STUDENTS' ERRORS IN USING MODALS

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Abstract

This study deals with the students' errors in using modals of Can, May and Must. There were 25 students chosen as the sample who were asked to write compositions containing the modals. There were errors found in the writings which were categorized into 10 types according to the use of the modals. Type 1 (modal + simple infinitive to) is the dominant errors while Type 5 (modal + pronoun) is the fewest. In all, there were 52 errors made in 192 modals used. Therefore, the percentage of the errors is 27%. This implies that the students could use the modals quite well. The second most difficult in the compositions is Must (34.92%) while according to their responses in the questionnaire the most difficult modal verb is May (48%) the causes of the errors were that the students lacked the knowledge of the uses; They seldom, practiced the use of the modals in compositions , and applied translation approach to use the modals in their writings. It is suggested that they be taught the pattern modal + simple infinitive to because this is the most common error.

Keywords: *errors, modals, compositions, questionnaire*

INTRODUCTION

Grammar is the most important part of language for anyone which should be first understood before being able to construct sentences. Rules based on the grammar of a language are used to express a certain idea represented in a sentence. By understanding the grammatical rules, the sentences can be arranged to produce the desired meaning. For instance, the same words in these two, sentences: 1*) The man teaches the woman* , and 2) *The woman teaches the man*, produce a different meaning. In the first sentence, "the man" takes the role of "the teacher" while in the second one, it is "the woman" who acts like a teacher. This difference is due to the fact that the grammatical rules of English have their own systems or syntactic rules.

It is undeniable that in order for one to master English, its grammar must be well understood first. However, the grammar itself covers many aspects. The eight parts of speech such as "noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, adjective, preposition, conjunction, and interjection" have their own syntactic rules which allow for a variety of meanings to be expressed. Learning how these parts of speech are used in everyday situation provides an insight into the problems of learning and understanding English as a foreign language. It is clear that grammar can lead a learner to an ability to express different meanings as required by the situation he is involved in.

Of the many aspects of English grammar, modals or modal auxiliaries which belong to verbs may present a problem to the mastery of the languages. The reason is that

modals are often used in everyday conversations and compositions. Errors in modality that are implied by modals. Besides, the variety of meanings that can be expressed by modals are often ignored and difficult for most students in Indonesia. This is quite understandable because modals are parts of the verbs that can convey concepts such as "ability", "possibility" and several others that are unfamiliar to the students who compare English with Indonesian.

There are cases in which modals are translated in terms of the ordinary meanings without referring them to the context of the sentences. Therefore, the sentence like "He must be tired" may be misunderstood when the modal "must" is translated as "*harus*" as in *Dia harus lelah,* while in fact the logical meaning is *Dia pasti lelah*. Also, the difference between the modal "can" and "may" is often confusing to many students who begin to learn the concepts mentioned above.

The writer has realized the fact modals are difficult to many students while studying the aspects ability, obligation and possibility they express. The sentences provided should cover the meanings so that the students can avoid errors which are common when the difference between the two modals is not clear. in other words, there is a question about the students' ability to use modals specially in their everyday conversations.

It is important to identify errors made by students in using modals in their conversations or compositions. By identifying the errors, the writer believer that some of the problems of grammar can be solved and thus facilitating the comprehension of the variety of meaning of modals in the students' attempt to master English.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Modals

The term "modals" refers to "modal verbs" or modal auxiliaries". Richards Platt and Weber (1985: 179) define a modal auxiliary as "any of the auxiliary verbs which indicate attitudes of the speaker (writer) toward the state of event expressed by another verb, that is, which indicate different types of modality. The modal verbs in English include: *may, might, can, could, have (got) to, will, would, shall, should.*

The modal auxiliaries are the auxiliary verbs that function to help the full verbs. Frank (1972:94) explains that auxiliary verbs are "helping" verbs that add structural meaning or a semantic coloring to verbs carrying the full burden of lexical meaning. All auxiliaries share the ability to be directly by "not" in negatives, often in contracted form: e.g. - *They have not gone.*
      - We shouldn't wait.
and to be reversed with the subject in questions: e.g. - Have they gone ?
                                                        - Should we wait ?

Modal auxiliaries add to the verb a special semantic component such as ability, obligation, possibility. Some of the modal auxiliaries express the same kinds of semantic coloring as verbs in the subjunctive mood.

Modal auxiliaries generally give no – s for any person, and no infinitive or participial form. They have only two formal forms, the *present* and the *past*, which are used with the

simple forms of the lexical verb *(may offer, might offer)*, the progressive *form (may or might be offering)*, the perfect form *(may or might have offered)* or the passive form *(may or might be offered)*.

Quirk and Greenbaum (1973:37) provide the essential modal auxiliaries in English as shown in table 1:

Table 1.
Modal Auxiliaries in English in different forms

Non-Negative	Uncontracted Negative	Contracted Negative
1. can, cauld	cannot, could not	can't cauldn't
2. may, might	may not, might not	mayn't, mightn't
3.shall, should	shall not, should not	shan't, shouldn't
4. will ('II), would ('d)	will not ("II not), would not ('d not)	won't, wouldn't
5. must	must not	mustn't
6. ought to	ought not to	oughtn't to
7. used to	used not to	usedn't to, didn't use to
8. need	need not	needn't
9. dare	dare not	daren't

The list shows all the modal auxiliaries in the uncontracted and contracted negative forms. The countracted negative form is used depending on the economy of the language. In conversation, for instance, the contracted forms may be preferable while the uncontracted negative forms are often used in formal writing or composition.

Of the modal auxiliaries in table 2.1, only a few will be discussed for the purpose of this study namely the modal auxiliaries: *can, may* and *must*

Kinds of Modals

Modals or modal auxiliaries can be divided into two main types according to the tenses:
1) present modals : e.g. can, may, shall, will, must
2) past modals : e.g. could, might, should, would

The present modal forms have different uses than those of the past modals. For example, in the sentence *I can speak English*, the notion of ability is expressed while in the sentence *Could you open the door* ?, the modal is not related to the past time but rather to the notion of politeness.

Modal auxiliaries can also be divided according to the forms namely:
1) the marginal modal auxiliaries or modal auxiliaries followed by "to" + infinitive: e.g. used to, ought to
2) quasi-auxiliaries or the modal auxiliaries that function like regular verbs: e.g. need, dare

Uses of Modals

Modals or modal auxiliaries have the following uses or meanings

1) to express ability : e.g. can (be able to)
2) to express permission : e.g. may, can
3) to express strong obligation : e.g. must, ought to
4) to express necessity : e.g. have to, has to, be to
5) to express possibility : e.g. may, can

Of the modals available English, three of them will be the focus in this study namely *can, may and must.*

For further details, Harman (1950: 129), for example, provides the following explanation:
1) Can was once an independent verb meaning "know". It is now used to denote or assert ability or power: e.g. *I can sing this song for you.*
2) May and its past might are now restricted to expressing possibility or permission, or a wish (in the subjunctive). *May* and *might* are indicative when they are used in statements of facts, and subjunctive when they are employed to denote suppositions. e.g.
   - *He may succeed (fair or strong possibility).*
   - *He may be a college graduate (He probably is).*
   - *You may leave now (indicative mode: permission).*

3) *Must* is now used to express strong necessity or obligation. It is always indicative, and except in rare cases it is always employed to denote present or future time. Unlike can and may, it spoken language, is generally rendered periphrastically by the phrase *had to*: e.g. *He must finish his homework now.*

Other authors of grammar books provide the following explanation. This explanation is intended to give more details about the uses of the modals *can, may* and *must which* can be used as the reference for determining the errors.
1) Three kinds of ability may be indicated by can and be able to. One is *physical ability*, e.g. – I can lift this stone; a second one is a learned ability in the sense of knowing how to do something, e.g. –*She can type*. The third type of ability is more general – it is equivalent to *have the power to* do something, e.g. – *I can see you tonight*. While the fist two kinds of ability are used mostly for live beings, especially human beings, the third type can be used for things as well as persons, e.g. –*This factory can produce dozens of machines a day*. It is only in this sense of ability, which is related to possibility, that can and be able to my be used for future time.
2) Strict schoolbook rules say that may is used only for permission. However, informal speech, cultivated speakers frequently also use can for permission. Of the two past forms denoting permission, might is more deferential in tone that could is

A request for permission often takes the form of a question. The request may be in first person or in third person: e.g. May (or can) I borrow your car?

The past forms of may and can are also used in politer requests: e.g. Might (or could) I borrow your car? The answers however. Are generally given in the present form, with may being preferred for granting permission. In these requests for permission, can retains some of its meaning of ability, and may some of its meaning of possibility.

