

TRAINCREASE NEWSLETTER

HORIZON2020



March
2021

- March 15th-17th: Rome Symposium
- March 31st: Report on Challenges (D1.1)
- March 31st: Call for Theory Building Microtwinning
- March 31st: Website launch

April
2021

- April 18th: Special Issue Proposal for *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* submitted
- April 30th: Theory Building Microtwinning: Applications collected

May
2021

- May 13th: Nine Microtwinning Accepted
- May 25th: Amendment #1 approved by EU

Greetings!

This is our second Newsletter, 5 months into the project. We were not able to meet in person since the beginning of the grant, but we feel like a team, already having quite concrete achievements in Traincrease.

We are nearing the end of the first phase of the project, which focused on Theory Building. Our theoretical views on abstraction were refreshed and sometimes challenged due to the March Rome Symposium. We summarized the challenges and novel ideas in a report, submitted as our first main deliverable of the project. The Symposium was also an inspiration for a special issue proposal that Anna Borghi sent to *Philosophical Transactions B*. Some ideas for theory development were put immediately to realization in 9 small projects—Microtwinning—accepted after the call. Thank you, Anna, and your Team at the Roma La Sapienza, for your leadership in this part of Traincrease!

Now is the time for transition to the second stage of the Project, focused on research methodology, under the guidance of the University of Manchester Team, led by Angelo Cangelosi and Thea Cameron-Faulkner. We will develop skills in Experimental Semiotics, Experimental Psychology, Movement Analysis, and Computational Modeling and Robotics – all as applied to research on abstraction. The first workshop, “Cultural evolution in the laboratory: how to experimentally investigate the emergence of abstract concepts”, will take place at the Interacting Minds Centre, Aarhus University. Due to the pandemic, we had to postpone the date (to 28-29 Oct 2021) but this way there is a fair chance it will be a face-to-face meeting! We are very much looking forward to this.

Thank you all for your involvement. Read on below for the events’ descriptions and details. Contact us with ideas or comments!

NEW/FRESH PERSPECTIVES ON ABSTRACT CONCEPTS SYMPOSIUM

Rome Symposium was the focal point of our efforts in March. We've managed to secure the array of keynotes who are at the forefront of research on abstraction or on theoretical frameworks which may lead to important changes in perspective.

The first day of the conference has been viewed over 1000 times on YouTube, with the next days approaching this number. Both the number and the engagement of participants have far exceeded our expectations.

Each day concluded with the debate between the Twinning Partners and the Keynotes, which was most helpful for identifying the theory building and research challenges. A more detailed description may be found in the section *Report*, summarizing the challenges.

Importantly, despite the online character of the event we had managed to create an atmosphere of genuine exchange, conducive to making further research connections and collaborations.

15-17th March 2021
live online event

organized by:
SAPIENZA University of Rome,
Department of Dynamic and Clinical
Psychology, and Health studies

EU HORIZON2020
TRAINCREASE Project,
coordinator Joanna Rączaszek-
Leonardi (WU, Poland)

Collaboration of: Warsaw University,
Aarhus University, Manchester
University, Sapienza University of
Rome.

BALLAB

Body Action Language
Borghi Anna's Lab

Federico Da Rold
Ilenia Falcinelli
Chiara Fini
Claudia Mazzuca
Arthur-Henri Michalland



> [Website](#)

> [Recordings:](#)

- [Day 1](#)
- [Day 2](#)
- [Day 3](#)
- [Full playlist](#)

The Symposium was an important meeting of people across disciplines (from philosophy to psychology to linguistics to anthropology to robotics), and across approaches (information processing, ecological, enactive frameworks) over the topic of the role of social interaction in abstraction and vice-versa. We decided to take advantage of this fact and propose a special Issue in the journal renowned for its openness to a discussion of novel issues and perspectives: *Philosophical Transactions of Royal Society B*. Under the guidance of Anna Borghi, a team of editors (Albertyna Osińska, Joanna Rączaszek-Leonardi & Andreas Roepstorff) invited the speakers of the Symposium to contribute to the Special Issue. They extended the invitation to those who were not present but could fill in important aspects of the debate. The proposal was submitted on the 18th of April.

As a TRAINCREASE management, we would like to express our great gratitude towards the work of BALLAB team: Anna Borghi, Claudia Mazzuca, Federico Da Rold, Ilenia Falcinelli, Chiara Fini, and Arthur-Henri Michalland.

Together we have created such a fruitful scientific conference and a joyful experience for all. Thank you!

FREE

Q&A

Since the time after each keynote lecture was limited, we gathered and saved the questions asked in the chat and on YT to send them to our speakers. With their involvement, a unique document was created: a Q&A booklet, which is a novel form of scientific dissemination.

email us at traincrease.h2020@psych.uw.edu.pl

or message on Facebook for the special Q&A booklet,
full of questions and answers from the Speakers.

