



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Modals and attitude verbs - 36871

Last update 02-09-2016

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: linguistics

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Aynat Rubinstein

Coordinator Email: aynat.rubinstein@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Sun. 14:00-15:00

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Aynat Rubinstein

Course/Module description:

Modal expressions (such as 'must', 'possible', and 'necessarily') and attitude verbs (such as 'want', 'believe', and 'demand') have traditionally been given similar treatment in semantics. In recent years, an interest in the interaction between them has emerged that has advanced our understanding of similarities and differences between the two classes of lexical items. This course provides an in-depth introduction to modality and attitude ascription in light of recent research on their interaction.

Course/Module aims:

The main goal of the course is to familiarize students with the semantics of modality and attitude ascription and to explore their interaction. The course provides a solid introduction to the two types of lexical items, starting from classic work and building up to state-of-the-art research. Open questions in the domain of modality, attitude verbs, and the relationships between them will be presented and jointly explored in a seminar-style setting.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- Access and read relevant scholarly research in semantics
- Present, compare, and evaluate classic and contemporary work in an important area of semantics
- Analyze linguistic data at various levels of structure and use
- Construct clear linguistic arguments
- Integrate existing research on modality and attitude verbs and identify theoretical and practical issues it applies to

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Class periods will consist of lectures as well as more interactive teaching modules. Students are required to participate actively by presenting papers in class and engaging their classmates in discussion.

Course/Module Content:

i. Conceptual and formal foundations (truth-conditional semantics; intensionality; argument association)

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- ii. Modality (quantificational possible worlds semantics; context dependency; grammatical constraints on the interpretation of modals)
 - iii. Attitude ascriptions (content of an attitude; comparative attitudes)
 - iv. Modals and attitude verbs (embedding)
 - v. Patterns of acquisition and historical change

Required Reading:

Hegarty, M. 2016. *Modality and propositional attitudes*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Additional Reading Material:

Anand, P. and V. Hacquard (2013). *Epistemics and attitudes*. *Semantics and Pragmatics* 6: 1-59. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3765/sp.6.8>

Bybee, J., R. Perkins, and W. Pagliuca (1994). *The evolution of grammar*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London.

Cournane, A. (2014). *In search of L1 evidence for diachronic reanalysis: mapping modals*. *Language Acquisition* 21(1): 103-117.

von Fintel, K. and I. Heim. (2011). *Intensional semantics*. Manuscript, MIT. Available at: <http://web.mit.edu/fintel/fintel-heim-intensional.pdf>

Hacquard, V. (2011). *Modality*. In Portner, P., Maienborn, C. and von Stechow, R. (eds.), *Semantics: An international handbook of natural language meaning*, pp. 1484-1515. de Gruyter, Berlin.

Hintikka, J. 1971. *Semantics for propositional attitudes*. In Leonard Linsky, ed., *Reference and modality*, 145-167. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Katz, G., P. Portner, and A. Rubinstein. (2012). *Ordering combination for modal semantics*. In Chereches, A. (ed.), *Proceedings of SALT 22*, pp. 488-507. CLC Publications .

Kratzer, A. (1981). *The notional category of modality*. In Eikmeyer, H.-J. and Rieser, H. (eds.), *Words, worlds, and contexts*, pp. 38-74. de Gruyter, Berlin.

Kratzer, A. (1991). *Modality*. In von Stechow, A. and Wunderlich, D. (eds.), *Semantik/Semantics: An international handbook of contemporary research*, pp. 639-650. De Gruyter, Berlin.

Kratzer, A. (2012). *Modal and conditionals: New and revised perspectives*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Nauze, F. D. (2008). *Modality in typological perspective*. PhD thesis, ILLC, University of Amsterdam.

Palmer, F. R. (2001). *Mood and modality*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 2nd edition.

Portner, P. (2009). *Modality*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Yalcin, S. (2007). *Epistemic modals*. *Mind* 116: 983-1026.

Yalcin, S. (2010). *Probability operators*. *Philosophy Compass* 5(11): 916-937.

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 0 %

Project work 50 %

Assignments 10 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 0 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 40 %

In-class presentation

Additional information: