

See discussions, stats, and author profiles for this publication at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/336826425>

A Semantic Study of Polysemy of CAN/COULD in English Journalism

Article · October 2019

CITATIONS

0

READS

229

3 authors, including:



Sangar Najim

Ministry of Education

9 PUBLICATIONS 1 CITATION

SEE PROFILE



Anjuman Sabir

Salahaddin University - Erbil

4 PUBLICATIONS 3 CITATIONS

SEE PROFILE

A Semantic Study of Polysemy of CAN/COULD in English Journalism

Sangar Hassan Najim Salahaddin University. College of Education - English Department

Anjuman Muhammad Sabir Salahaddin University. College of Education - English Department

Abstract:

The polysemous phenomenon exposes the diversity of meanings within the same lexeme, English modal auxiliaries have more than one interrelated meanings (i.e. they are polysemous). This paper describes three meanings of CAN (*plus its derived form COULD*) : *possibility, ability and permission*. The flexibility of meanings in CAN/COULD has been applied on English journals in different fields (i.e. politics, literary criticism, science-tech, sport and health). The paper concludes that the meaning of CAN/COULD denoting possibility is more frequent in the Science-Tech than in the other fields.

Key Words: Polysemy, possibility, ability, permission, modals.

1 Introduction

Modal auxiliaries (henceforth Modals) embrace a variety of semantic usages such as: necessity, obligation, ability, possibility, permission, instruction, requests, offers etc. This study is concerned only with (can)with its derived forms (could)¹. Linguists have probed into modals from distinct viewpoints. **Modal verb is a verb that helps another verb (usually not a modal verb) to express a wide range of aims in daily life. Collins (2009) states that there are some syntactic and inflectional properties that differentiate them from main verbs. The first property includes the past simple of the first four modals (could, would, might and should), the other property is the ability of having the ‘NICE’ constructions: negation, code, inversion and emphasis. Besides syntactic and inflectional properties, modals also have:**

- (i) No non-tensed form: they don't have participle forms.
- (ii) No person-number agreement: they don't have third person singular present tense shape like the entire verbs, and that's why they are suitable with all subjects, as :

You must/will/... but not *has to...

- (iii) Bare infinitive: it is another property, that modals can be used without the marker *to*.
She must go on.
She can speak portuguese.
- (iv) Unreal conditions: the first verb of the apodosis usually is a modal, as in:
If he studied hard, he could success in the exam.
- (v) Unreal preterit (=an alternative term for the past-tense form of a verb) for example:
Could he play the guitar when he *was* eleven?

Below is the declaration of the four ‘NICE’ properties (Huddleston, 1976; Palmer 1987):

- (i) Negation: modals have both (positive and negative) forms:
She can't move.
You won't say?²
In contrast to modal , such negative forms are not possible in full verbs:
**You liken't the pen.*
**You comen't to the party.*
In the current English it is not possible to say:
**you like not the pen.*
**you come not to the party.*
- (ii) Inversion: in contrast to full verbs, the modal auxiliaries admit inversions (i.e. putting the verb before the subject), thus it will be in the form of interrogatives. As in:
will you be a good person?
Can you call the doctor?

¹ The (ought to, need, dare and had better) are thought to belong to quasi modals.

² The negative form **mayn't* is not used, but *may not* is used instead. But furthermore we have verbs such as: prefer and hate, as in: I prefer not to ask him/ I hate not to win. However, they still have not negative forms like modals **preferen't/haten't*.

Quite reverse is the full verbs, : **Like you the pen?*

**Come you to the party?*

- (iii) Code: so called ‘avoidance of repetition’ by Palmer and Blandford, while Firth called ‘code’, where a full verb picked up by a modal, this type includes (...and...so), as in:

John can come and so can James.

I must leave and so can you.

- (iv) Emphatic Affirmation: the last feature of modals is emphasis, the stress placed on the modals for emphatic affirmation, especially of the doubtful statements, or even denial of the negative. As in:

I múst tell him.

You cán see it.

Moreover, Coates (2015:14) argues that, modals have seven characteristics, the first four characteristics are similar to Huddelstone’s NICE properties:

- (i) Takes negation directly (*can’t, mustn’t*).
- (ii) Takes Inversion without DO (*can’t I?, must I?*).
- (iii) ‘Code’ (*John can swim and so can Bill*).
- (iv) Emphasis (*Ann COULD solve the problem*).
- (v) No ‘s form for the third person singular (**cans, *musts*).
- (vi) No non-finite forms (**to can, *musting*).
- (vii) No co-occurrence (**may will*).

