



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF GERMAN AND
MALAY MODAL VERBS FORMATION PROCESS***

FARHANA MUSLIM BINTI MOHD JALIS

FBMK 2015 91



UPM
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA
BERILMU BERBAKTI

**CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF GERMAN AND
MALAY MODAL VERBS FORMATION PROCESS**

By

FARHANA MUSLIM BINTI MOHD JALIS

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,
Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfillment of the Requirement
for the Degree of Master of Arts**

May 2015

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DEDICATION

Immeasurable appreciation and deepest gratitude for the help and support are extended to the following persons who in one way or another contributed in making this study possible. I take this opportunity to dedicate my written work to my family who has supported me unconditionally throughout this journey.

I am most grateful to my beloved parents Mohd Jalis Md Jelas and Zaharah Mohd Dali. These two strong and gentle souls have taught me to believe in Allah and to never give up in order achieving the goals in life. All of their unconditional love supports and encouragements have been my words of wisdom to pull me through in this journey of pursuing knowledge.

My wholehearted dedication goes to the better half of my life, Norhasnizam, Thank you for your eternal support and understanding. His infallible love will always be my source of strength. His patience and sacrifice will remain in my inspiration throughout my life. Without his help, I would not have been able to complete much of what I have done and become who I am.

Finally, I dedicate my work to the sunshine of my happiness and strengths, Nor Irdhia Naurah and Nor Hani Nasuha. I thanked Allah for blessing them to me as they will always be my push factor to move forward and achieving the dreams in my life. They are my best cheerleaders!

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts

CONTRASTIVE STUDY OF GERMAN AND MALAY MODAL VERBS FORMATION PROCESS

By

FARHANA MUSLIM BINTI MOHD JALIS

May 2015

Chair: Associate Professor Normaliza Abd Rahim, PhD
Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication

Acquiring a foreign language is not an easy task especially when the target language differs greatly from the source language particularly in its grammatical system. As such, learning the basic German verb is definitely a challenge for Malaysian language learners due to the typological differences as German is an inflectional language while Malay is an isolating language. For instance, when constructing a German modal verb in a sentence, inexperienced learners may face many challenges due to the differences in word formation process. This study aims to identify the components of German modal verb formation process used by editors in a set of eleven editorial columns of *KL-POST* 2012 magazines (a magazine published for the German speaking society in Kuala Lumpur) by contrasting them with the Malay modal verbs (*kata bantu ragam*). Data were collected and analysed using Whitman's (1970) model and made predictions on the results of the comparison made using Stockwell's et al., (1965) 'hierarchy of difficulty'. This study may have implications on both the learning and teaching of German as it provides better understanding for learners to form correct sentences in German. Findings reveal that differences and similarities exist in the formation process when German and Malay modal verbs are contrasted. In addition, by using Stockwell's et al., (1965) 'hierarchy of difficulty' to make predictions, it was found that modal verbs may cause difficulties in language learning. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that understanding the differences and similarities may provide alternative explanations that can assist learners' comprehension, and it is important for educators to provide more explanation on the use of modal verbs in their lessons. This study can act as a guide for language instructors to prepare more effective teaching plans that will provide better explanations for morphologically inexperienced learners.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
Sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sastera

