

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Modality is a condition in which speakers tend to talk about real situations and things that are possible or necessary to happen. This expression, including modal verbs, is manifested by many realizations of linguistic use (Collins, 2009; Palmer, 2014; Quirk, 1985). Therefore, modal verbs are important in language use, and the changes are dynamic in a society (Collins, 2009). Modal verbs are frequently used in everyday communication since they have simple forms but are also wide in semantic connotations and communicative functions (Li, 2017). In English, several modal verbs must be included as auxiliary verbs. The existence of these modal verbs is very important, namely *will, would, can, could, may, might, shall, should, and must*. These nine modal verbs are then classified into five expressions: ability, permission, obligation, advice, and possibility.

In English learning and teaching, modal verbs are also crucial since they are considered the most complex and challenging grammatical units (Mukundan & Khojasteh, 2011). This challenge and complexity often cause errors in learning modal verbs, especially for EFL learners. Modal verbs refer to different meanings and, in some instances, also share similar primary meanings. On the other hand, modal verbs are also problematic for native

English speakers. For example, modal verbs "may" and "might" can convey doubt and certainty. Nevertheless, "may" can also have alternatives to express other modal functions, such as permission and serving as a politeness language (Holmes, 1988). These problems certainly affect EFL learners' teaching and learning process. So, textbook authors and teachers should present the modal verbs in teaching materials with the authentic use of English in daily life, especially for textbooks.

Textbooks hold an important role since they provide beneficial learning sources, especially for EFL learners (Charalambous, 2011; Radić-Bojanić & Topalov, 2016). Textbooks are designed for particular educational purposes and equipped with learning facilities. They are systematically organized to achieve learning objectives and support the learning programs. As educators, teachers also need books that provide texts and tasks that engage students effectively and cognitively and help teachers adapt and determine materials with methods that suit students (Tomlinson, 2023). In line with Tyson & Woodward (1989), approximately 90 percent of classroom activities rely on the content of textbooks, teachers are typically encouraged to follow the textbook material, and examination material tends to align with the textbook materials. Römer (2005) states that a good EFL textbook design will increase the meaningful teaching and learning process. However, some textbooks may contain inauthentic material, and certain words are barely used in everyday communication. According to Collins (2006), he claimed that textbooks do not always provide the "real" use of English and sometimes the information is not

accurate about English authenticity, for example in English communication. On the other hand, students are expected to use English in daily life. Therefore, authentic materials in English teaching are used to improve students' skills in applying English in real life. In addition to being easy to learn, the material in the textbooks should be authentic. Based on the explanation above, non-native English speakers should not rely on their intuition and feelings when designing textbook materials. This problem can be overcome by consultation with the corpus as it provides a large collection of natural texts and represents the authentic use of language, which can be beneficial for designing textbook materials (Burton, 2012; Timmis, 2015).

Fortunately, numerous modal verbs have been studied using corpus-based analysis in language teaching, especially EFL. Many of them have found mismatches between modal verbs used in textbooks and the authentic or “real” use of English implemented in the corpus. This means that the language used in textbooks does not represent the actual use of English, and this is a common case when comparing the language used in textbooks with corpus results. Focusing on modal verbs it has been studied by Khojasteh & Kafipour (2012), who stated that the modal verb usage in Malaysian ELF textbooks does not align with the real and authentic usage as how is recorded in the corpus reference. Some corpus-based studies have been conducted on textbooks (Arellano A, 2018; Burton, 2012; Leung, 2016; Norberg & Nordlund, 2018; Phoocharoensil, 2017). The studies prove that ELT textbooks do not encompass the language as it is used authentically in English.

