

A Content Analysis of Modals in Action Pack Ten, Eleven, Twelve in Terms of Variety in Meaning, Distribution, and Activities: Recommendations for Effective Methods in Teaching Modals

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This study aims at investigating the extent to which modals are presented in Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve in terms of variety in meaning, distribution, and activities which teach students modals and how these activities are effective. The researchers adopt content analysis method to answer the question of the study. The unit of analysis is the modal verb in Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve. They categorized modals in terms of the type of modality they express into: modals that indicate *deontic modality*, modals that indicate *epistemic modality*, and modals that indicate *dynamic modality*. Each category will be subcategorized according to the specific meaning it indicates such as: possibility, ability, permission, obligation, and advisability. The findings of the study revealed that the most dilemmatic issue in teaching modals is their meanings due to the fact that students are, sometimes, overwhelmed by the idea that there is only one meaning for each modal whatever it occurs in different contexts. Thus, they should be acquainted with the opposite idea, i.e., each modal has more than one meaning according to the context it occurs in.

Key Words: content analysis, modals, Action Pack Ten, Eleven, Twelve, meaning, distribution, and activities, effective methods in teaching modals

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa kata kerja bantu yang terdapat pada buku Action Pack sepuluh, sebelas dan dua belas dalam hal variasi terkait pengertian, distribusi, aktivitas-aktivitas dan untuk mengetahui keefektifan aktivitas-aktivitas tersebut. Peneliti mengadopsi metode analisis isi untuk menjawab rumusan masalah. Unit analisis

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difokuskan pada buku Action Pack sepuluh, sebelas dan dua belas dengan mengategorikan kata kerja bantu deontik ke dalam beberapa jenis diantaranya modalitas epistemik dan modalitas dinamik. Tiap jenis modalitas dikelompokkan menurut pengertian spesifik seperti kemungkinan, kemampuan, perizinan, kewajiban, dan kelayakan. Temuan penelitian mengemukakan bahwa masalah yang paling dilematis dalam pengajaran kata kerja bantu dilihat dari sisi pengertiannya. Hal ini didukung oleh fakta bahwa siswa, kadang-kadang, merasa bingung dan resah oleh gagasan bahwa hanya ada satu makna untuk setiap kata kerja bantu dalam konteks yang berbeda.

INTRODUCTION

The modal system makes up one of the four classes of auxiliary verbs, which are: verb to be, verb to have and verb to do. The word modal comes from the word mood, and the word *modal* was originally used as an adjective for the type of auxiliary (i.e., modal auxiliary), but now it is commonly used as a noun to refer to this type of auxiliary verbs.

Any investigation of modality and modals in English inevitably raises problems not only for ESL learners but also EFL learners as well. As Celce-Murcia and Freeman (1999) put it concisely: "Modal auxiliaries are one of the most difficult structures that you as an ESL/EFL teacher will have to deal with" (p. 80).

Many linguists have studied and discussed modality and revealed the problematic areas of this subject in English grammar. Thompson (2002) discusses the way how teachers can help students learn modals. He argues that ESL/EFL teachers can help their students to learn modals by asking them to learn how to form these modals correctly, recognize categories of modality, and choose the appropriate modal for expressing modality. These three activities might help them master the intricacies of English modals in three areas: forming modals, recognizing categories of modality, and using modals to express modality.

Other techniques introduced by Thompson (2002) are *re-phrasing* and *role plays*. The first activity is used to find the exact meaning of a modal which might have different meanings according to the context by re-phrasing a sentence with a modal and giving its interpretation. The second activity refers to introducing a situation for each pair of students then asking them to write a conversation about this situation and act it out.