**KAJIAN KONTRASTIF PROSES PEMBENTUKAN KATA KERJA BANTU
MODAL BAHASA JERMAN KEPADA BAHASA MELAYU**

Oleh

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Mei 2015

Pengerusi: Profesor Madya Normaliza Abd Rahim, PhD
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Mempelajari bahasa asing bukanlah sesuatu perkara yang mudah terutama apabila terdapatnya perbezaan tatabahasa di antara bahasa sasaran dan bahasa sumber. Mempelajari asas kata kerja modal bahasa Jerman sememangnya mencabar terhadap penutur bahasa Melayu berikutan perbezaan tipologi bahasa Jerman dan Melayu. Dalam membina ayat kata bantu (modal) bahasa Jerman, penutur bahasa Melayu yang keliru mungkin akan menghadapi cabaran berikutan perbezaan dalam proses pembinaan ayat. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti komponen-komponen proses pembinaan frasa kata bantu ragam bahasa Jerman yang digunakan dalam kesemua 11 ruangan editorial majalah masyarakat penutur bahasa Jerman di Kuala Lumpur *KL-POST* yang telah diterbitkan sepanjang tahun 2012 dan membandingkan komponen tersebut kepada proses binaan frasa kata bantu ragam bahasa Melayu. Kajian ini menggunakan Model Whitman (1970) sebagai metodologi kajian yang merangkumi kajian isi kandungan di mana data kajian akan dikumpul dan dibincangkan secara menyeluruh. Seterusnya, melalui dapatan kajian, andaian tahap kesukaran dilakukan menggunakan teori andaian tahap kesukaran Stockwell et al., (1965). Kajian bandingan bahasa Jerman dan bahasa Melayu ini akan memberi implikasi terhadap kedua-dua proses pembelajaran dan pengajaran bahasa Jerman. Analisis kajian ini mendapati bahawa, melalui perbandingan struktur binaan ayat kata bantu ragam bahasa Jerman dan bahasa Melayu, bukan sahaja perbezaan malah persamaan dalam dapatan kajian juga boleh diperoleh. Dapatan kajian ini boleh membantu pelajar memahami tatabahasa bahasa Jerman dengan lebih baik justeru mengakibatkan pelajar kurang melakukan kesilapan. Di samping itu, melalui analisis andaian tahap kesukaran Stockwell's et al., (1965) mendapati bahawa, sekiranya pelajar membina ayat menggunakan kata bantu ragam bahasa Jerman semasa proses pembelajaran, pelajar mungkin akan menghadapi kesukaran. Kesimpulannya, melalui kajian bandingan bahasa, kaedah penerangan alternatif terhadap pelajar boleh dilakukan bagi memastikan pelajar memahami kaedah pembelajaran bahasa Jerman dengan lebih baik. Kajian ini boleh dijadikan panduan kepada tenaga pengajar dalam membantu mereka menyediakan pelan pengajaran dan memberi penerangan alternatif kepada pelajar yang lemah dalam menguasai bahasa Jerman.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to first and foremost gratefully thank the Merciful and Almighty Allah to provide me with all the strength and will to complete this dissertation. Alhamdulillah, despite all of the obstacle and difficulty that I have faced, with His blessing, I still manage to go through and finish this work.

I am taking this opportunity to express the deepest appreciation to my committee chairperson Assoc. Prof. Dr. Normaliza Abd Rahim, whose work demonstrated to me that no success can be achieved without hard work and determination. Her invaluable guidance and encouragement throughout the process of thesis preparation and writing is very much appreciated. I also would like to express, my gratitude to my committee members, Dr. Torsten Schaar for his close reading, constructive comments, supports and guidance for German language of this study.

Nevertheless, I would like to express my appreciation to Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) and the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) for financial assistance and supports in order for me to pursue my study.

Finally, there are no words to describe my deepest gratitude and appreciation to my family especially to my beloved husband, Norhasnizam for being my strength in sickness and in health, and supported me unconditionally. Not to forget, my fellow friends thank you for always being there to cheer and give me a boost to complete this study. Thank you all so much.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 15 May 2015 to conduct the final examination of Farhana Muslim Binti Mohd Jalis on her thesis entitled “Contrastive Study of German and Malay Modal Verbs Formation Process” in accordance with the Universities and University College Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Arts.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

acc	accusative case
adv	adverb
Aux	auxiliary
Aux1	first auxiliary
Aux2	second auxiliary
BM	<i>Bahasa Melayu</i> / Malay Language
CA	contrastive analysis
conj	conjugation
DAAD	<i>Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst</i> / German Academic Exchange Service
DE	<i>Deutsch</i> / German Language
EN	English Language
FEM	<i>femininum</i> / feminine
form.	formal
GMI	German Malaysian Institute
GMV	German modal verb
GSSKL	German Speaking Society Kuala Lumpur
IL	interpretation language
inf.	informal
INTEC	International Education College
KBSM	<i>Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah</i>
LEO	Link Everything Online
L1	first language
L2	second language
MMV	Malay modal verb
MoE	Malaysian Ministry of Education
MV	modal verb
NP	noun phrase
O	object
S	subject
SL	source language
sg	singular
pl.	plural
pres	present tense
TestDaF	German as a Foreign Language Test
TL	target language
UiTM	Universiti Teknologi Mara / Mara Institute of Technology
UKM	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
UM	University of Malaya
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
USM	Universiti Sains Malaysia
V	verb
V1	first verb
V2	second verb
V3	third verb
VP	verb phrase

