Modals in Tagalog

Wataru Uegaki, James Engels, Ella Hannon, Anne Mucha, & Fred Whibley. (created for the UKRI FLF project "Logic in Semantic Universals" based on Vander Klok 2021 "Revised modal questionnaire for cross-linguistic use")

Language name: **Tagalog**

ISO 639-3: tgl

Glottolog: taga1270

Consultant demographics: A male speaker of Isabela Tagalog.

He also speaks Ilocano.

Elicitation dates: 20 Dec 2022, 12 Jan 2023

The document is reviewed by a native speaker linguist, marked in blue.

Legend for reviewer comments:

- \$ when the reviewer provides a preferred alternative, including \$\$\$ for a strong preference
- Inline # when the reviewer judges the consultant's translation to be infelicitous,
- == when the reviewer provides an equally acceptable alternative, either for the modal or the whole sentence

BODY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

A. EPISTEMIC

MOD

A1 Epistemic Necessity

swim

(1) Ben goes swimming every day. Ben is not obliged or required to go swimming; it is just a habit of his. It is now time for Ben to be swimming... so Ben must be swimming (right now).

now.

Malamang lumalangoy (V) si Ben (NP) ngayon (Adv). DET

Ben

(2) You know that John goes to school at 9am every day. You look at the clock and see it is 9am, therefore **John must be at school**.

MalamangnasaeskwelahannasiJohn.MODatat.schoolalready DETJohn.

(3) (Adapted from von Fintel & Gillies 2007). The math teacher says: There are 3 boxes. The ball is in box A or in box B or in box C. It is not in A. It is not in B. So, it (the ball) must be in third box.

Malamangnasa ikatlongkahon ito.MODat thirdbox this

Siguradona/\$ng nasa ikatlongkahon ito.MODCOMP at thirdbox this

Comment:

- *Sigurado* requires that the prejacent is a 100% objective certainty, it is infelicitous if it is merely a subjective certainty (therefore less felicitous in 1 and 2).
- This can also be "sigurado=ng" with the velar nasal allomorph of the linker/complementizer "na." The version with =ng sounds better to me.
- (4) Tim is calling for his dog. The dog is not coming. Tim looks for the dog in the kitchen, bedroom, living room, (in every room in the house) but the dog is not in any of those rooms. Therefore, Tim concludes that **the dog must not be in the house**.

Malamangwalaangasosa[.loob]ngbahay.MODneg.exis DETdoginsideofthe.house

A2 Epistemic Weak Necessity

(5) You know that Ann goes hiking from 7am until 8am every day. Most of the time Ann goes to the lake, but sometimes she goes to the mountains. It is now 7:30am and your friend asks where Ann is. You say to your friend: **Ann should be at the lake right now.**

MalamangnasalawanasiAnnngayon.MODatlakealready DETAnnnow.

(6) (Imagine that) you used to live in Goa. You are not living in Goa anymore. You notice how different the weather is in the UK, where you live right now. You know that it often rains in Goa, especially in the afternoon, but not necessarily every day. Now it's the afternoon, so you think it should be raining now in Goa.

MalamangumuulansaGoangayon.MODrain.CONTatGoanow.

(7) When the light is on at Mary's house, it usually means that she is home. You want to visit Mary. You walk past Mary's house and notice that the light is on. You think to yourself: **Mary should be at home**.

MalamangnasabahaysiMaryngayon.MODathomeDETMarynow.

A3 Epistemic Possibility

(8) The teacher is not consistent. The students never know if he's going to come or not to teach class. Today, it's time to start class and the students are waiting again. **He might be coming to school today**.

Siguro papasok eskwelahan siya ngayong.araw. sa MOD come 3sg **DET** at.school today Papasok siguro siya eskwelahan ngayong.araw. sa MOD 3sg come **DET** at.school today

My sense is that "siguro" is biased toward the truth of the prejacent, rather than just conveying possibility. (maybe parallel to English "probably") For example, I don't think "Siguro p, siguro not p" is a coherent statement.

I would use "baka" in this situation, I think:

Bakapapasoksiyasaeskwelahanngayon.arawMODcome3sgDETat.schooltoday

(the alternative word order is impossible for "baka")

(9) Grace is looking for her necklace. She looks in her wardrobe and on top of the wardrobe. It's not there. She looks on top of the TV. It's not there. She looks in her backpack. It's not there. She hasn't checked her sister's wardrobe yet, but **Grace's necklace might be lost**.

Siguro/<mark>\$Baka</mark> nawala ang kwintas ni Grace. DET **MOD** necklace DET Grace lost Nawala siguro ang kwintas Grace. ni Lost **MOD** DET necklace **DET** Grace

(10) Charles is looking for his pet cat, but cannot find it. He knows that his cat is very elusive and mysterious. Charles tells his sister:

The cat may be inside. The cat may also be outside.¹

¹ (The task is not only to translate these two sentences individually, but to keep in mind the sequencing i.e., these sentences are not to be used in isolation).

```
Siguro nasa.loob ang pusa o pwede ring nasa.labas.
MOD inside DET cat or [possibly?] also outside.
```

Pwedeng nasa loob o nasa labas ang pusa.

H.H. also provides:

Pwedeng nasa loob ang pusa o pwede ring nasa labas.

Baka nasa loob ang pusa, o baka nasa labas.

Maaaring nasa loob ang pusa, at maaaari ring nasa labas.

Comment:

- *Pwede* requires the presence of alternatives (which could be contextually explicit but linguistically implicit). In the presence of such alternatives, pwede becomes more felicitous than siguro.
- *Siguro* can come after the verb. *Pwede*, *sigurado*, and *malamang* don't have the same syntactic flexibility.
- Here the reviewer that the continuation sounds like the speaker is self-correcting.
- "Maaari" is a possibility modal, though it doesn't seem to appear in your data.
- "at" is the conjunction "and"
- (11) Daniel lives in London and his friend has recently moved to New York. Daniel's parents told him that he is not allowed to go and see his friend in New York because it is too far away. You heard that Daniel is leaving London next week but you don't know where he will go. Daniel usually does things that he is not permitted to do. You think **Daniel might go to New York**.

```
Siguro pu-punta sa New York si Daniel.

MOD CONT-go to New York DET Daniel
```

A4 Epistemic Non-necessity

(7') When the light is on at Mary's house, it usually means that she is home. You want to visit Mary. You walk past Mary's house and notice that the light is on. However, there is no car in the driveway. You think to yourself: **Mary may not be at home.**

```
Siguro/$BakawalasabahaysiMary.MODneg.exisathomeDETMary.
```

A5 Epistemic impossibility

(1') Ben goes swimming every day. Ben is not obliged or required to go swimming; it is just a habit of his. It is now time for Ben to be swimming... so **Ben can't be at home**.

Siguradona/\$ng walasabahaysiBen.MODCOMP neg.exis athomeDETBen

== Malamang wala sa bahay si Ben.

(3') The math teacher says: There are 3 boxes. The ball is in box 1 or in box 2 or in box 3. We opened box 1, and the ball was there. There is only one ball. So, **the ball cannot be in 3**.

Sigurado-ngwalaangbolasaikatlongkahon.MOD-COMPNeg.exisDETballinthirdbox.

B. DEONTIC

B1 Deontic Necessity

(12) In Indonesia, the law states that when you ride a motorbike... You must wear a helmet.

Dapatmag-suotkanghelmet.MODAG.VOICE-wear2sgDEThelmet.

Alternatively: Dapat ka=ng mag-suot ng helmet

Also, "dapat" may be more appropriately classified as conveying deontic weak necessity. "kailangan" feels stronger, so the following work:

"Kailangan mo=ng mag-suot ng helmet" ("mo" is a different case form of 2sg)

"Kailangan(g) magsuot ka ng helmet"

(Here, the linker/complementizer might be optional. Note that the velar nasal linker =ng replaces the word final /n/ of the preceding word. Orthographically, the effect is just adding a "g" to the end of the word)

(13) You are going to visit your friend in the hospital. When you enter into the hospital, you stop at the information desk to inquire what room your friend is in. But the woman at the information desk tells you that you can't visit your friend now because it's already 8pm. She says, "I'm sorry, the hospital regulations say that... Visitors must leave by 6pm."

