ENHANCING THE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING MODALITY THROUGH SONG IN TEACHING GRAMMAR

MENINGKATKAN KEMAMPUAN MAHASISWA DALAM PENGGUNAAN *MODALITY* MELALUI LAGU DALAM PENGAJARAN *GRAMMAR*

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to describe the students' ability in studying Grammar especially Modality by using song. Modality as the topic provided in Grammar I that the researcher taught in academic year 2016 and 2017 needed serious concern because the students got difficulties to make the sentences by using modality so that the level of students' scores in every exercise was in the range of low ability. In this case, the researcher used some songs which contain the lyrics with modality pattern and function as the teaching tool to overcome the students' problems. The design of this research was descriptive design by using quantitative data because the researcher gave the students some tests to know whether song could increase their abilities in using modality. Then, the researcher described the data gotten from modality tests without manipulations. The result of teaching process and tests indicated that the students got better understanding in using modality and their abilities were significantly improved. It is hoped that the result of this research can motivate and make the other researchers who get the same difficulties in teaching Grammar aware to use song as teaching tool to improve students' ability in Grammar subject.

Keywords: Grammar, Teaching tool, Song, Modality, ability

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah mendeskripsikan kemampuan mahasiswa dalam mempelajari *Grammar* khususnya pada topik *Modality* dengan menggunakan lagu. *Modality* merupakan topik dalam mata kuliah *Grammar* yang diajarkan pada tahun ajaran 2016 dan 2017

yang sangat membutuhkan perhatian khusus karena mahasiswa mengalami kesulitan untuk membuat kalimat dengan menggunakan *Modality* sehingga tingkat kemampuan mahasiswa rendah pada setiap latihan yang berhubungan dengan *Modality.* Karena hal ini, peneliti menggunakan beberapa lagu yang terdari dari lirik- lirik dengan pola- pola dan fungsi *Modality* sebagai alat pengajaran untuk mengatasii masalah yang dihadapi mahasiswa. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif dengan menggunakan kuantitatif data karena peneliti memberikan beberapa kali tes untuk mengetahui apakah lagu dapat meningkatkan kemampuan mahasiswa dalam penggunaan *Modality.* Kemudian peneliti mendeskripsikan data yang diperoleh darii beberapa tes tanpa adanya manipulasi. Hasil dari proses pengajaran dengan menggunakan lagu dan tes menunjukan bahwa mahasiswa memiliki pemahaman yang lebih bagus dalam penggunaan *Modality* dan kemampuan merekapun sangat meningkat. Sangat diharapkan bahwa hasil penelitian ini dapat memotivasi dan membuat peneliti-peneliti lainnya yang mempunyai kesulitan yang sama dalam mengajar *Grammar* peduli untuk menggunakan lagu sebagai alat pengajaran agar dapat meningkatkan kemampuan *Grammar* mahasiswa.

Kata Kunci : Tata Bahasa, Alat Pengajaran, Lagu, *Modality,* kemampuan

Introduction

Learning grammar gives a wide range of knowledge about word classification and part of speech like nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, determiners, and interjections. Then, grammar rules make us understand how to combine these word classifications and part of speech become sentences with complete subject and object by using the appropriate lexis to build meaningful language that is really important for both written and spoken communication. The significant of grammar knowledge to acquire English as the foreign language has been purposed by some experts through their researches since the previous time. According to Canale and Swain (1980) to enhance communicative competence needs good grammatical competence. It means that without good grammar, we could not express our ideas and thought clearly into good communication so we can have poor communication skill. Then, Larsen-Freeman (2003, p. 78) states that grammar can help the learners to accelerate the language acquisition. These theories strengthen the importance of grammar in the process of acquiring English as the foreign language. This reason makes grammar included in the language teaching integrated into four language skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking).