Collins's study (2014) traces the fortunes in Australian English of four quasi-modals (*have to* and *have got to* representing the domain of necessity/obligation, and *want to* and *be going to* representing volition/prediction), comparing them with semantically related modals (*must*, *should*, *ought to*, *will*, and *shall*). Depraetere (2014) attempts to answer the question: do modals have a core meaning which is underspecified and context-dependent (monosemy) or are the different meanings semantically sufficiently differentiated to allow us to say that a modal is polysemous? She argues that those modal verbs (like *may* or *must*) that can express epistemic meaning as well as non-epistemic meaning are presented a model for the analysis of modal meaning: there is pragmatic layer that caters for potential pragmatic effects.

Vethemani, Abdul Manaf & Akbari (2009) identified modals used by the students at two different levels. What modals students preferred are *can*, *will* and *could* which were used to express ability and certainty. However, modals of probability/possibility showed lower frequencies of use in students' writing. This study indicates that the students were able to perceive the conceptual meaning of each modal and their communicative function.

Nuyts, Byloo, and Diepeveen (2010) significantly attempt to achieve a better understanding of the nature of deontic modality, and of its relationship with the imperative mood, by studying the Dutch modals *mogen* ‘may’ and *moeten* ‘must’. They argue that there should be a distinguishing element between ‘deontic’ and ‘directive’ uses of the modals, that deontic modality should be defined, in terms of the notions of (degrees of) moral acceptability or necessity, not in the traditional terms of permission and obligation. They state that the ‘directive uses’ of the modals should be analyzed in speech act terms. The analysis of *mogen* and *moeten* also indicates that there is a division of labor between the directive use of the modals and the imperative mood, the choice between them being predominantly a matter of the performativity vs descriptivity of the directive.

Mukundanl, Saadullah, Ismail, and Zasenawil (2013) examine the Malaysian students’ use of modals in argumentative written tasks at the syntactic level. The research findings showed that students preferred to use a lot of modals in their writings. However, the use of these modals was limited to a few words only.

In his study, Palmer (1987) presents modals and modality as one of the most problematic areas in English grammar but still it is worth discussing. He confirms this idea by arguing that "there is, perhaps, no area of English grammar that is both more important and more difficult than the system of the modals" (p. I). Furthermore, Palmer (1990) distinguishes three usages of modality: epistemic, and deontic and dynamic. The former is concerned with making “a judgment about the truth of the proposition”, the second is concerned with “influencing actions, states or events”. The third category of modality is called dynamic modality (Palmer, 1990, p.6).

Small (2010) discusses the way English textbooks present modals. He chooses a random sample of contemporary textbooks and analyzes them to detect the issue of modals' presentation in them. He concludes that learners would definitely find difficulties with modal verbs when studying English. Consequently, textbooks should help them improve their understanding of the linguistic functions of modals through which affective meaning is conveyed. This would help them to respond to and effectively convey their own attitudes and feelings as well as increase their linguistic proficiency through the flexible use of modals in writing or speaking.

In English, a speaker may use lexical expressions that express the modality such as "it is possible that...", "it is necessary that..." , "it is certain that...", "possibly", "perhaps...", "I permit you..."...etc. or modals such as can, could, shall, should, will, would, may, might, be able to, had better, must, ought to, have to, have got to, among others.

The lexical expressions that express modality are easier and more straightforward to be understood than modal verbs which remain vague. Consequently, to interpret the meaning of modals you have to match their meanings to the context and avoid assuming that they have just one meaning in all contexts. For instance, *can* has three various interpretations in the following examples:

1. The door can be repaired. "Possibility"
2. He can swim. "Ability"
3. You can go now. "Permission"

Arab learners of English are familiar with the most obvious formal characteristic of modal verbs that there is no –s ending for the third person singular, but there are some other

criteria mentioned by Palmer (1990) in which the modals share with auxiliary verbs. These are as follows:

1. Inversion with the subject. (e.g., Must he come?)
2. Negative form with "n't" (e.g., He can't go.)
3. Code. (e.g., He will come and so will she.)
4. Emphatic affirmation. (e.g., He may come.) (P. 4)

Palmer (1990) also mentions other criteria which are specific to modal verbs. These characteristics distinguish them from primary auxiliaries as well as from other verbs:

1. No –s form of the 3rd person singular. (No mays, cans etc.)
2. No non-finite forms (Infinitives, past and present participles)
3. No co-occurrence. (No he may will come etc.)