Dapat um-alisangmgabisitakapagalas.saisna.MODAG.V-leaveDETPLvisitor when6.o.clockalready

B2 Deontic Weak Necessity

(16) Your friend is having a birthday party. She tells you that she would like it if everyone invited wore formal clothes, but that it is not necessary to wear formal clothes to attend. You think to yourself... I ought to wear formal clothes to the party.

Kailanganko-ngmag-suotngpormal nakasuotansaparty.MODI-LINK AG.VOICE-wear DETformalCOMPclothestoparty

\$Dapat ako=ng mag-suot ng pormal na kasuotan sa party. **\$Dapat** mag-suot ako ng pormal na kasuotan sa party.

"kasuotan" is a bit formal (cf. English "clothing"). "Damit" is more conventional

(17) Your friend tells you that the rules of the restaurant state that employees must wash their hands after going to the bathroom. You reply to your friend:... Customers ought to wash their hands too!

Kailangan din mag-hugas kamav. mga customer na ng ng **MOD** DET PLCOMP AG.V-wash **DET** also customer hands

\$Dapat

(18) In England, it is recommended that face coverings be worn in stores, but it is not a legal requirement. You plan on going shopping, and you think to yourself... **I ought to wear a mask**.

(#)Kailangan ko-ng mag-face.mask.

MOD I-link AG.V-wear.a.mask

\$\$\$Dapat

Comment:

- **Dapat** expresses requirement by law, rules (H.H. reports the necessity conveyed in *dapat* is weak compared to *kailangan*).
- Kailangan expresses relational requirements between the agent and someone else or the society

B3 Deontic Possibility

(19) The ferris wheel ride is only for children under 12 years of age. Martin is 10 years of age. It is not obligatory for Martin to go on the ride if he doesn't want to, but **Martin may ride the ferris wheel.**

Pwede-ng s-um-akay si Martin sa ferris wheel. **MOD-**LINK ride-AG.V-ride DET Martin DET ferris wheel

== Maaari

(20) According to the rules of the hospital, family members are only allowed to enter the patient's room during visiting hours. You came to visit your sister after visiting hours. But the really nice nurse says... You may enter.

Pwede ka-ng p-um-asok.

MOD you-LINK enter-AG.V-enter.

== Maaari

(21) You are making plans for tomorrow night to meet up with your friend. Your friend says: You can stay overnight or go home. // You can stay overnight. You can also go home.

Pwede ka-ng mag-overnight o um-uwi na.lang.

MOD you-LINK AG.V-stay.over or AG.V-go.home instead

== Maaari

Pwede ka=ng mag-overnight. **Pwede** ka rin=g umuwi na lang.

(22) Alice fell down the stairs and broke her arm a while ago. She hasn't been lifting her baby while her arm was hurt because the baby is heavy. Finally, she recovered, and she went to the doctor for a final check-up. The doctor gave her permission to lift her baby. But when she got home after her visit to the doctor, Alice found that she is still too weak to lift her baby, although according to the doctor's orders **Alice can lift her baby**.

Pwede na-ngbuhat-inniAlice ang baby niya.MOD already-LINKlift-PAT.VDET Alice DET baby 3sg.poss

(23) Beth's teacher told her class that it was okay to go swimming, but Beth doesn't want to because she has never learnt to swim! However, as far as the teacher's directions are concerned...

Beth can go swimming.

Pwede-nglumangoysiBeth.MOD-LINKswimDETBeth.

B4 Deontic non-necessity

(16') Your friend is having a birthday party. She tells you that she would like it if everyone invited wore formal clothes, but that it is not necessary to wear formal clothes to attend. You think to yourself... I ought to wear formal clothes to the party, but I don't have to / needn't wear formal clothes.

Hindi ko **kailangan**-(n)g mag-formal.

NEG I MOD-LINK AG.V-wear.formal.clothes

(18') In England, it is recommended that face coverings be worn in stores, but it is not a legal requirement. You plan on going shopping, and you think to yourself... I don't have to wear a face covering.

