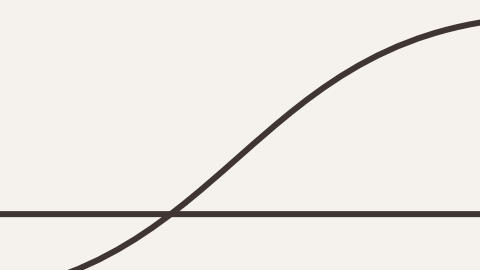




Modality in Mandarin Chinese and Tagalog

by Eliana Mugar and Samantha Rigor



Background & Focus

- English
 - *Can* covers a lot of different modalities, such as permission, ability, and knowledge
- Mandarin
 - Lexical differences in auxiliary verbs
 - Ex: “can” → 可以 (permission), 会 (knowledge), 能 (ability)
 - No change in lexical verbs
- Tagalog
 - Lexical differences in auxiliary verbs
 - Ex: “can/may” → *maaari* (Eng: *may*, permission), *pwede* (Eng: *can*, permission), *kaya* (Eng: *can*, ability)
 - Morphological differences in action verbs
 - Neutral form vs. ability/involuntary action (AIA) form

Background & Focus

B<in>uks-an ni Lisa ang pinto.

<PFV.NTL>open-LV GEN Lisa NOM door

‘Lisa opened the door.’

Na-buks-an ni Lisa ang pinto.

PFV.AIA-open-LV GEN Lisa NOM door

‘Lisa managed to open the door. / Lisa accidentally opened the door.’

Mandarin Modals

The Semantic Categories of Chinese Modal Auxiliary Verbs

Chinese modal auxiliary verbs	Semantic category
爱 <i>ai</i> (like, love), 打算 <i>dasuan</i> (intend), 敢 <i>gan</i> (dare), 乐意 <i>leyi</i> (would like), 肯 <i>ken</i> (be willing to), 情愿/宁愿 <i>qingyuan/ningyuan</i> (would rather), 想 <i>xiang</i> (would like), 要 <i>yao</i> (will, would), 愿(意) <i>yuan(yi)</i> (be willing to), 准备 <i>zhunbei</i> (prepare)	Volition (10)
得 <i>de</i> (can, may), 可能 <i>keneng</i> (can, could, may, might), 可以 <i>keyi</i> (may, might), 会 <i>hui</i> (can, could, will, would, know how), 能 <i>neng</i> (can, could), 能够 <i>nenggou</i> (can, could), 应该 <i>yinggai</i> (ought to be the cause that...)	Probability (7)
别/甭 <i>bie/beng</i> (mustn't, shouldn't), 得 <i>dei</i> (must), 配 <i>pei</i> (be good enough), 需要 <i>xuyao</i> (need), 要/须要/应 <i>yao/xuyao/ying</i> (should, must), 应该/应当/该/应 <i>yinggai/yingdang/gai/ying</i> (should), 值得 <i>zhide</i> (deserve)	Necessity (7)

Filipino Modals

TABLE I: THE FILIPINO MODALS

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Methodology

We recruited one native Tagalog speaker and one native Mandarin Chinese speaker from our personal contacts.

Phase 1: Storyboard Elicitation

- “Party Food” from *Totem Field Storyboards*
- Google Form with both images and captions
- Participants asked to translate sentences into their native languages

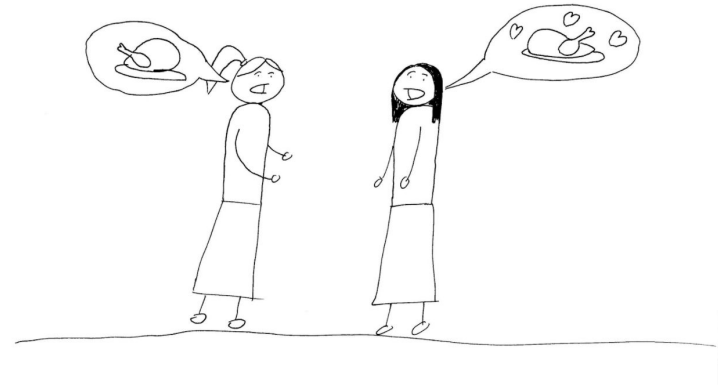
Phase 2: Grammaticality Judgment

- Responses to Google Form analyzed
 - “You used [X modal auxiliary] in your translation, would [Y modal auxiliary] make sense?”
 - “Would changing from [X] to [Y] change the meaning of the sentence?”
 - Used modal tables as our baseline for asking the grammatical judgement questions
-