Both may and can also occur in a simple request that does not involve permission: e.g. *May (or can) I have a drink of water?* for a simple request with *you, only can* is used: e.g. *Can (or could) you cash this check, please?*

May or can is used not only in a request for permission but in the sense of be permitted. In this sense, the past forms might and could express only past time: e.g. – Present or "timeless" time: Anyone may (or can) enroll for this course. –Past time: - In those days, anyone might (or can) enroll for this course.

May used in indirect speech is sometimes ambiguous. In the two preceding sentences *may* and its past, might, can be interpreted as meaning either permission or possibility.

3) The difference between obligation and necessity is often one of degree only. While statements with should and ought to suggest a desirable course of action, which may possibly not be acted upon; must and have to suggest a more urgent course of action which does not allow for the possibility of rejection: e.g. You must (or have to) do your homework every day: I must (or have to) keep my word. This difference in degree also operates when these auxiliaries are used to make a commendation:

 e.g. - This is an excellent book, you should (or ought to) read it (moderate recommendation).
     - This is an excellent book. You must (or have to) read it (strong recommendation)

Must is generally felt as stronger than have to. Its use ranges from a compulsion forced by life to a constraint imposed through a strong sense of duty or moral conscience: e.g. – We must eat (in order) to live (A compulsion imposed by life).

Must in this use suggests inexorable fate, and is sometimes interchangeable with will: e.g. – What must (or will) be, must (or will) be.
  - You must obey the law (A constraint imposed by others in authority-the government, teachers, parents employers, etc.).
  - I must save some money every week. (A constraint imposed by the speaker)

In the sense of necessity, the past forms for *must* is had to: e.g. I had to meet my cousin yesterday. This past tense is used in the sequence of tenses: e.g. – He tells me I must do it becomes he told me I had to do it.

However, in informal English the present form must is often heard in such sentence : he told me I must do it (Frank, 1972:97).

Errors

In a foreign-language learning process, errors may appear because of the differences between the students' native language and the target language. It is true that English and Indonesia have many differences in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. English, for instance, is no a phonetic language which is based on the sound systems. The word book [bu:k], for instance, is not pronounced [u:] in the word blood (blad), sometimes the students will mispronounce many words in English. When such a thing occurs, it is said that the students make errors which of course hinder the progress learning.

Errors are any deviation from the standard grammar of the target language. When a student says, "He is go to school", he actually makes an error of tenses in English. It should be either "He went to school" (simple past tense) or "He is going to school" (present continuous tense). Norrish (1983:5) defines an error as follows:

> Error is a systematic deviation from the accepted system
> of the target language. Mistake is a non-systematic
> deviation from the accepted system of language being
> learned and it is usually due to human limitations such
> as tiredness, nervousness, and fatigue.

From the quotation above, it is clear that errors are not the same as mistakes. Mistakes are unpredictable in the sense that they may occur because of human factors such as the limitation of memory and psychological problems. It means that when the student is asked why he makes a mistake, he can give the explanation. On the other hand, the students never recognize their errors or they never know that they have made errors.

Further, brown (1980:163) gives some explanation on this difference: "A mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a "slip", in that it is a failure to utilize a know system correctly" All people make mistakes, in both native and second language situations. Native speakers are normally capable of recognizing and correcting such 'lapses' or mistakes, which are not the result of some sort of breakdown or imperfection in the process of producing speech.

Richard, Platt and Weber (1985:95) add that "an error is the use of linguistic item (e.g. a word, a grammatical item, a speech act, etc.) in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning. " A distinction is sometimes made between an error, which results from incomplete knowledge, and a mistake made by a learner when writing or speaking and which is caused by lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness, or some other aspect of performance. Errors are sometime classified according to vocabulary (lexical error), pronunciation (phonological errors), grammar (syntactic error), misunderstanding of a speaker's intention or meaning (interpretative error), production of the wrong communicative effect e.g. through the faulty use of a speech act or one of the rules of speaking (pragmatic error).

It can be definitely stated that errors can be seen from the types or sources of errors and the causes of errors. The types are related to grammar, the errors is said to be a grammatical error. In other words, there are different aspects or areas of language in which the students make errors. Also, there are causes of errors which should be investigated through a research. The causes can be speculative in the sense that there may be many explanations about how and why errors occur in the learning process. By analyzing the given data, perhaps, the causes can be explained or determined definitely.