2.The importance of Modals in writing

Modals represent at least four related purposes: politeness, suggestion, tentativeness and proposition. Consequently, they have their own importance in academic atmosphere. Since this study deals with English journalism, therefore it is worth to mention the importance of using modals (Hykes, 2000). Accordingly, modals are the third widely used verbs after the two most used present and past tenses in academic writing, (Anon., 2018) states: “Modals are often used in academic writing to soften, or “hedge”, claims and show tentativeness of result interpretations. Writers use hedges to avoid criticism for being radical or overconfident. Thus, instead of writing “The reason for this change is ...”, academic writers may write “The reason for this change might/may/can/could be...”, admitting many other factors could have influenced the change”. Nonetheless, it is the English speaker’s most used auxiliaries for the purpose of showing: possibility, permission, obligation, order and ability etc. besides, in their writing, the modals show the authors point of view, especially when the writer indicates his/her own attitude towards any issues. Butler (1999:138 cited in Hykes, 2000) states: the modal verbs are one of the most powerful devices in English language for the presentation of conclusions with arranging subtle gradations in strength and confidence.

3.Semantics of English Modals

Modals occupy a wide range of daily using in English language, it is quite clear that modals are not the only kind of ambiguous verbs, but since they represent a variety of important use, then they are not easy to deal with. Below is (Coates, 2015, p. 26)'s illustration of interrelationship of words and meanings:

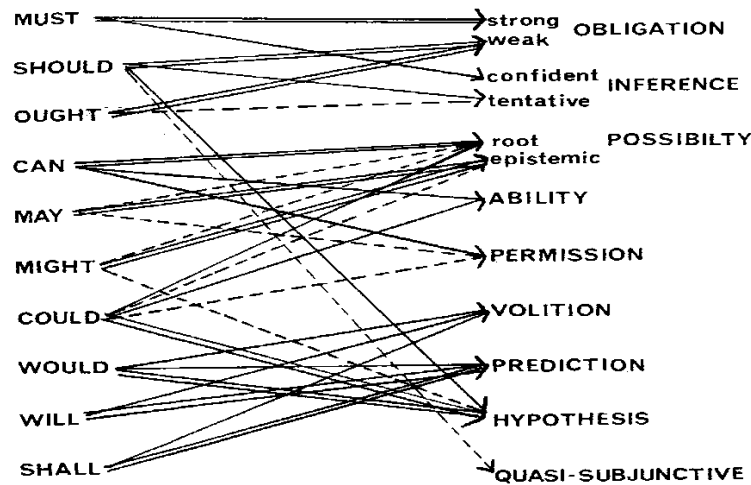


Figure 1 Interrelationship of Words and Meanings

The above figure, modals (left hand) and their meanings (right hand) shows the multi-uses of modals, for example (Ability) is shown as owning two exponents (CAN and COULD), while (volition) is shown as having three exponents (WILL, WOULD and SHALL) etc.

According to Coates (2015), it is fairly obvious that a number of modals share certain meanings. As an instance: SHALL and WILL share 'inference' and 'obligation' meanings.

3.1 Ambiguity of Polysemy

Ambiguity poses a problem in language studies, it is defined as one word with multiple senses. Therefore, the term lexical ambiguity is used for the one-word ambiguity. While having an ambiguous clause is structural ambiguity. Accordingly, the polysemous phenomenon is a kind of ambiguity. Some linguists believe that lexical ambiguity intends to have one word with distinct senses, which is the opposite to polysemy, whereas in polysemy the senses are related, for example (Velar, 2004 cited in Nazhiha, 2009) argues that lexical ambiguity has both good and bad sides, he considers the polysemous phenomenon is the good side of lexical ambiguity, because it goes with tendentious of natural economic of language, as only one word represents many related meanings.

Below are the occurrences of the polysemic word 'yield' from (Naziha, 2009):

- Two molecules of H_2 and one molecule of O_2 yield two molecules of H_2O .
- Vehicles approaching from the entrance ramp must yield to incoming traffic. (pp.9-10).

in one of the approaches of the polysemy named (WordNet), both polysemy and lexical ambiguity have been treated as synonymy, accordingly; polysemy and lexical ambiguity can occur in distinct contexts, referring to distinct meanings, and that's why, it is too hard to differentiate between both polysemy and lexical ambiguity because they both share common points such as related and extended senses (polysemy is considered as it is from the same lexeme) (Hong, 2015).

