

Cool Modes

collaborative learning and modelling system

Cool Modes 2.02

- manual -

University of Duisburg-Essen

Institute for computer science

and interactive systems

What is Cool Modes?

Cool Modes was designed to support discussions, collaborative learning and cooperative modelling.

The acronym “Cool Modes” here stands for Collaborative Open Learning and MODELing System (Pinkwart, 2003).

Cool Modes provides a variety of different visual languages and forms of representation; beside unstructured languages like hand-writing Cool Modes offers semi-operational languages (e.g. to support discussions) and languages that have operational semantics like Petri Nets or System Dynamics.

Cool Modes consists of a framework and is supplemented by an expandable inventory of visual languages, that are each available in form of “reference frames” that are added to the system by a “plug-in”- method.

The framework offers the basic features like working with workspaces, interlinking several applications on distributed computers and loading, storing and exporting data.

The various visual languages are added through “reference frames”.

Part of these reference frames are the so called “palettes” that provide various elements of a visual language like for example nodes and edges.

Figure 1 shows a running discussion in Cool Modes. The small area on the right is a palette of a plug-in, of which the elements are drawn via drag&drop-operations to the workspace on the left.

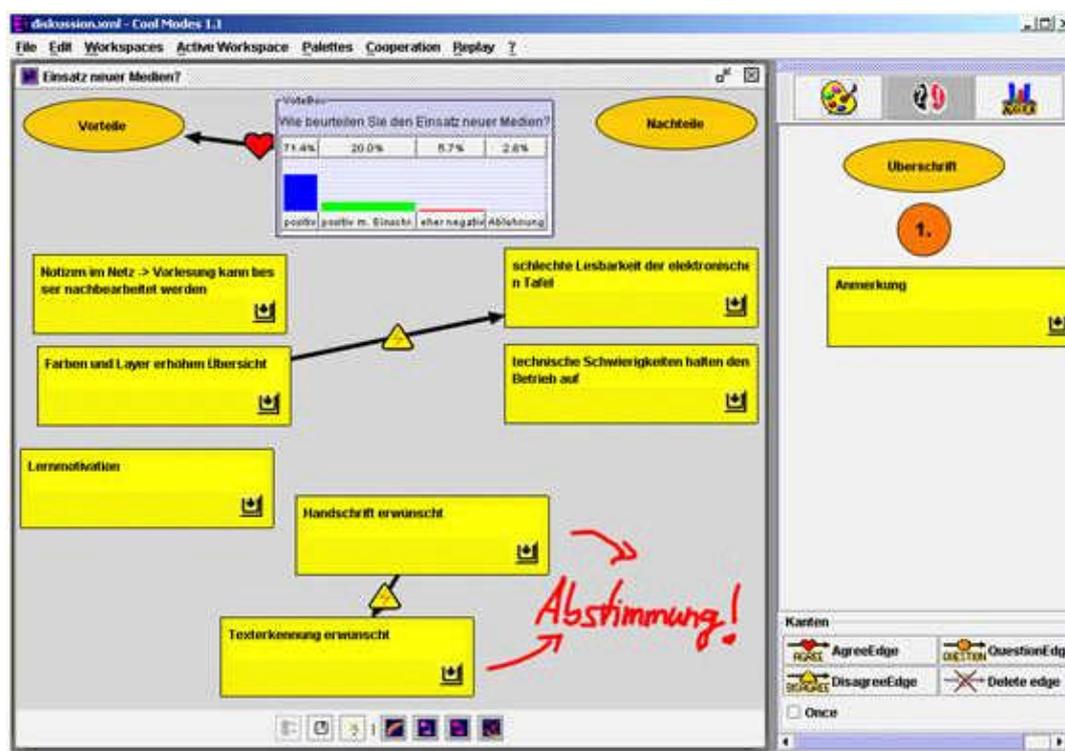


Figure 1: Cool Modes workspace.

Characteristic for working with Cool Modes is the mixture of various/different languages in a single workspace.

