Action in Language, Organisations and Information Systems

ALOIS-2003 - An International Workshop on Scandinavian Basis

March 12-13, 2003, Linköping, Sweden

The ALOIS-2003 web site is: www.vits.org/alois/.

Background

The development of information technology has had a tremendous impact on organisations during the last decades. New information systems have been introduced and the effects of them are both positive and negative. The management of IT in organisations is a very challenging task. Too often implementation of new information systems fails. The relations between the IS and its organisational context are complex and the theoretical understanding of these complex phenomena and relations are still not sufficiently deep.

The complexities of the organisational practice of information systems put demands on research and knowledge. There are many conceptual approaches aiming at describing and explaining these complex phenomena. Where do we find the promising ones? Some approaches emphasise the action concept. Without acknowledging actions, there seems to be difficult to create good scientific descriptions and explanations. Although such approaches may have differing theoretical perspectives, they have a unifying interest in the action concept and its explanatory power. Examples of such approaches are activity theory, actor network theory, structuration theory and language action theory. There may be other approaches with theoretical influences of more or less explicit action orientation, such as social phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, soft systems theory, critical social theory, hermeneutics, social semiotics, socio-pragmatism, situated cognition theory, practice theory and affordance theory. Together with this interest in action comes also an interest in many related issues, as for example, knowledge, language, communication, social interaction, social institutions, coordination, artefacts, power and values.

The purpose of this research workshop is to bring together researchers with an interest in action-theoretic approaches for studying information systems and their relations to organisations. It is a main assumption that such a forum will contribute to fruitful meetings between research traditions of different kinds but with some action-theoretic affinities. We hope that researchers coming from different traditions can benefit from this attempt of crossing borders and elaborating syntheses.

Call for papers - topics

We invite researchers interested in action-theoretic understanding to submit a paper to this workshop "Action in Language, Organisations and Information Systems" (ALOIS-2003). The area for the workshop is rather broad. Unifying is an interest for

the action notion as a primary tool for interpretation, description and explanation. The list below, which presents broad sub-topics should not be seen as exhaustive. We emphasise papers concerning the interplay between information systems and organisational issues. In the name of the workshop we have also included "language". This is done since we think that language has a decisive role for information systems and interaction in organisations.

List of possible topics:
- The social interaction of business processes
- Action and communication in organisational coordination and collaboration
- Negotiation and exchange processes of electronic commerce
- Pragmatics of knowledge management
- Management and strategy of organisational change
- Action oriented theorisation of IT artefacts
- User interfaces as languages for action
- Actability vs usability
- Workpractice languages and IS development
- The language and action of IS methods
- The social action and interaction of IS design
- User – designer interaction in IS development
- Learning in IS development
- The practices of requirements engineering
- Implementation and diffusion of IT
- IS usage as language games
- IS usage, organisational actions and effects
- Pragmatic evaluation of information systems
- Practice epistemologies
- Research strategies and methods for pragmatic studies
- Comparison between different action-theoretic positions

How to submit

Send a full paper (max 7000 words) electronically to Mikael.Lind@hb.se no later than December 10. Submissions must be made as e-mail attachments preferably in PDF format. (It is possible to use MS-Word). Please provide all contact information on a separate cover page and do not mention authors and institutions in the paper.

Dates

- Call for papers: September, 2002
- Submission of full paper (max 7000 words): Extended to December 17, 2002
- Notification of acceptance: January 24, 2003
- Submission of revised paper: February 19, 2003
- ALOIS Workshop: March 12-13, 2003 in Linköping, Sweden

Workshop organisation

ALOIS is a research workshop. This means that there will be plenty of time for discussions. Every paper will be given approximately 45 minutes for presentation and discussion. Some papers, of special interest, will be selected as target papers. These papers will get appointed discussants, who will write and present commentary papers.

The ALOIS workshop will be co-located with VITS Doctoral Consortium, which will take place at March 11. The ALOIS workshop and VITS Doctoral Consortium will be organised by the Swedish research network VITS.

Publication

There will be provisional proceedings distributed to the participants at the workshop. After the workshop the authors will be encouraged to revise their papers according to comments at the workshop. Post-proceedings will be published by the department of information and computer science, Linköping University. Proceedings will also be published electronically.

Program Committee

Program chair: Göran Goldkuhl, Linköping University & Jönköping International Business School, Sweden

PC members:

Peter Bøgh Andersen, University of Aalborg, Denmark
Susanne Bødker, University of Aarhus, Denmark
Peter Carstensen, IT University of Copenhagen, Denmark
Rodney Clarke, Staffordshire University, UK
Stefan Cronholm, Linköping University, Sweden
Jan Dietz, Technical University of Delft, The Netherlands
Yrjö Engeström, University of Helsinki, Finland
Ole Hanseth, University of Oslo, Norway
Bo Helgesson, Blekinge Institute of Technology, Sweden
Johnny Holmström, Umeå University, Sweden
Juhani Iivari, University of Oulu, Finland
Gianni Jacucci, University of Trento, Italy
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Kari Kuutti, University of Oulu, Finland
Mikael Lind, University College of Borås, Sweden
Jan Ljungberg, Göteborg University, Sweden
Kalle Lyytinen, Case Western Reserve University, USA
Eric Monteiro, NTNU, Trondheim, Norway
Markku Nurminen, University of Turkku, Finland
Kjeld Schmidt, IT University of Copenhagen, Denmark
Mareike Schoop, RWTH, Aachen, Germany
James Taylor, University of Montreal, Canada
Geoff Walsham, Cambridge University, UK

Boris Wyssusek, Technical University Berlin, Germany
Pär Ågerfalk, Örebro University, Sweden

Organisation Committee

The ALOIS workshop will be organised by the Swedish research network VITS.

Organisation co-chairs:
Mikael Lind, University College of Borås, Sweden
Pär Ågerfalk, Örebro University, Sweden

Other members of Organisation Committee:

Stefan Cronholm, Linköping University, Sweden
Göran Goldkuhl, Linköping University, Sweden