

## **What "may" and "must" may be in Japanese**

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For the expression of necessity and possibility according to rules, preferences, and goals, Japanese relies heavily on evaluative conditional constructions ("if... good/bad"). Too varied to be considered idioms, but not fully productive either, they pose interesting challenges for formal grammatical theories. In this talk, I will focus on a few specific examples and will investigate to what extent they yield to a compositional analysis. I will then discuss these results with regard to an improved understanding of the overall system of modality in Japanese.