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Language is a very effective tool in communication. Whether it is spoken or written, language is used to create a conversation among people and to produce literature that expresses people's thoughts and emotions (Asmah Haji Omar, 2003:5). Language is first learned at home informally and formally at school and in higher education. Bilingualism exists in just about every country around the world regardless of the class of society or age groups (Grosjean, 1982; McLaughlin, 1984). A bilingual person is often a member of a minority group whose way of thinking and whose values are unfamiliar to the 'majority'. Language may be used to eradicate a person's distrust and fear of others without showing it (McLaughlin, 1984:3).

Learning a foreign language, on the other hand, takes the same effort as learning a second language. The language learner must first understand the basic grammatical rules and forms of the particular language in order to use the language (Asmah Haji Omar, 2003:2). One may say that it is easier for people to acquire their first language since it is acquired naturally, than it is to study a second or third language. For those who are bilingual, they would somehow understand the art of acquiring a third or more foreign languages (Kärchner-Ober, 2011:227).

In Malaysia especially, the Malay language is known as the National language or - 'Bahasa Kebangsaan' or 'Bahasa Melayu'. Almost every Malaysian speaks Malay because it is a compulsory subject taught in school. According to *Berita Harian* (2011, July 29), Malaysia is now populated by 67.4% *Bumiputeras* (most of them Malays), 24.6% Chinese, 7.3% Indians and 0.7% other ethnic groups from a total of 28.3 million people. In addition, 8.2% are foreigners currently staying in Malaysia. In the land of multilinguals, many Malaysians speak more than one language, for example English, Tamil, and Chinese.

For instance, a Malay learner may speak Malay as the mother tongue (L1) and learn English at school as a second language (L2). As another example, an Indian learner who speaks Tamil as L1, learns Malay as L2 and English as a third language (L3) at school. When both learners wish to learn German for example, German will be considered their foreign language. Foreign languages are not commonly being spoken by Malaysians in their daily conversation. A foreign language is usually used for education, business or cultural purposes (Asmah Haji Omar, 2003:3). Those who speak a foreign language only speak the language in a certain community and in certain places such as school, university or language centres. The rise of new media has resulted in many Malaysians realising the importance of having an extra foreign language for various purposes such as teaching and learning, media entertainment, social networking, as well as business.

Chapter one presents the background of this study, which gives a brief description of German and Malay and the history of learning German in Malaysia. This chapter also deals with the problem statement of the study, research objectives and questions, followed by the research significance, limitations and finally, the operational definition of terms used in this study.

1.2 Background of the Study

This section describes the background of the languages being studied, namely German and Malay. The purpose is to provide information about German and Malay language such as their typology and linguistic features.

1.2.1 The German and Malay languages

Typologically, German language (known in German language as *Deutsch*) is related to the West Germanic sub-branch (along with English, Frisian and Dutch) of the Germanic branch of the Indo-European language tree. According to Durrell (2003), German is spoken as a native language by about 100 million people in at least fifteen European countries, making it by far the biggest speech community in Western and Central Europe. German is the official state language in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Luxembourg. It has been accorded regional status in areas of Belgium, Denmark, Italy and Romania, spoken as minorities in France, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Russia. The language is used in a vast range of domains such as daily conversation, formal speech, technical writing, journalism, literature and many more (Durrell, 2003:1).

The Malay language (Bahasa Melayu), on the other hand, belongs to a branch of the Austronesian family tree. Malay is the native language of Malays residing in the Malay Archipelago (Nik Safiah Karim, 1978:21) and is spoken as the national language in several states. Standard Malay language has various official names. In Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore, Malay language it is known as *Bahasa Melayu*. While in Indonesia, it is known as *Bahasa Indonesia*.