Hindi ko **kailangan-**(n)g mag-face.mask.
NEG I **MOD-**LINK AG.V-wear.mask

B5 Deontic impossibility

(12') In Indonesia, the law states... You mustn't ride a motorbike without a helmet.

Hindi ka dapat mag-motorbike na wala-ng helmet.

NEG you MOD AG.V-ride.motorbike COMP neg.exist-LINK helmet

(13') You are going to visit your friend in the hospital. When you enter the hospital, you stop at the information desk to inquire what room your friend is in. But the woman at the information desk tells you that you can't visit your friend now because it's already 8pm. She says, "I'm sorry, the hospital regulations say that... Visitors must not stay after 6pm."

Hindi **dapat** manatili ang mga bisita pagkatapos ng alas.sais. NEG **MOD** stay DET PL visitor after DET six.pm

C. TELEOLOGICAL

C1 Teleological Necessity

(24) There is only one main road from Location A to Location B... If you go from Location A to Location B, **you have to take this road**.

Kailanganditokad-um-aan.MODhereyouAG.V-road

(25) Team A are playing in a tournament. In order to advance... Team A has to beat Team B.

Kailanganma-talongUPangAteneo.MODVERBALIZER.ABILITY-lostDETU.P.DETAteneo

• The complex *ma-talo* means to beat

(26) The best pizza in town is sold at Gino's. You have invited your sister for dinner, and you decide to order pizza. You tell your sister: **We have to order from that restaurant** to eat the best pizza.

Kailangan natin-(n)g mag-order sa restawran na iyon. **MOD** our-LINK AG.V-order DET restaurant COMP that.

C2 Teleological Weak Necessity

(27) There are different ways to get to the shopping centre. You can go by foot, by bus, or drive yourself. You are not sure how to go. Your friend advises you to get the bus because it is cheaper... To get to the shopping centre, you should take the bus.

Kailangan/\$Dapat mo-ng mag-bus.MOD you-LINK AG.V-bus.

#siguro

Siguro pwede kang mag-bus kung gusto mong makatipid. Maybe you can take the bus if you want to save money.

(28) There are 3 ways to get to the seaside: a direct road, taking smaller roads, or a combination. Your friend says that taking the smaller roads is very beautiful. According to him, **you should go via the smaller roads**.

Kailangan/\$Dapat d-um-aan ka sa makipot na daan.

MOD AG.V-ride you DET narrow COMP road

(29) Your friend wants to buy a new shirt for her job at a reasonable price. There are many nice shops for professional clothes in the area, and you work at one of them and think it offers good prices. You say: **You should come to my shop** to buy a new shirt.

Kailangan/\$Dapat mo-ng p-um-unta sa tindahan ko .

MOD you-LINK AG.V-come DET shop my

C3 Teleological Possibility

(30) There are two different ways to get to the mountains from the city centre. The first route is inland and the second route goes around via the coast. Both take around 7 hours by bus and they are equally beautiful... You can take the first way.

Pwede-ngsaunakad-um-aan.MOD-LINKDETfirstyouAG.V-ride/go/pass.through/etc

== maaari

Alternatives:

"Pwede kang dumaan sa una"

"Pwede ka sa una dumaan"

#siguro

Siguro sa una ka dumaan kung ayaw mo sa coast.

You can take the first way if you don't want the coast.

Maybe take the first way, if you don't want the coast.

(31) There are two swimming pools in the town with the exact same design and both are an equal distance from your house. You plan to go swimming later on but have no specific desire for which pool to go to. You tell your sister... You can go to the swimming pool to the west.

Pwede ka-ngp-um-untasaswimming pool sakanluran.MOD you-LINKAG.V-goDETswimming pool DETWest

== maaari

(32) Your friend wants to buy a new shirt for her job. Since there are many nice shops for professional clothes in the area, you say... You can go to this shop.

Pwede ka-ngp-um-untasatindahan-(n)gito.MOD you-LINKAG.V-goDETshop-LINKthis

== maaari

C4 Teleological non-necessity

(27') There are different ways to get to the shopping centre. You can go by foot, by bus, or drive yourself. You are not sure how to go. Your friend advises you to get the bus because it is cheaper... To get to the shopping centre, you should take the bus, but **you don't need to take the bus**.