Most of the researchers who dealt with lexical ambiguity (= a situation in which a single form has more than one interpretations), concentrated on polysemy, in which two types of polysemy (i.e. metaphorical polysemy and metonymic polysemy) have been argued,. The first type, (metaphorical polysemy), is nearer than the second one, (metonymic polysemy), to homonymy. It has been observed, the changing of meaning in metonymic is not accidental rather than to be regular, however; this changing in meaning is clarified in terms of function, which is called referring function (RF= a process in which using the same expression to refer to distinct categories of things is possible). According to RF one cannot point to the referent itself, but to something else called the demonstratum. For example: Arbil voted for Mr. X. indeed, one can leave the hearer the relation 'Arbil= place for people' and using RF (as it has the general interpretation x for y), so that, one could easily recognize that, the (Arbil refers to inhabitant of Arbil)(Klepousniotou, 2001).

3.2 Polysemy and Homonymy

Any statement or utterance which has diverse meanings is ambiguous. If the meanings are related, the statement is polysemy, while the unrelated meanings are belonging to homonymy. Occasionally, the difference between polysemy and homonymy is shown within the metaphor of lexicon entries, a polysemous assertion acquires only one entry, while a homonymous expression earns two distinct lexicon entries. Responding to these inquires Viebahn & Vetter (2006), proposed five patterns to differentiate between polysemy and homonymy:

- (i) Constitutive Relations: this relation holds between objects (i.e. derived objects), for instance: 'paper' and the books, newspapers, magazines etc.
- (ii) Causal Relations: this relation holds between product and producer, for example: 'newspaper' as hard copy (=physical) and as the corporation. To give another instance: 'juice' as a (verb) the way it produces and as a (noun) liquid.
- (iii) Instantiating Relations: this relation is between abstract sorts and their concrete tokens. As in: 'book', '(news)paper', 'word', 'letter', 'symphony', etc.
- (iv) Metaphorical Extensions: using the same word for the other purposes by the processes of figurative extensions. For example: *see* used for visual perception while its figurative extension is the realm of intellectual.
- (v) Pragmatic Strengthening: a word with its basic meaning, step by step acquires more meanings which pragmatically implied by its basic meanings. For example: since its initial use was temporal succession.

3.3 The Monosemy View of Modals

A monosemy view of modals has an initial or sole meaning. Hence it avoids the notion of ambiguity as well as polysemy. Many linguists Ehrman 1966, Werthimer 1972, Groenendijk and Stokhof 1976, Tregidgo

1982, Perkins 1983, Haegeman 1983 and (Papafragou, 1988) consider a modal has only one meaning, they regard ‘necessity and obligation’ as only one meaning, according to them, there is an obvious connection between ‘necessity and obligation’, also between ‘possibility and permission’. if necessity and obligation are nearly the same, then a modal having both meaning is regarded as having only one meaning. Joos (1964) cited in (Wen, 2013) examined eight modals *will, shall, must, ought, dare, need, can and may* on the shed light of the monosemantic approach. Accordingly, there are three different types of meanings amongst these eight modals. They are either “stable” or “casual”, “contingent” or “adequate”, “specifies that it is potential” or “assures the event”. His evidences proves his argument below (p. 21):

Shall (includes should)—contingent casual assurance

Will-- adequate casual assurance

Must – adequate stable assurance

Ought to – contingent stable assurance

Dare—adequate stable potentiality

Need—contingent stable potentiality

Can—adequate casual potentiality

May—contingent casual potentiality

Considering Joos, the two expressions are similar, where casual assurance is the initial meaning of the two auxiliaries, yet semantically they are distinct. The fact is one cannot apply this to all the modals in English, that’s why polysemy view become popular on interpretation of modals.

3 . 4.The Polysemy view of Moddals

The polysemic view can apply to all the modals. Yet they can be slippery in their using in natural language to convey a lot of messages (Bouma, 1972). Meanwhile, Quirk, et al., (1985) differs from others approach, by pointing the two senses of meaning of modals:

- (i) Intrinsic: related to the occasions and actions whereas humans have control on them such as volition, permission and obligation.
- (ii) Extrinsic: humans don’t have control over them, such as possibility, prediction and necessity.