Nevertheless, not all the modals conform to all the above criteria.

Purpose and Questions of the Study

The present study aims at investigating the extent to which modals are presented in the textbook titled Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve in terms of variety in meaning, distribution, and activities that teach students modals and how these activities are effective. The study will suggest some techniques for improving the method of teaching modals presented in these textbooks. The purpose of the study will be achieved through locating answers for the following questions:

1. To what extent are modals presented in variety in terms of meaning in Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve?
2. To what extent are modals distributed in Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve?
3. To what extent are there activities in Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve that teach students modals?
4. Are there recommended techniques to teach modals effectively?

Statement of the Problem

One major area of the difficulties of recognizing the meaning of English modals is the relation between the meaning and the form of these modals, as Palmer (1987) asserts that "if we decide to approach it exclusively either from form or from meaning, we run into difficulties" (P.1). Grammatically speaking, the textbooks do not provide a wide variety of exercises and activities concerning modals. Despite the importance of modals in teaching the language, many textbooks are confined with introducing them in just one or two units in the whole textbook. And though this limited space given to modals might not treat the issue of modals thoroughly in terms of variety in meaning. Therefore, the present study comes to shed light on these issues.

METHOD

Criteria of the Study

The criteria of the study will be based on the extent of the variety in the modals' meaning, distribution and adequacy and effectiveness of the activities and exercises that tackle modals in Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve.

Categories of the Study and Unit of Analysis

Modals will be categorized in terms of the type of modality they express. They are modals that indicate *deontic modality*, modals that indicate *epistemic modality*, and modals that indicate *dynamic modality*. Each category will be subcategorized according to the specific meaning it indicates such as possibility, ability, permission, obligation, and advisability. The unit of analysis is the modal verb in the textbooks.

Limitation of the Study

The present study is confined to investigating modals in three textbooks in Action Pack series which are Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve. Other textbooks in the series in question will be out of the scope of this study. This is due to the fact that modals are dealt with in somehow more illustrated manner in such textbooks than Action Pack for earlier stages, i.e., Action Pack 1-9. Modals are studied only in the form of active sentences. There is no room for studying modals in the structure of passive sentences.

Reliability of Content Analysis

For the intra-reliability, the researchers analyzed the modals in the three textbooks under study and repeated the analysis to find that there is a consistency of (0.98) which indicates the high percentage of reliability.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Because of the fact that modal verbs constitute a well-recognized system in English grammar but not in Arabic, this may bring a problematic area for Arab learners of English in this respect. Consequently, TEFL/TESL textbooks should take this fact into consideration when designing the activities and exercises to enable students grasp the function and the meaning of modals. Below are the findings of the study concerning the four questions of the study followed by the discussion.

Presenting modals with variation in meaning in the textbooks in question is very important so as to familiarize students with all the various functions of modals. When analyzing Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve in terms of the categories and subcategories of the modals' meanings, the following findings are obtained and presented in the Tables below.

Table 1. *Modals and their categories in Action Pack Ten/Unit Eight*

Categories of Modality	The Modal	Subcategories of Modality	Frequencies of Exercises Wherein the Modal appears	Percentage
Deontic	Can	Ability	2	20
	Could	Ability	1	10
	Can't	Ability	1	10
Epistemic	Would	Possibility	1	10
	Could	Possibility	1	10
Dynamic	Can	Ability	1	10
	Can't	Ability	1	10
	Could	Ability	1	10

