

Justification logic

Thomas Studer

University of Bern, Switzerland

<http://www.iam.unibe.ch/~tstuder>

Abstract

Traditional modal logics feature formulas of the form $\Box\phi$ that stand for *an agent knows ϕ* . The classical semantics for these logics is given by possible world models, in which the formula $\Box\phi$ is true if ϕ is true in all worlds that the agent considers possible. However, this approach is missing the justified part of Plato's classic characterization of knowledge as justified true belief. Justification logics can fill this gap. Instead of formulas $\Box\phi$, the language of justification logics includes formulas of the form $t : \phi$ that mean *the agent knows ϕ for reason t* . The evidence term t in this expression can represent a formal proof of ϕ or an informal reason why ϕ is known. Moreover, justification logics include operations on these terms to reflect the agent's reasoning power. For instance, if $\phi \rightarrow \psi$ is known for reason s and ϕ is known for reason t , then ψ is known for reason $s \cdot t$, where the binary operation \cdot models the agent's ability to apply modus ponens. In our talk, we give a short introduction to justification logic and present the main results in this area.