Conclusions

In this way, we have demonstrated that position outside the noun phrase is diagnostic of modals: can and can't do.

Discussion

A dynamic increase in can

Background

What can and can't do

References


English World-Wide 33:176–182.


Science 331:176–182.


Linguistic Inquiry [12x402]total 18 (3727) 0.48.

Fig. 4: Rates of British interpretation can do

If someone wanted to nick your bike they could do. (2)

Other varieties of English (Toronto); finite tantum and modal interaction with possibility modals

Fig. 3: Rates of British interpretation can and can't do.

Can 1 (1819) 0.05; may 7 (218) 3.2; might 7 (218) 3.2.

Other varieties of English (Toronto); finite tantum and modal interaction with possibility modals

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Fig. 4: Rates of British interpretation can do

If someone wanted to nick your bike they could do. (2)

Other varieties of English (Toronto); finite tantum and modal interaction with possibility modals

Fig. 3: Rates of British interpretation can and can't do.

Can 1 (1819) 0.05; may 7 (218) 3.2; might 7 (218) 3.2.
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Figure 5: Instances of *can* by modal interpretations

References


