Indexicality and its domains

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This mini course introduces Kaplan's (1989) theory for indexicals. We will start with the investigation of the phenomenon of "context sensitivity", how it can be described, and its different forms, for instance, ambiguity, vagueness and gradability. Then, we will explore Kaplan's theory, some of its consequences for the analyses of natural language, and some of its empirical shortcomings.

We will move on to the investigation of cases of "deferred ostension", descriptive indexicals, and instances of so-called "monsters" in the semantics of natural language. We will also analyze different approaches to demonstratives in contrast with definite descriptions. Finally, we will explore some possible extensions of the "indexical landscape" by investigating predicates of personal taste, exclamatives, and also use-conditional meaning, such as interjections.

Our aim in this mini course is then (i) to introduce Kaplan's theory and explore its consequences and shortcomings, and (ii) to present and analyze a wide domain of semantic phenomena related to indexicality.