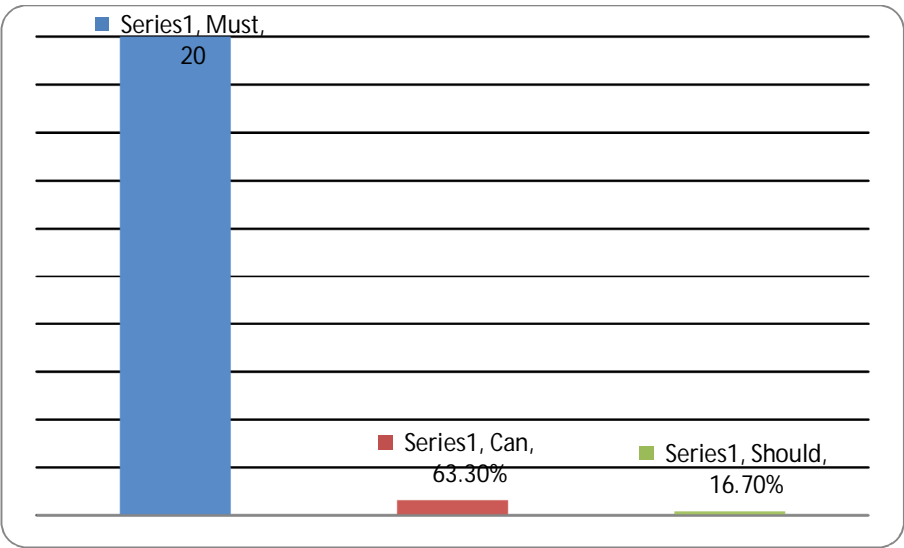


Figure (4-20)

More than half of the students answered with must while 20% of them are answered with can and 16.70% are answered with should they do not have any background about using modal verbs.

3- Honestly, youhave told me the truth.

Table (4-21)

answer should)	Frequency	Percentag
Ought to	11	36.7%
Should	13	43.3%
Might	6	20%
Total	30	100%

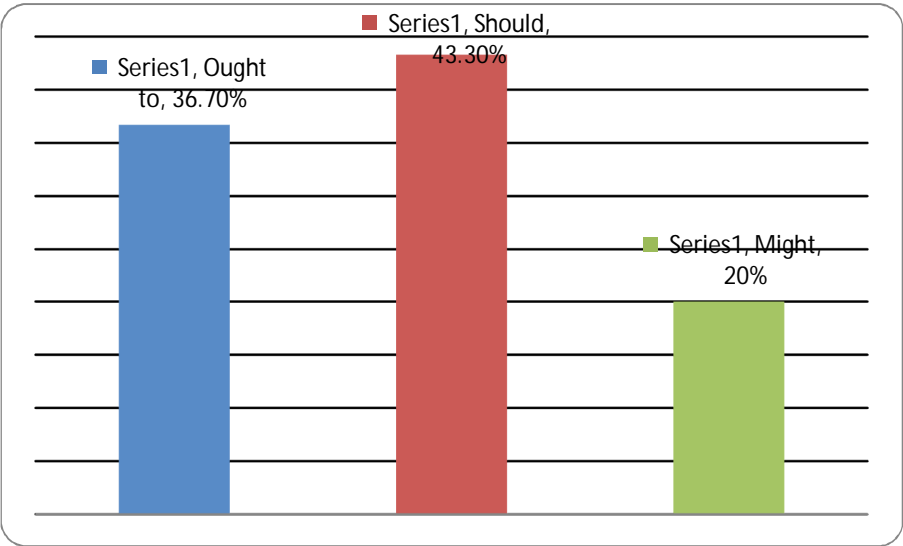


Figure (4-21)

From the table and Figure (4-21) 43% from the students answered correctly and the rest of them answered incorrect.

4.4 Summary:

The results of the test revealed that most of secondary school students have no able to put modal verbs in the suitable place.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Suggestions for Further Studies

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Suggestions for Further Studies.

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of this study, conclusion, and suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Summary of the study

Since modal verbs are expressions peculiar to a language, their perception is often not a great challenge to the native speakers of that language because they form a manner of speaking that is natural to that speaker. But for non- native speakers it may be a difficult task. This study aimed at raising learners' awareness towards using English modal verbs. In addition, it reveals some of the possible problems which might face secondary school students and how they can find the possible solutions for these problems. The researcher used the descriptive analytical method in conducting this study. The data were collected from twenty five (25) English teachers and from a test on the use of English modal verbs distributed and answered by 30 students. The data were analysed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences - SPSS. The researcher proposed some hypotheses and questions in this study in order to find the possible causes of the problems of using English modal verbs in secondary schools. The problems of using English modal verbs in secondary schools might be due to some cultural factors. In addition to the lack of early instruction of secondary schools' students all these can be considered as some of hypotheses of facing such problems in using English modal verbs, because later after Sudan gained its independence in 1956, Arabic language began gradually to replace English a medium of instructions.