It is possible in Cool Modes to annotate for example Petri Nets with elements of the discussion plug-in and to emphasize specific relations with the help of hand-writing.

General Handling/ General information for working with Cool Modes

Elementary part of Cool Modes are the plug-ins, also called reference frames.

Plug-ins contain various features each visualizing different issues.

Features of different plug-ins can be combined in most cases.

Most Plug-ins offer so called nodes and edges.

The nodes are connected to each other through various types of edges.

The choice of nodes (objects) and edges of the active plug-ins is shown in each case in den window titled „Plug-ins“. Nodes can be drawn in the workspace via a drag&drop operation and can also be positioned within the workspace in the same way. You activate an edge by clicking on it in the plug-in window and create one in the workspace by drawing from start-node to the target node in order to make clear the direction of the node.

Some types of nodes merely show a bond/connection between two objects, others have a specific purpose. Remember that not every node can be linked to every edge.

The following example of the discuss plug-in should illustrate the functionality of plug-ins.

Figure 2 shows a workspace (1), in which some nodes (2) are linked to each other through edges (3). The different types of nodes and edges each fulfil a specific function in the demonstration/illustration (discussion).

Moreover you also see hand-written notes (4) that have been created with the hand-writing plug-in. In addition the discussion is supplemented by a poll, which is created with the help of the voting tool (5). The active plug-in here is the discussion plug-in, therefore the features of the plug-in are shown in the plug-in window (6).

The rest of the plug-ins, though not active at the moment, but easy to enable at any time, are represented by icons at the top of the plug-in window (8).

At the bottom of each workspace you see a tool-bar (7), at the top, over the workspace, the menu bar (9).

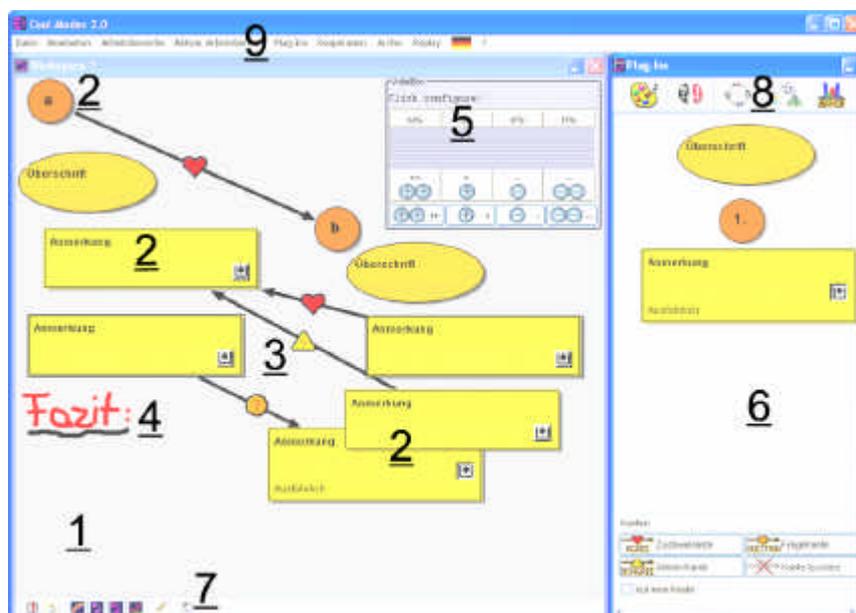


Figure 2: Cool Modes workspace with hand-written annotations

„First Steps“

After having installed the programme (for detailed description see attachment) you can start Cool Modes by a double click on the file entitled *StartCoolmodes.bat*.

The default setting shows all menu items in English.

To change this setting, click the English flag, which is located on the right side of the menu bar (see arrow) and choose the flag of the desired language. From then on the menu items are shown in the chosen language. Some plug-ins also are multilingual and automatically switch to the chosen language.

