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News & Events

CONFERENCE REPORT

“Enacting Intersubjectivity:
Paving the Way for a Dialogue between
Cognitive Science, Social Cognition
and Neuroscience”

*Università della Svizzera italiana,
Lugano, 13th and 14th February 2009*

The International workshop “Enacting Intersubjectivity: paving the way for a dialogue between cognitive science, social cognition and neuroscience” was held on the 13th and 14th of February 2009, in Lugano at the Università della Svizzera italiana (USI). The workshop was organized by the Institute of Psychology and Sociology of Communication (IPSC), at the Faculty of Communication Sciences; it has been financed by USI and by the Swiss National Science Foundation.

This first edition workshop is part of an ambitious project started with the publication of the book “Enacting Intersubjectivity: A cognitive and Social Perspective on the Study of Interactions” edited by Francesca Morganti, Antonella Carassa and Giuseppe Riva.

The study of intersubjectivity has opened up new perspectives for cognitive and social researches that investigate mental capacities allowing humans to relate to each other and to engage in social interactions. Intersubjectivity is

a basic dimension of consciousness on which socialness is grounded.

Up to now, it takes place – at the very heart of contemporary studies – an intense debate around some central questions that concern the nature and forms of human intersubjectivity, its development and its role in situated joint activities.

The landscape of disciplines involved in the study of intersubjectivity is vast, and includes philosophy, neurosciences, cognitive science, comparative and developmental psychology, social cognition and others. This aspect, on one hand, points to the power and the fecundity of the construct; on the other hand, it may be a source of misunderstandings, due to significant differences in theoretical presuppositions and research methodologies. As a consequence, it becomes extremely important building opportunities for comparison and debate.

Both the publication of the quoted book, and the realization of this international workshop have to be considered as opportunities to create border areas, aimed at fostering the cross-fertilization between different perspectives and paving the way for a constructive dialogue between the disciplines.

The workshop offered a general overview on contemporary and innovative researches on intersubjectivity, through the contributions of several

eminent scholars from European and American countries (namely the book chapters' authors), who have been invited at the workshop.

The workshop was organized in three main invited sessions. The first one was titled "Enactive Cognition, towards an embodied approach to the study of mind." This session contained several contributions discussing intersubjectivity in terms of socially embodied human capability. The speakers proposed theoretical and experimental contributions about the function of the body in social interaction, describing how our intersubjective abilities are grounded in socially distributed and embodied actions, functioning as a basis for mutual sharing of experience in joint activities.

The second invited session, "Mind in interactions, towards a cognitive socialness," concerned what happens when a subject meets another subject, focusing on the interaction process, especially in a social-cognitive perspective. Some contributions tried to define the problem of understanding others, moving on two directions: first investigating the social understanding, second analyzing the understanding of social events. Other contributions in this session tried to deepen the role of intersubjectivity in the development of communication and cognitive development, both in typical and atypical development.

In the third invited session, "Neurologically linked, towards a neuroscientific endorsement," some researches were proposed, presenting results about the neurocognitive mechanisms involved. In particular, it was discussed

the mirror-neurons' function, enabling an individual to understand the actions performed by others, matching the sensory with motor representations of those actions.

The invited sessions were spaced out by four oral sessions and a poster session in which contributions from comparative psychology, developmental psychology, philosophy, cognitive science and neuroscience were presented.

Moreover, during the workshop a round table was held on the most discussed issues in the intersubjectivity area, offering an opportunity for exchanging point of views on methodology, interdisciplinary contributions and future trends.

This first international workshop, in my opinion, has been a fruitful event in the complex landscape of intersubjectivity research, offering challenging contributions for further researches and valuable exchanges in the theoretical framework.

References

- MORGANTI F.; CARASSA A. & RIVA G. (2008). *Enacting Intersubjectivity. A Cognitive and Social Perspective on the Study of Interactions*. Amsterdam: IOS Press.
- CARASSA A.; MORGANTI F. & RIVA G. (2009). *Proceeding of International Workshop "Enacting Intersubjectivity: Paving the Way for a Dialogue between Cognitive Science, Social Cognition and Neuroscience"*, Lugano, 13th-14th February 2009. Lugano: Università della Svizzera italiana Press.

