

## Difficulties in Teaching English Modal Auxiliaries to Turkish Students: A Cognitive Pragmatic Approach

Ismail Erton

Faculty of Arts & Sciences  
Department of Translation and Interpretation  
Atılım University, Ankara, Turkey

### Abstract

Recently, attention in modern linguistic theory has been shifted to facilitating a broader understanding of the world, in which language is a tool to establish a bridge between the interlocutor and the recipient. To do so, the development of linguistic, communicative and socio-pragmatic competences enriched with socio-cultural inputs in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) or Second Language (L2) teaching and learning contexts have a significant impact on language learners both to develop their perception as native speakers of English and to facilitate the progress of cognitive skills and capabilities. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate a case study to show some of the difficulties in teaching English modal auxiliaries to Turkish students in EFL/L2 contexts which arise not only from structural characteristics, but also from insufficiently developed linguistic, communicative and socio-pragmatic competencies. It is also asserted that only teaching the lexical properties of modal auxiliaries in isolation from their socio-pragmatic and semiotic contexts alone cannot help learners to become successful communicators in the target language as it ends in communication failures, hesitation, a slower L2 progress, fear and misunderstandings. Therefore, role-play activities, cloze tests, research assignments, writing tasks and songs can also be integrated into the teaching-learning process to assist learners to become more aware of their actual authentic usages in a wide range of contexts through different activities. On the whole, this would also free language learners to refer to their First Language (L1) input and shape a broader understanding of the Foreign Language (FL) framed with its actual authentic usage.

**Keywords:** cognitive linguistics, competence, curriculum, language learning-teaching, modal auxiliaries

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## Introduction

So far, numerous language learning and teaching methods have been generated for teaching grammar to English as a Second language (ESL) students. Yet, most of these approaches have failed to achieve the desired purpose since the center of attention in these practices are mostly on reflecting the structural aspects of language rather than its functional interpretation in various relevant contexts. The latest trends in linguistic studies over the last twenty years strongly emphasize the significance of the development of linguistic competence, which facilitates the progression of communicative and pragmatic competences. As soon as Chomsky (1965) published his book 'Aspects of the Theory of Syntax', attention in linguistic studies shifted from structural practices to communicative consciousness. Wales and Marshall (1966) criticize Chomsky's approach to language production since it is a theory of language production and does not deal with language at the verbal state. Fodor and Garrett (1996) went beyond this debate and emphasized the importance of psycholinguistics in language production. For them, "both linguistic and psychological models are the models of competence" (p. 138). Choraih et al (2016) adds that, "this line of research had become less tenable with the increasing attention to the role of sociocultural and sociolinguistic factors that affect and shape the process of L2 development" (p. 184). While most linguists draw their attention to linguistic, psychological, social and cultural influences on language production, Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) focus on the humanistic properties of language production which include fluent, accurate and strategic production and use of language in various socio-cultural contexts. Definitely, a model, which integrates linguistic, psychological, socio-cultural and other extra-linguistic factors is the notion of communicative competence. For Widdowson (1989), communicative competence is:

Communicative competence is not a matter of knowing the rules for the composition of sentences and being able to employ such rules to assemble expressions from scratch as and when occasion requires. It is much more knowing a stack (or stock?) of partially pre-assembled patterns, formulaic frameworks, and kit of rules, so as to speak, and being able to apply the rules to make whatever adjustments, necessary according to contextual demands (p. 135).

In order to adapt grammatical rules into verbal language production, becoming aware of contextual requirements, discourse and the strategic language usage appear as some of the key issues to frame communicative competence. In this respect, Canale (1983) studies the notion of communicative competence in four parts, namely grammatical competence, socio-linguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence which not only incorporate the features of socio-cultural demands with discourse analysis, but also emphasize the significance of the critical, creative and the reflective processing and the usage of strategies in non-verbal and verbal communication (pp. 2-206).

