

Peer Review Comments

Article: Eerland, A., Sherrill, A. M., Magliano, J. P., and Zwaan, R. A. (2017). The Blame Game: An investigation of Grammatical Aspect and Blame Judgments. *Collabra: Psychology*, 3(1); 29, pp. 1–12, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1525/collabra.113>

Article type: Original Research Report

Editor: Max Coltheart

Article submitted: 24 September 2017

Editor decision: Accept Submission

Revision submitted: 08 November 2017

Article accepted: 09 November 2017

Article published: 07 December 2017

Responses for Version 1

Reviewer: Andreas Schramm

Affiliation: Hamline University, St Paul, MN, US

Competing Interests Statement: I do not have competing interest

Review Completed: 18 October 2017

Recommendation: Revisions Required

1) General comments and summary of recommendation:

Describe your overall impressions and your recommendation, including changes or revisions. Please note that you should pay attention to scientific, methodological, and ethical soundness only, not novelty, topicality, or scope. A checklist of things to you may want to consider is below:

- Are the methodologies used appropriate?
- Are any methodological weaknesses addressed?
- Is all statistical analysis sound?
- Does the conclusion (if present) reflect the argument, is it supported by data/facts?
- Is the article logically structured, succinct, and does the argument flow coherently?
- Are the references adequate and appropriate?

This is a very engaging article and concurrent research. The argument is laid out well, but could benefit from using Klein's more current and temporally focused theory of aspect. Some surprises stated by the authors and concurrent explanations would benefit. Using Klein's theory would also allow to address a weakness in the methodology (asking post-reading questions) and to generalize the results more. Please see comments inserted into the article for more detailed information.

2) Figures/tables/data availability:

Please comment on the author's use of tables, charts, figures, if relevant. Please acknowledge that adequate underlying data is available to ensure reproducibility (see open data policies per discipline of Collabra here).

The use of tables and data is adequate.

3) Ethical approval:

If humans or animals have been used as research subjects, and/or tissue or field sampling, are the necessary statements of ethical approval by a relevant authority present? Where humans have participated in research, informed consent should also be declared.

If not, please detail where you think a further ethics approval/statement/follow-up is required.

All is well here.

4) Language:

Is the text well written and jargon free? Please comment on the quality of English and any need for improvement beyond the scope of this process.

The language used is adequate for a cognitive-science audience.

Reviewer: This author has chosen to remain anonymous

Affiliation: --

Competing Interests Statement: None

Review Completed: 01 November 2017

Recommendation: Revisions Required

1) General comments and summary of recommendation:

Describe your overall impressions and your recommendation, including changes or revisions. Please note that you should pay attention to scientific, methodological, and ethical soundness only, not novelty, topicality, or scope. A checklist of things to you may want to consider is below:

- Are the methodologies used appropriate?
- Are any methodological weaknesses addressed?
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- Does the conclusion (if present) reflect the argument, is it supported by data/facts?
- Is the article logically structured, succinct, and does the argument flow coherently?
- Are the references adequate and appropriate?

The authors conducted five experiments to explore the role of grammatical aspects in blame judgements. The findings show that order of mentioning plays a role in blaming judgement. However, grammatical aspects may only affect our blame judgement in an indirect way. The methodologies and statistical analysis were appropriate. Generally, this paper is easy to read (free of jargons) and clear in its hypothesis. The result is fair and not overstated.

However, the introduction part can use some more relevant and recent study on grammatical aspect. For example, on page 4 the end of first paragraph ends with "This is consistent with the thesis that imperfective aspect directs attention to the internal structure of an event" without citing any studies here. Perhaps Liu and Bergen's 2016 work could help. (Liu, Nian, and Benjamin Bergen. (2016). When do language comprehenders mentally simulate locations? *Cognitive Linguistics*, 27(2), 181-203.)

My other concern is about the experimental design in Experiment 4 and 5 (page 7, questions 6 and 7). I found the question about how many times did one protagonist punched the other confusing because it was not mentioned. Can it be changed from filling a cell with a number to a multiple choice? It may not be practical to redo the experiments. But this may be considered for future studies as it may cause less confusion and excludes outlying answers.

Also, on page 14 discussion of experiment 3, the authors claim that "This might be because the scuffle is more directly related to the actions that preceded it..." without very brief illustration. Is there any previous research supporting this claim? I found no detailed discussion in the general discussion either.

2) Figures/tables/data availability:

Please comment on the author's use of tables, charts, figures, if relevant. Please acknowledge that adequate underlying data is available to ensure reproducibility (see open data policies per discipline of Collabra here).

The use of tables and figures is effective. But I do have concerns about the use of some labels in Experiment 3. On page 13, the Results section states that "...main effect for order of events for the blame judgements regarding..." The term "order of events" is ambiguous and can imply both "order of mentioning" as well as "chronological order of events". And a reader will need to continue reading till the next sentence to figure out what "order of events" refer to. I suggest replacing the term "order of events" to "order of mentioning" to avoid ambiguity. Also for Table 4 on page 14, the cell "Action Mark first" and "Action John first" causes similar confusion. I had to go back to page 7 to confirm that there was only one agent (Mark) who did the punching. So it shouldn't be "Action John first" since there wasn't such an incident. It'll be clearer if changed to "Mark mentioned first" and "John

mentioned first”.