Brown (1980:173), for instance, mentions that the major source of learner errors are due to :

a) *Interlingual transfer :* the errors are due to negative interlingual transfer because the system of the second language is familiar. The native language is the only linguistic system in one's previous experience upon which the learner can draw the transfer.

b) *Interlingual transfer.* the negative transfer of items within the target language, or, put another way, the incorrect generalization of rules within the target language (negative intralingual transfer or overgeneralization), e.g. –Does john can sing? He goed, I don't know what time is it.

c) *Context of learning:* in a classroom context the teacher or the textbook can lead the learner to make faulty hypotheses about the language (also called "false concepts" by Richards, 1971, "induced errors", by Stenson 1974). Students often make errors because of a

misleading explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of a structure or word in a textbook, or even because of a pattern that as rotely memorized in a drill but properly contextualized.

The explanation on the sources or types of errors above suggests that the students make the errors because they may use the grammar of the native. Language to understand the grammar of the target language (interlingual). But that is not the only type. After learning the target language, the students also make errors because they mix up the grammatical rules. For instance, the student may think that the verb "want" has the same rule as the modal "can" and so he produces the sentence like " I can to speak English" (the particle "to" should be omitted). The other source of errors is that when the students misunderstand the explanation of their teacher. Or perhaps, the teacher gives the wrong information about the rules of the target language.

Error Analysis

Due to the fact that errors appear in the learning process, an error analysis is very important. It is intended for finding out the difficulty of learning English as a foreign language.

Corder (1989:23) says that "error analysis is the study and analysis of the errors made by second and foreign language learners". Error analysis may be carried out in order to: a) find out how well someone knows the language, b) find out how a person learns language, c) obtain information on common difficulties in language learning, as an aid in teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials.

Further, Sharma (1981:21) adds that "error analysis is a process based on analysis of learners' errors with one clear objective: evolving a suitable and effective teaching-learning strategy and remedial measures necessary in certain clearly marked out areas of the foreign language". It is a multidimensional and multifaceted process, which involves much more than simply analyzing errors in written (or spoken) English of the learners and counting them for frequency.

Error analysis in this case should be able to uncover the many problems of using modals in English. By giving a test, the students will probably show their own errors in writing composition in English.

METHODOLOGY

This research is conducted by applying the integrative design. It means that both the quantitative and qualitative approaches are applied to answer the research questions presented in Chapter One. To answer research question one, the quantitative approach of descriptive design is used; while the qualitative approach is applied to answer research question two.

The population in this study consists of all the second-year students of UNIMED, English Department which numbers about 8 students. This population is considered too large

for the analysis of the compositions. Therefore, a sample must be randomly drawn by a lottery system.

The sample is determined to be 20 students (about 20% of the population) who have taken writing course before.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

After asking the 25 students to write compositions based on the given topics, it was found out that they all produced the compositions with various lengths of sentences. These compositions were analyzed in terms of the types and causes of errors in using the modals which consist of can, may and must.

The findings from the students' compositions were used to classify the types of errors they made in using the modals. The findings from the questionnaire were used to find out the causes of the identified errors.

The Types of Errors

To know the types of errors made by the students, the students' compositions were analyzed in terms of the uses of the uses of the modals Can, May and Must. The classification is based on the grammatical errors and named according to the review of literature.

The types of errors were found as the following (see Appendix 10 for more complete list).
1) Type 1 : the modal + infinitive to
  For example: - I must to practice my English.
  There are 12 examples of errors of type 1
2) Type 2: modal + be + infinitive without to
  For example : - I must be know the meaning.
  There are 6 examples of this error of type 2
3) Type 3: modal + verb (past tense)
  For example: - We can saw the girl
  There are 10 example of this error of type 3
4) Type 4: modal + verb + -s
  For example : -They may you to go to course
  There are 4 examples of the error of type 4.
5) Type 5: modal + pronoun
  For example: - They may you to go to course
  There is only 1 example of this type.
6) Type 6 : modal + verb-ing
  For example : -We must studying everyday
  There are 5 examples of this type of error
7) Type 7 : modal + adjective
  For example : We can easy to remember the lesson
  There are 4 examples of this type of error
8) Type 8 : modal + adverb
  For example : - Your friend can each other to change think about
  There are 6 examples of this type or error
9) Type 9: modal + modal

For example : -This may will make us grow badly
There are 2 examples of this type of error

10) Type 10: modal + noun
For example : - I may suggestion to stop smoke
There are 2 examples of this type of error

From the counting and classification of the above errors, the percentage of the type of error can be presented as follows:

Table 2.
The Percantage of the Types of Errors

Type	Number of Examples	Percentage (%)
1. modal + infinitive to	12	23.07
2. modal + be + infinitive without to	6	11.54
3. modal + verb (past tense)	10	19.23
4. modal + verb + -s	4	7.69
5. modal + pronoun	1	1.93
6. modal + verb-ing	5	9.61
7. modal + adjective	4	7.69
8. modal + adverb	6	11.54
9. modal + modal	2	3.85
10. modal + noun	2	3.85
Total	52	100

Table 2 indicates that the biggest portion of errors was in type 1 (modal + infinitive to) which was 23.07%. This means that most of the students always associated type with the verb pattern verb + infinitive to as in I want to speak English. The lowest percentage is in type 5 (modal + pronoun) which is 1.93%.

It should be mentioned that were 192 modals used in the compositions while there were 52 errors out of this number. Therefore, the percentage of the errors can be derived by using the following formula:

$$PE = \frac{\sum IE}{\sum MP}$$

Where : PE   = Percentage of Errors
$\sum$ IE = Number of wrong uses of modals
$\sum$MP = Number of all modals produced

By inserting the figures into the equation, the percentage is as follows:

$$PE = \frac{52}{192} \times 100\%$$

PE   = 27%

This percentage of errors implies that the students actually could use the modals Can, May and Must quite well. In other words, the three types of modal were quite familiar to the students thus producing only a minor portion of errors.

The Causes of the Errors

The causes of errors in this study can be found out by analyzing the responses to the questionnaire items. After checking the responses (See Appendix 9), the causes of the errors can be predicted as the following:

1. The students lacked taught the subject (question no. 3 "Pernahkah guru mengajarkan perbedaan antara kata could dari can ?" –Has your teacher taught you the differences between could and can?, which indicates that 21 students out of 25 agreed.
2. The Students seldom practiced the use of the modals both in writing and speaking. This is supported by their response to question no. 8 of the questionnaire " *Bagaimana menurut anda cara belajar modal verbs yang paling effective ? –In your opinion, what is the most effective way to learn the modal verbs ?* in which 22 students said By practicing rather than acquiring the known the grammatical rules on the use of the modals, however, they still made the errors because they almost never practiced using them.
3. The students were applying translation approach to use the modals in their composition. This assumption is also supported by the students response to question no. 9 in the questionnaire "Apakah kesulitan yang anda hadapi dalam memahami modal verbs can, may and must? - what is the difficulty you face understanding the modal verbs such as can, may and must ? in which they paid attention to the meanings of the modals as the difficulty factor. There were 14 students saying the meaning was more significant than the form (7 students) while 5 students chose neither. Translation was dominantly practiced in their compositions.

These three factors that cause errors are the dominant ones in the students' compositions. There are other causes of course which are worth noting. It is important to discuss other aspects of the study in the following section.

DISCUSSION

There are three types of modal in this study namely can, may and must. There were errors in use in each of the modals. The proportion of the percentage of the errors is varied in the use of each of modals. The following discussion describes what was found out in the data.

Errors of Can

The modal can is one of the three modals to be investigated in this study. It was found out that this modal was not the biggest number in errors. There were 21 errors found out. When this number is compared to the total number of the modal errors, the percentage of errors is 21: 98 x 100% = 21.42%. The largest number of errors was in the modal Must (22 : 63 x 100% = 34.92%) and the least number is in the modal May (9 : 31 x 100% = 29.03%).

Certainly, there were correct uses of the modal Can in the compositions. The proportion between the correct uses and the errors was calculated. In the 25 compositions, there were 77 correct uses and 21 errors. From this figure, it can be concluded that the proportion is 21 : 98 x 100% = 21.42%. This means that the errors on Can is not a very high percentage in comparison to the correct use of the modal.

Further, it was found out that Can is the mostly read word in books or journals. The majority of the students (21 students) claim that they have read this word very often. In the questionnaire, *"Dari ketiga kata berikut; can. may dan must, manakah yang paling sulit*

dimegerti menurut anda? – Of the there word, can, may and must, which one is the most difficult to understand?), this modal is not the most difficult modal (3 out of 25 students said that this modal was the most difficult one). Therefore, when the results of the compositions and the answer in the questionnaire are matched, it turned out that, the modal *Can* is not the most difficult one. The percentage of the modal Can is dominantly interpreted as *Ability* (24 students) while the meaning of *Permission* is interpreted by 5 students, *Possibility* by 3 students. There are mistakes in interpreting the meaning, which is not relevant. The meaning of *Suggestion* is take by 1 student, and *Request* by 1 student.