Relatedly, recent research over the last 30 years in linguistics seems to reflect its outcomes on language learning and teaching methods. Methods and techniques in the classroom not only provide structural input at first sight, but also provide both teachers and the students with the opportunity to increase their awareness and practice extra-linguistic elements in language production, such as socio-cultural and ethical issues, signs and symbols, culture-oriented figures, learning styles and strategies, etc. Here, perhaps the most significant goal is to form an

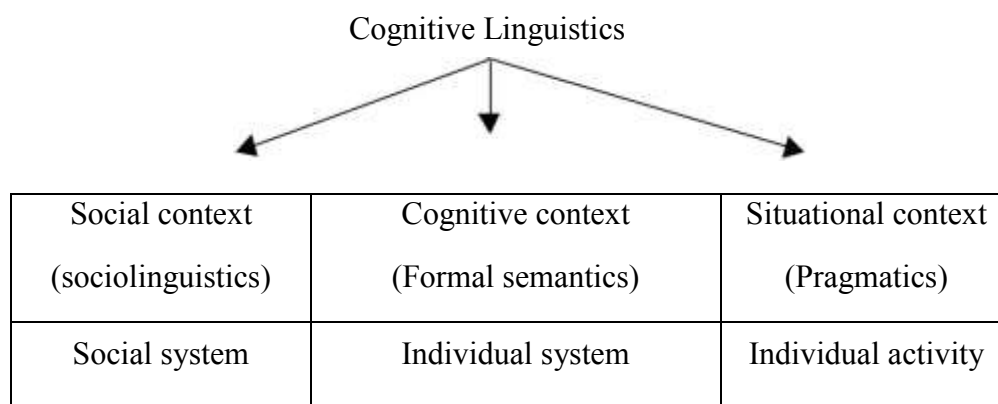
intercultural competence in the classroom, which would enable the students to perceive the features in a foreign language as much as its native speakers do.

The development of the pragmatic aspects of language is vital in order to avoid communication breakdowns, structure and frame a wider worldview independent of the user's native language for more intellectuality and creative and critical thinking. According to Li et.al. (2015) "Compared with grammatical mistakes pragmatic errors may cause more serious problems in communication because they are typically interpreted by native speakers as arrogance, impatience and rudeness, and thus they are less likely to be forgiven by the native speakers" (p. 41). Likewise, Mey (1993) defines linguistic behaviour as a social behaviour. For him, a communicative act takes place in a communicative discourse which represents the nature of the linguistic action – determined by economic and social rules, political ideas, ideas and perspectives, etc... (pp. 186-7). The language teacher who has already raised her consciousness enough to develop students' communicative and pragmatic competences will open doors for the cognitive development of the individuals. This not only provides language proficiency, but also helps the person to become a better version of the self who acknowledges her environment and the world through the language she has learned.

### **The Role of Cognitive Pragmatics in the Achievement of English Modal Auxiliaries**

The dilemma between what is said and what is meant goes beyond structuring grammatically correct utterances and understanding their conceptual and emotive content interpreted within a semantic frame. Since pragmatics is the study of meaning in context, it naturally is concerned with the cognitive principles and processes in the course of language production. Pragmatics, in this respect, does not merely cover contextual information delivered in the course of speech production, but also context-independent features that indirectly influence the situational context of language production and the internal processes that mind decodes and encodes in the interpretation of linguistic and non-linguistic data as have already accumulated in competence in general.

In this respect, it is possible to examine pragmatics as a functional framework which examines linguistic acts and principles in relation with the choices of the interpreter in the course of language production. Wunderlich (1972), Mey (1993) and Versuchueren (1999) work on a functional-pragmatic approach to language. Yet, such functional studies on language production are not enough to determine the process in which the utterances are produced, and the intention of the speaker, how the hearer achieves and interprets the delivered meaning could not be explained within a functional frame. Gadzar (1979) and Leech (1983) study grammar and pragmatics connection from a semantic approach. Sperber and Wilson (2002) examine pragmatics as a matter of cognition, which cannot be studied and explained within grammatical perspectives. When all the approaches to grammar are taken into account, one can reach the conclusion that the study of grammar and pragmatics cannot be separated from each other. Indeed, both complement each other to facilitate a better understanding of communication. As Naweth and Bibok (2010) state, "... we basically consider the interaction between grammar and pragmatics a co-operation of two separate components of the theory of language in contexts of language use" (p. 505). Cuenca summarizes all theories concerning language usage (cognitive linguistics) in the following scheme:



*Figure 1. Theories of Language Use (Cuenca, 2003, p. 2)*

It is possible to say that Cuenca's scheme considers language use as a dynamic system. For her (2003), "... the system is conceived in a dynamic way, interrelating linguistic structure (syntax), meaning (semantics), language use (pragmatics) and conceptual structure (cognition)" (p. 2). Cuenca's model of language usage reflects an integrated model in which syntax, semantics and pragmatics are interdependent but co-related models which work collaboratively in the process of language production. Additionally, Carston (2002) claims that "A major development in pragmatics since Grice's work is the recognition that linguistically decoded information is usually very incomplete and that pragmatic inference plays an essential role in the derivation of the proposition explicitly communicated" (p. 132). She adds that "... what is communicated, that is, the output of the pragmatic processor is usually a set of fully propositional thoughts or assumptions, which are either true or false of an external state of affairs in the world" (p. 132). Here, Cuenca's and Carston's ideas about language production and usage complete each other in the sense that, as the study of pragmatics moves from the philosophical interpretation of language and located in cognitive science, it paves the way for a much clearer understanding of how utterances are produced, delivered and achieved between the addresser and the addressee. In a way, Terejko (2016) concludes by saying that:

... Cognitive grammar expresses a profound interest in the issues of pragmatic nature, very often employing them as the basis for further investigation into the nature of language... the problems such as language acquisition, grammatical representations and structuring can be accounted for by means of a direct reference to the phenomena that are pragmatic in character (p. 43).

Leaving aside the discussions and theories concerning the bond between grammar and pragmatics, modal auxiliaries in English can be one of the favourite chapters as their denotational and connotational meanings do not mean much unless context-based pragmatic features are also taken into account. Yet, it may not even facilitate comprehension if modal auxiliaries are taught in isolation from their sociocultural discourse. For Kakzhanova (2010) "Modals express the result of the conversation of thought processes (deep structure) about the realization of actions into the surface structure" (p. 2530). As mentioned earlier, modals do not reflect a structural understanding for a particular intention, but encourage a socio-culturally oriented pragmatic approach to human

understanding. Kakzhanova adds that “. . . modals determine the relation of a person to actions or the quality of an action as realizable or unrealizable” (p. 2530). In English, certain tones of action are expressed using certain verbs, depending on the functions they perform in various contexts. Such verbs are called ‘*modal auxiliaries*’, whose functions can be ability, possibility, request, permission, obligation, etc. For Torabiardakani, et.al. (2015) “. . . modal auxiliary semantic system is enormously complicated for L2 learners because the same modals sometimes are used to express different functions like that of ‘probability’, ‘possibility’, ‘certainty’ and of ‘inclination’, ‘ability’, ‘permission’ and ‘obligation’” (p. 54). Though modal auxiliaries in English have different lexical forms and various functions in language use, in Turkish, they are expressed with the suffix {-ebilmek} {-meli} {-mali} attached to the main (root) verb. In this respect, the problem is that in the actual use of modal auxiliaries in English, the social, cognitive and situational (pragmatic) contexts are bounded together in the course of language production, making it impossible to consider each context acting in isolation from each other. However, in Turkish, the suffixes attached to the root verb provide limited clues to the audience and are mostly interpreted within a formal semantic frame. For this reason, Turkish learners of English find it difficult to fully grasp the semantic and pragmatic equivalence of modal auxiliaries and are, thus, unable to reflect their actual usage in language production either, in EFL or English as a Second Language (ESL) settings.