Linguistically, there are some features that distinguish German from Malay. One of the most prominent features is that German assigns fixed genders namely; *Maskulinum* (masculine), *Femininum* (feminine) and *Neutrum* (neuter) to their nouns (Durrell, 2003:172). The assigned genders are not natural genders, but they are known as grammatical genders (*das Genus*). Table 1.0 below shows example of gender assigning in German nouns:

Table 1.0: Example of Genders Assigning in German Nouns

	<i>Maskulinum</i> Masculine	<i>Femininum</i> Feminine	<i>Neutrum</i> Neuter
DE	<i>Der Tisch ist lang.</i>	<i>Die Frau weinen.</i>	<i>Das Buch ist dick.</i>
EN	<u>The</u> table is long.	<u>The</u> woman cry.	<u>The</u> book is thick.
BM	<i>Meja itu panjang.</i>	<i>Wanita itu menangis.</i>	<i>Buku itu tebal.</i>

This feature of gender assigning does not exist in the Malay language system. Malay language does not have gender in its nouns as it is only assigned to living forms. German is an inflection language. German nouns and other words used with nouns have endings and other means to show gender, number and case (Durrell, 2003:171). Example in (Table 1.1):

Table 1.1: Example of German Inflection

	<i>Sie</i> NP They	<i>komm(en)</i> V come+3sg+pres+pl	<i>morgen</i> adv tomorrow
DE	EN		BM
<i>Sie kommen morgen.</i>	They come tomorrow.		<i>Mereka datang esok.</i>

Table 1.1 shows the example of German verb inflection (conjugation). The suffix of the noun changes according to noun. These inflections seem difficult to learn in the beginning, but they are central to the way German works as a language. According to Whittle et al. (2011:40), German inflects its nouns, adjectives and pronouns in four grammatical cases. The cases are nominative or '*Nominativ*' in German, accusative or '*Akkusativ*', dative or '*Dativ*' and genitive or '*Genitiv*'. This case system does not exist in Malay language. English also has cases, but they are only apparent with pronouns, not with nouns as in German. The nominative case is used for the subject of the finite verb, selected verbs and for nouns and pronouns independent of a verb, as in exclamations or when addressing people.

The accusative case is used to indicate the direct accusative object, after preposition (selected prepositions). The dative case is employed widely in spoken and written German. The dative is used to convey an indirect or dative object. The dative case is also used to indicate the person, for whom the action of the verb is done, indicating something unpleasant, certain prepositions and certain verbs (Whittle et al., 2011:43-47). The genitive case, on the other hand, is less commonly used in German nowadays. Genitive is used to denote possession, after collective nouns or nouns denoting proportion, certain adjectives, small number of verbs, adverbial expressions, and after

certain prepositions (Whittle et al., 2011:48-51). Malay does not have such cases in its language system.

Both languages use the Roman alphabet in written script. German alphabetical system is slightly different since it has 4 additional letters which are not found in English and Malay. The letters are 'Ä-ä (A umlaut), Ö-ö (O umlaut), Ü-ü (U umlaut), and ß (Eszett) (Whittle et al., 2011:17-18). Syntactically, Malay has the Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) structure in its active sentence. German active sentences are more flexible and can take both the structures of Object-Verb-Subject (OVS) and Subject-Verb-Object (SVO). Hence, with the verb placed as the second element, the sentence is grammatically and semantically correct. Example in (Table 1.2):

Table 1.2: Example of German V2 placement

DE:	<i>Ich lese ein Buch.</i>	/	<i>Ein Buch lese ich.</i>
	S V acc O	/	acc O V S
DE	EN	BM	
<i>Ich lese ein Buch.</i> <i>Ein Buch lese ich.</i>	I read a book. I read a book.	<i>Saya baca sebuah buku.</i> <i>Saya baca sebuah buku.</i>	

Despite being different typologically, German and Malay do however, share some similarities which will be discussed in chapter four.

1.2.2 History of German Language Learning in Malaysia

The German Language has a long history of being accepted as foreign language in Malaysia. The existence of several German language institutions that teach and at the same time promotes German culture in Malaysia proving of its role and purpose. German was first introduced in the formal Malaysian education system in early 1958 by the Goethe Institute located in Penang. It is an institute that organises and supports cultural events that promote German language, intercultural exchange and provide information on the culture, social and political life of Germany to foreign countries. The Goethe Institute was relocated to Kuala Lumpur in 1962 where it remains until now (Goethe Institute, 2014).

Due to a high demand in technical and scientific based disciplines such as in Science and Engineering, students are required to learn German so that they are able to comprehend the technical and scientific terminologies or concepts in German (Renate, 2011). The Malaysian government believed that Germany, being one of the leading countries in the field of engineering and science, established close diplomatic ties. Thus, the German language made inroads in selected local schools and institutions (Berita Harian, 2014:30 January).

According to the Curriculum Development Centre (Koh, 2009), efforts in introducing German as a foreign language in residential schools started between late 1990 and early 1991. A group of non-graduate teachers were sent to Germany for training, in 1991 followed by two more groups in 1995 and 1996. The programme was initiated by the Malaysian Ministry of Education (MoE) to fulfil a vision of having fifty well-trained teachers in German by 2002. However, the programme was put on hold in 1997 due to economic down turn. The initiative resulted in German being taught in secondary schools in 1995. Students had the choice to learn German when they entered selected residential schools (Koh, 2009:5).

The main objective of initiating German Language acquisition in schools by the Malaysian government was to fulfil the national education philosophy and to equip students with the knowledge necessary to enable them to face the challenges of a world without boundaries. The Malaysian government issued a *Kurikulum Bersepadu Sekolah Menengah (KBSM)* teaching syllabus for German language to show that the government was serious in the teaching and learning of German in Malaysia (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2014). The government also hopes that by learning German, Malaysia will be able to produce a generation that is internationally compatible (Berita Harian, 2014, January 30).

In the 1990's, German was only taught as an elective subject at local universities. It was available in University of Malaya (UM), Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and Mara Institute of Technology (currently known as Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM)). Since then, German has been taught as a field of study at undergraduate level in local universities, local schools, private institutions and international schools. Currently, there are only two local universities offering German as a Bachelor's degree. This was followed by University of Malaya (UM) which began its Bachelor of Languages and Linguistics (German Language) in 1998, and Universiti Putra Malaysia which offered Bachelor of Arts (German Language) in 2001 (Koh, 2009:5).

Scholarships are available for students who wish to study German in Malaysia as well as in Germany. Besides that, funding can be sourced from the Germans in Malaysia such as German Academic Exchange Services or '*Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst*' (DAAD). DAAD extends scholarship programmes for students interested in bachelor and post graduate studies or even to carry out exchange programmes in Germany (DAAD, 2014).

The German Malaysia Institute (GMI) which is located in Selangor is also offering similar courses in INTEC, UiTM. The GMI was established based on the mutual agreement of the German and Malaysian governments to promote the transfer of technology through technical education and training (Koh, 2009). The courses offered are mostly for the fields of Production Technology and Industrial Electronics. Students are also required to go through industrial training besides learning German as a compulsory subject.

Excellent students are given the opportunity to further their studies at the Universities of Applied Sciences (*Fachhochschule*). In order to do so, they have to fulfil a basic German proficiency test. In addition, students who obtain the A-Level grade of point 13 and above and pass the TestDaF (German as a Foreign Language Test) are also given the opportunity to pursue the programme in Germany (German-Malaysian Institute, 2014).

1.3 Problem Statement

Learning a foreign language has been a huge challenge for learners, especially for learners whose source language has various differences in its grammatical systems as to the target language (Kärchner-Ober, 2011). Learning verbs that exhibit significant differences may cause difficulty for learners. According to Kendris (1963) in his French and Spanish dictionary:

“Verbs have always been a major problem for students no matter what system or approach the teacher uses”.

Kendris (1963: vii)

In Malaysia, comparative studies of both German and Malay languages has not been widely conducted partly due to a shortage of related materials which have posed as constraints for this study (Koh, 2009; Diederich, 2003).

Learners' difficulty arises generally because there is inadequate understanding of the German morphological system. Learners will find it hard to work with the grammar in German since they have to translate the meaning of the word while simultaneously configuring the morphological functions. German verbs are usually conjugated when it is used with a noun (Whittle et al., 2011: 85). This is a basic rule when learners first learn German. When constructing a German sentence involving modal verb, other aspects such as verb placement and lexical verb in infinitive form must also be taken into consideration by the learners. This is where Malaysian learners of German usually face difficulties.

A study conducted by Schmitz (1991), on interference of SL (L1) in the learning of TL (L2) focused on the problem of language interference among Malay learners of the German language. Schmitz (1991) explains almost every major part of German linguistics in contrast to Malay, focusing on error analysis as the main discussion. The explanations provided by Schmitz (1991) were not explicit enough and discussion was more on the surface of the related problem. In the study, he dedicated a chapter on morphology and a small section on verb inflection. His research on verbs also did not focus on one type of verb in particular. In fact, the contrastive analysis requires more attention and detailed observation on factors such as semantic and morphological aspects.

Schmitz (1991) studies encompassed comparisons based on the student's error analysis, but there were no predictions on the level of difficulty when applied to modal verbs related to nouns. This was seen as an opportunity to conduct studies on the area and further improvise methods to address the problems related to the process of learning German as a foreign language. Based on Schmitz (1991), this study therefore was to focus on complementing the gaps in the comparative study of German and Malay modal verbs.

A look into Koh's (2009) study on the use of German articles and error analysis made by Malaysian students revealed the absence of agreement in gender between articles and the noun. Koh (2009) did a comparison of Malay and German languages, which focused more on the latter, incorporating the features on inflection and conjugation. Koh (2009) also suggested that the errors that were made by the students may have resulted or led to other grammatical problems. As a result, the problem regarding modal verbs was seen as an area of concern on grammatical aspects that require alternative solutions.

Another study conducted by Robe'ah Yusuf (2010) on error analysis of German regular and irregular verb conjugation among Malaysian students in Universiti Perguruan Sultan Idris (UPSI) can be regarded as one of the study that closed the gap on contrasting German to Malay modal verbs. It showed that students were often confused on how to use the correct form of verb and made repetitive errors regarding suffix. Students also often faced great challenges when conjugating German verbs. They usually made mistakes with stronger verbs and irregular verbs. The mistakes were often due to the fact that Malay verbs have zero inflection while German verbs are inflectional. The limitations of her study towards error analysis of German regular and irregular verbs made by UPSI students were on all verbs and not specifically on modal verbs. Besides that, the formal descriptions of composing a modal verb in Malay were not explicitly explained. There were neither contrastive processes of languages involved, nor a prediction on level of difficulty.

The present study of contrasting German to Malay modal verbs, therefore, attempts to address the gaps raised in the previous studies and perform an analysis in order to improve language acquisition among students learning the German language. This study aims to establish a new platform for future research in the field of contrastive analysis for both languages. It would require extensive studies on German-Malay contrastive modal verbs to fill the gap in the existing literature. The study can potentially provide better explanation for learners to understand how German grammatical system works. Through this study, it is hoped that analysis regarding the acquisition of German verbs such as conjugation and verb placement would provide some clear and explicit explanations. Lacking these explanations may result in learners' confusion that affects the level of comprehension.

1.4 Research Question

The study objectives aim to answer these two research questions:

1. What are the components in German modal verb formation process used in the editorial columns of *KL-POST* 2012 magazines?
2. What are the contrasting formation processes of German and Malay modal verb in the editorial columns of *KL-POST* 2012 magazines?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The study will take into consideration the following objectives:

1. To identify the components of German modal verb formation process used in the editorial columns of *KL-POST* 2012 magazines
2. To contrast the formation process of German and Malay modal verb in the editorial columns of *KL-POST* 2012 magazines

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study of contrasting GMV to MMV are seen as a crucial matter as some students or learners who are less competent with English or German may sometimes need another alternative explanation in order to understand how German grammar functions and works. According to Whitman (1970), contrastive analysis may help learners by providing an alternative way of explanations. Even in explaining the basic rule of forming a simple German sentence, some learners may look into another language as a comparison in order to understand how the grammar of the target language actually works rather than just looking up in grammar books. Due to this, this study tries to bring forward the problems faced by students and educators of German, to discuss the issue and provide academic answers for the learners. In addition for learners, the material that was used to facilitate this research may provide a useful reading material and learning tool. Diederich (2003) in his article claimed that there are not enough reading materials and dictionaries that could directly translate German to Malay. As for this matter, *KL-POST* is seen as a very good reading and learning material. The study hopes that the collected data would be useful for learners to see the similarities and differences and solve their confusion which may resulted in a better understanding of the German grammatical system.

This study seems to be very important to the editors of *KL-POST* and maybe other magazine editors who intend to write editorial post to be read by Malaysians who know German. This is because this study really looks into the modal verb used by the editors. The Malay modal verb has its level of obligation in its function. For example the German modal verb '*sollen*' if translated to Malay may have many meanings such as '*harus*' or '*patut*', depending on the content of the sentence to show level of politeness. German modal verbs also have its politeness. That is why the editors need to bear in

mind when writing a post, he or she might want to use clearer and more complete linguistics element such as personal pronoun or noun in the sentences for Malaysian learner who are less experience to understand the content better. As a result, they might be urging more Malaysian readers to read more German reading materials.

This study may act as a stepping stone to other researchers who wish to gain more information or to write research papers related to contrastive linguistics particularly involving the German and Malay languages. Diederich (2003) mentioned the insufficiency of reading materials written in German and German to Malay language dictionaries. Therefore, this study hopes to create awareness among the local researchers on the need to contribute to this field of study to allow the study of the German-Malay language to be done outside of Germany. This matter will introduce the Malay language to the world. In addition, as the model created by Whitman (1970) is applicable towards contrasting other sets of languages due to the freedom of form selection that is not specifically pointing to the use of modal verb alone and the fact that the term 'form' refers to any linguistic unit or size, this study may be used by any researchers or educators of any language to perform a contrastive study between languages and also to predict potential difficulties that learners might face.

This study may also be a guide for the educators and language instructors as the outcome of this study may give new input to the current approach in teaching foreign languages particularly German Language. Besides, this study may also strengthen and improve the teaching of the German language in Malaysia and learners' learning styles. Karchner-Öber (2011) argued that Malaysian students who studied German as a foreign language are shy and refuse to ask questions whenever they face problems. Therefore, the study is seen as a good opportunity for educators to improve their teaching plans by incorporating this alternative approach that could be effective and easy for both parties to understand. Hufeisen & Neuner (2004) believed that when acquiring a new language, it often helps to know another language as it can ease the process of learning. For instance, if a certain structure is not available in the native language, learners may relate it with the language that they know.

Finally, this study is considered to be important to the society. The term society does not only imply to the Malaysian society who studies German but also to the German speaking society that lives in Malaysia. There are many Germans who stay in Malaysia for a period of time in various sectors such as education, business, factories and many more (GSSKL, 2014). This study may help the Germans who wish to communicate with the locals better. For the Malaysian society, this study is very important to educate people who wish to know German language and culture better. This study also hopes to welcome more Malaysians to study German language and serve as a platform for the locals to contribute new and latest ideas to improve and enrich the German society activities.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

Contrasting modal verbs is a very broad field. This study is concerned with the area of GMV formation and in contrast to MMV formation which includes morphology, semantics and syntactical process along the way. There will be no conclusive what to be made about the learning of German as a foreign language by Malaysian learners. Limitations of the study are briefly listed:

1. The study is limited to German modal verbs used in editorial's column in all 11 issues of Kuala Lumpur German speaking society *KL-POST* issued in the year 2012.
2. The target discussion will be concerning more on grammatical study of modality that is related to the formation process of German modal verb phrase in contrast to Malay modal verbs such as in the area of inflection (morphology), modal verbs meaning (semantic) and verb placement (syntax) to MMV phrase.
3. This study also concerns on predicting the level of difficulty that Malay learners might encounter during the process of learning German modal verbs.

1.8 Definition of Terms

In this part, the operational definition will be given concerning related topics that will be explained in this study. This will help readers to understand the linguistics terms involved and the definition of it.

1.8.1 First Language

Trask (1998: 145) defines a mother-tongue language as the individual first language, which is a language acquired from childhood. Furthermore according to Trask (1998), it is not impossible for a person to have more than one mother tongue language. Kamus Dewan (2005:106) in addition defines a mother-tongue language as a language that has been used as a child.

1.8.2 Foreign language

Crystal (1992:141) explained that a foreign language is *"A language which is not the mother tongue of a speaker. The term is often used to exclude cases where a language has a special status within a country (such as English used as a second language in Nigeria), although the second language is not a mother tongue language, there is a reluctance to see it in the same terms as other foreign languages which have no status"*. A foreign language that is being taught in schools does not have a role in daily communication. A foreign language is usually only used for specific purposes like education or business. Often times, Malaysians would not refer a second language as a

foreign language. This is because in Malaysia it is very common for Malaysians to speak more than one language (Kärchner-Ober, 2011:227).

