

International Conference on Austroneisan Linguistics
Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan
July 18-23, 2015

On Semantic Verb Classes and Regularity of Voice Paradigms in Tagalog

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1. Definition of the verb and voice

- Verbs are lexical units with voice and aspect morphology.
- Voice is the formal means of representing changes in syntactic marking of semantic participants of the situation.

2. Number of voices

More than the number of affixes. Verbs with the same affixation can be considered two different voices:

- (1) *T<in>akbo-ø ko yun=g*
<PERF>run-DV 1SG.GEN DIST.NOM=LK
sakayan ng jeep.
stop GEN jeep
'I ran to the jeep stop.'
- (2) *Malayo rin ang t<in>akbo-ø*
far also NOM <PERF>run-MV
ko papunta sa park.
1SG.GEN going OBL park
'I also ran far on my way to the park.'

3. Number of voices

- Possible voices: actor, patient, directional, locative, beneficiary, instrumental, causal, measure, referential, maleficient, experiencer, etc.)
- Different from (De Guzman 1978):

bigay

b<um>igay (AV) ‘to give up’

i-bigay (PV) ‘to give’

bigy-an (DV) ‘to give’

pag-bigay

mag-bigay (AV) ‘to give’

pag-bigy-an (DV) ‘to yield’

4. Classifications of Tagalog Verbs

- Subcategorization: affix-correspondence classes (Silverio 1962; Cruz 1972; Schachter & Otanes 1972; McFarland 1976).
- Attempts to provide a classification based on exhaustive lists of available voice forms are rare.

5. Hypotheses

- 1. Chaotic Voice:
 - The voice is highly irregular
 - Variation both in number and type of available voice forms. (Schachter & Otanes 1972: 283): “No general rules can be given for the occurrence or non-occurrence of a base with any particular major affix.”
- 2. ‘Anything Goes’:
 - (Kaufman 2009: 7) “Any Tagalog root can take any voice so long as the conceptual representation of the root provides for the relevant participant.” “Crucially, it must be realized that the voice system is fully productive and can create novel combinations of roots and voices for specialized meanings”.

6. Hypotheses

- However, intuitively, voice paradigms of verbs describing similar situations are also expected to be similar, if not the same.
- E.g. *prito* ‘fry’ and *saing* ‘cook rice’ describe similar situations with the same set of participants: agent, patient, location, instrument, etc.

7. Evidence: Peculiar voice forms

- **Verbs of excretion:**

- **Experiencer voice :**

Na-su~suka *ako.*
MOD.EV-IMPERF~vomit 1SG.NOM
'I am feeling sick.'

Na-suka *ako.*
MOD.EV.PERF-vomit 1SG.NOM
'I vomited.'

- *tae* 'defecate', *ihi* 'urinate', *ubo* 'cough', *hatsing* 'sneeze', *singa* 'blow nose', ..

8. Evidence: Peculiar voice forms

- **Verbs of change of property:**

- **Affective Voice:**

Na-ganda-han ako sa kaniya.

MOD.PERF-beauty-AfV 1SG.NOM 3SG.OBL

‘I was struck by her beauty.’

- **Measure Voice:**

Malaki ang i-g<in>anda niya.

big NOM MV-<PERF>beauty 3SG.GEN

‘She became much more beautiful.’

9. Premise

- Location, instrument, beneficiary and cause can be present in many situations:
- ***Here's*** where he first told me that he loves me. (Location)
- He ate ***with his left hand***. (Instrument)
- He slapped the villain ***for me***. (Beneficiary)
- She fried tilapia ***because her hungry husband arrived***. (Cause)
- Are corresponding voice constructions possible for all roots in Tagalog?

10. Experiment

- 20 verb roots, 4 semantic classes:

cooking	hitting	commun	Ingestion
<i>Luto</i> 'cook'	<i>Palo</i> 'hit'	<i>Sabi</i> 'say'	<i>Kain</i> 'eat'
<i>Prito</i> 'fry'	<i>Sipa</i> 'kick'	<i>Tanong</i> 'ask'	<i>Inom</i> 'drink'
<i>Laga</i> 'boil'	<i>Hampas</i> 'strike'	<i>Sagot</i> 'answer'	<i>Singhot</i> 'sniff'
<i>Sigang</i> 'cook sinigang'	<i>Tadyak</i> 'kick'	<i>Sigaw</i> 'shout'	<i>Higop</i> 'gulp'
<i>Saing</i> 'cook rice'	<i>Sampal</i> 'slap'	<i>Bulong</i> 'whisper'	<i>Lunok</i> 'swallow'

11. Experiment

- Questionnaires eliciting acceptability judgments:

P<in>ag-lutu-an ko ng adobo
<PERF>STEM-cook-LV 1SG.GEN GEN adobo
ang kaserola.
NOM pan

‘I cooked adobo in the pan.’