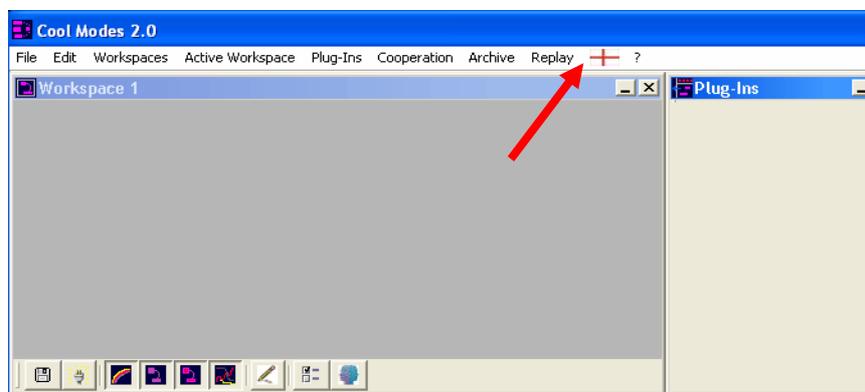


Figure 3: Cool Modes' basic user interface

If you wish to use other Cool Modes features besides the delivered pen in the toolbar (see figure 4), you will need to install the plug-ins. Store the files in the folder „plugins“, that is located in the folder “libs” of your Cool Modes installation. All windows (workspaces and plug-ins) can be positioned as you like. Windows can be moved by clicking into the blue window-title and dragging to the desired position as you might know from other software products.

The size is also changed as you know it from MS Windows for example.

If the size of a window is not adequate to show all elements of a plug-in scrollbars are automatically added.

Cool Modes is delivered without plug-ins, therefore you have to download each plug-in separately from our website <http://www.collide.info>.

Register yourself to get access to the download area. Choose the menu item downloads and the category software (as you already did during installation).

There you will find a folder with the title “Cool Modes Extensions“. Choose the desired plug-ins from this folder and download them.

When you start Cool Modes a workspace with the title “Workspace1” already is available.

To add a further workspace choose the option “New private workspace” from the menu item “Workspaces”. A new workspace appears.

Each workspace possesses a footer showing a variety of icons. In a new workspace you see 9 of these icons, whose functions/features are clarified by small pictures.



Figure 4: Tool bar

Move your mouse over these icons and while hovering above a text appears that informs you about which feature is hidden behind. You activate/deactivate the features by clicking on the particular icon. The icon looks pressed down when it is active.

Features of the tool bar



Save this workspace

This icon allows to save the content of the active workspace.



Share this workspace

When you click on this icon the same pop-up window appears that you see when you choose the option "New session" (see below). You can start a new session and share your workspace by filling in the form in the pop-up window and choosing "ok".

When you are in a session, the icon appears with a red background. If you leave the session with your workspace, the icon appears again with a light grey background.



Background image

With this icon it is possible to show or hide an existing background image.



Background graph

This icon makes it possible to activate or deactivate a possibly existing background graph.



Graph

This icon permits showing and hiding of a graph (= all nodes and edges that are in use).



Drawing area

This icon provides the possibility of activating/deactivating of drawing areas.

By choosing the option „add drawing area“ under the menu item „active workspace“ you can add as much drawing areas as you like, whose content can individually be made visible or invisible. Drawing areas can be removed by selecting the option "remove drawarea" under the menu item "active workspace".



Pen

The pen gives you the possibility to make black- coloured hand-written notices. For other colours or line strengths you need to install the hand-writing plug-in.



Preferences for this workspace

By pressing this button you can activate/evoke a pop-up window with the title “Preferences”. Here you can name your workspace, select if you want to show or hide the scrollbars and arrange existing nodes automatically.



Awareness Preferences

This option serves for supporting a cooperation. It gives the possibility, to make the position of your telepointer visible for your cooperation-partners.

You can choose between three settings: always visible, never visible, visible when the user presses the mouse button. (stimmt nicht ganz, ich glaub das ist andersrum mit der Pointeranzeige!!)

The menu bar shows the following items:

- File
- Edit
- Workspaces
- Active Workspace
- Plug-Ins
- Cooperation
- Wizzwards
- Replay
- Flag
- ?- Menu

File



Open

With this option you can open an already stored Cool Modes file (in XML-format).