SPEAKERS

HELENE LOEVENBRUCK
University of Grenoble

CHARLES FERNYHOUGH
Durham University

GUY DOVE
University of Louisville

PETER LANGLAND-HASSA
University of Cincinnati

PENNY PEXMAN
University of Calgary

GARY LUPYAN
University of Wisconsin-Madison

DEDRE GENTNER
Northwestern University

MARTIN PICKERING
University of Edinburgh

MIKKO SAMS
Aalto University

KATHARINA ROHLFING
Paderborn University

AGNIESZKA WYKOWSKA
Italian Institute of Technology (Genoa)

JOANNA RACZASZEK-LEONARDI
University of Warsaw

BODO WINTER
University of Birmingham

TERRENCE DEACON
University of California (Berkeley)

LARRY BARSALOU
Glasgow University

LOUISE CONNELL
Lancaster University

OPHELIA DERoy
University of Munich

NICHOLAS SHEA
University of London

LAURA BARCA
ISTC-CNR (Rome)

MARTA PONARI
University of Kent

LUCA TUMMOLINI
ISTC-CNR (Rome)



Report

The Symposium and Partner's discussions stemming from it revealed many key challenges in the study of abstract concepts and words. The role of social interaction for abstraction and the function of abstract concepts and words within social interactions seemed indeed to be a novel perspective. It allowed for an insightful systematization of the questions and deciding on research priorities.

Starting from the very definition of concepts and abstractness, the interactive perspective emphasizes and the primacy of action and co-action. This reveals new sources for the stabilization and flexibility of concepts and their underlying categories. Thinking about features and concepts as relational and processual seemed to alleviate some of the conundrums.

The social-interactive perspective also allowed for a broader look and deeper appreciation of the role of language, through which the collective input necessary in the case of abstract concepts can be realized. Last but not least, the aspects of inner grounding—in felt motion, emotions, and other experiences—were discussed, as well as ways that social interactions and relations may influence them.


Conclusions from these discussions were gathered in a report (*Document Summarizing the Challenges*) and uploaded as a deliverable of the project. It is also our Milestone in the project development, orienting us in our future actions. We identified areas of research for the Microtwinning projects, crucial for developing this area of research. They were published as *Call for Microtwinning*: small collaborative cross-institutional projects, involving ESRs from Warsaw University in collaboration with world-class experts. For titles of the accepted projects see the *Microtwinning* section.

Microtwinnings

After a turbulent and vivacious planning process in which all partners were involved (accommodating ESR's under their supervision, discussing preliminary ideas), we have now reached the point of formulated projects ready to be kicked-off. For details and updates check [The Traincrease Website](#).

Involved in every one of the aforementioned projects, there is an early-stage researcher from the University of Warsaw benefiting from the grant through hands-on learning with experienced colleagues from Aarhus, Rome, and Manchester! To all the Partners who agreed to supervise and collaborate on the project, we wanted to say: **Thank you for your great engagement, encouragement, and time!**

Therefore: our Grant Deliverable 1.2 (*Call for Theory Building Microtwinnings*) has been completed with success.




[UW/UM/UR] *AFFECTIVE AND INTEROCEPTIVE DIMENSIONS OF IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS AND THEIR LITERAL EQUIVALENTS OF ABSTRACT CONCEPTS*




[UW/UR] *CONCEPTS IN CONVERSATION: BEHAVIOUR COORDINATION AND ROLE OF EFFECTOR FOR DIFFERENT KINDS OF CONCEPTS*




[UW/AU] *DIMENSIONS OF ABSTRACTION IN DIVERGENT THINKING*




[UW/UM] *INVESTIGATING POSSIBILITIES OF EGOCENTRIC SENSORIMOTOR GROUNDING OF SPATIAL CONCEPTS IN ROBOTICS*



[UW/AU/UR] *LANGUAGE AND TYPES OF ABSTRACT CONCEPTS: A DUAL-TASK INTERFERENCE STUDY*



[UW/UM/UR] *LOW AND HIGH NUMBERS AND EFFECTORS INVOLVEMENT*



[UW/AU/UM] *MULTIMODAL SYMBOL GROUNDING IN COMPARATIVE AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: (META)THEORISING THE EVIDENCE FROM LEXICONS*



[UW/UM] *SIMULATING EARLY ABSTRACT VOCABULARY ACQUISITION IN MOTHER-INFANT INTERACTION*



[UW/UM] *THEORY OF MIND – DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EMBODIED AND DISEMBODIED AI*

Aarhus Workshop

The autumn seems to be more optimistic for in-person meeting possibilities and we are looking forward to it! For us, one of the most important events will be the 2-day workshop “Cultural evolution in the laboratory: how to experimentally investigate the emergence of abstract concepts” organized by Aarhus University’s Interactive Minds Center on October 28th-29th.

The workshop addresses experimental approaches to the investigation of the emergence of abstraction and meaning. We will introduce a selection of methodologies from cultural evolution, cognitive science, and experimental semiotics from an interdisciplinary perspective. The workshop will involve theoretical talks, demonstrations, hands-on experience and exercises, and discussion sessions. Spaces will be limited and registration is required. Further information about the workshop and registration will be announced.

Lecturers: Kristian Tylen, Riccardo Fusaroli, Andreas Roepstorff, Karsten Olsen, *TBA*.

It will be an opportunity for the network to connect and mix the ideas, as well as equip the early-stage researchers with needed skills. Further information will be updated on the [website](#).

NEW WEBSITE

Want to know more about Traincrease?
Curious of the initiative, and our projects?
Or maybe you see your project becoming a Traincrease
Microtwinning in the future?

visit us at
traincrease.uw.edu.pl

COMING SOON

Microtwinning Teams's
websites
Publications' promo
Aarhus Workshop
New project timeline



“This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 952324.”

Traincrease Newsletter is prepared and distributed by The Management Team at UNIWARSAW. Please [contact us](#) if you don't want to receive this Newsletter in the future.

Feel free to contact us at:

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or

any of the Traincrease-dedicated social media channels:

