

**Social Sciences, Humanities and Education Journal (SHE Journal)**

Volume 1 (3) 75 – 81, September 2020 | ISSN: 2720-9946 (Online) | ISSN: 2723-3626 (Print)

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## **AN ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH MODALS IN MODAL VERB PHRASE STRUCTURES IN EDUCATIONAL ESSAYS OF ‘SHERRY JOHNSON’ AND ‘TAMJID MUJTABA’**

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**Abstract:** This research aimed to present the findings of English modals in modal verb phrase structures in educational essays of ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’, which to increase the learners’ awareness of modals when they hesitate in the foreign language, which is the very common in writing. This research used qualitative research to analyze the modal verb phrase in educational essays of ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’. This research has found that the most frequent modal verbs in these essays are can, may, will, should, would, and must. The researchers found 23 different modal verbs in ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ academic essays documents that indicate actions, states and conditions associated with education. The most used modals were in ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ essay, it produced 12 modals. These results correspond with the definition of these documents. The findings are proofing of how language expresses the characteristics of an academic text type in a professional and academic way domain.

**Keywords:** Modals, Modal Verb Phrase, Educational Essay, Corpus Analysis

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**Citation:** Riadil, I. G. (2020). An analysis of english modals in modal verb phrase structures in educational essays of ‘sherry johnson’ and ‘tamjid mujtaba’. *Social Sciences, Humanities and Education Journal (SHE Journal)*, 1(3), 75 – 81. DOI: 10.25273/she.v1i3.7567



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## INTRODUCTION

Language is a method of capricious, vocal symbols that allow all individuals in a given other individual cultures or those who have learned the scheme of that culture, to communicate or to cooperate and interact each other (Finocchioro, in Ramelan 1984). According to Fuertes-Olivera (2008: 69) a “specialized corpus includes demonstrative oral and written texts which imitate the kind of language of a particular domain of a function”. Since the corpora which include specialized uses of English are not freely available, the researcher usually have to compile them on their own. The limitations to consideration that must be taken during corpus compilation are the genre and the subject of the texts, the type of texts, and the corpus size and language variety. For instance, if corpus analysis to emphasis on language structures of communication in written way. The aim of this research paper is to present the findings of a study of modal verbs, modal verb phrase structures and to present discussions for each modals that have found by the researcher of modality in an academic type of professional texts, i.e. ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ education essays. Imparting knowledge on modal auxiliary verb to the learners has always been a complex and difficult task for EFL teachers. Likewise, the EFL learners face the exertion and difficulty in learning and using the modal auxiliaries properly and appropriately in their written tasks. DeCarrico (1986) and Hinkel (1995), in the expert studies, they discovered that the foreign learners use modal verbs more in context and situation as opposed to native learners. In other words, foreign learners use modals in a different way from native learners.

English language and linguistics learners are mandatory to know the perspective or point of view and descriptive rules of English in order to be capable, skillful, and proficient to perform language tasks more effectively.

The language functions and procedures or forms need to be simplified for one to be more proficient, and EFL students need to know the different kinds of grammatical knowledge at different phases in their own language (Chitravelu, Sithamparam & Teh, 1995). The EFL learners need to be acquainted and more familiar with specific grammatical rules in order to do some language tasks. An expert known as Levinson (1983) explains that as the EFL learner developments, it is predictable for them to be aware of some grammatical rules or terms like what establishes a subject-verb agreement, sentence, and others, it is sufficient to make them know and able to discuss with the teacher the errors that have been made, and as modal auxiliary verb is one aspect of grammar, the rules need to be simplified for EFL learners to be able to use it in proper way. One of an expert known as Kasper (1979), said that in his own study, proves that German students who learn English are also unsure and doubtful of some of grammatical aspects in English, especially in understanding and knowledge the pragmatic category of modals and modality in accounting for the differential contextual insinuations. Undoubtedly, the EFL learners could be opposite the similar problems.