Ik<in>a-pag-luto niya ng adobo
<PERF>CV-STEM-cook 3SG.GEN GEN adobo
ang pagkapanalo sa contest.
NOM win OBL contest

‘He cooked adobo because of the win in the contest.’

18 native Tagalog speakers, age 17-44.

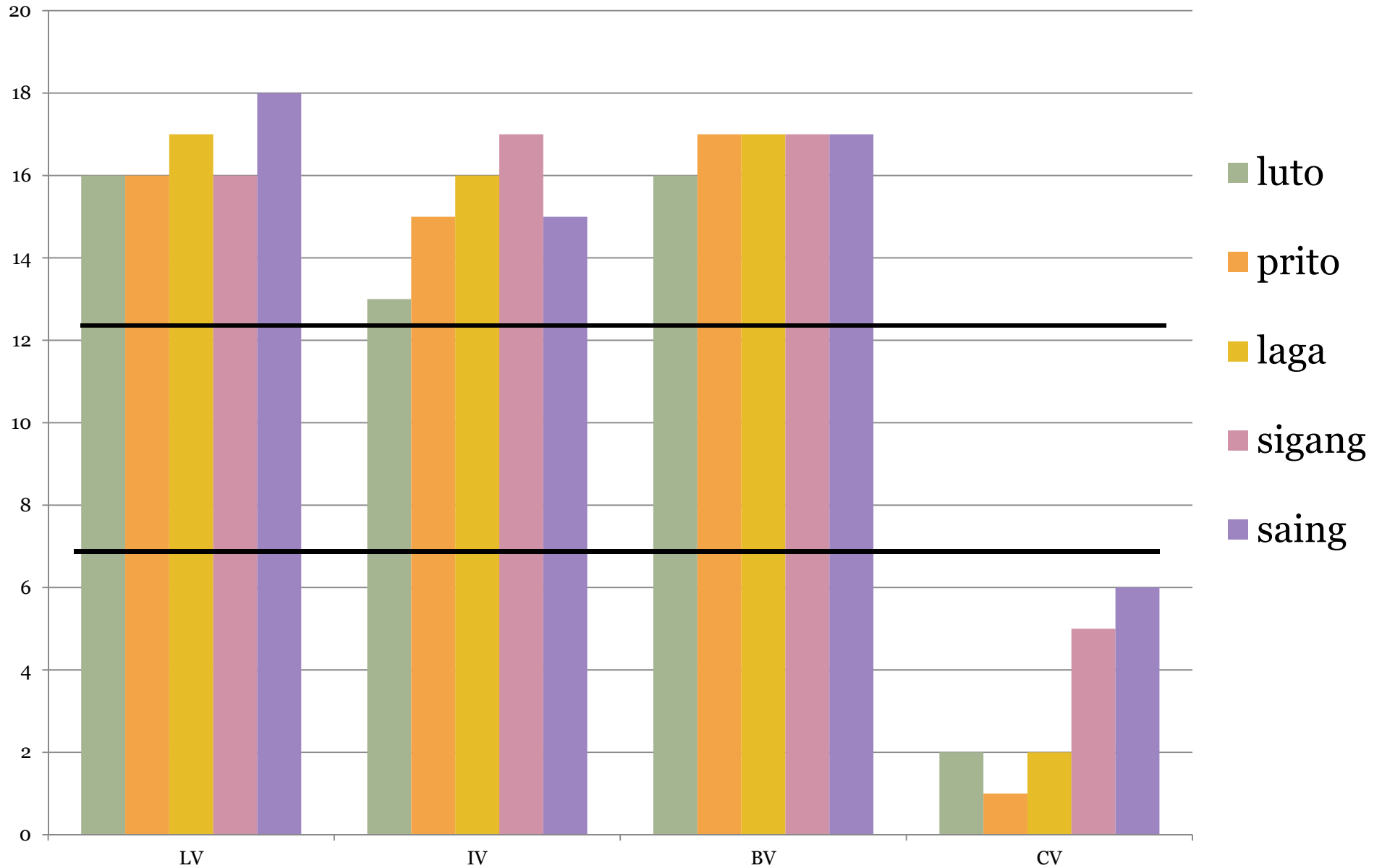
12. Results: cooking and hitting

	LV	IV	BV	CV
Luto	16	13	16	2
Prito	16	15	17	1
Laga	17	16	17	2
Sigang	16	17	17	5
Saing	18	15	17	6
Palo	2	17	1	6
Sipa	6	18	16	6
Hampas	4	18	11	7
Tadyak	5	18	11	4
Sampal	2	18	2	13

