



Points of discussion for meeting 8

 Date @April 10, 2024 15:00

Points of discussion for meeting 8

1. Feeling stuck

For the past couple of days/weeks, I have been feeling a bit stuck, because of the following reasons:

1. I've had some issues focusing.
 - This is not related to my motivation for or the content of my thesis, it's due to other reasons; but it has contributed to this feeling of being a bit lost, so I thought I'd mention it.
2. In doing my literature research for Chapter 3, I've started to feel a bit unsure of what the point and structure of my thesis will be exactly.
 - I'm a bit unclear on the details of how scrutinizing Mercier & Sperber could fit together with the approach I've been taking thus far.
 - This relates also a lot to the next point.
3. In reading Mercier & Sperber 2017, Chapter 10: "Reason: What is it for?", I felt like they were discussing exactly what I intended to discuss in my thesis.
 - They discuss a lot of the assumptions of their 2011 paper in more detail. They discuss biological function and some details of evolution, they discuss the validity of the evolutionary approach, and they discuss the utility of cooperation in a lot of detail.
 - Of course, this doesn't mean that my research up until now has been moot, but it does make me think more about what I would like to

contribute exactly. I think it would be nice to discuss this in detail tomorrow, also related to what the structure of my thesis will be. In particular regarding Chapter 3 on reasoning, I was unsure what place the argumentative theory should have in the whole story, and where the emphasis should/could be.

- A thought: maybe I could focus on the exact evolutionary history/causation of how reasoning and communication have become intertwined. Since one would presumably need reasoning to devise arguments, but one's audience must also be able to reason to evaluate them, there is this chicken-egg problem. I hope I'll be able to explain this line of thought more clearly tomorrow, haha — but it has to do with the way in which cooperation, epistemic vigilance, communication and reasoning have all come together over the course of our evolution.

2. Timeline until final deadline

I would like to propose a timeline until July that is a bit more detailed, so that I have a bit more structure and something to hold on to.

We had previously set the following deadlines:

- Friday 28th of June: final draft
- (Friday 5th of July: feedback on final draft)
- Friday 12th of July: final version of thesis

I'd like to propose to move these one week into the future; would that be possible for you as well, considering it's in the summer vacation?

I propose the following preliminary timeline:

10/04	"Recalibration" meeting
24/04	Draft chapter 3
08/05	Draft chapter 4
22/05	Revise chapter 2
05/06	Revise chapter 3
19/06	Revise chapter 4
03/07	Finalize introduction + conclusion
05/07	Final draft thesis
(12/07)	(Feedback on final draft)

Let's discuss tomorrow whether you agree with this timeline, and with moving the deadlines further into the vacation. In this timeline, I've put two weeks for revising each chapter based on my experience with Chapter 1, but it could of course always turn out to go smoother as I go on. In any case, this is not a rigid and final timeline at all.

3. Thesis presentation

In two weeks (Wednesday the 24th of April at 17h), I have to present my thesis project to the other students (and ILLC members, I believe) in the plenary MoL thesis presentations. The requirements are as follows:

Presentations typically last round 10-15 minutes (including questions) and should include (i) an illustration of the research questions that will be addressed in the thesis and their scientific significance; (ii) a research plan (no time schedule but indication of a strategy); and (iii) preliminary results, if available

I think this should not be a problem; but maybe we can discuss this very briefly, maybe also as it relates to point 1 and 2.