An experts known as (Halliday, 1973) said that the most deliberated issues for the past 30 years has been questioning which grammar should be made accurate to language learners. In language teaching, it has been strongly doubtful whether unambiguous grammar lessons have a role in foreign language classrooms (Ratnawati, 1996). Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1983) are obstinate that a good knowledge of English grammar is very necessary and important for teaching English as English Foreign Language (EFL) learners more effectively. Nevertheless, there is an amount of indecisiveness as to what and what not to teach. Teachers have to be more

positive and know what and how much knowledge to carry and transfer to these learners as to facilitate learners to more effectively obtain and gain all four skills in learning the foreign language. This will ensure that these learners ultimately become to be more proficient speakers of the target language.

Due to this uncertainty, the EFL teachers find the difficulties to teach one the most essential items among all of the grammatical items, which is the modals. Modal's are said by one of an expert that it is to be part of the grammatical items which considered problematic (Palmer, 1974). It is important to distinguish the problems among EFL learners in using modals and find actions and measures to correct them and given that modals as a key role in a sentence or expression. Hence, the present study intends to examine the use of in academic 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba' essay of EFL Learners in terms of their forms, types, token, and functions from data made available by the researcher. To this end, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the types and token of modals used in the 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba' essays?
2. For what functions are the modals used by the essays of 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba'?

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research is used as Qualitative research. Patton and Cochran (2002) defines qualitative research is categorized by its purposes, which belongs to understanding some feature of social life, and this technique which is generate the word, rather than numbers, as data for the analysis. Qualitative research is understanding of social phenomenon based on participant's point of view. In order to increase information into a certain phenomenon, such as an environment, a process, or a belief. The purpose of this study was to the frequency of modals used in the 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba'

education essays and the functions are the modals used by the essays 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba'. According to Wood and Kroger (2000), discourse analysis explained as a person's insight that comprehends methodological and conceptual elements. Furthermore, they also maintain that discourse data includes spoken and written transcripts. In the other hand, Stark and Trinidad (2007) add that discourse analysis concerns on language use. Therefore, the researcher showed a discourse analysis to study the frequency of modals used in the 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba' essays and the functions are the modals used by the essays of 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba'.

The object of this research were the 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba' education essays. The entitles 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba' essay is "U.S. public education something to be proud of" and the entitles of 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba' essay is "Education in London: Challenges and opportunities for young people". The words that counted on the 'Sherry Johnson' essay is 544 words and the words that counted on 'Tamjid Mujtaba' essay is 1055 words. To instigate the study, the researcher defined what *modal* are rendering to some experts. Then, the researcher observed and looked for and chosen the essays which was used. After collecting the objects of this research, in the next part of the research process, the essays were analyzed by using the theories. In this process, the researcher used three steps. First, the researcher observed and looked for some essays, and then found the modal verbs in each of the essays. Second, the findings were analyzed and classified into the types and token of modal verbs. Third, the findings of classifications were defined and explained as the possible reasons why the modal on 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba' essays are used on the essay. Those three steps were to

response and answered the research questions in this study. Finally, the researcher drew the conclusion based on the finding in this research.

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Findings**

This part discusses the results of this research. It contains of two sections, namely the token of modals used in the ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ essays and for what functions are the modals used by the essays of ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’.

**The Types and Frequencies of Modal**

This section answered the first project questions about types of modal used in the ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ essays. There are nine types of modals; those are Can, May, Shall, Will, Could, Might, Should, Would, and Must. From the data which were taken by the

researcher by a recording of utterances in the ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ essays, there were nine types of Modals used by them. The data that was produced by a concordance search of modals used in ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ essays which the written academic work forms supplied the observed figures to distinguish the distribution of modals at the different levels.

Since this study was to investigate the modal and semi-modal verbs, the researcher just focused on the modal verbs. They were Can, May, Shall, Will, Could, Might, Should, Would, and Must modal with the total number of occurrences 11 in ‘Sherry Johnson’ essay and 12 in ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ essay. The details of the types of modal used in the ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ essays presented in the following table:

**Table 1.** *The Token Count of Modals for ‘Sherry Johnson’ and ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ Essay*

No.	Modals	Sherry Johnson Essay	Tamjid Mujtaba Essay
1.	Can	1	8
2.	May	-	-
3.	Shall	-	-
4.	Will	7	3
5.	Could	-	-
6.	Might	-	-
7.	Should	1	1
8.	Would	1	1
9.	Must	1	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>

The table above implies that the most token or frequent of modals used in the ‘Sherry Johnson’ essays was Can (1), May (-), Shall (-), Will (7), Could (-), Might (-), Should (1), Would (1), and Must (1), with total number of occurrences 11, and the most frequent of models used in the ‘Tamjid Mujtaba’ was Can (8), May (-), Shall (-), Will (3), Could (-), Might (-), Should (1), Would (1), and Must (-), with total number of occurrences 12.

**Discussions**

**The Functions of Modals**

Actually, modals have many functions. Argues that modals have some functions which depend on the situation of the text. There were at least nine functions of models which became the focus on this study. They were Can, May, Shall, Will, Could, Might, Should, Would, and Must. The researcher analyzed the use of modals and cleared the functions by considering the context of the condition from the utterances.

As already presented in the previous section, the essays produced modals in different functions. It used nine different types of modals based on some expert theories. In this study, modals as hesitation devices appeared the most in the selected essays. These were some function of models used in the 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba' essays:

#### A. Can

Passive

Corpus Findings:

1. In Academic prose, **can** is used in passive voice because most passive constructions are formed with the auxiliary *be* followed by an *ed*-participle.
2. In Academic prose, **can** is used in passive voice because that is used to avoid explicit identification of the person who is obligated to act.
3. The meaning of **can** is indicating ability or capacity to do

Active

Corpus Findings:

4. In Academic paper, **can** is used in active voice because the function of **can** in those sentences to describes the subject actually doing the action.
5. The meaning of **can** is indicating ability or capacity to do
6. In Academic paper, **can** is used in active voice because that is used to avoid explicit identification of the act that is obligated to person.

#### B. May

Active

Corpus Findings:

1. In Academic paper, **may** is used in active voice because the function of **may** in those sentences to describes the subject actually doing the action.
2. The meaning of **may** is indicating ability or capacity to do
3. In Academic paper, **may** is used in passive voice because that is used to avoid explicit identification of the act that is obligated to person.

Present Perfect Tense

Corpus Findings:

4. In Academic paper, **may** is used in Present Perfect Tense, because the verb **been** is the most common present perfect form in all registers except conversation.
5. The meaning of **may** is indicating the activity that happens before another time or event..
6. In Academic paper, **may** is used in Present Perfect Tense, because the verb has/have is the single most common present perfect verb in any one register.

#### C. Shall

There is no shall of modal verbs in each essays, but shall itself have two general function such as:

1. In Academic paper, **shall** used with "I" and "we" to talk about the future (especially in formal British English
2. In Academic paper, **shall** used with "I" and "we" to ask questions or make suggestions

#### D. Will

Corpus Findings:

Passive

1. In Academic paper, **will** is used in passive voice because most passive creations are formed with the auxiliary *be* followed by an *ed*-participle.
2. In Academic paper, **will** is used in passive voice because that is used to avoid explicit identification of the person who is obligated to act.
3. The meaning of **will** is indicating the activity in the future.

Simple Future Tense

Corpus Findings:

1. In Academic paper, **will** is used in Simple Future Tense, because **will** in that sentence indicate what the subject are going to be in the future. .

2. The meaning of **will** is expressing the future tense.
3. In Academic paper, **will** is used to expressing the inevitable event.