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EVENTS

June 2009:

**2nd Digital Cultures Workshop:
Social Media Publics**
University of Salford
4–5 June 2009
Salford, Greater Manchester, UK

**Communicating Change:
Weaving the Web into the Future**
University of Glasgow, Graduate
School of Arts and Humanities
8–10 June 2009
Glasgow, Scotland, UK

**EUROQUAL Conference and
Workshops on Ethics and Politics
in Qualitative Methods**
Collegium Civitas/European
Science Foundation
8–10 June 2009
Warsaw, Poland

**39th World Congress of the
International Institute of Sociology:
Sociology at the Crossroads**
11–14 June 2009
Yerevan, Armenia

**Intercultural Communication
between China and the World:
Interpersonal, Organizational and
Mediated Perspectives**
11–14 June, 2009
Beijing, China

**NachwuchsforscherInnentagung:
Dimensionen von Bildungs-
und Sozialweltforschung sowie
Methodenentwicklung**
Zentrum für Sozialweltforschung und

Methodenentwicklung (ZSM),
Otto-von-Guericke-Universität
26–27 June 2009
Magdeburg, Deutschland

July 2009:

**Turkish Cultural Studies Association
Symposium: Media and Culture**
2–4 July 2009
Zonguldak, Karadeniz, Turkey

August 2009:

**Annual Convention, Association for
Education in Journalism and Mass
Communication (AEJMC):
How to Survive & Thrive in JMC**
5–8 August 2009
Boston, USA

**VIIIth International Conference in
Philosophy: Contemporary
Understandings of Being-Bodily**
11–13 August 2009
Guatemala City, Guatemala

**Media and Communication Research
19th Nordic Conference**
Karlstad University
13–15 August 2009
Karlstad, Sweden

**Journalism and New Media
Technologies in Africa**
Pan African University
23–27 August 2009
Lagos, Nigeria

September 2009:

**9th Conference of the European
Sociological Association: European**

Society or European Societies?
ISCTE-Lisbon University Institute,
New University of Lisbon,
University of Lisbon, Portuguese
Sociological Association
2–5 September 2009
Lisbon, Portugal

**International Conference on
Intercultural Communication**
School of Journalism and Mass
Communication and Institute of
Management Studies, Noida
3–5 September 2009
Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

**Identität und Wandel der Lebens-
formen – Identity and Lifestyles
Transformations – Identité et
transformation des modes de vie**
Swiss Sociological Association
7–9 September 2009
Geneva, Switzerland

**International Conference on
Youth Transitions**
University of Basel, Swiss youth
panel survey TREE
11–12 September 2009
Basel, Switzerland

Spoken Word Conference
Kingston University/
Institute of the Spoken Word
18 September 2009
Kingston, UK

**19. Jahrestagung der Arbeitsgemein-
schaft Objektive Hermeneutik**
Arbeitsgemeinschaft
Objektive Hermeneutik
19–20 September 2009
Frankfurt am Main, Germany

**Communication, Cognition and
Media: Communication Sciences
International Congress**
Catholic University of Portugal
23–25 September 2009
Braga, Portugal

**3rd Vienna Games Conference:
Future and Reality of Games
(F.R.O.G.)**
25–27 September 2009
Vienna, Austria

October 2009:

**Campaigning for Europe 2009
Parties, Campaigns, Mass Media and
the European Parliamentary
Elections 2009**
Universität Koblenz-Landau
7–9 October 2009
Landau, Germany

**International Conference on
Media and Communication
(MENTION'09)**
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
13–15 October 2009
Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

**Der Bildermarkt – Strukturen, Ver-
triebswege, Kosten und die Folgen**
Tagung der DGPK-Fachgruppe
Visuelle Kommunikation
29–31 October 2009
Potsdam, Germany

**Theorien der internationalen und
interkulturellen Kommunikation**
Internationale Tagung mit
integriertem Doktoranden-Workshop
29–31 October 2009
Mannheim, Germany

November 09:

**Alles nur Theater? Authentizität
und Inszenierung in der
Organisationskommunikation**

16. Jahrestagung der DGPK-
Fachgruppe «Public Relations/
Organisationskommunikation»

5–7 November 2009

Offenburg, Germany

**Public Value in der Digital-
und Internetökonomie**

Jahrestagung der Fachgruppe
Medienökonomie

13–14 November 2009

Hamburg, Germany

**Change in Progress.
Models of/Models for Journalism
and Communication**

University of Bucharest

19–21 November 2009

Bucharest, Romania

Digital Media Technologies

**Revisited: Theorising
Social Relations, Interactions
and Communication**

20–21 November 2009

Berlin, Germany

December 2009:

**Impact of Media and New
Technologies on Languages**

Minya University

7–9 December 2009

Minya, Egypt

Sabina Misoch