Grammar must get a special attention in the language teaching because it can help the learners to develop and to broaden their language skills (Richards

and Renandya (2002). Grammar studies more intensively will help the learners achieve the communicative competence in the language use because it shows the way how to make sentences formed from words, phrases, and clauses by using appropriate connection and conjunction dealing with specific meaning and context. Furthermore Ellis (1997) proved through his research that grammar teaching help the learners to develop accuracy in second language and to accelerate the progress of language acquisition. It is supported by Purpura (2004) who points out that grammar plays a central role in language teaching. Grammar rules make the learners sharpen their intelligence to produce the sentences with specific content and context. The learners will be able to think consciously whether the utterances used are appropriate or not so that they can gain more educated communication. Batstone (1994) emphasizes that grammar enables the learners to understand how to use the language in good structure so that communicative competence can be accomplished. Related to these theories, it can be concluded that grammar is the important subject in English foreign language classroom to make the learners increase their ability to use English very fluently in such a good communication.

However, teaching grammar in foreign language classroom always gets some problems since the language teachers and lecturers do not use the effective ways. Grammar taught extensively and monotonously that focuses on a great numbers of rules by lecturing methods cause boredom among the learners and trap them into constraint and stress feeling so that grammar become the frightening English subject. To make the learners aware and enjoy studying grammar is the teachers' responsibility to be more creative and innovative to find out the best way to teach. Giunchi (1990) confirms that grammar has significance in language acquisition, but way how to teach grammar should be considered. Then, Skehan (1992) adds that the usefulness of grammar can be obtained when the learning process develops in very appropriate instruction. Also, Arikan, Taşer and Saraç-Süzer (2008) in their research were found that an effective language teacher could give better grammar teaching and give the changing of the learner' perception about the difficulties of grammar. Concluded from the theories, the success of teaching and learning grammar depends on the creativity of the teacher or lecturer to discover more effective ways in teaching for example by using many creative methods, strategies, and activities and learning media.

Actually, some researchers have tried some innovation the teacher or the language instructor can utilize many educational tools or instructional tools to enhance grammar competence by avoiding stress and pressure in learning

grammar, such as, by using multimedia (Fitrawati & Oktavia, 2017) however it is hard to be implemented. One of the instructional tools that can be used is song because it can help the students without any strain or constraint in learning process. Song is one of the excellent tools to give a positive learning environment to the students that can force them to extend their language creativity because song makes them maintain their stable emotion in learning. This condition can stimulate the students' desire and motivation to develop their grammar ability for the better accomplishment. Keskin (2011) believed that song can give positive effect in learning process to make the learners become active and comfortable in facing the lesson. The same as Keskin, Saricoban (2000) said that song can influence the class environment especially in grammar class because it provides the easiness in studying and they enjoy learning and practicing some language structures. It means that by using song the teacher or lecturer can reduce stress, and anxiety and help the students to feel relax so that the negative attitude in studying grammar can be avoided. Shen (2009) adds that using English song enable to help the learners to increase their interest, motivation and build the harmonious classroom atmosphere in learning English as the foreign language.

Furthermore, Rumley (1999) said that song is very important for the language learners because they can develop positive attitude during the learning process. It means that song gives opportunities for the leaner to have successful experience in language activities. The learners not only learn new words but also the patterns of the sentences of each song lyric and get the meaning of each lyric then being able to imitate the use of the repetitive structure of song and practice new words or vocabularies in the variation of sentences. Then, Martin (2000) argues that using song is very challenging for the learners' grammatical development because they can learn the language pattern from the form of songs. According to Orlova (2003) songs allows the learners to study grammar especially the use of tenses. Maria Luisa Cruz-cruz (2005) proved in her research that song is the effective instructional tool to give the learners good energy and motivation in learning grammar. From these related theories, it could be concluded that Grammar is not such a difficult subject to teach and to learn as long as the teachers or lecturers know how to teach it and the students can feel safety to get it in their English classroom. In the teaching grammar, the teachers can try the varieties of song that contain the appropriate lyrics to perform the language pattern or structure that are going to be taught.

Due to the beneficial of using song in teaching grammar, the researcher used song to teach Grammar I in class C of academic year 2016/2017 in STKIP

PGRI Sumatera Barat. The specific reason why the researcher used song in this class C was the large number of students showed the reluctant to learn grammar especially on modality topic and the average of them got lower score than 60 in some quizzes about the usage of modal verbs. It means that they were indicated in the low level of ability in using modal verbs. Here, the students were not able to differentiate the using of modal verbs from the other common verbs that concerned on their function. As the result, the students' attitude showed that they had less interest and motivation in learning modality topic so that the class tended to be passive.