Pwede-nghindikamag-bus.MOD-LINKNEGyouAG.V-busH.H. says this evaluates to ⟨!(TAKE_BUS)

For this non-necessity context, H.H. prefers: *Hindi mo kailangan-ng mag-bus*

C5 Teleological impossibility

(24') There is only one main road from Location A to Location B... If you are going from Location A to Location B, you can't take another road.

Hindi ka **pwede**-ng d-um-aan sa iba. NEG you **MOD**-LINK AG.V-ride/go/etc DET another

(25') Team A are playing in a tournament. In order to advance... Team A can't lose to Team B.

Hindi pwede-ng ma-talo ang UP sa Ateneo. NEG MOD-LINK "beat" DET U.P. to Ateneo

D. CIRCUMSTANTIAL

D1 Circumstantial Necessity

(33) You are on a bus. You have not had a chance to go to the toilet for 4 hours, and your bladder is full. You text your friend... I have to pee so badly!

Ihing-ihi na ako. Pee NA I

This kind of reduplication to express an urgent need is only possible with verbs of emission. Overt modal expression with equivalent meaning is also possible:

Kailangan ko na talagang umihi.

(34) In the middle of a conversation, you feel a sneeze coming on... Excuse me! I have to sneeze.

Na-ba-bahing ako. NA-(sneeze)-sneeze I

(35) Water is entering a pipe, which has two outputs: the left output and the right output. You block the left output so that **the water must come out from the right output**.

Sa kanan maka~(ka)-labas ang tubig.
DET right ABIL-contemplative-go.out DET water

H.H. reports a clearer alternative as:

Sa kanan lang makakalabas ang tubig
DET right only <...> DET water

D3 Circumstantial Possibility

(36) Ani came to visit a small island in the Philippines. She noticed that the climate and many of the plants are similar to some places she visited in Indonesia, where *duku* trees grow. The temperature is the same, the rainfall is the same, the types of rocks and the soil are the same. But when she looked around, she didn't find any *duku* trees anywhere. But because the temperature, rainfall, and soil are the same, she thinks that... *duku* trees can grow here.

Pwede-ng t-um-ubo ang duku rito **MOD-**LK AV-grow **DET** duku here Kaya-ng tumubo ng duku rito **MOD-**LK AV-grow DET duku here

• Comment: Kaya is more agentive. The consultant initially offered pwedeng for inanimate subject.

Also works, and I think is not as agentive as the example with "kaya" and maybe more natural than the example with "pwede"

Incidentally, "duku" exist in the Philippines but they're called "lansones" at least in Manila Tagalog

(37) Amy was in Italy and learned how to make traditional Italian pasta. Now Amy is back in the country she lives in, and she wants to make traditional pasta, but the right kind of ingredients are not sold where she lives. So, she is unhappy because she wanted to show her parents how to make traditional pasta...

Amy can make traditional pasta (but she does not have the ingredients).

Kaya	ni	Amy	*na	mag-luto	ng	traditio	onal	pasta	
MOD	DET	Amy	*COM	P AV-	cook	DET	traditio	onal	pasta

[&]quot;Marunong si Amy magluto..." (Amy knows how to cook...) is probably more natural, but doesn't have the modal

(38) Ben was in a motorbike accident 3 weeks ago, and he sprained his ankle. Ben is able to walk now. However, the doctor told Ben that he is not allowed to walk until 5 weeks after the accident... **Ben can walk now.**

Kayana-ngmag-lakadniBenMODPRT.already-LKRAV-walkDETBen

Kaya ni Ben *na maglakad

The abilitative form is also possible here:

[&]quot;Makakatubo ang duku dito"

[&]quot;Mabubuhay" as in the parallel example below also works instead of "makakatubo"

[&]quot;Na-kaka-lakad na si Ben" ('na' in this example is the 'already' particle rather than the linker)

Comment: general ability vs. pragmatically influenced by his injury in above example

(39) Paul is quite old now, but he is still strong. His children are scared he will hurt his back if he does any intense labour, so they told him that he is forbidden to lift heavy things. But one day, his friend Rob asked to help him in the field, because Rob knows Paul is still strong. So when Rob saw a large rock that had to be moved, he asked Paul straightaway for help (but he didn't tell Paul's children!). Rob knew that... Paul can lift that rock.