Modals have polyfunctionality, a modal can occupy more than one semantic function, they can be either intrinsic or extrinsic, depending on their occurrences (Hykes, 2000). Based on Quirk, et al. (1985), modals are one of the problematic auxiliaries in English grammar. they can have both intrinsic and extrinsic utilizes. For instance: the modal can have the meaning of possibility (i.e. extrinsic) and the meaning of permission (i.e. intrinsic). Consider the figure below:

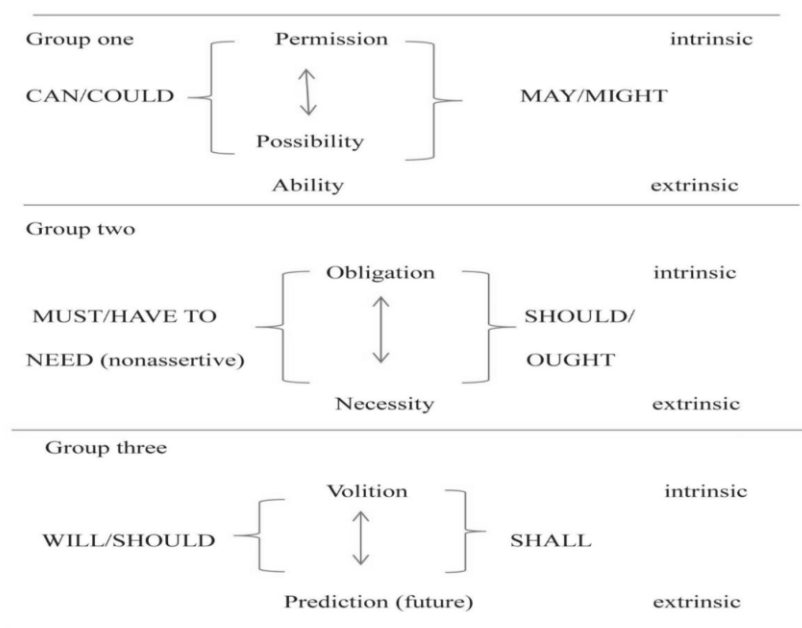


Figure 2 The Meanings of Modal Verbs (adopted from Quirk et al, 1985)

3.4.1 CAN, COULD

Depending on what (Leech, 2013) claimed, CAN has three types of meanings. Its first meaning is possibility, which is more common than the other sorts. For instance:

You can speak English fluently.

It means that, it is possible to ‘you’ to speak English fluently. This type is so common, especially for future actions, as in:

We can say so much about our meeting tomorrow.

Or in the form of interrogative, as below:

I wonder if you can tell me the truth?

The second meaning expressed by CAN is Ability, which is less common than the previous. For instance:

Can you speak Kurdish? yes, I can.

Which interprets to: Yes, I can speak Kurdish or = I am capable of speaking Kurdish. There is a little bit distinction between “BEING ABLE TO DO” and “ACTUALLY DOING”, besides; we don’t have clear line distinction between CAN=ability, and CAN=possibility. Both are too close. Moreover, *be able to* is not always allied with ‘ability’ rather than it uses for possibility and permission.

The third meaning expressed by CAN is permission, which is even less common than the prior. For example:

Can I see you Mom? Yes, you can.

Which interprets to: can I have a permission to see you?

For (Coates, 2015), CAN and COULD are associated with ability and possibility, although they are suited and convenient with permission. Her illustration of fuzzy set of CAN is as follows (p.86):

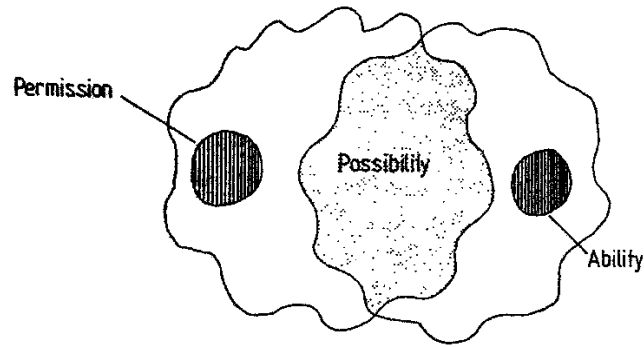


Figure 3 A Fuzzy Set Diagram of CAN

Based on what Coates examined, her examples about CAN used in the meaning of permission, have the following characteristics:

- (i) Subject is animate: which declare the situation, whereas giving permission associates with enforcing obligation.
- (ii) Verb is agentive: whereas as the previous, permission deals with imposing obligation; meanwhile MUST perform the speaker of being worthy of describing the ability of the action stated, but giving-permission do not.
- (iii) The statement can be rewording with 'permitted' or 'allowed'.

4. Polysemy of Modal Verbs in English Journalism

This section is an analysis of the polysemous phenomenon of the modal verbs in English Journalism, the semantic cluster and meanings of the modals have been shown up with the meanings and paraphrases of both Epistemic and Deontic modals.