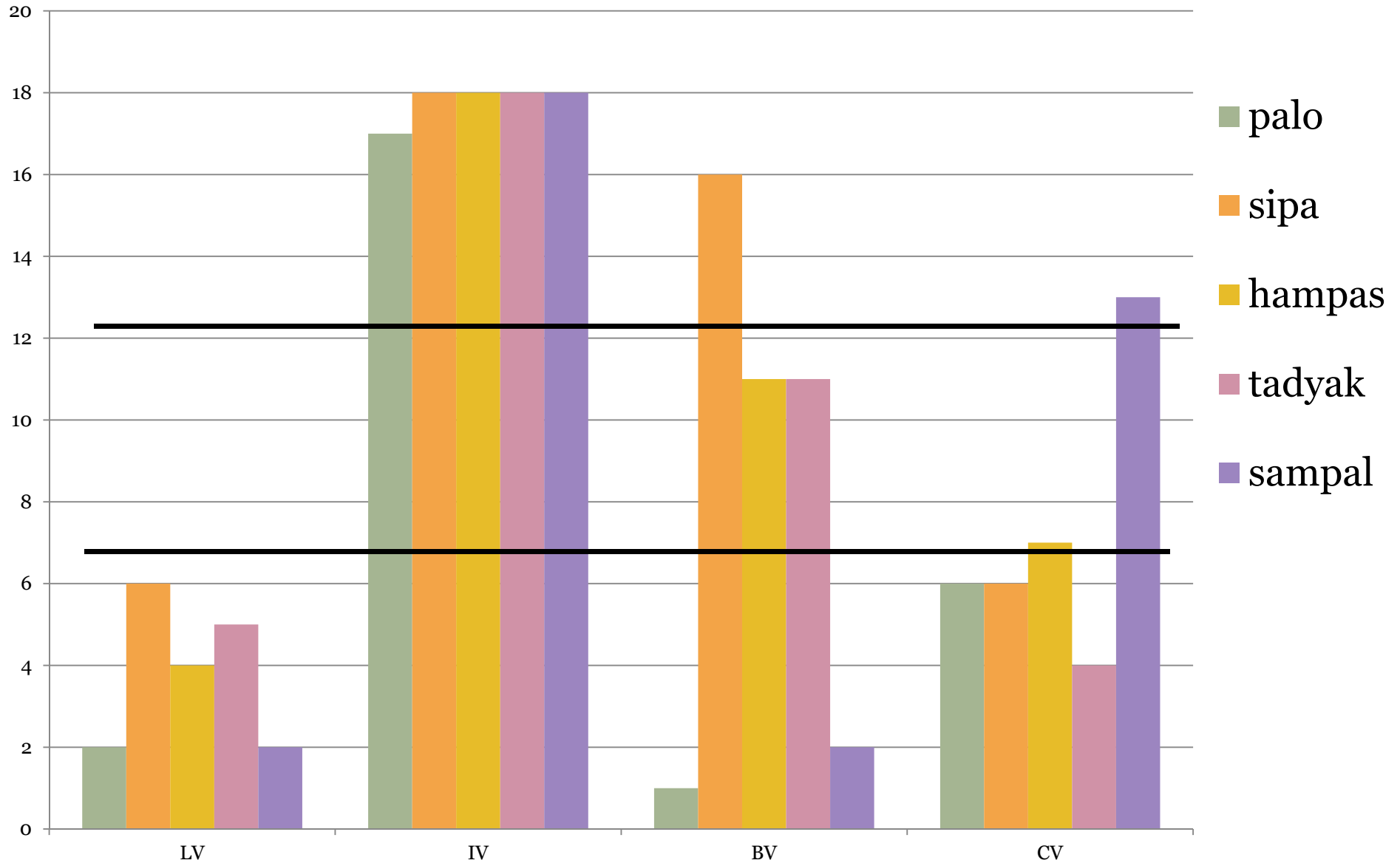
13. Results: communication and ingestion

