

Agency and Intentions in Language (AIL)
Interdisciplinary workshop
Georg-August University of Göttingen
January 13-15, 2021 (virtual)

Our sense of agency and ability to distinguish between intentional and accidental actions are fundamental for social interaction. They allow us to plan and perform joint actions and assign responsibility for our own actions and those of others. Research on the nature of agency and intentions has been very fruitful over the last few decades both in philosophy and in linguistics. However, interdisciplinary discussion has rarely taken place.

We are delighted to announce the first interdisciplinary workshop on Agency and Intentions in Language. The goal of the workshop is to bring together scholars in linguistics and philosophy interested in questions related to agency and intentions.

Invited speakers

Francesco Constantini (University of Udine)
Joshua Knobe (Yale University)
Anna Szabolcsi (NYU)

On the linguistic side, we welcome submissions examining any grammatical phenomena sensitive to the degree of agency or interpretation of an action as intentional versus accidental, such as controller choice (Farkas 1988), subjunctive obviation (Ruwet 1991, Schlenker 2005, Costantini 2009, a.o.), licensing of polarity items (Szabolcsi 2004), aspect choice in Slavic (Forsyth 1970, Paducheva 2013, Despic 2020, a.o.), case marking in ergative split languages and ‘out-of-control’ morphology. The focus of the workshop is mainly empirical, so submissions are welcome from all domains of the grammar (morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, etc.) and irrespective of any specific theoretical framework. Some of the topics of interest include, but are not restricted to, the following:

- ways in which natural languages manifest different degrees of agency or the distinction between intentional and accidental actions (morphological marking, syntactic structures, semantic denotations of verbs and adverbials, pragmatic and contextual differences)
- connection between agency, intentions, and event structure
- relation between agency, intentions, and causality

On the side of philosophy, we welcome submissions addressing any aspect related to the nature of agency, intentions, and acting intentionally. Both theoretical and empirical research contributing to debates on causal theories of action, free will, moral responsibility, nature of reasons, and practical rationality are welcome.

Submissions

Anonymous abstracts, not exceeding 2 pages (including references and examples), with font no less than 11 Times New Roman, and 2 cm margins, should be uploaded on EasyChair (<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=ail1>) Presentations will be allotted 30-minutes slots with 15 minutes for Q&A.

Important dates

- Submission deadline: December 7th, 2020
- Notification of acceptance: end of December 2020
- Workshop: January 13-15, 2021 (9h-13h New York time or 15h-19h Berlin time)

Contact and organization

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