Consequently, English language came to be taught as a foreign language. The current status of this language in the context of Sudan shows that it is declining and losing its significance in the educational environment in this country because the purposes of learning this language have been changed.

5.2 Conclusions

This study concluded in the following:

- 1- Secondary school students in Omdurman are facing problems in using English modal verbs
- 2- There are no sufficient specialized materials on using modal verbs in secondary schools' syllabus (SPINE series).
- 3- One of the possible causes of problems of using English modal verbs is the lack of early instruction in secondary school students.
- 4- The problems of using English language modal verbs in secondary schools are due to some cultural factors.
- 5- Including modal verbs in English language syllabus and providing sufficient training for teachers could be one of the possible solutions to the problems of using modal verbs.
- 6- Idiomatic expressions could be considered as one of the causes of facing problems in using English modal verbs.
- 7- One of the problems of using English modal verbs is that secondary school students always predict the meaning of modal verbs from the components of the modal verbs.
- 8- The background of the students as a second language learner affect his/her understanding of English modal verbs.

5.3 Recommendations:

In the light of the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following points:

- 1- The practice of English modal verbs should be further emphasized in the syllabus. (SPINE Series).
- 2- The effective strategies in teaching modal verbs should be used to help students to promote their awareness in using modal verbs. For example, more

exercises in using modal verbs.

3- The students should be encouraged to practice modal verbs out of the class rooms and they should try to build their own knowledge about modal verbs.

4- More practical approaches in teaching and learning English modal verbs should be used in English foreign learners' classrooms.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

Since this study was investigating the problems of using modal verbs in secondary schools the researcher suggests the following for further studies:

- 1- Investigating the problems of Using Modal Verbs in English Language Facing Universities Students.
- 2- An analysis of Errors of using modal verbs in Secondary Schools' syllabus (SPINE series) .

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Appendices

Sudan University of Science and Technology

College of Graduate Studies

English Department

**A questionnaire and test of the Investigating the
difficulties**

In using and understanding English Modal verbs.

Appendix (1): Questionnaire

Dear Teachers

This questionnaire is a part of the study which attempts to investigate the problems of using and understanding English Modal Verbs that might encounter secondary schools students.

The questionnaire is meant to assess ELT teacher's view on the relevance of modal verbs, possible problems that might face both, the students and teachers, and the possible solutions of these problems. Your participation will be treated confidentially and will not be used for any purposes other than the one stated in this study.

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Elham Abdulrahman Abdulgader

M.A Candidate

Sudan University of Science and

Technology

Questionnaire

No	Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	1- Secondary school students are face problems in using English modal verbs.					
2	2- The problems of using English modal verbs in secondary schools might be due to the difficulty of idiomatic expression.					
3	3- One of the possible causes of facing problems might be due to the lack of early instruction of secondary school's students.					
4	4- There is no sufficient specialized material on using modal verbs in secondary school's syllabus (SPINE series).					
5	5- Secondary schools' students always predict the meaning of modal verbs from the linguistic context.					
6	6- The problems of using English modal verbs might be due to the complexity of understanding modal verbs.					

7	7- The background of the students as a second language learner might affect understanding of English modal verbs.					
8	8- One of the possible solutions of these problems is including modal verbs in the English language syllabus.					
9	9- One of the possible solutions of these problems is to provide sufficient training of teachers in the field of teaching English.					
10	10- One of the possible solutions of these problems is to provide a sufficient practice for student in modal verbs.					

The questionnaire Referees and their Jobs and place of work.

No	Name	Job	Place of work
1	Dr.Tag alsir bashoom	Lecturer	Sudan University of Science and Technology
2	Dr. Yusuf ALTiraifi Ahmed	Lecturer	Sudan University of Science and Technology

Appendix (2): Test

Test on English modal verbs for secondary schools students

Question one: Put the verbs in their correct forms:

- 1- When I was thirteen years old I..... (Can) run fast, but now I can't.
- 2- If you run fast you..... (Catch) the bus.
- 3- If I met him, I..... (Tell) him the truth.
- 4-.....you open that window please?

Question two: complete the following sentences by using modal verbs:

May must can might should will

- 1- He said hecome tomorrow.
- 2- That..... Or may not true.
- 3- Childrenobey their parents.
- 4- If I had gone to school, Ihave met the teacher.

Question three: Draw a circle:

- 1- Footballersnot touch the ball with their hands
a- must b-should c-can
- 2- I am very tall. So Iplay basketball.
a- must b- can c- should
- 3- Honestly, youhave told me the truth.
a- Ought to b- Should c- might