

Exploring the Acquisition of English Modal Auxiliary Verbs by Persian EFL Learners Considering Full Transfer/Full Access Theory

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(Received: 20th, June, 2017, Accepted: 11th, November, 2017, Date of publication: December, 2017)

The current study was carried out to investigate the acquisition of English modal auxiliary verbs by adult Persian EFL learners. In order to fulfill the intended objective, 34 intermediate and 33 advanced participants studying English at language institutes were chosen. The selected L2 learners were assessed both on their production (translation task) and perception (forced choice elicitation task) of the intended modal verbs. The data analysis revealed that they suffered inability in the production of simple and perfective forms of dynamic modal auxiliary *would*. Meanwhile, the distinction among deontic modal auxiliary verbs *should*, *must*, and *have to* constituted another area of difficulty even at higher levels of proficiency. The obtained results reveal that the structural problems caused by L1 transfer exist even at higher levels of learning. These findings reject the principles of full transfer/full access theory.

Key words: Auxiliary Verbs, Deontic Verbs, Possibility Verbs, Verbs of Desire, Full Transfer/Full Access Theory.

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