### **A contrastive study of Turkish and English modal auxiliaries: Perception of Turkish Students.**

In this respect, modal auxiliaries are exemplified in pairs considering their functions in language usage. As the samples are examined, a pragmatic context is created to better understand the delivered message.

#### ***Sample 1***

*Function: Possibility*

*Modal Auxiliaries: Can & Be able to*

*[Two friends talking at a café about a previously discussed theatre event]*

English:

A: Will you get two tickets for the movie tomorrow?

B: b1 – I think I will.

b2 – I think I will be able to.

Turkish:

B: – Zannedersem alabilirim.

Both modal auxiliaries in English mean more or less the same in terms of the degree of possibility they represent. However, though –be able to– is more formal than –can –, –be able to– also reflects a message that something has to be completed or managed before so that ‘B’ will go and get the tickets. In –can– there is no hesitation that the tickets will be purchased, yet in –be able to– the speaker might have thought of some inappropriacies before using –be able to – instead of can. However, in Turkish, it is not possible to understand the degree of possibility represented in English form. The speaker A’s response to Turkish –B– will be a ‘thank you’ and so is the same

for b1. Yet, a response to b2 can either be a ‘thank you’ or a question trying to clarify the problem which was not articulated by B.

### **Sample 2**

*Function: Permission*

*Modal Auxiliaries: May & Can*

*[In the classroom. The instructor is lecturing.]*

English:

Student: Sir, May I go to the toilet.

Instructor: – Yes, sure.

– No, please wait for the break!

Student: Sir, can I go to the toilet?

Instructor: No, you cannot!

Turkish:

Öğrenci: Hocam, tuvalete gidebilir miyim?

Hoca: – Evet, gidebilirsin.

– Hayır, gidemezsin!

In English, with the permission function once asked using –can–, the speaker is almost sure about to receive a positive response, but skips the fact that it is the teacher’s decision to give permission. That is why if a permission is asked with –can– the responder most probably will give a negative response. However, if formulated with –may–, the responder will reply in a positive manner. By asking for permission with –may – the student sends an unarticulated message to the instructor which means; ‘I respect your authority and your decision’, but in –can– the unarticulated message does not reflect such an intention. In the Turkish version, such a hidden intention does not exist. It is a direct question which would have either a negative or a positive response.

### **Sample 3**

*Function: Obligation*

*Modal Auxiliaries: Must & Have to*

*[Mother, at home talking to her son about his studies.]*

English:

Mom: You must spend more time to study for your tomorrow’s quiz.

Mom: You have to spend more time to study for your tomorrow’s quiz.

Turkish:

Anne: Yarınki sınavına çalışman gerek.

Anne: Yarınki sınavına çalışmalısın.

In English, an obligation expressed with –must– and –have to– reflect strong obligation. When mom expresses this obligation with –must–, she means that she, herself, feels a strong

obligation for her son to study for tomorrow's quiz but her son does not feel that obligation as her mother does at equal sense. On the other hand, when a strong obligation is expressed with –have to–, mom reminds her son of the external factors forcing him to study. In this respect, mom feels a very weak obligation and makes her son feel it more. However, in Turkish, it sounds more like a suggestion rather than any degree of obligation. It is not possible to identify which function it serves for. Even the responder might feel a little threat in mom's speech.

#### **Sample 4**

*Function: Suggestion, weak obligation*

*Modal Auxiliaries: Should and Ought to*

*[Two friends studying for tomorrow's exam at home]*

English:

A: What else shall we do?

B: We should do more practice if we want to be successful!

Turkish:

B: Başarılı olmak istiyorsak daha fazla pratik yapmalıyız.

*[Father advising son for the graduation ceremony next week]*

English:

You ought to go shopping and get ready by the end of this week. Do not leave everything to the last minute!

Turkish:

Alışverişe çıkmalı ve bu haftasonuna kadar hazır olmalısın. Her şeyi son dakikaya bırakma!

