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***Cooperation, Independence, and Agency in Answers to Polar Questions***

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In this talk, I will focus on the range of ways that speakers provide confirming answers to polar questions. Drawing primarily on English but also on cross-linguistic work on answering practices, I will outline the basic taxonomy of answering practices. For instance, in response to a question such as: *Can Peter join us tomorrow?* Answer practices range from *Yeah* or *Of course* to *He can join us* or *He can* to *He can join us Thursday*. Since all of these practices involve confirming, what additional communicative work do speakers accomplish through them? In this talk I will offer an overview of what I term the “answer possibility space.” I will argue that by considering not just 2 answer types but the full range of possibilities, we gain insight into the social-relational work that speakers are concerned with a focus on issues of cooperation, independence, and agency.