

## The German modal *sollte* in the antecedent of conditionals

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The topic of this talk is the use of the German modal *sollte* in the antecedent of conditionals as illustrated in (1) and (2).

- (1) Wenn dir das zu früh sein sollte, dann kannst du auch später kommen.  
If you that too early be should then can you also later come  
'If that's too early for you, you can come later.'

- (2) Wenn es in Nordrhein-Westfalen zu Neuwahlen kommen sollte,  
If it in North Rhine-Westphalia to new elections come should

dann hat die CDU gute Chancen auf einen Sieg.  
then has the CDU good chances for a victory

'If there happen to be new elections in North Rhine-Westphalia, then the CDU has a good chance of winning.'

We call this use the “deliberative” use of *sollte*. We argue that the deliberative use is neither a special case of a priority use nor of an epistemic use, in short, we argue that *sollte* on a deliberative interpretation doesn't have its usual meaning as a weak necessity modal. We propose that the use conditions of *sollte*-antecedents are closely related to the use conditions of conditionals with the complementizer *falls* in German.