In English, both –should– and –ought to– represent weak obligation and suggestion. In the first example, the suggestion is expressed by –should–. However, one cannot use –ought to– in the place of –should– here because there is no formality involved. Likewise, in the second example, one cannot use –should– in the place of –ought to– since the context reflects a formal background (a graduation ceremony). A similar example can also be given with –ought to– when cultural obligations are represented.

Example: You ought to wear a suit and a tie for the Independence Day Ceremony.

In this respect, for the examples above, –should– is not preferred since it represents a suggestion with a weak obligation. In Turkish examples, it is not possible to distinguish the degree of formality and suggestion. It sounds more like a suggestion rather than any form of obligation. Therefore, to reflect the same contextual message in Turkish, additional words have to be added to the translation to match English meaning.

#### **Sample 5**

*Function: Degree of possibility*

*Modal Auxiliaries: could, may, might*  
*[Two friends talking on the way home]*

English:

A: Would you like to go to the cinema tomorrow?

B: Well, we could.

Well, we may.

Well, we might.

The answer in Turkish:

B: Hmm (Pekala), gidebiliriz.

In English, the degree of possibility for –could– may– and –might– is weak. Though all modal auxiliaries in this respect demonstrate a weak possibility, –could– is stronger than –may– and so is –may– when compared with –might–. An answer given in –could– still holds the possibility of going for a movie tomorrow. However, an answer given in –may– and –might– seems an indirect refusal or expresses the presence of other conditions to the request. As speakers continue their conversation, for the answer given in –could–; they will most probably look for other ways (arrange their time, finish up routines earlier, get permission from X, etc.) to make it happen. Yet, for the answers in –may– and –might– it seems that it is not possible to make it happen and the speaker will express their sorrow and will make it happen someday in the future or will most probably make another plan. Relatedly, the answer given in Turkish does not reflect any of the hidden messages expressed in English and can contain both positive or negative messages, thereby resulting in confusion perhaps.

### **Sample 6**

*Function: Request, contingency*

*Modal Auxiliary: would, will*

*[Two friends talking at home. They are moving.]*

English:

A: Would you please help me to pack these books?

B: Yes, I would!

Yes, I will!

The answer in Turkish:

B: Evet, olabilir. / Evet, yardım edebilirim. (for would)

Evet, edeceğim. (for will)

In English, the request formulated in –would– expresses contingency and reciprocity. A is asking for B’s help in a polite manner. Such a request also embodies an invitation for collaborative work. Likewise, the answer given in –would– is an approval for this request in the same manner. However, the answer given in –will– not only reflects a formal approval but also expresses a future possibility as well. In this respect, the answer given in –will– does not represent reciprocity or collaboration. On the other hand, the Turkish answer (for would) does not express



contingency, in the future. This possibility also does not mean an exact yes or no! Yet, in English, it expresses a positive response. However, the Turkish answer for –will- means exactly the same in English.

Now, let's examine another example:

*[Brother and his sister are at home studying math. It seems like they have been studying for a very long time and now is the time for a break.]*

English:

Brother : Would you like to have some coffee?

Sister : Yes, I would.

Yes, I do!

Turkish: (for –would-) : Evet, olabilir.

Evet, içebilirim.

for (-do-) : Evet, içerim.

In English, the brother's invitation for a cup of coffee embodies both contingency and reciprocity. Likewise, the sister's answer for this invitation, expressed in –would- approves the question. Here, most probably, the brother will go to the kitchen and bring two cups of coffee for both of them. However, the answer represented in –do-, does not include a reciprocal intention. Here, the sister does not mind whether her brother will drink coffee with her or not. By answering in –do-, she simply asks for a cup of coffee for herself and does not take her brother into account. In Turkish, the answer (for would) again, does not reflect a reciprocal intention, but represents possibility expressed in a positive manner as in the previous example. However, the answer expressed with –do- both reflects a future action and a positive response as it is in the English version.