3) Ethical approval:

If humans or animals have been used as research subjects, and/or tissue or field sampling, are the necessary statements of ethical approval by a relevant authority present? Where humans have participated in research, informed consent should also be declared.

If not, please detail where you think a further ethics approval/statement/follow-up is required.

This paper briefly mentioned that there was a consent form for participants to sign (electronically) and if they fail to do so their data would be excluded from the data analysis. I assume the authors have obtained IRB approval.

4) Language:

Is the text well written and jargon free? Please comment on the quality of English and any need for improvement beyond the scope of this process.

Sometimes the flow of the text is not smooth enough. Also, use fewer demonstratives will make the sentences clearer (reference issue). I have some minor suggestions listed below.

1. P.4 to p.5. There is an abrupt change of topic from page 4 to page 5. The last paragraph on page 4 ends with the sentence “This last finding is directly relevant to the current study” and gives readers expectation to read on with discussion of current study in the next paragraph. Yet on the next page the topic changes back to a previous study, and no current study is discussed until the second paragraph on page 5. The order of narration can be rearranged to make it smoother.
2. Page 11, last paragraph. The examples in parentheses (Mark punching John/John punching Mark) are of different grammatical aspects than the ones used in Exp. 3. This can easily be corrected by using the materials used (Mark punched John). Otherwise, this causes confusion because only perfective is used in this experiment.
3. Page 15 second paragraph. The introduction of grammatical aspect jumps to that of lexical aspect. However, that description can be more specific, for example to mention the difference between telic and atelic verbs. The authors also mentioned in their discussion that the use of different verbs is desirable for future study, so a brief description of different verb types here will be helpful.
4. A typo in the last paragraph on page 24. IN the sentence “Moreover, using one items could have lead...” “items” should be “item”.

Editor Decision for Version 1

Editor: Max Coltheart

Affiliation: Macquarie University, AU

Editor decision: Revisions Required

Decision date: 04 November 2017

Dear Anita Eerland,

I now have two reviews of your submission to Collabra: Psychology, “The blame game: An investigation of grammatical aspect and blame judgments”. Both are very positive, so I expect to be able to accept the ms after revision.

Both reviewers made a number of suggestions for revision. I’d like to see a revision from you which responds to each suggestion and also see a covering letter which says what responses you have made or, where you have chosen not to respond, explains why not. I don’t plan to send the paper out for

further review, and as long as the covering letter looks OK I will be able to accept this revision.

If as you revise you feel there is anything you need to discuss with me feel free to email me about this.

The full review information should be included at the bottom of this email. There may also be a copy of the manuscript file with reviewer comments available once you have accessed the submission account. A summary of the requested edits from the editorial team can be found below. Please consider these points and revise the file accordingly:

To access your submission account, follow the below instructions:

- 1) login to the journal webpage with username and password
- 2) click on the submission title
- 3) click 'Review' menu option
- 4) download Reviewed file and make revisions based on review feedback
- 5) upload the edited file
- 6) Click the 'notify editor' icon and email the confirmation of re-submission and any relevant comments to the journal.

Please ensure that your revised files adhere to our author guidelines, and that the files are fully copyedited/proofed prior to upload. Please also ensure that all copyright permissions have been obtained. This is the last opportunity for major editing; therefore please fully check your file prior to re-submission.

I'd like to have the revisions submitted by 18 November. If you cannot make this deadline, please let me know.

Best wishes,

Max Coltheart

Macquarie University

max.coltheart@mq.edu.au

Author's Response to Review Comments for Version 1

Author: Anita Eerland

Affiliation: Utrecht University, NL

Revision submitted: 08 November 2017

Dear Max Coltheart,

Once again, thank you for your positive response to our submission "The blame game: An investigation of grammatical aspect and blame judgments" and the opportunity to resubmit our work. We've now uploaded our revision as well as a supplementary file containing the comments made by the reviewers and our response below.

Best wishes,

Anita Eerland

Attached document:

<https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/ubiquity-partner-network/ucp/journal/collabra/113-1402-1-SP.docx>

Editor Decision for Version 2

Editor: Max Coltheart
Affiliation: Macquarie University, AU
Editor decision: Accept Submission
Decision date: 09 November 2017

Dear Anita,

I am happy to accept your revision of "The blame game: An investigation of grammatical aspect and blame judgments" for publication, pending the completion of copyediting and formatting processes, though there is still something that needs to be done. Your covering letter mentions that the study was approved by the IRB of Northern Illinois University, but this isn't stated anywhere in the current version of the paper, is it? If not, then this information needs to be inserted into the ms before it is copyedited. Please get in touch with the Editorial Office to make sure this happens.

Apart from this, you do not have to complete any tasks at this point. The accepted submission will now undergo final copyediting. You will be contacted once this is complete to answer any queries that may have arisen during copyediting and to allow a final chance to edit the files prior to typesetting. If you wish to view your submission during this time, you can log in via the journal website.

Best wishes,

Max Coltheart

Macquarie University

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