Actually, Modality is one of the topics taught in Grammar I in which the teaching contains the way how to use them in positive, negative, interrogative sentences. Modal verbs studied consists of the use of can, could, may, might, must, have to, should, will, and would. Although the use of modal verbs is not too difficult to learn, a large number of students especially in Class C of STKIP PGRI Sumatera Barat in academic year 2016/2017 less understood about it. The researcher as the Grammar Lecturer had given some explanations about the main characteristic of modalities and their functions. Based on Huddleston et al (2002) modal verbs have function to show possibility, obligation, probability, necessity, permission and suggestions. Modal verbs do not discuss about something that is definitely happen but it is more about something which is expected to happen. According to Collins (2009) modality has various forms and function that consist of possibility, necessity, ability, obligation, and permission. It means that modal verb can be used to help people to express what they think and believe into various perspectives. Modal verbs have strong function in written and spoken language to help the writer or speaker convey their opinion, view, understand and purposes in building interaction with the reader or listener.

Although the researcher taught modality by using the form and function suggested by the experts to make the students understand on the modality usage, they still got confuse to use modality based on each function. From the problems found in the researcher's classroom, the researcher decided to use song instead of book as the authentic source for teaching to make the students become easy and enjoyable to study and to know the different usage of modal verbs. By using song, it was hoped that the researcher's students not only got the new variation of vocabularies but also the way of grammatical use that can be practiced directly. It was supported by Surujiu and Scarabnaia (2012) who state that song gives the problem solving for teaching modal with the effective exercises. Many songs contain the verses with modal verbs that can enrich the

student's knowledge and reinforce them to do interactive, cooperative and collaborative learning activities. Songs give the opportunity for the students to practice many words with appropriate pronunciation because they can directly listen and reproduce those words. Also, song gives positive atmosphere for the students in learning modal verbs because it presents the example of modality through the verses. It is supported by Diane Larsen-Freeman (2000) who describes that song is very useful for stimulating positive emotions. Then, Murphey (2002) argues that song can make the students feel harmony, relax and have fun during the classroom interaction. It can be concluded that songs offer the good ways for teaching and learning modal verbs through some interactive activities because the students can listen and watch directly how the modals are used and let them able to make their own sentences by using modality.

Before teaching modality through song, the researcher considered the song selection because the song should be adapted based on the learning goal that is suitable with the grammar topic that helps the students to gain the better learning achievement. The given song should be available for evoking the interesting discussion and exercises about the purposed lesson. Hancock (1998) said that song must be selected based on the students' interest and make them prefer in learning activity. The familiar song helps the students build the comfortable feeling because they have the experience about the song lyrics and easy for them to explore about the lesson. Then, Murphy, at all (1990) said that the level of age is the important concern for selecting song for the lesson. It means that age determines the content and the vocabularies that must be suitable with the level of students' knowledge.

Based on these experts' opinions, the researcher as grammar lecturer tried to find out the most appropriate songs with the students' age in order to give fun and enjoyable learning activates and tasks. The chosen song should be interesting, easy to understand, comfortable and give energy and fun learning condition. In conclusion, the main purpose why the researcher did the research on teaching grammar especially modality by using song was to describe whether song can increase the students' ability in using modal verbs in each function like possibility, necessity, ability, obligation, and permission so that the students can accomplish the better result of their study. Perhaps, the result of this research can give new way for the English teacher or lecturer to use song as one of the alternative teaching tools to overcome students' problem in learning grammar specifically about the use of modality.

Method

In this research, the researcher used descriptive design with quantitative data because the researcher just focus on describing the data gotten during the learning process toward the students' ability after doing some tests on modality . According to Gay, Mills & Airasian (2000) descriptive research is the study about all phenomena happened related to the research's problem and describe all the data as they are without any manipulations. The strong reason why the researcher used this kind of research design is the researcher just aims to describe or to investigate whether the students have better change on their ability in using modality.

The participants of this research consist of 28 students from class C in academic year 2016/2017 in Grammar I class. To select the participants, the researcher used purposive sampling. According to Arikunto (2010) purposive sampling can be used if the researcher wants to select the participant for the specific purpose. Here, in this research, the researcher purposed the class that got the lowest mark for modal verb lesson in order to make them more interesting, and have positive attitude for studying modal. For this reason, the researcher directly chose class C because the mean score for the modality test in this class was lower compared to the other classes that the researcher taught. The fact became the big concern for the researcher to select class C as the participant of this research.