### Reflections in Classroom Settings

Teaching modal auxiliaries to students, whose native language is a member of the agglutinative language family, is not easy. Since English is not taught in its authentic environment, the responsibilities of the language teachers are doubled in this sense. The semantic interpretation of the speech acts or translation activities are not enough for students to comprehend the intention behind the usage of modal auxiliaries. The socio-linguistic, semantic and pragmatic inputs have to be implemented to language teaching curriculum in order to provide students with the opportunity to consider a foreign (or second) language from the point of view of its native speakers. Classroom activities and theoretical input demonstrated in isolation from their actual usages in various social contexts do not seem to help learners to comprehend their functions in any way. As Philip (1984) summarizes:

The lesson to be learned here by ESL teachers is that there are other approaches to language structure besides transformational grammar and the fact that a theory is not recognized as being a dominant one in theoretical linguistics, does not mean that it is either misguided or of no value to ESL teachers. On the contrary, it seems

we might be able to discover quite a lot by looking into such theories with an eye on practical application (p. 23).

Linguistic theories or language learning and teaching methods are able to meet the needs of the language learners only to a certain extent. As Philip asserts, perhaps the major point in language teaching is to provide practical implications to classroom settings so that learners find enough room to discover not only their structural and semantic reflections, but also their actual usage in socio-cultural contexts and their pragmatic representations. Once students become aware of their such settings, historical backgrounds and their perception by the native speakers, a set of practical implications to encourage the use of modal auxiliaries can be as follows:

### ***Role Play***

The instructor can create a context in which the use of modal auxiliaries is practised in a near-native environment. Such practices not only provide students with the opportunity to transfer their theoretical background into context-based practices, but also enable the activation of communicative, pragmatic and semiotic competences. Critical and creative thinking, reflecting appropriately upon a request, providing fluency to avoid communication breakdowns, thinking from a pragmatic perspective so that the recipient and the addresser can both benefit from a mutually meaningful dialogue, the practice of non-linguistic elements – body language, signs, symbols – are perhaps some of the most significant implications of a role play activity in which students find more room to practice modal verbs.

### ***Cloze Tests***

Either with multiple-choice options or not, cloze tests help learners to practice both the grammatical structures of modals and their semantic and pragmatic interpretations in non-interactive settings. Students, in this respect, are able to diagnose the functions of modal auxiliaries by paying attention to their structural aspects in written contexts.

### ***Research Assignments***

The instructor can ask students to conduct research over the internet in order to find texts that include modal auxiliaries the most. The texts may come from the following:

- Tourism Brochures
- Travel Tips
- Audio scripts of Sitcoms
- Plays
- Instruction Manuals

The texts above include a large number of modal auxiliaries. In this respect, students become more aware of varying usages of modal verbs in different contexts. These contexts also help students increase their awareness about how language is practised in real-life settings. The instructors can ask students to highlight modal auxiliaries and want them to explain the reason behind the use of that specific modal in that particular statement / context. Thus, students recognize both the grammatical structures and the functional interpretation of modal verbs.

### ***Writing Tasks***

Writing a paragraph or an essay can be another opportunity for students to express their emotions through modal verbs. The syntactic structures formulated with *am, is, are, was, were, have, has,* and *will* are far from reflecting intentions upon a particular situation. The instructor in this case should encourage learners to use more modal auxiliaries in order to reflect their intentions in the context they create. By doing this, students learn to integrate the structural aspects of modals into their perception. Hence, the readers/hearers of these texts will benefit more from the stylistic use of modals and would comprehend the deep structure beyond mere surface interpretation.

### *Songs*

For lower levels, teachers can ask students to record songs for EFL classroom. In turn, students can bring these songs to class and together follow the use of modals from the audio script. Later, the classroom can discuss the various functions of the modal verbs used in the songs with possible alternatives. Relatedly, there can be another discussion about how the meaning would change if replaced with another modal. (i.e. – have to – in the place of – must – or – had to – in the place of –should-, etc.)

