

Future and evaluation

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In this presentation, we discuss the purely epistemic reading of the future in Greek and Italian. In this reading, the future morpheme behaves as equivalent to the universal epistemic modal *must*. We call this use ‘epistemic future’. Epistemic future appears to have an evidential component: it cannot be used if the speaker knows, either via visual perception, or via a report, that the prejacent proposition *p* is true. This renders epistemic futures nonveridical, and we extend this claim to *must*, building on a recent proposal by Giannakidou and Mari 2012, 2014). The judgment with the future is epistemically weaker than an unmodalized assertion, and relies on partial knowledge supporting *p*. We show that partial knowledge is not indirect knowledge. Our analysis contrasts with von Stechow and Gillies 2010 who argue that *must* is ‘strong’, and further refines the classical ‘weak’ analysis of universal epistemic modals (Karttunen 1972, Kratzer 1981, Giannakidou 1998, 1999 and more recently Lassiter 2013).

We nonetheless explain the effect of strength by introducing a component conveying the speaker’s positive bias about *p* being true in the actual world. Our analysis makes a distinction about actual and projected truth that creates bias; it therefore renders universal epistemic modals both strong (because of the bias) and weak (because of nonveridicality).

Modal adverbs often accompany future statements and, we argue, reveal the bias. We show that the adverbs with which future sentences combine are speaker oriented ones (Ernst, 2009). We argue that the bias can be confirmed by strong adverbs, and overwritten by weak ones. We propose a new analysis that comprises an EVALP layer that hosts the adverbs.