Lexical aspect shapes the meaning of attitude reports

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It is by now understood that inferential properties of attitude predicates help explain the kinds of clauses they can and can't combine with. Ongoing are debates about what the relevant descriptive generalizations are, and how they should be analyzed. For example, *are* all neg-raising predicates incompatible with interrogatives? How does this generalization, originally formulated on the basis of English, hold up cross-linguistically? If it is less than true, should we patch up, or discard the theories that are designed to predict it?

It is also understood that more than just modal properties of attitude predicates, e.g., neg-raising, veridicality, preferentiality, etc., play a role in this empirical landscape. Elements above the attitude verb matter, in (1), and elements below the attitude verb matter as well, in the comparison between (1b) and (2).

(1)   a.   #I think whether I should have invite Sam.
       b.   I'm thinking whether I should have invite Sam.

(2)   ??I'm thinking whether I invited Sam.

In this talk, I focus on contrasts like (1), where manipulating tense and aspect affects an attitude predicate's combinatorial profile. This suggests that eventuality related factors (e.g., being stative, eventive, telic, atelic, etc.) must generally factor into analyses of attitude reports. I delimit the kinds of interactions we might expect between the aspectual, modal and combinatorial properties just mentioned, provide a way of modeling them, and discuss the challenges that arise along the way.

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