1.8.3 Contrastive Analysis

According to Kridalaksana (1993:13), contrastive analysis (CA) is a synchronised method in language analysis with the aim to show similarities or differences between languages or dialects in order to obtain principles that may be applied in practical problems such as language teaching, linguistics research and translation. CA is a systematic study of a pair of languages with a view to identify structural similarities and differences. The significance of contrasting is not to prove which language is prior than the other language, but to find explanations in cross language dilemma thus resulting in minimal mistakes that learner often makes.

1.8.4 Translation

Catford (1965:20) defines translation as the replacement of textual material in one language (source language) by equivalent textual material in another language (target language). Catford (1965) applied Halliday's Systemic Grammar model (1961) to translation theory, where he categorized translation shifts between levels, structures, word classes and units. Catford (1965) agreed that translation should be a branch of comparative linguistics. In this study of contrasting German and Malay, translation is an important method to obtain research data. Translation is very important to determine comparative grammatical function in the verbs used.

1.8.5 Word Formation

According to Grauberg (1997:8), word formation is 'many words, though constituting one unit of meaning, are derived from simpler ones by the addition of prefixes or suffixes or by some combination of words'. In descriptive or traditional grammar, word formation is by changing the word base form by adding affixes to it. In generative grammar, derivation is a sequence of linguistic representations that indicate the structure of a sentence or other linguistics unit before, during and after the application of some grammatical rule or set of rules.

1.8.6 Modal Verb

A modal verb or sometimes known as 'modal auxiliary' verb that typically express the attitude of the speaker to the content of the sentence, expressing volition, possibility, necessity, permission and more (Durrell, 2003:248).

1.8.7 Inflection

According to Katamba (1993:48), inflection is variation in the form of a word usually by adding affix (typically suffix) which expresses a grammatical contrast which is obligatory for the stem's word class in some given grammatical context. The added grammatical element to a word doesn't change its basic part of speech and this applies to verbs, articles, and possessive adjectives and adjectives Schenke and Seago (2004:2-4).

1.8.8 Conjugation

Conjugation is known as the act of inflecting in a word (usually by adding an affix or changing the stem of a word). In many languages, verbs belongs to a number of distinct morphological classes and usually affected by person, number, gender, tense, aspect, mood and many other grammatical categories (Katamba, 1993:224). Learning verb conjugation is not an easy task since a new learner has to memorise certain affixes involved and tables of conjugation usually helps them learn conjugation better.

1.9 Chapter Organization

In chapter organization, summaries of all five chapters that have been planned will be written here as to give a brief information of what to expect in this study.

1.9.1 Chapter 1

Chapter one focuses on the background of the research including the introduction of the contrasted languages (German and Malay). This chapter also reveals the core of the study which is the problem statements, research objectives, research question, research significant, research limitation and finally, the operational definition of the topics used in this study.

1.9.2 Chapter 2

In chapter two, all previous literature review related to this study is mentioned and reviewed. The chosen topics such as contrastive analysis theory, previous comparative studies, cross linguistics studies and modal verb studies are reviewed so that the missing gap can be identified for this study.

1.9.3 Chapter 3

Chapter three discusses more on the research methodology. The study begins with the theoretical framework of Whitman's model (1970) and in order to complete the model, Stockwell, Bowen & Martin's (1965) 'hierarchy of difficulties' is used to make predictions. This chapter also explains about instrument, data collection techniques, data analysis and process of written text translation used in this study.

1.9.4 Chapter 4

Chapter four provides the contrastive analysis of the data according to Whitman's model (1970). German and Malay modal verbs are being contrasted and explicitly discuss. Predictions on level of difficulties are also being made in this chapter according to Stockwell, Bowen & Martin's (1965) 'hierarchy of difficulties'. Lastly, the summary of the findings are also made for this chapter.

1.9.5 Chapter 5

Chapter five puts a summary on the study of contrasting German to Malay modal verbs. This chapter also provides recommendation for various target groups that may be useful. Furthermore, suggestions will also be made for further studies to ensure continuous German-Malay studies and helping students and new learners of German to learn German better.

1.10 Conclusion

It is hoped that by contrasting the verbs of German and Malay, it would spark a new generation of German-Malay researchers and in future tries to solve new problems that may arise hence interfere with the acquisition of the German language in Malaysia. Apart from identifying the problems in the German language learning, this research hopes to be among the pioneers in guiding those who are seeking the for best method of teaching German as a foreign language along with the current needs in communication. In the next chapter, selected reviews of the literature are discussed further.

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