The basic concept of semantics for normal modal logics is that of a \textit{relational model}. It consists of a set of worlds, which are related by a binary “accessibility relation,” together with an assignment which determines which \textit{propositional variables} count as “true” at which worlds.

\textbf{Definition syn.1.} A \textit{model} for the basic modal language is a triple $\mathfrak{M} = \langle W, R, V \rangle$, where

1. $W$ is a nonempty set of “worlds,”
2. $R$ is a binary accessibility relation on $W$, and
3. $V$ is a function assigning to each \textit{propositional variable} $p$ a set $V(p)$ of possible worlds.

When $Rw w'$ holds, we say that $w'$ is \textit{accessible from} $w$. When $w \in V(p)$ we say $p$ is \textit{true at} $w$.

The great advantage of relational semantics is that models can be represented by means of simple diagrams, such as the one in \textbf{Figure 1}. Worlds are represented by nodes, and world $w'$ is accessible from $w$ precisely when there is an arrow from $w$ to $w'$. Moreover, we label a node (world) by $p$ when $w \in V(p)$, and otherwise by $\neg p$. \textbf{Figure 1} represents the model with $W = \{w_1, w_2, w_3\}$, $R = \{(w_1, w_2), (w_1, w_3)\}$, $V(p) = \{w_1, w_2\}$, and $V(q) = \{w_2\}$.

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