Conditionals and Counterfactuals: A Semantic-Topological Analysis

Esteban Echaniz[1]
[1] USACH, Santiago, Chile
echanizalvarez@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper will present a semantic-topological analysis scheme for conditionals and counterfactuals based on Lewis Stalnaker semantics (with emphasis on Lewis). The main aim of this research is to analyze Lewisian similarity spheres from a topological approach. Such an approach raises challenges such as the limit assumption and the dilemma of whether this methodology is the most clean, useful and (mainly) plausible. Finally, we will compare the results of counterfactual analysis from Kit Fine's point of view, his truth-maker semantics, and whether this approach could be represented by topological semantics.

1 Abstract

This paper focuses on presenting a scheme of semantic-topological analysis of conditionals and counterfactuals, starting from the basis of Stalnaker-Lewis semantics, but focusing mainly on Lewis's counterfactual proposal. The main purpose of this paper is to propose an outline of a possible extension of Lewisian similarity spheres to analyze similarity between possible worlds.

A similarity analysis based on a topological semantics, which brings us new challenges such as: What contribution does topological semantics bring to the analysis of conditionals and counterfactuals? Similarly, a new challenge will be to propose a method to analyze the plausibility of the similarity representations made by this new type of analysis.

This new approach will also have to face the assumption of the limit, and, on the other hand, it will have to face the question: Is this the best method of explanation and representation of Conditionals and Counterfactuals?

Finally, a comparison will be made to the treatment of counterfactuals by Kit Fine's truth-maker semantics, and whether this approach can be interpreted from a topological point of view.

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