In this research, the researcher used instrument to collect the data that are needed to answer the research's problem. According to Creswell (2012) instrument is the tool that is used to observe, to measure and to document the data consisted of questionnaire, observation checklist and test. Here, the researcher used test as the research instrument to measure the students' ability in using of modality function including possibility, necessity, ability, obligation, and permission. The description of modal semantic categories based on those functions could be shown in the table 1.

Table 1 gave the information that the modal use has the same patterns but with different function including as permission, ability, possibility, obligation, and necessity. For this case, the researcher would like to know whether the students got better understanding to use which modal verb are more suitable for each modality function based on the categories of modality as described at table I. In this case, the researcher used the test in gap filling form because this kind of test could be effective to evaluate the students' understanding. Taylor (2013) said that gap filling is a test in such a way by deleting some words or a word from the question item that should be constructing based on the criterion proposed. If the students are correctly completed the gap, it would be considered that those students have got better knowledge about the use of modality and each

function. After doing tests, the researcher analyzed the result of document tests and then the researcher calculated the percentage of students' ability in the appropriateness in using modality; can, could, may, might, must and should.

Table 1 Modal Semantic Categories

Meaning	Definition	Example
CAN		
1.Permission	evidence of some condition that determines whether an agent is or is not permitted to do something	*Can* I have some? You *can* read my book *Can* I have an apple please?
2.Possibility	express the degree to which something is Possible: inanimate noun/dummy it + can + linking verb + adjective/ noun phrase; or Inanimate noun + can + main verb	A brief view of the century as a whole *can* be useful.
3. Ability	evidence of an animate agent that is capable of doing something	I *can* hear what she's saying to somebody He goes, I *can*'t swim.
COULD		
1.Permission	used in its past tense to refer to permission	And we didn't know we *could* see her. She had the nerve to ask me if she *could* sit at the end of our table.
2.Possibility	express the degree to which something was possible	That *could* be her. It *could* be anything you choose.
3. Ability	evidence of an animate agent that was capable of doing something in the past	They asked me and I just *could*n't refuse I *could*n't feel my hand.
MUST		
1.Obligation	express an agent's responsibility to do something	We *must* be careful to avoid several logical pitfalls. We *must* get up early.
2.Necessity	Logical concludes something is likely/necessary based on evidence available to the speaker/ writer	It *must* have something to do with the government. She *must* have left already.
SHOULD		
1.Obligation	the agent is obliged to do something	You *should* relax.
2.Necessity	Logical concludes something is likely/necessary based on evidence available	That *should* have been Sydney
MAY		
1.Possibility	expressing agent's doubt in the truth of proposition (Coates, 1983) or slight possibility	So you *may* not see it as a joke. That *may* be wrong, though. It *may* rain tomorrow.
2.Permission	refers to present or future time when used to ask for permission or to make a polite request and giving permission to the agent	Please *may* I go to the toilet? You *may* do some maths if you want to You *may* do your language work if you want to.
MIGHT		
1.Possibility	expressing agent's doubt in the truth of proposition	It *might* rain tomorrow.
2.Permission	refers to present or future time when used that the agent was permitted to do something	She said I *might* go.

Adopted from Biberet al.'s in **Torabiardakani, N., Khojasteh, L., & Shokrpour, N. (2015)**

Finding and Discussion

To encourage students' positive view of using song in studying modal verb and to enhance good ability on those modal uses, the researcher needed some considerations. The song must be selected based on the students' interest and the age level to make them more attractive and exciting to learn. Here, the researcher utilized some popular songs with the simple vocabularies which are easy to understand and to memorize within the concept of modality use. Two examples of those songs are:

The first Song :
How Can you Mend a Broken Heart?

I can think of younger days
When living for my life
Was everything a man could want to do
I could never see tomorrow
But I was never told about the sorrow
And how can you mend a broken heart?
How can you stop the rain from falling down?
How can you stop the sun from shining?
What makes the world go round?