Recent files

This option provides a list of files that were used at last. With a click on the name of the file you can open the desired file.



Save

In case you changed a loaded or already saved file, you can save the modification under the current filename with this menu item. (Attention! The old file is written over!!)



Save as

This option allows storing of files under a new name.



Print

By selecting this option you can print the current Cool Modes interface (including all workspaces and the plug-in window).



Export as

This option allows to export the currently visible status of Cool Modes as graphic in JPG or SVG format.



Send by mail

This option offers the possibility to send your result by mail.

Choose „Send by mail“ and a window with a (set) form opens. Besides the mailserv type in the subject of your mail, the recipient, and if needed the name of the recipient to whom a copy should be sent.

You can also choose between three different degrees of quality. Quality describes the rate of compression. If the quality is low, the factor of compression is high and the resulting graphic file small. This is also valid vice versa.

When you have access to the stated mailserv you can send your file by mail by choosing „send mail“. If you don't want to do this, choose „cancel“ and the window with the mail form closes.



Exit

When you choose this option a pop-up window appears, in which you are asked if you want to exit Cool Modes. Choose “Yes” to quit the programme and “No” to continue.

It is also possible to quit Cool Modes by clicking on the x on the right side of the top of the interface. The already mentioned pop-up window also appears in this case.

Edit



Cut

This option allows to cut several marked nodes from the workspace. Edges that possibly are between the nodes are deleted, but are not taken/collected in the clipboard. Therefore they are not available for pasting.



Copy

With this feature you can copy several marked nodes to the clipboard. Edges that possibly are between the nodes are (as you already know from cutting) not considered.



Paste

This option allows to paste objects which you (have) cut or copied before into the same workspace. To paste these objects click in your workspace and choose the menu item for this purpose.



Delete

The option „Delete“ allows a removal of marked nodes in workspaces. Edges between nodes that shall be deleted are also cleared/erased.



Undo

This option makes it possible to cancel an action. It can only be used in cooperation and affects all workspaces that take part in the cooperation.



Redo

This option gives you the chance to revoke an action you called off before. Like the option „undo“, „redo“ only is possible if you are in a session.

Workspaces



New private workspace

This option allows to open a new private workspace.



New shared workspace

With this option you can create a workspace that provides the possibility to work together with others over several, distributed computers.



Remove active workspace

This menu item makes it possible to remove the active workspace. Attention: joined workspaces (with red icon) can only be removed locally, they are still available for the cooperations partners. If you want to use these areas yourself again choose the option "Refresh session" from the menu item "Cooperation".

Active Workspace



Select background

This option provides the possibility to select and insert a background. If you choose this option you can insert as much pictures (PNG, GIF, JPG, TIF format) as you like. The size of the picture automatically matches/adapts to the size of the workspaces.



Add drawarea

This option offers the possibility to add as much drawareas as you want to the workspace. The drawareas are organised in layers that serve for hand-written annotations. It is possible to show and hide drawareas by activating/deactivating the buttons in the footer of the workspace. The active workspaces are shown versenkt??.



Remove drawarea

Draw areas can be removed by the choice of this option.



Preferences

By pressing this button you can open a pop-up window with the title "Preferences". Here you can name your workspace or change its name, select if you want to show or hide the scrollbars. With the help of scrollbars you can choose the part of the workspace you like

to edit in case it exceeds the size of the current window size. Moreover you are given the possibility to arrange existing nodes automatically.



Save

This option allows to store the current workspace.



Arrange nodes

With the help of this option you can arrange nodes of the active workspace automatically.

Plug-Ins



Add plug-Ins

This option allows to add a plug-in from a list, which appears after choosing the menu item. By clicking on the desired plug-in(s) they are chosen. The picked/selected plug-ins appear in the window with the title "Plug-ins".



Used plug-Ins

Under this menu item all plug-ins are listed which you have used before. By clicking on them you can reaccess them.