4.1 Data and Corpus

Eleven British Newspapers of 2019 have been chosen to be the corpus of this study, mainly (the guardian, Daily Mail, The Telegraph, The Sunday times, The Independent, The Times, The Mirror, Financial Times, Daily Star, the morning star, the Economist). Additionally, the samples have been collected from five different fields of the English journalism namely: (sport, politics, Science-Tech, literary criticism, and health).

Table 1 Organization of the studies' corpora.

English Journals	Data and Corpus	Fields
------------------	-----------------	--------

Newspaper	the guardian, Daily Mail, The Telegraph, The Sunday times, The Independent, The Times, The Mirror, Daily Star, the morning star, the Economist, Financial Times.	sport, politics, science-Tech, literary criticism, and health
------------------	--	---

4.2 The use of CAN/COULD

The central modal CAN and COULD have three meanings, the deontic CAN/COULD denote ability and permission, while the epistemic CAN/COULD denote possibility (cf. 3.4.1).

4.2.1 CAN/COULD referring to Ability

The modal CAN denoting ability (deontic) is less common than the epistemic CAN referring to possibility, CAN means ability merely paraphrases to (someone is *capable/able to* of doing something), although there's a bit distinctions between “being able to do” and “actually doing”, The following extracts illustrate CAN referring to ability:

Extract No 1. From [The Independent, (politics), (14th June 2019)]: “Though one way to explain it might be that the only point in the last four years that I **can** recall anyone becoming aware of the existence of Steve Double is when”

The modal CAN from this context is assigned to pronoun ‘I’, whereas it refers to the doer that he is capable of recalling (or able to recall...), in which the deontic can has a strong degree, because the speaker/writer gives some assurance to listener/reader that he is being able to such things.

Extract No. 2 from [Mirror, (Sport), (15th June 2019)]: "The important thing is to be strong so that we **can** play better, which is what we did after scoring the first goal."

Argued above, the deontic use of CAN referring to ability is less common, among the texts one can barely find one example. The CAN in the above extract, represents ability, whereas the speaker indicates, in order to be capable of playing better; to be strong enough.

Extract No. 3 from [The Economist, (Literary Criticism), (15th June 2019)]: “like seven jumbos landing on the roof”, people submerge themselves in any body of water they **can** find”.

In such extract of literary criticism, CAN denotes ability mixed with the imagination and illusion, whereas in the writer's world, people are able to do the unreal things, although CAN generally denotes ability, it differs here from the first extract, it occurs with the pronoun ‘I’ and denotes the authority of the writer/speaker, while in this extract, people generally have ability of doing.

The following illustrates the deontic COULD referring to ability:

Extract No. 4 from [The Guardian, (Health), (15th June 2019)]: “I thought I **couldn't** sing. Then I discovered there's no such thing as ‘tone deaf’ – and that singing is not very different to speaking”

the modal deontic COULD in the above context in its negative form, denotes ability in the past, the speaker thought he was not able to sing any more, due to the lack of his health.

Extract No. 5 from [The Economist, (Literary Criticism), (15th June 2019)]: “She wished she **could** go back and tell everyone that the dead did not die instantly, that they **could**, in fact, continue to reflect on things, including their own demise.”

The two occurrences of COULD in the above extract refer to ability in the past, the deontic COULD in the literary context, is like CAN in extract No. 3, both are in the world of illusion and imagination, denoting something they wish they did.

4.2.2 CAN/COULD refer to Permission

The deontic CAN referring to permission, is even less common than the CAN refers to ability, accordingly; CAN referring to permission has three characters: subject is animate, verb is agentive and the statement of CAN referring to permission is paraphrased as ‘permitted’ or ‘allowed’ the following extracts illustrate the deontic CAN represents the semantic cluster

of permission:

Extract No. 6 from [Express, (Science-Tech), (14th June 2019)]: “You **can’t** be imprisoned for not paying your TV licence, however, you **can** be jailed for non-payment of a fine issued by a court.”.

Extract No. 7 from [The Guardian, (Sport), (15th June 2019)]: “It is the sort of place that lets the players know straight away they are here to work. Then, by contrast, we are staying in a really nice hotel [in nearby Cesenatico] with all mod-cons where the players **can** relax.”

The modal CAN in both 6 and 7 refers to permission, in which rules, human authorities or regulations permit/allow someone to do something. In both statements CAN paraphrases as ‘permitted’ or ‘allowed’, in No. 6 the negative form of deontic CAN refers to the opposite idea, not permitting someone to do X, therefore it is paraphrased to: one not allowed to be imprisoned, just for not paying TV licence, while it is allowed for authorities to imprison you for non-paying of a fine issued by a court.