How can you mend a this broken man?
How can a loser ever win?
Please help me mend my broken heart
And let me live again

I can still feel the breeze
That rustles through the trees
And misty memories of days gone by
We could never see tomorrow

No one said a word about the sorrow
And how can you mend a broken heart?
How can you stop the rain from falling down?
How can you stop the sun from shining?

What makes the world go round?
How can you mend this broken man?
How can a loser ever win?
Please help me mend my broken heart

by the Bee Gees

The second song :
The Show Must Go On"

Empty spaces - what are we living for
Abandoned places - I guess we know the score
On and on, does anybody know what we are looking for...
Another hero, another mindless crime
Behind the curtain, in the pantomime
Hold the line, does anybody want to take it anymore
The show must go on,
The show must go on
Inside my heart is breaking
My make-up may be flaking
But my smile still stays on.
Whatever happens, I'll leave it all to chance
Another heartache, another failed romance
*On and on, does anybody know what we are living for?*
I guess I'm learning, I must be warmer now
I'll soon be turning, round the corner now
Outside the dawn is breaking
But inside in the dark I'm aching to be free
The show must go on
The show must go on
Inside my heart is breaking
My make-up may be flaking
But my smile still stays on
My soul is painted like the wings of butterflies
Fairytales of yesterday will grow but never die
I can fly - my friends
The show must go on
The show must go on
I'll face it with a grin
I'm never giving in
On - with the show -
I'll top the bill, I'll overkill
I have to find the will to carry on
On with the -
On with the show -
The show must go on...

These songs were presented by using audio- visual media like overhead projectors and loud speakers that make the students see and listen the songs more clearly. Together with the students, the researcher sings the songs in order to familiarize them with vocabularies used in those songs. After discussing the vocabulary meaning and the structure or the pattern of modality in song lyrics, the students had the opportunity to discuss and to repeat the use of modality and make their own sentences. The result of the students' works showed that they could get positive attitude in learning modality because they could make many sentences by using modality specified on *can, could, must, should, may* and *might* into the correct pattern. The fact found in this research could give better support to what had been found by Falioni (1993) and Chastain (1998) and Carter (1998) Finacchiaro & Bonomo (1973) who concluded that learning will be facilitated when authentic language devices are used in language classes. In this case, song is authentic teaching tool because it presents and visualizes what the real teaching material that should be learnt. The use of songs could provide good grammar and ease the students to learn the modality pattern through a lot of repetition of song lyrics in which it helps them to have good language memorable.

Furthermore, the enhancing of students' ability in using modality could be better shown from the result of some tests. The tests were presented in gap filling form so that the researcher needed to validate the test items in order to find out the item difficulties. Then, the researcher reconstructed the questions if the difficult items were mostly found. The content of the test was related to the topics or subjects stated in the syllabus or lesson plan and those have been discussed in the process of teaching and learning. For the test, the researcher provided 60 test items that consist of modality. First, modality *can* were the items numbers: 1, 6, 17,24,30,36,41,48,52, 58. Second, the items numbers; 3, 10,11,14,20,27,33,44, 50, 60 were available for modality *could*. Third, modality *must* consisted items numbers: 2,8,15,21,26,31,39,47,53,57. Fourth, modality *should* was for items number: 7,13,19,23,31,38,43,55,56,59. Fifth, the item numbers for modality *may* were 5,9,16,25,28,32,37,42,46, 51. At last, modality *might* was presented in items 4, 12, 18, 22, 29, 34, 40, 45, 49 and 54. The students' ability could be determined from the result of test 1 and test 2 exactly from the percentages of correct answers done by the students. The findings of students' ability on using modality were shown in the following Bar Chart.
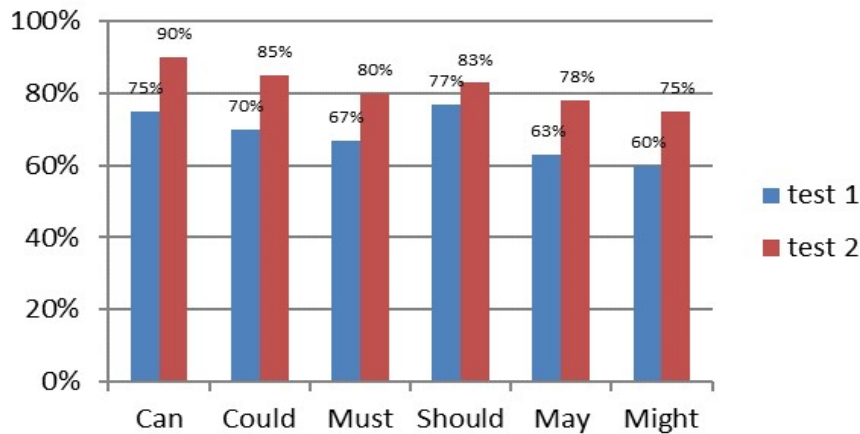
Bar Chart 1 *The Percentages of students' ability on using Modality from test 1 and test 2*