Example from “Party Food”

- Picture targets “going to have”, “can”, and “love”
- Overall, targeted:
 - *want*
 - *going to have*
 - *can/can't*
 - *love*
 - *probably won't*
 - *would have*

4. “We’re going to have chicken.” “I can eat chicken. I love chicken!” *



Long answer text

Results for Mandarin Chinese

Phase 1 complete

- Different forms of “can” used throughout translation
 - For allergies, used “不能” → “not able to”
 - For OK foods, used “可以” → permission
 - Only used “会” to convey probability
 - Ex: “I probably won’t.” → “不会”
- Translations differ from expected output, possibly more colloquial
 - Ex: “Do you want to come to my party?”
 - Expected “想” → volition auxiliary, translates to “want” in English
 - Instead, used “可以” → permission

Once phase 2 is done, I will be able to find motivations behind certain choices in auxiliary verbs and determine whether some auxiliaries are interchangeable with others

Results for Tagalog

- “Mary do you **want** to come to my party on Saturday?”
- Targeting: *want*
 - Phase 1
 - “Mary, **gusto** mo bang dumalo...” – like (wish)
 - Phase 2
 - Can use “pwede” (permission)
 - Can use “maaari” (permission)
 - *Can use “sana” – hope (request)
 - *But cannot use “nawa” (wish)
 - ✓ Can use “ibig” – love (desire)
 - ✓ Can use “nais” – want (desire)
 - Both “ibig” and “nais” sound formal

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Results for Tagalog

- “What food are you **going to have**?”
- Targeting: *going to have*
 - Phase 1
 - “Anong mga pagkain ang **ipapakain** mo?” – morphological change
 - Phase 2
 - Speaker says none of the words in the modals work to replace it
- For all instances of **going to have**, my speaker only morphologically changed the verb (in the context of *we will eat [food item]*)

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Results for Tagalog

- “I **can’t** eat certain things.”
- Targeting: *can’t*
 - Phase 1
 - “Meron akong mga **hindi kinakain**” – morphological change
 - Phase 2
 - ✓ can use “pwede” – can (permission)
 - ✓ can use “maaari” – can (permission and/or ability(?))
 - ✓ can use “kaya” – can (ability)
 - As long as they’re all paired with “hindi” to negate + the correct form of “kumain” (to eat)

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Results for Tagalog

- “I **can’t** eat clams. They make me very sick.”
- Targeting: *can’t*
 - Phase 1
 - “Di ako **pwedeng** kumain...” – can (permission)
 - Phase 2
 - Need to compare contextually different *can* and *can’ts*

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Results for Tagalog

- “I **love** chicken!”
- Targeting: *love*
 - Phase 1
 - “**Gusto** ko ang manok!” – like (wish)
 - Phase 2
 - ✓ can use “*ibig*” – love (desire)
 - ✓ can use “*nais*” – want (desire)
 - Speaker says it’s formal, but they all work

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Results for Tagalog

- “Hmm... I can eat fish, but I **probably won’t**.”
- Targeting: *probably won’t*
 - Phase 1
 - “Hindi na lang **siguro**” – like (wish)
 - Not on the list!
 - Phase 2
 - ✓ can use “baka” – might (possibility)
 - *CAN’T use “tila” – might (possibility)
 - *CAN’T use “yata” – might (possibility)
 - *CAN’T use “maaari” – may (possibility)

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Results for Tagalog

- “You ate everything I **would have** eaten!”
- Targeting: *would have*
 - Phase 1
 - “Kinain mo ang lahat ng **dapat** ay kakainin ko!” – must (necessity) OR must (obligation)
 - Phase 2
 - *CAN’T use “kailangan” – need (necessity) OR should (permission)
 - *Can use “sana” – may (request)
 - Unsure of “nawa”
 - *Can use “gusto” – like (wish)
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Further Discussion

- Mandarin
 - Complete grammaticality judgment section of elicitation
 - Determine whether a difference in modal auxiliaries varies due to individual translation or due to semantic meaning of the modals themselves
- Tagalog
 - Look into context dependent *can* and *can'ts*
 - Further analysis on why certain modals (even within the same expression category) work/don't work

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