	Be able to	Ability	1	10
Total	5	3 (meanings)	10	100

Table 2. *Modals and their categories in Action Pack Ten/Unit Nine*

Categories of Modality	The Modal	Subcategories of Modality	Frequencies of Exercises Wherein the Modal appears	Percentage
Deontic	Should	Advisability	2	16.66
	Shouldn't	Advisability	2	16.66
	Must	Advisability	2	16.66
	Mustn't	Advisability	1	8.33
	Don't have to	Advisability	2	16.66
	Must	Obligation	2	16.66
Epistemic	-	-	0	0
Dynamic	Have to	Necessity	1	8.33
Total	6	3	12	100

Table 3. *Modals and their categories in Action Pack Eleven/Unit One*

Categories of Modality	The Modal	Subcategories of Modality	Frequencies of Exercises Wherein the Modal appears	Percentage
Deontic	Can't	Ability	1	9.09
	Couldn't	Ability	2	18.18
	Could	Ability	2	18.18
	Able to	Ability	1	9.09
	Manage to	Ability	2	18.18
Epistemic	-	-	0	0
Dynamic	Able to	Ability	1	9.09
	Mange to	Ability	2	18.18
Total	7	1 (ability)	11	100

Table 4. *Modals and their categories in Action Pack Twelve/Unit Five*

Categories of Modality	The Modal	Subcategories of Modality	Frequencies of Exercises Wherein the Modal appears	Percentage
Epistemic	Can't be	Possibility	1	16.666
	Must be	Possibility	1	16.666
	Might have	Possibility	2	33.33
	Might	Possibility	1	16.666
	Must have	Possibility	1	16.666
Deontic	-	-	0	0
Dynamic	-	-	0	0

Total	5	1	6	100

When studying the findings in the tables above, we find that Unit Eight in Action Pack Ten focuses on the deontic modals (40%), that express ability, epistemic modals that express possibility (20%) and dynamic modals (40%) that express ability. Below are examples of each category:

1. I need my glasses. I *can't* see without them. (deontic/ability)
2. What *would* people do if computers started to act by themselves? (epistemic/possibility)
3. What *can* these things do? (dynamic/ability)

Furthermore, Unit Eight, focuses on introducing four modals two of which are introduced with their negative forms (*can/can't* and *could/couldn't*), and the others are introduced without negative forms (*would* and *be able to*). To conclude, great attention in this unit is paid for expressing the meaning of *ability* by modals. This might be due to the fact that the meaning in question is the easiest to be expressed by modals like *can* and *could*. Another reason might be that students in intermediate levels deal with speech acts more than in advanced levels (where students develop skills of thinking critically, imagining, analyzing...etc.) as in Action Pack Ten, and Eleven where a considerable amount of focus given to epistemic modality expressed by modals such as *must have*, *might have*, *must be*. However, the modals *can* and *could* can express other meanings such as request, permission, and prohibition. As for the meaning of possibility in the unit under consideration, it is expressed by the two modals *could* and *would*. Students would be better acquainted with different meanings of one modal by giving them examples of these modals in context as to stress the fact that every modal could have more than one meaning according to the context it occurs in.

With regard to Unit Nine in the same textbook (Action Pack Ten), as illustrated in Table 2, we find that a great deal of focus is given to deontic modals that express advisability and obligation (91.333%). No consideration is given to epistemic modals, however, one modal, *have to*, that expressed dynamic modality (8.333%) is introduced. Examples of modals in this unit are as the following:

1. You *should* save some money every month. (deontic/ advisability)
2. You *must* be careful with your money. (deontic/advisability)
3. You *must* use a password for the bank website. (deontic/obligation)
4. Most people *have to* work to earn money. (dynamic/ necessity)

One point might be good to be raised here, is that students should be taught how to distinguish between *should*, *must* and *have to* since all are used to express advisability, however, they differ in intensity of expressing such meaning. This can be done through giving them more examples of these modals in context and by paraphrasing their meanings. For instance, the advice given in the sentence number 2 is stronger than that in the sentence number 1. Furthermore, students should be familiarized with that the modal *must* is also used to express other meanings such as possibility and prohibition. In conclusion, the two units, Unit Eight

and Unit Nine in Action Pack Ten focus on two meanings very heavily which are *ability* and *advisability* and other two meanings marginally which are *possibility* and *necessity*.