	LV	IV	BV	CV
Sabi	3	14	14	13
Tanong	4	15	15	6
Sagot	14	18	16	14
Sigaw	15	18	14	16
Bulong	4	16	14	6
Kain	18	18	4	10
Inom	18	17	10	16
Singhot	17	17	9	15
Higop	18	17	7	13
Lunok	7	17	6	15

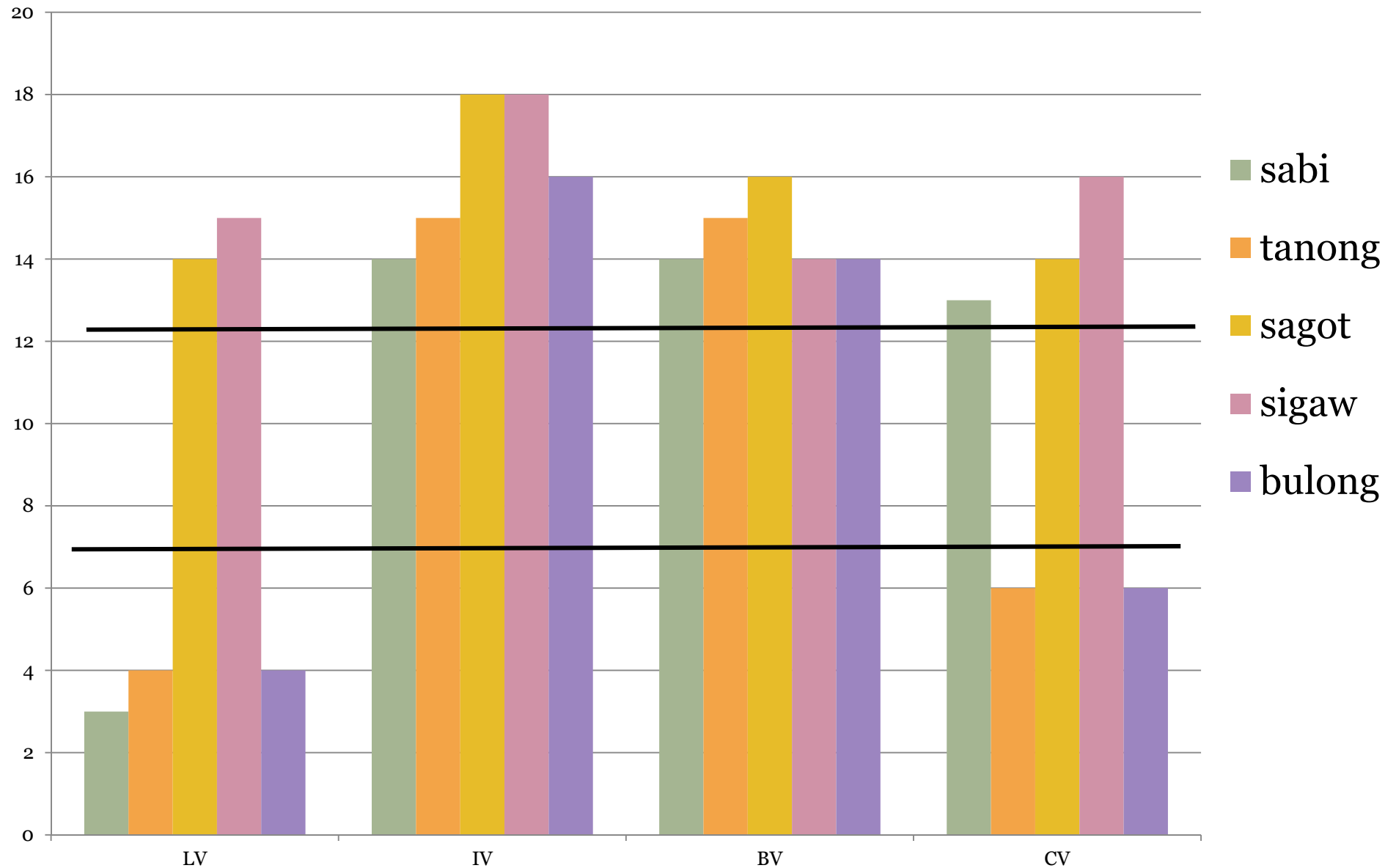
14. Cooking verbs



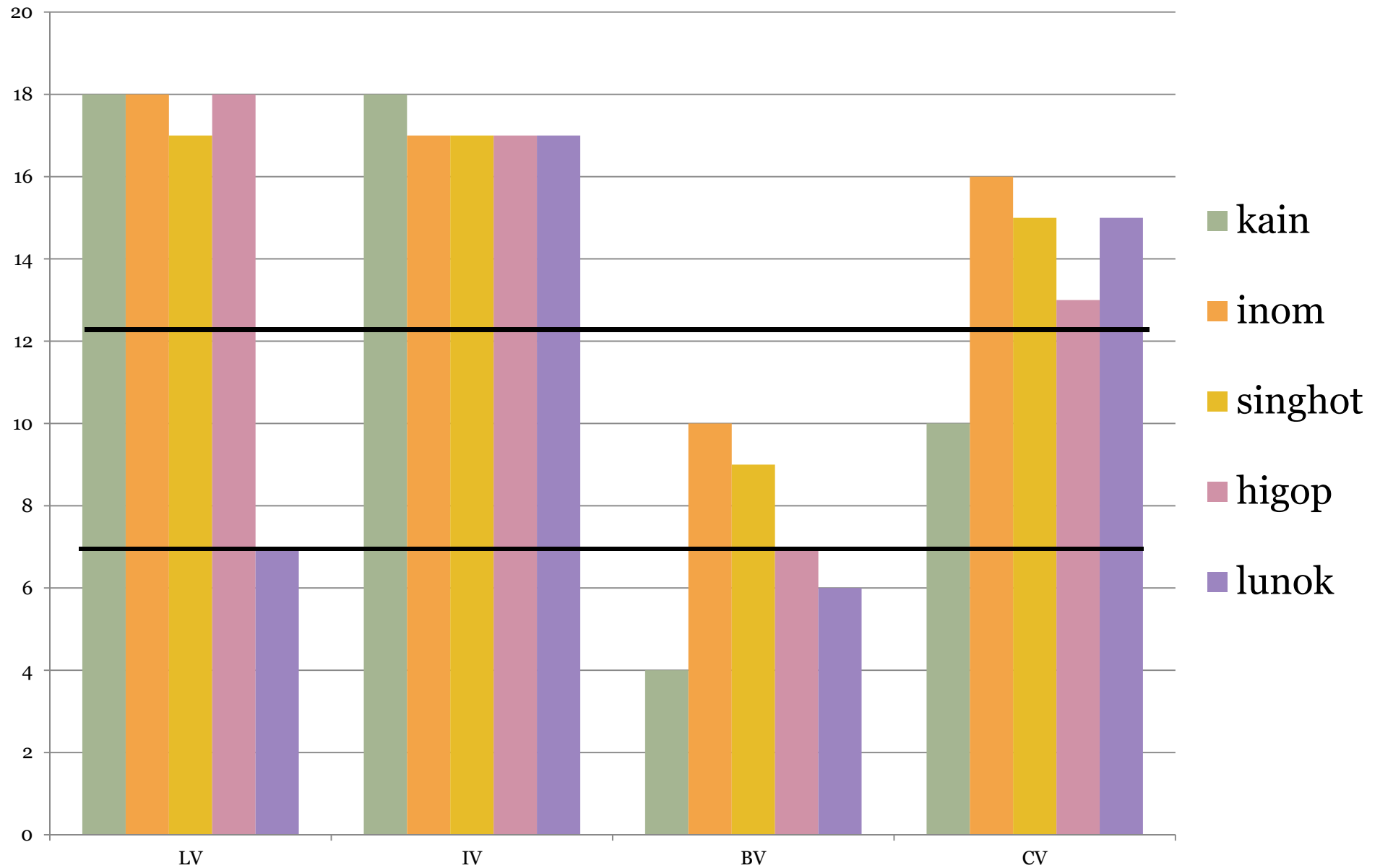
15. Hitting verbs



16. Verbal Communication verbs



17. Ingestion verbs



18. Conclusions

- Not ‘anything goes’
- Not chaotic
- Certain degree of regularity
- Some voices in 3 of the 4 classes do not manifest regularity. Why? Different acceptability for imperatives? Different individual grammars? Experiment design flaw?
- Some generalizations made in literature regarding Tagalog or other Philippine languages are not valid for the data.

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