COULD also refers to permission as in the followings:

Extract No. 8 from [The Independent, (Science-Tech), (12th June 2019)]: “The treatment **could** allow doctors to quickly scan patients' blood without ever removing it from them, to spot circulating tumour cells or CTCs.”

Extract No. 9 from [Daily mail, (Science-Tech), (14th June 2019)]: “Afforestation: This technique would irrigate deserts, such as those in Australia and North Africa, to plant millions of trees that **could** absorb carbon dioxide.”

Both extracts represent permission, the deontic COULD meaning permission and ability is less frequent than CAN/COULD refers Possibility, in nearly the most exemplified examined in this study, the lion's share is for CAN/COULD denote to possibility.

4.2.3 CAN/COULD referring to Possibility

The only semantic cluster denoting possibility is epistemic modality, the epistemic CAN referring to possibility is more frequent than the others (i.e. ability and permission), where especially; for future actions and the interrogative sentences, it interprets to as: it is possible that someone doing something, or “external circumstances allow X to do...”, even in its negative form where the paraphrase will be “it is not possible that...”,(c.f. table 8). The following extracts are from the all six corpora in which examined in this study:

Extract No. 10 from [The Morning Star, (Sport), (15th June 2019)]: “There’s a huge amount of respect for how good they are, but they are also a side that **can** be beaten, so you don’t want to give them too much.”.

Extract No. 11 from [The Daily Star, (Politics), (29th May 2019)]: “The charges **can** only be dealt with in the Crown Court.”

The epistemic CAN in both extracts 10 and 11, denotes possibility, in the extract No. 10, CAN in interprets to as: it is also possible to beaten, so that you should not give them everything. The epistemic CAN represents the future actions, where in the future it is possible to be beaten, while in No. 11, the epistemic CAN is between present and near future, means it is possible to deal with only in the court, where there are no other options.

The following extracts illustrate the negation of CAN denoting possibility.

Extract No. 12 from [The Sun, (Sport), BO-NO! (17th June 2019)]: “BORIS Johnson's leadership rivals today ganged up on him again - claiming he's out of touch and **can't** be trusted in a desperate bid to stop his march to No10.”

Extract No. 13 from [The Morning Star, (Science-Tech), New car tyre **can never** be punctured or go flat - Is this the future? (16th June 2019)]: “An innovative new car tyre has been designed which never goes flat and **can't** be punctured. Michelin has developed an airless car tyre for passenger vehicles dubbed the Uptis Prototype (or “Unique Punctureproof Tire System”).

Extract No. 14 from [Express, (Sport), (16th June 2019)]: “Hinch said that the Dutch Hoofdklasse league is so strong, they **cannot** help but bring in great player after great player.”

The negative form of the epistemic CAN=CAN'T denotes an action that is not possible, whereas standing aside BORIS is not possible, as he is not trusted. In which it is opposite to the negative deontic CAN, where it replaces the negative MUST (Epistemic MUST cannot be negated). below is an extract example of the epistemic CAN in its interrogative form:

Extract No. 15 from [The Independent, (Science-Tech), (16th June 2019)]: “**Can** students take part? Students **can** also take advantage of Amazon Prime Day by signing up for to Amazon Student [...] How **can** you get the best deals?”

The above extract, epistemic CAN in the form of interrogative, asks about how it is possible for students to participate, while the second CAN is the deontic modality, whereas CAN means permission, it is paraphrased as: “students permitted to participate in such events, while the third CAN, is epistemic, referring to possibility.

COULD occurs in its epistemic use, means: “it was possible for someone to do X”. the following extract illustrates this statement:

Extract No. 16 from [The Economist, (Literary Criticism), (28th March 2019)]: “She **could** exploit her relative freedom to move around by becoming an undercover agent for Britain’s nascent Special Operations Executive (soe), which sent her back to France in 1941.”

Here, the epistemic COULD means: it was possible for her to become an undercover agent in the past..., like CAN means possibility, also COULD means possibility is more common than the two other meanings of the deontic CAN/COULD mean ability and permission.

Noting that, the epistemic COULD in the conditional statements can be paraphrased into “It would be possible to someone to do X”. Moreover, in the negative COULD=COULDN’T the negation occurs inside its scope. The two occurrences of the below extract proves this statement:

Extract No. 17 from [The Daily Mail, (Health), (24th June 2019)]: “He **couldn't** lift his arms, **couldn't** feed himself, and doctors warned Alexander and his family that he might never walk again.”