With regard to Action Pack Eleven, Table 3 shows that there is only one unit, Unit One, which introduces one meaning and function of modals which is *ability*. This meaning comes under the umbrella of deontic modality (73%) and dynamic modality (27%). No room is given to epistemic modality at all. The modals introduced in Action Pack Eleven/Unit One are the same ones introduced in Action Pack Ten/Unit Eight which include *can*, *could*, *can't*, and *be able to*. Consequently, nothing almost new is introduced in Action Pack Eleven/Unit One except the modal *manage to* which almost gives the same meaning implied in the modal *be able to*. While these two modals express ability to do something on specific situations, *can*, *could* and their negative forms are used to express ability in general. The following are examples:

1. I *can't* drive, so I didn't hire a car. (ability in general)
2. I *managed to* take lots of photos of the fireworks before the festival ended. (ability on occasions)
3. The power went on again and the train was *able to* start. (ability on occasions)
4. We *couldn't* speak the language very well. (ability in general)
5. We *couldn't* afford to fly home, so we decided to go by train. (ability on occasions)

In Action Pack Twelve, again only one unit, Unit Five, tackles modals. This is clear in Table (5) where all the focus is on the modal's meaning of possibility which comes under the umbrella of epistemic modality. Five modals are introduced in this unit which include *can't be*, *must be*, *might have*, *might* and *must have*. This might be due to the fact that epistemic modality is not dealt with at all in Action Pack Eleven but in one unit, Unit Eight, in Action Pack Ten where only two modals are introduced: *would* and *could*. It is made clear in this unit what difference hold among these modals that indicate epistemic modality. The following examples illustrate this point:

1. It *can't be* an interesting place to work. (You feel sure it isn't)
2. It *must be* an interesting place to work. (You feel sure it is)
3. The crowds *might have* spoiled it. (Possibility in past)
4. The crowds *might* spoil it. (Possibility in the future)
5. Some people *might have* come from Africa. (You think it was possible)
6. Some people *must have* come from Africa. (You feel sure it was possible)

To conclude, in all the three textbooks under analysis, the variation of the modals' meanings, to some extent, is not presented adequately. In all the four units included in these three textbooks, only three meanings of modals are salient which are: *possibility*, *advisability*, and *ability*. Therefore, it might be a good suggestion to insert some units in these textbooks for the sake of familiarizing students with the other meanings and functions of the modals such as obligation, prohibition, permission and request.

With reference to the second question of the study concerning the extent to which modals are distributed in Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve, Table 5 presents the distribution of modals along with their frequencies and percentages in the three textbooks under analysis.

Table 5. *Modals distribution, frequencies, and percentages in Action Pack Ten, Eleven, and Twelve*

Title of the Textbook	Units Where Modals are Introduced in the Three Textbooks												Frequencies of Modals in each Unit	%
	U. 1	U. 2	U. 3	U. 4	U. 5	U. 6	U. 7	U. 8	U. 9	U.10	U.11	U. 12		
Action Pack Ten	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	12	54.5
Action Pack Eleven	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	22.75
Action Pack Twelve	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	22.75
Total	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	22	100

It is clear from the illustration of the distribution of modals presented in Table 5 that there are two units in Action Pack Ten that present the subject of modals. There is only one unit that tackles the issue of modality in each of Action Pack Eleven and Action Pack Twelve. Consequently, we find no balanced and comprehensive distribution of modals in the three textbooks under analysis. Twelve modals are introduced in Unit Eight and Unit Nine in Action Pack Ten. These modals include *can*, *could*, *can't*, *couldn't*, *must*, *mustn't*, *should*, *shouldn't*, *have to*, *don't have to*, *would*, and *be able to*. The modals introduced in Unit One Action Pack Eleven include five modals. Four of them (*can*, *can't*, *could*, and *couldn't*) have been introduced in Action Pack Ten/Unit Eight, in addition to the modal *manage to*. As for Action Pack Twelve, five modals that expressed only epistemic modality are introduced. These modals include *can't be*, *must be*, *might have*, *might*, and *must have*. Only four meanings of modals introduced in the four units in the three textbooks under analysis: ability, possibility, obligation and advisability.