Similarly, a variety of modal verbs studied in language education in Malaysia, China, Egypt, Japan (Al-Ghalban, 2015; Laleh & Shokrpour, 2015; Li, 2017; Mukundan & Khojasteh, 2011; Nozawa, 2010). Nevertheless, among the numerous studies concerning the modal verbs in EFL textbooks, there are rarely studies that discuss the utilization of possibility, ability, and permission modal verbs in Indonesian EFL textbooks, particularly for senior high school level. As we can see in Oktavianti and Prayogi's (2020) research, which focuses on the future tense markers usage in Indonesian EFL textbooks for senior high school. Then, the research by Amelia (2021) discusses collocation verbs in Indonesian EFL Textbooks for senior high school. One research by Oktavianti and Fajria (2021) is similar to this study. They focused on investigating modal verbs' use in EFL textbooks in Indonesia for senior high school level, then compared it to one control corpora, COCA. However, the modal verbs in their study include central modals (core modals) and quasi-modals. From these studies, it can be concluded that little study specifically discusses the use of modal verbs possibility, ability, and permission in Indonesian EFL Textbooks, especially for senior high school grades. There are studies on textbooks in Indonesia. However, they mostly focus on evaluating tasks and cultural values (Ayu & Indrawati, 2018; Mayangsari et al., 2018; Widodo, 2018). For English textbooks context, also more focus on the application of the book (Mede & Yalçın, 2019), the literature and literacy view of the book (Raquitico, 2014), and the comparison of the contents of national

exams and textbooks (Aziez & Aziez, 2018), while the linguistic perspective of the textbook is not widely discussed (e.g., the use of modal verbs).

Therefore, based on those explanations, the researcher investigates the use of possibility, ability, and permission modal verbs in EFL textbooks for senior high school in Kurikulum Merdeka compared to the use of modal verbs in a control corpus. To minimize confusion, this study does not analyze epistemic, deontic, and dynamic, yet focuses on the utilization of the types of core modal verbs that refer to these expressions. Moreover, this study also focuses on investigating the spoken sections, the dialogues, or conversations that are presented in the textbooks. In daily language communication, spoken language plays a vital role because it is the primary form of communication. The teaching and learning English is supposed to be as natural as possible so that we can implement the “real” use of English. Since spoken language has various characteristics and features (Halliday, 1989), this point is also important to consider when designing textbooks. Furthermore, Biber et al., (2021), stated that modal verbs are frequently used in spoken contexts rather than written texts. In analyzing the corpus data, this study applied one corpora, namely Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), as control corpus. COCA represents the “real” use of English since it has recorded more than one billion in a long period (from 1990 to 2019). Therefore, this research aims to provide information on whether or not the EFL Indonesian textbooks for senior high school have used natural English in terms of possibility, ability, and permission central modal verbs

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, there are some issues identified as follow:

1. EFL textbooks do not always provide the authentic English
2. The information in the EFL textbooks sometimes not accurate especially in English communication
3. There are some mismatches between modal verbs used in textbooks and the authentic use of English

C. Focus of The Study

Researcher focused on corpus based analysis of possibility, ability, and permission of EFL textbooks for senior high school in Kurikulum Merdeka. The corpus data collected from the conversation section of the textbooks. In this study, researcher applied one control corpora, namely Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). Language used in COCA represents the real use of English since it has recorded more than one billion in a long period (from 1990 to 2019). The limitation of the study is about the modal verbs of possibility, ability, and permission used in the conversation section in the textbook by investigating the types of sense of ability, possibility, and permission modal verbs in the textbooks. Then, researcher compared the frequency of possibility, ability, and permission modal verbs used in conversation section of the textbooks with the control corpora (COCA).

D. Formulation of The Problem

Based on the background of the study, the issues are identified as follow:

1. What type of possibility/ability/permission modal verbs are found in the textbooks conversation sections?
2. What are the most frequent modal verbs of possibility/ability/permission in the textbooks conversation sections?
3. What are the most frequent modal verbs of possibility/ability/permission in spoken sub-corpus of COCA?

E. Objective of The Study

1. To find out type of possibility/ability/permission modal verbs are found in the textbooks conversation sections
2. To find out the most frequent modal verbs of possibility/ability/permission in the textbooks conversation sections
3. To find out the most frequent modal verbs of possibility/ability/permission in spoken sub-corpus of COCA

F. Significance of The Study

The researcher hoped that this study is useful and contributes to English teaching and learning. The significance of the study expected to be beneficial, as follows:

1. EFL textbook writers

It can be a consideration in designing the textbooks as the learning medium in teaching and learning English for EFL. Moreover, they can also consult the corpus as it provides a large collection of natural texts and the authentic use of language.

2. Teachers

The result of this study expects to give a reference for teachers to use appropriate English material from textbooks, especially the use of modal verbs for English teaching and learning.

3. Other researchers

The researcher of this study expects that the result can be useful and give a contribution for other researchers, especially those who have an interest in corpus-based analysis of modal verbs of possibility, ability, and permission in EFL textbook for senior high school.