### **Discussions and Pedagogical Implications**

A human's perception of his immediate environment depends on various parameters which mostly have already been achieved in the course of academic or non-academic activities. The development of a foreign language awareness cannot only be fed by structural properties but also socio-cultural, historical, pragmatic and semiotic conventions which shelter a broader understanding in foreign/second language. Modal auxiliaries in this respect are, perhaps, one of the subjects in English grammar whose perception requires more than traditional instruction and practice. As Kakzhanova (2013) claims, "Modals reflect both human intentions and objective circumstances as factors determining whether an object will be realized. They are words whose lexical meanings express degrees of realization of actions" (p. 2535). Here, her words; 'realization of actions' should be well investigated. In the course of an interaction between two people or in a particular text produced for a specific reason, if a text is produced intensely with modals, understanding what is meant may not be possible all the time by the addressee. Lack of theoretical input, limited knowledge about socio-cultural conventions and shortcomings in a broader comprehension of the pragma-semiotic aspects of language would result in communication breakdowns, which include misunderstanding, confusion, a slower L2 progress, fear and poor communication. When the delivered message could not be understood fully with its contents, the recipient can misinterpret the message, may not respond, show hesitation and, thus, produce a poor communication discourse, in which both parties fail to achieve the desired purpose of communication. This case especially occurs in EFL or ESL situations in which there is a high necessity for the language learners to fully grasp a foreign/second language with its all dimensions.

Turkish students find it difficult to understand the intended meaning of modal auxiliaries since such chapters are often taught in isolation from their socio-cultural and pragma-semiotic practices and contexts. In this way, students begin to refer to their First Language (L1) to find the equivalence and thus create a translation environment, which is not a desired process in language learning and teaching. In translation studies, equivalence is a serious problem that translators face especially in texts which are translated from L1 into L2. About the mismatch of modal verbs in Turkish and English. Kiliç (2013) states:

Modality is usually marked on the main verb in Turkish, it is not clearly marked as in English. Since the modalities are not used with performative verbs in Turkish as they are used in English, the syntactic structure of Turkish does not allow us to show a class of modals (p. 21).

The performative verbs (the morphemes) as attached to the main verbs (the root) are unable to reflect the intended message. Here, a language teacher has to prepare an operational plan to be integrated into the curriculum in which learners not only enjoy being a part of the action, but can also develop their linguistic, communicative and pragma-semiotic competencies which help them to frame a broader understanding of a foreign/second language. In this way, language learners can focus on both what and how they are expected to perform in a particular discourse. As Bardavi-Harlig (2001) states:

The role of instruction may be to help the learner to encode her own values (which again may be culturally determined) into a clear, unambiguous message ... without asking a learner to compromise her values and adopt those of the target culture (p. 31).

A socio-culturally enriched FL/L2 curriculum helps learners to become more aware of themselves in terms of conforming the norms and values in the target language. Here, the teachers of EFL play a significant role in the construction of a FL/L2 schemata. As Kasper and Rose (2002) claims, "... unless learners consciously attend to the complex interaction between language use and social context they will hardly ever learn the pragmatics of a new language" (p. ix). A combination of implicit and explicit instruction should therefore be integrated into the regular content of the FL/L2 curriculum to facilitate linguistic input and to increase their awareness to raise their L2 consciousness to native speaker proficiency level. The aim of this instruction from Kasper's (1997) perspective is to "help students situate L2 communicative practices in their socio-cultural context and appreciate their meanings and functions within the L2 community" (p. 12).

### Conclusion

In this paper, modal auxiliaries, a typical chapter to be covered in English grammar, is taken into consideration. A carefully, neatly planned and implemented FL/L2 curriculum enriched with social and pragma-semiotic input not only facilitates successful interaction both in written and oral formats, but also helps learners to consider global issues from the native speaker's perspective in which the foreign language acts as the primary interlocutor and agent in various contexts.

### About the Author:

**İsmail Erton, PhD.**, is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Department of Translation and Interpretation, Atılım University, Ankara, Turkey. He is also the director of Academic Writing and Advisory Center (AWAC). His research interests are; linguistics, curriculum design and pedagogy, language learning and teaching, translation studies and education. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7057-6924>

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