As far as modals are important in English to express different attitudes and feelings, students should be familiar with the various meanings in their textbooks. Thus, modals should be introduced and re-introduced in more than one unit all throughout the textbook, otherwise students might think that any modal introduced to them in one single unit in the whole textbook might have only one meaning and there is no need to see it again in the sequent units in the textbook.

With regard to the third question of the study concerning the activities that teach students the meaning of modals, Table (7) below presents the activities used to teach modals in the three textbooks along with their numbers and percentages.

Table 6. *Types of the activities used to teach modals and their percentages in the three textbooks*

Title of the Textbook	The Units wherein Modals Taught	Types of Activities	Number of Activities	%
Action Pack Ten	Unit Eight	Fill in the Blank	4	27
		Talking about Abilities		
		Pair & Group Discussion		
		Talking about Possibilities		
		Matching modals with their meanings		
	Unit Nine	Matching negative forms of modals with their meanings	5	33
		Rewriting sentences using modals		
		Pair work: using modals to talk about certain situations		
		Group work: Talking about rules and laws in countries by using modals		
Distinguishing between modals that express general ability and those express ability on occasions				
Action Pack Eleven	Unit One	Distinguishing the tense, negative forms and replacement of modals	4	27
		Spotting mistakes in the modals used in sentences		
		Fill in the blank using modals		
		Recognizing differences in the meanings of modals		
Action Pack Twelve	Unit Five	Pair work: Making sentences about a photo by using modals	2	13
Total	4	15	15	100

Table 6 shows that Unit Nine in Action Pack Ten gets the highest percentages (33%) of the activities concerning modals in the three textbooks under analysis. This might be due to the fact that this unit tackles the meaning of only three modals (have to, should, must) which express almost the same meaning of advisability and it is not easy to detect the slightest differences between them. For instance, Activity Three in the unit in question teaches students to differentiate between these modals in very effective way which is termed *re-phrasing* by Thompson (2002). When doing this activity, students are given sentences that express modality without using a modal. Then they have to re-phrase these sentences using modals. Below are some examples:

1. It isn't a good idea to carry lots of money around with you. (You *mustn't* carry lots of money around with you.)
2. It isn't necessary to pay for these drinks. They're free. (You *don't have to* pay for these drinks.)
3. It is a good idea to put your money in a bank. (You *should* put your money in a bank.)

Other useful activities that integrate speaking with writing are Activity Four and Activity Five wherein students are asked to work in pairs/groups to discuss and write a set of rules concerning different situations and topics (money, clothes, public behavior, driving a car) using modals.

Matching modals with their meanings and matching them with their negative forms (Activity One and Activity Two), is also helpful in drawing fine distinction between similar meanings of modals. For instance, the sentence: *Most people have to work to earn money* is matched with the meaning: *this is necessary* while the sentence: *You must be more careful with your money* is to be matched with the meaning: *I feel very strongly that this is right*. An example for matching negative forms of modals with their meanings is: *You mustn't borrow money from someone without asking* which is to be matched with *I feel strongly that this is wrong*.

Unit Eight in Action Pack Ten and Unit One in Action Pack Eleven have the same percentage (27%) of activities concerning modals. The former introduces activities about filling the blanks with modals, talking about abilities and possibilities, and pair/group discussion about inventions by using modals. Pictures of these inventions are provided to stimulate students' thinking of the possibilities of using such inventions. Using pictures in this activity is very effective technique in teaching modals. The latter, Unit One in Action Pack Eleven, introduces activities about filling in the blank with modals, distinguishing between modals that express general ability and those express ability on occasions, distinguishing the tense, negative forms and replacement of modals, in addition to spotting mistakes in sentences that have modals.