Kaya pa ni Paul mag-buhat ng bato. MOD PRT.still DET Paul AV-carry DET rock

\$Kaya pa ni Paul buhat**-in** ang bato=ng iyon

\$Mabubuhat ni Paul ang bato=ng iyan

(40) The travel vans have a limit of 13 people by law. But the drivers don't care, and stop for more than 13 people. Also, the vans are bigger than you think... **Travel vans can fit 20 people**.

Kaya-ng pag-kasya-hin ang dalawampung tao sa van.

MOD-LKR ??-V.fit DET 20 person DET van

== Pwede

Kasya ang dalawampung tao sa van. ADJ.fit DET 20 person DET van

<u>D4.</u> Circumstantial non-necessity

(44) Given the way this volcano has been active in the past 100 years, it is likely but not certain that it will erupt in the next 5 years. **The volcano doesn't have to erupt**.

Pwede-ngp-um-utokangbulkan,peropwederinghindi.MOD-LKRAV-eruptDETvolcano,butMODPRTNEG

== maaari-ng

== Pwedeng/maaaring hindi pumutok ang bulkan

D5. Circumstantial impossibility

(34') Ben was in a motorbike accident 3 weeks ago. He sprained his ankle and is in a lot of pain. **Ben can't walk.**

Hindi kaya-ng mag-lakad ni Ben

NEG MOD-LKR AV-walk DET Ben

= Hindi na-kaka-lakad si Ben

(35') Water is entering a pipe, which has two outputs: the left output and the right output. But, you know that the left output is blocked. And the water is coming out from the right output. You say: **the water** can't come out from the left output.

Hindi maka~ka-labas sa kaliwa ang tubig. NEG AG.POT-go.out DET left DET water

Hindi kayang lumabas sa kaliwa ng tubig.

malabas*
mailabas = to get something out

(36') Ani came to visit a small Caribbean island. She noticed that the climate and many of the plants are very different to the places she visited in Indonesia, where *duku* trees grow. The types of rocks and the soil are different as well. She doesn't know whether or not there are *duku* trees on the island. But because the temperature, rainfall, and soil are so different, she thinks that... *duku* trees can't grow here.

Hindi ma~bu-buhay ang duku rito. **NEG (ABTV)-live** DET duku here

 $Ma \sim bu-buhay = ma \sim ka-katubo$

Hindi kayang mabuhay ng duku rito.

makabuhay*

E. BOULETIC

E1 Bouletic Necessity

(41) You love handbags. You see a really nice handbag in a window and you say... I must buy it.

Kailangankongbilhin ito.MOD1SG-LKRbuy-PV it

(42) Your friend asks you what you want to do today since it is a holiday and you both are not required to do any tasks today. However, you absolutely want to see this new movie that everyone is talking about-You say... I must go to the cinema.

Kailangan ko-ng p-um-unta sa sinehan.

MOD 1SG-LKR AV-go DET cinema

(43) A daughter tells her parent... My friend wants to come visit me.

Gustoakongbisita-hinngkaibiganko.Want1SG-LKRvisit-PVDETfriendmy

Table of Tagalog modals:

MODALS	EPISTEMIC	ROOT/NON-EPISTEMIC					
		PARTICIPA	NT-EXTERNAL	PARTICIPANT-INTERNAL			
	Epistemic	Deontic	Teleological	Circumstantial	Bouletic		
Necessity	Malamang	Dapat	kailangan	kailangan	kailangan		
	Siguardo	kailangan					
Weak Necessity	malamang	kailangan	kailangan		n/a		
Possibility	Siguro // pwede // baka	pwede // Maaari	pwede	kaya (agent-focused) // pwede (nonagent)	n/a		
Non-necessit y	Siguro + [NEG]	Negate kailangan clause	Pwede + [NEG]	Pwede + [NEG]			
Impossibility	Sigurado // malamang + [NEG]	Negate dapat clause	Negate pwede clause	NEG + ma(ka/bu) // NEG + kaya			