

Center for Cognitive Science

University at Buffalo, State University of New York

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280 Park Hall

North Campus

2:00 pm -4:00 pm

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Referential anticipation in real-time language comprehension

Studies of spoken language comprehension have shown that listeners often anticipate upcoming referents as sentences unfold. For example, predicate terms such as "eat?" or "inside..." are used to rapidly narrow the domain of referential candidates to edible things/containers in the contextual environment. To a large degree, these outcomes can be accounted for by embodied theories of language understanding, e.g., where linguistic meaning is grounded in mental simulations of perception and action. In this talk, I will present a series of studies that evaluate whether anticipatory processes can be explained without appealing to aspects of linguistic or conceptual knowledge that are not naturally captured in embodied approaches. The outcomes reveal that this knowledge strongly constrains the use of perceptual and action-based information in referential predictions, even with predicate terms that denote concrete and perceptible physical events.

Refreshments will be available

Open to the public!

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