Error of *May*

The modal *May* also appeared in the students' compositions. There were 31 modals of *may* in the composition consisting of 22 correct modals and 9 errors. From this figure, it can be stated that the proportion between the correct modal and the errors is 9:31 x 100% = 29.03%. This proportion is lower than that of the modal Can. this means that May is more errors they make, the higher the proportion becomes. The lower percentage proportion implies that it is easy.

Further, the modal May is seldom read or noticed in the books or journals (only 9 students). This is the answer to the questionnaire (Dari sejumlah modal verbs atau modal auxiliary seperti can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would, must, ought to, used to, need and dare, kata mana yang sering anda baca atau lihat dalam buku teks atau bacaan anda ?. – Of the modal verbs available, which one is most commonly found in your reading text). This means that the modal May is not so familiar to the students. However, in the practice of compositions, there were fewer errors in the use of May. This means that there is inconsistency between the students' observation and their real production of the modal in the compositions. According to the students' answer to question no. 5 in the questionnaire, the most difficult modal is May, but in their real production, the most difficult modal is *Must* (12 students produced the error while 7 students made the errors of *May*)

Errors of Must

The modal must is the third modal in the investigation. There were 63 modals of Must consisting of 41 correct uses and 22 errors. The percentage of the proportion is therefore 22: 63 x 100% = 34.92%. when this percentage is considered in relation to difficulty, then the modal Must is the most difficult modal of the three modals in the compositions (production of errors). However, according to the students' response in the questionnaire (question 5), the most difficult modal is May. This inconsistency is acceptable because a questionnaire may not represent the real perception of the students. For instance, a student may think that the modal May is the most difficult one, but in fact in the production he makes more errors of Must. This modal is quite familiar to the students (15 students chose this modal as the familiar one) in comparison to other modals.

There is inconsistency between the students' responses in the questionnaire and the reality in the production of errors. According to their answers to question 5, the most difficult modal is *May* while in their composition the most difficult modal is *Must*. This modal receives the higher percentage of proportion (34.92%).

Some of the errors are interpreted to be caused by the context of learning (the wrong lessons from the teacher). This is supported by the students' responses to question 4 *(Kalau*

anda melihat kata can dalam kalimat, makna apa yang langsung muncul dalam pikiran anda? – If you look at the word "can", what meaning instantly occurs on your mind ?) in which they mentioned the meanings of are more than that in the grammar books (*possibility, suggestion and request*). The meaning (function) of Can should be for ability, and permission. Most probably the extra meanings were gained from their teacher's explanation about the grammar. Also, this is supported by the students' answers to question 12 (Apakah kalimat "You may go home now", *kira-kira sama maknanya dengan* "You can go home now". *Jika tidak, mengapa demikian* – Does the sentence "You may go home now" mean almost the same as "You can go home now"? *If not, why* ?) in distinguishing the meanings between *May* and *Can*. The extra meanings denote *certainty* and *emphasis*.

It can be reported that the average number of paragraphs is 3:28, and of sentences is 15.64. The highest percentage of the type of error is in type 1 (23.07%) while the lowest percentage is in type 5 (1.93%).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion
Based on the research findings, the researcher concludes that:
1. There were 52 errors which were categorized into 10 types of errors based on the correct use of the modals Can, May and Must. The highest percentage of the type of error is in type 1: modal + infinitive (1.93%). Based on the review of literature, the errors are all categorized as intraligual errors.
2. There were 3 causes of the errors according to the interpretation of the students' answers to the questionnaire, namely 1) the students lacked the knowledge about the uses of modals despite the fact that they had been taught the subject, 2) the students seldom practiced the use of the modals both in writing and speaking, 3) the were applying the translation approach to use the modals in their composition.

Suggestions
The following suggestions are offered to solve the problem of learning which cause the common errors:
1. Modals should be introduced by first emphasizing on the use of the pattern modal + infinitive without to at early stage of leaning English.
2. Students should be given ample practice to write many compositions in which they can use the modals to express their ideas and feelings.
3. Teacher or lecturers should explain the various meanings or functions of the modals at the early stage by giving practical examples.
4. Students and teachers should analyze possible errors in the students' compositions to have clear comprehension of modality in English

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