

Temporal and Modal Dimensions of Modal and Temporal Expressions

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Course description

While modal and temporal expressions have long been objects of active research, recent work has shown that a much better understanding of their interpretive possibilities is gained by integrating the modal and temporal dimensions and taking their interactions into account. This course prepares students for advanced work in this area. Following an introduction to the relevant data and formal apparatus, we present analyses of a variety of linguistic expressions which showcase the benefit of an integrative modal-temporal perspective.

Course Outline

1. Logical analyses of modality and tense
 - Two-dimensional modal-temporal logic
 - Interactions between modal and temporal accessibility relations
2. Temporal interpretation of modals
 - Temporal interpretation and selection of modal base
 - Modals in matrix sentences and in conditionals
3. Covert modality: “scheduling readings” of the bare Present
4. Indicative conditionals
 - Tenses and modals in ‘if’-clauses
 - Temporal relations between antecedent and consequent
5. Indicative vs. one-past vs. two-past subjunctive conditionals
6. Modal implications of temporal connectives
 - Predictability, counterfactuality, (non-)veridicality