The last activity, spotting mistakes, is very helpful in that it teaches students to think critically to detect the slightest differences among the meanings of different modals. For instance, the sentence "After two hours of standing in the aisle, I *could* find a seat" is introduced to students to see if the modal suits the context from a semantic point of view. Since students are taught that *manage to* and not *could* (which is used for ability in general) is used for ability in specific situation, they directly replace *could* with *manage to*.

Action Pack Twelve has only one unit, Unit Five, which introduces the topic of modals with just two activities. The first activity deals with recognizing differences in the meanings of modals while the second, which is a pair work activity, introduces a picture of a man sitting on snow and having a mobile. His hair and shoulders covered with snow and he seems lost in an area covered with snow. He is talking in the cell phone to someone to help him. Students are asked in the activity to think of what might happen (events) before and after the scene portrayed by the photo of the man. They are given the modals *must have* and *can't have* to discuss and write the events they feel sure of their occurrence, and the modal *might have* if they are not sure of what they suggest. Again, using pictures is a very effective way of teaching the meaning of modals.

To sum up, six types of activities are included in the three textbooks under analysis. These activities include: *filling in the blank with the modal, pair/group work discussion about events using modals, matching modals and their negative forms with their meanings, activities of distinguishing between different meanings of modals, spotting mistakes in sentence with modals, and talking about possibilities and abilities*.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

Based on what have been discussed so far concerning the issue the analysis tackles, one could infer that the most dilemmatic issue in teaching modals is their meanings due to the fact that students are, sometimes, overwhelmed by the idea that there is only one meaning for each modal whatever it occurs in different contexts. Thus, they should be acquainted with the opposite idea, i.e., each modal has more than one meaning according to the context it occurs in.

With reference to all three types of modality, (deontic, epistemic, and dynamic), we find that they have been introduced in the three textbooks under analysis with different degrees of illustration. Only Action Pack Ten covers the three types of modality. This might be due to the fact that this textbook seeks to build infrastructure knowledge concerning modals and different types of modality they express. However, in Action Pack Eleven, one type of modality, namely *epistemic modality* disappears to appear and be dealt with solely and thoroughly in Action Pack Twelve. One positive and worth mentioning point concerning the activities introduced in the three textbooks, is the great and effective variety in the exercises that teach the meaning of modals; however, there might be a need for other effective methods to help students grasp the intricacies of English modals. In the final run, modals are better to be taught and recurrent in the three textbooks, i.e., more than one or two units should introduce the topic of modality so as to help students digest and master its problematic areas.

Recommendation

The borders of distinguishing the meaning of modals that comes under the three types of modality are in many cases not clear. Consequently, students should be taught different meanings of modals by relating them to the context and using more illustrative and critical exercises that enables them to cope with this dilemmatic issue.

Using a variety of effective techniques such as using pictures in initiating a pair/group discussion about a specific scene in the picture, spotting mistakes in sentences that have inappropriate modals, re-phrasing, role-play, translation, using passages that include modals with different meanings, replacing modals with modal expressions, just to name few are considered valuable and effective techniques to teach modals. Below are some suggestions to teach modals effectively:

1. Teaching each modal with its negative form.
2. Asking students to form their own sentences using modals after giving them certain vocabulary that might help in forming sentences. Teaching modals that have similar meanings together.
3. Using exercises with conversations and dialogues to provide clear contexts to understand the meaning of modals.
4. Using pictures which are followed by multi-exercises.
5. Asking students to translate sentences with modals that differ slightly in meaning into their native language or providing them with alternative translations for the same modal in different contexts. This technique might help to enhance students' ability of distinction between modals' meanings in different contexts.

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