Remove plug-Ins

By choosing this option you can remove plug-ins that you chose before from the window with the title "plug-ins"

Cooperation

Cooperation allows synchronising several workspaces. The content(s) of the workspace are changed in all workspaces that take part in the cooperation at the same time. To enable a cooperation a special server has to run, the so called MatchMaker Server. This server can be started out of Cool Modes or by choosing the file "Start MMServer.bat" in the Cool Modes installation folder.

(Die Kooperation ermöglicht das Synchronisieren mehrerer Arbeitsbereiche. Die Inhalte der Arbeitsbereiches werden bei allen an der Kooperation teilnehmenden Anwendern gleichzeitig geändert. Um eine Kooperation zu ermöglichen, muss ein spezieller Server laufen; der so genannte MatchMaker Server. Dieser kann direkt aus Cool Modes heraus oder per Klick auf die Datei „Start MMServer.bat“ im Cool Modes-Installationsverzeichnis gestartet werden.)



New session

This option allows to constitute a new (cooperation-) session. Therefore you have to type in the address of the computer on which the MatchMaker Server should run (localhost, if this should be your own computer) in the form. In addition you have to choose a name for your session and to name the log-file. Affirm by selecting "ok". By choosing this log-file you can replay a session later on.



Join session

The MatchMaker Server is scanned. By choosing the desired session from a list by clicking on the name (in case more sessions are running at the same time) you can join the session.



Refresh session (wird gerade in der deutschen version verändert, deshalb erstmal nicht übersetzt)

Mit Hilfe dieser Option können Sie den aktuellen Serverzustand einer Kooperationssitzung lokal wieder herstellen, inklusive aller zuvor geschlossenen Arbeitsbereiche. Wenn Sie also im Laufe einer Kooperationssitzung Arbeitsbereiche geschlossen haben, können Sie sich diese durch Auswahl dieser Option wieder anzeigen lassen.



Leave session

By choosing this option you leave the session in which you are.



Start server

With this option you can start the MatchMaker Server locally, which provides the possibility to Work together with others over distributed computers.

Replay



Replay session

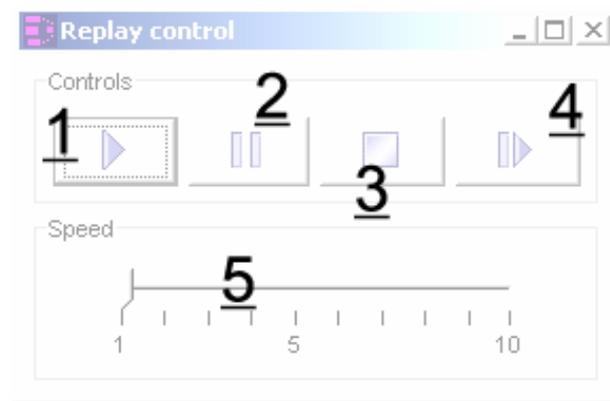


Abb. 5: Replay control elements

This option allows to replay a session by opening the log-file that “recorded” the session before. A window appears, which offers you some control elements.

There are icons available, with whom you can play-back (1) the session, stop it (3) or pause the session (2). The speed at which the session should be replayed can be regulated by choosing a level on the “time-scale” (5). By the choice of 1 the rate is real-time, by the choice of a higher number the rate is higher.

Alternatively there is the possibility to replay a session step by step (4) (from breakpoint to breakpoints). This assumes, that (you) somebody added breakpoints during the session. Please mind/consider that you either use the three buttons in the left to control the rate or the possibility to replay the session step by step (from breakpoint to breakpoint/along the breakpoints). A mixture of both might cause problems.



Recent files

Under the option „Recent files“ you find the specific log-file for a replay of a past session.



Add breakpoint

The one who started the session is able to add as much breakpoints as he/she likes. These breakpoints serve to structure the session. When you replay the session you can directly jump from breakpoint to breakpoint.

Wizzards

This menu includes some wizzards, who support working with Cool Modes.

The wizzards mainly are self-explanatory so that an explanation is resigned/left out in this manual.

? - Menü



About CoolModes

Behind this option the number of the version is hidden.



About this document

Here you can get information about the current document.