#### E. **Could**

Active

Corpus Findings:

1. In Academic paper, **could** is used in active voice because the function of **could** in those sentences to describes the subject actually doing the action.
2. The meaning of **could** is indicating ability or capacity to do
3. In Academic paper, **could** is used in active voice because that is used to avoid explicit identification of the act that is obligated to person.
4. In Academic paper, **could** is the past form of **can**, and more polite than **can**.

#### F. **Might**

There is no might of modal verbs in each essays, but shall itself have two general function such as; might is used to express what is hypothetical, counterfactual, or remotely possible, might is also has function as used to be allowed to, possible or probable as well. Might is also used when a person discussing something that has a slight possibility of happening, or it can used to ask for permission in a more polite way.

#### G. **Should**

Active

Corpus Findings:

1. In Academic paper, **should** is used in active voice because the function of **should** in those sentences to describes the subject actually doing the action.
2. The meaning of **should** is indicating an intention.

3. In Academic paper, **should** is used in active voice because that is used to avoid explicit identification of the act that is obligated to person.
4. In Academic paper, **should** is the past form of **shall**, and more polite than **shall**.

#### H. **Would**

Past Future Perfect Tense

Corpus Findings:

1. In Academic paper, **would** is used in Past Future Perfect Tense because the function of **would** in that sentence to describes the even that is hoped and predicted that it will be done before a certain time in the future from the perspective of the future , then it will be correct or not according to what is desired.
2. The meaning of **would** is indicating the effect or consequence of an imagined event or situation.
3. In Academic paper, **would** is the past form of will.
4. In Academic paper, **would** more polite than **will**.

Passive

Corpus Findings:

1. In Academic paper, **would** is used in passive voice because most passive creations are formed with the auxiliary *be* followed by an *ed*-participle.
2. In Academic paper, **would** is used in passive voice because that is used to avoid explicit identification of the person who is obligated to act.
3. In Academic paper, **would** is the past form of will.
4. In Academic paper, **would** more polite than **will**.

Past Future Tense

Corpus Findings:

1. In Academic paper, **would** is used in Past Future Tense because the function of **would** in that sentence to express the circu

stance in the future from the perspective of the past.

2. The meaning of **would** is indicating the effect of an imagined event or situation.
3. In Academic paper, **would** is the past form of will.
4. In Academic paper, **would** more polite than **will**.

#### I. **Must**

There is no must of modal verbs in each essays, but shall itself have two general function such as:

1. In Academic paper, **must** To show that you have or need to do something, for example because it is very important and necessary to do or because it is a rule
2. The meaning of **must** "Must not" (or "mustn't") is used to show you are not allowed to do something
3. In Academic paper, **must** To show that something is very logical or very likely to be true.

#### CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, this study that attempted to find out and investigate the used of modals in the 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba' essays that the object produced modals for different functions. Based on the data that already investigated in the 'Sherry Johnson' and 'Tamjid Mujtaba' essays produce 24 modals which it produces nine different types of modals. The results of this study showed that there were nine types of modals; those were those are Can, May, Shall, Will, Could, Might, Should, Would, and Must. Furthermore, this study also showed nine functions of modals, namely Can, May, Shall, Will, Could, Might, Should, Would, and Must. As the learners of foreign language (FL), we should know the modals not only as a distraction of writing but also as the way to improve our writing skill. The

aims of this study are to introduce the types, frequencies and the functions of modals verbs and to increase the learners' awareness of modals when they hesitate in the foreign language. Furthermore, the foreign language (FL) learners can learn and use modals which are good to use. It also helps foreign language (FL) learners to choose which modals can use proper for our writing. Henceforth, this study has revealed that how important the modals in the writing especially in academic or professional writing. Forthwith, to a certain extent, the findings of this study will also be expected to provide contributions to the development of the theory, especially to corpus linguistics and sociolinguistics study since this study is based on corpus linguistics.

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