The findings of the research could be seen from the bar chart which presented the percentages of students 'ability on using modality. It shows that the students experienced the significant changes of their ability in using modal from test I to test 2. The students' abilities in using *can* and *could* for the modality function of "ability", "possibility" and "permission" were better improved from test 1 to test 2. In the test 1, the percentage of the students who made the correct answer for modality *can* was 75 % and it had steeply increase about 15 % to 90 % in test 2. The students' condition in using modality *can* get significant changes from good to very good condition. Then, the use of modality *could* in test 1 was about 70 % among the students who could answer successfully and it was better increased in the test 2 up to 83 % from good condition to very good condition.

The same condition also happened for the use of modality *must* and *should* with the modality function of "obligation" and "necessity" where in test I, the students' level of ability was in range "good" but in test 2 the students could reach the range " very good". However, most of students' still got difficulties for the modality *may* and *might* with the function of "possibility" and "Permission". The condition could be seen from the result of test 1 and 2, in where just 63 % of students could answer correctly the question related on the use of *may* and 60 % successfully finished the questions related to *might*. Here, the students' abilities on both modalities were in the range of satisfactory. The students' ability in use of *may* and *might* were not too significant improved in test 2 because the students got the level of good not very good.

From the findings of the research, it could be concluded that the students had primary ability in using modality *can* and *could* for the function of

"ability", "possibility" and "permission". It seems that the use of modality *can* and *could* were quite easy for the students and it could be better supported by what have been found through the research done by Biber et al (1999) through his research said that the use of modality *can* and *could* with "ability", "possibility" and "permission" meanings are frequently used not only in spoken but also written English. It means that modality *can* and *could* are commonly use in daily communication so that the students get familiar enough with the sentence patterns and when the teacher re-explain about their usage through song, the students will have deep understanding. It could be proved from the result of this research where the students get a great tendency to do the correct answers for modality *can* and *could*.

On the other hand, the students still had difficulties in the using of modality *may* and *might* for the function of "possibility" and Permission".   From the researcher's analysis on the students' answers, it could be concluded that the students got serious hesitation to differentiate to use *may* and *might* for either "permission" or "possibility". This finding is strongly emphasized by Romer (2004) who concluded in his research that many students in the sense that the modality *may* and *might* are the main exponent of "possibility" rather than "permission" in English. In other word, the students are tended to use *may* and *might* as possibility meaning so that "permission" meaning is neglected. It could be seen from the students' answer sheets in which the researcher found that most students did many mistakes to choose *may* and *migh*t as "permission" function.

Conclusion

Based on the research that has been done, the researcher can conclude that the students' performance on Grammar could be better changed since the teacher or lecturer become creative and innovative to find out the teaching tool to provide the best solution on the students' problems in the learning process. It has been proven from the result of the research done that the students' ability especially in the use of modality was significant increased after the researcher used song as teaching tool in teaching modality. Through song, the students can get either better understanding about the pattern of each modality or the function of modality in the context or language use. Song can give comfortable and powerful situation that make the students easily concentrate and get interest to learn. When the students focus to follow whatever is given, they will be pleasure to access and concern to the lesson. Perhaps the result of this

research become a great consideration by many teachers or lecture to use the variation of interesting media or tool to encourage the students to study and make themselves comfortable with the grammar lesson. Furthermore, the researcher hopes that the findings of this research inspire the other researchers to use song as one of the variables of their researches in order to give better solution for their students' problems in English Foreign Language classroom.

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