Moreover, the interrogative COULD=possibility also occurs. Consider the following extracts:

Extract No. 18 from [The Daily Mail, (Literary Criticism), ‘A plot that grips, moves and intrigues... **could** you write a bestseller and win £20,000? Enter the Daily Mail first novel competition (24th June 2019)].

Extract No. 19 from [The Daily Mail, (Health), **Could** an injection of a 'young blood' protein be the 'fountain of youth'? Study claims an enzyme from younger mice extended lifespan by 16% for older ones. (24th June 2019)].

In the extract No. 18, COULD means: “is it possible to write a bestseller book and win that amount of money?” the interrogative sentence asks about the possibility of writing such book, moreover; the epistemic COULD in the extract No. 19 is as same as the previous. In which it refers to possibility, COULD in No. 19 means: is it possible to an injection of a 'young blood' protein be the 'fountain of youth?.

4.3 Frequency of the three meaning of CAN/COULD

The meanings used in the five fields can be found as in the table below:

Table 2 Frequency count of the meanings of CAN/COULD

Modal Forms	Semantic Meanings	Deontic/Epistemic	Frequency Count
-------------	-------------------	-------------------	-----------------

CAN	Ability	Deontic	3
COULD	Ability	Deontic	3
CAN	Permission	Deontic	3
COULD	Permission	Deontic	2
CAN	Possibility	Epistemic	9
COULD	Possibility	Epistemic	5

Besides, the most frequent meanings concerning in the fields is possibility, the table below shows the meanings according to its fields.

Table 3 CAN/COULD in the five fields

Modals	Fields	Total
CAN/COULD	Politics	3
	Sport	5
	Science-Tech	8
	Literary Criticism	5
	Health	4

From the table above, it is demonstrated that the writers of the Science-Tech field have used the modal CAN/COULD with its meanings more than the other fields.

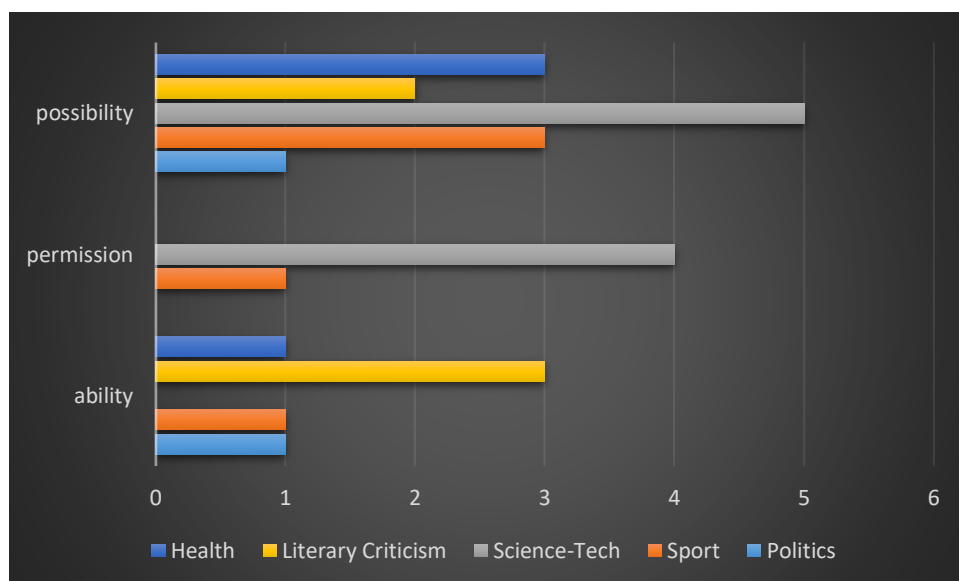


Figure 1 The reveal of the three all meanings of CAN/COULD among the fields

Conclusion:

The modal CAN/COULD has three major interrelated meanings namely possibility, permission and ability. The modal CAN/COULD denoting possibility is the most frequent used among all three meanings. It seems the writers of the Science-Tech field use the modal CAN/COULD to refer to its meanings of ability, permission and possibility more than the other writers, in which the Science-Tech needs to express the ability

of technology, although referring to the permitted/allowed inventions in the future, besides the possibilities of creating new inventions or discovery. Finally, the least frequent use of CAN/COULD is in the field of politics.

References

- Anon., 2018. *George Mason University Writing Center*. [Online]
Available at: https://d101vc9winf8ln.cloudfront.net/documents/28688/original/Modal_Verbs_2018.pdf?1532637722
[Accessed 26 May 2019].
- Bouma, L., 1975. On Contrasting the Semantics of the Modal Auxiliaries of German and English. *Lingua*, 37(4), pp. pp. 313-339.
- Coates, J., 2015. *The Semantics of the Modal Auxiliaries*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Collins, P., 2009. *Modals and Quasi-modals in English*. Netherlands: Rodopi.
- Hong, J., 2015. *Verb Sense Discovery in Mandarin Chinese—A Corpus based Knowledge-Intensive Approach*. New York: Springer.
- Huddleston, R., 1976. Some Theoretical Issues in the Description of the English Verb. *Lingua*, 40(4), pp. 331-383.
- Hykes, J. M., 2000. 'A Comparison of the Use of Modal Verbs in Research Articles by Professionals and Non-native Speaking Graduate Students' MA thesis,. Iowa State University: Ames.
- Klepousniotou, E., 2001. The Processing of Lexical Ambiguity: Homonymy and Polysemy in the Mental Lexicon.. *Brain and Language*, 20 Nov, Issue 81, pp. pp. 205-223.
- Leech, G., 2013. *Meaning and The English Verb*. 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.
- Naziha, H., 2009. 'The Role of Context in Translating Polysemy. Case Study: First Year Master'. PhD Dissertation.. s.l.:Mentouri University-Constantine.
- Palmer, F. R., 1987. *The English Verb*. 2nd ed. Singapore: Longman Singapore Publishers.
- Preda, A., 2013. Lexical Ambiguity Revisited: On Homonymy And Polysemy. In: I. e. Boldea, ed. *The Proceedings of the International Conference Literature, Discourse and Multicultural Dialogue, section: Language and Discourse*.. Tirgu-Mures: Arhipelag XXI Press, pp. pp. 1047-1054.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. & Svartvik, J., 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. New York: Longman Group Limited.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. & Svartvik, J., 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. New York: Longman Group Limited.
- Viebahn, E. & Vetter, B., 2006. How Many Meanings Mor 'May'? The Case For Modal Polysemy. *Philosophers' Imprint*, 16(10), pp. pp. 4-6.
- Wen, H., 2013. *A Semantic Analysis Of Modal Verbs In Barack Obama's 2012 Presidential Campaign Speeches*. MA Thesis.. University of Malaya.: Available at: <http://studentsrepo.um.edu.my/5703/> (Accessed: 15 Feb 2019)..

پوخته:

نهم تويزينهويه بريته له خویندنهويهکی سيمانتیکی فرهواتایی بو فرمانی ياریدهدهری CAN/COULD له رۆژنامهوانی نینگليزیدا، دیاردهی فرهواتایی نهوه دهگهيهئیت، که وشهيهك بهومهرجهی لهههمان بنهچهی خوی بیت دهكریت زیاتر له يهك مانای ههبيت، فرمانه ياریدهدهرهكانيش له زمانی نینگليزی زیاتر لهيهك مانا لهخۆدهگرن (واته فرهواتان)، نهم تويزينهويه ههولیکه بو درخستنی سن مانای CAN/COULD که بریتین له توانین، رووخسهت و ههروهها شيان(نهگهرلهوانهيه). کهتيايدا ههريهك له مانایانه لهسهه رۆژنامهوانی نینگليزی جيبهجينکراوهو ههريهك لهبوارهکانی (وهرزش، رامیاری، رهخنهی نهديهی، زانست و تهکنۆلۆجیا، لهگهئ تهندروستی) وهرگیرون و دهركهوتوهو که رۆژنامهنووسهکانی بواری زانستتهکنۆلۆجیا لهههموو نهوانی تر زیاتر فرمانی CAN/COULD یان بهکارهیناوهو لهنيويشياندا مانای (شیان – Possibility) زیاترين بهکارهینانی تۆمارکردوه.

ملخص:

تکشف ظاهرة متعدد المعاني عن المعاني المتنوعة للأفعال المساعدة CAN / COULD ، للأفعال النموذجية المساعدة في اللغة الإنجليزية أكثر من معانٍ مترابطة. يقدم هذا البحث ثلاثة معاني ل (CAN) (بالإضافة إلى شكلها المشتق COULD) ، ويشير المعاني إلى كل من (الإمكانية والقدرة والإذن). تم تطبيق المعاني CAN / COULD على الجرائد الإنجليزية ، في حين إن المجالات التي تم أخذها هم (السياسة، النقد الأدبي، العلوم والتكنولوجيا، الرياضة والصحة) ، كما استنتجت البحث بان المعنى الأكثر استخداما ل CAN / COULD هو الإمكانية(إحتمال) والذي استخدم من قبل الصحفيون في مجال العلوم-التقنية أكثر من المجالات الأخرى