

Speakers extrapolate community-level linguistic knowledge from individual linguistic encounters

Speakers' lexical choices are affected by interpersonal-level influences, like a tendency to reuse an interlocutor's words (a phenomenon known as **lexical alignment** in the psycholinguistics of dialogue). But which are the effects of community-level factors on speakers' lexical choices? For example, do they align as often with an interlocutor from their own speech community (in-community partner) vs. an interlocutor from another speech community (out-community partner)? And, how do such interpersonal experiences contribute to the acquisition of community-level linguistic knowledge? In particular, do speakers generalise their lexical choices across interlocutors depending on the interlocutors' community membership? This talk will present three psycholinguistic experiments testing (i) how speakers' lexical choices vary depending on their partner's choices and speech community, and (ii) how speakers' extrapolation of these choices to a subsequent partner is influenced by their partners' community membership. Our results suggest that speakers encode speech community information during dialogue and store it to inform future contexts of language use, even when it has not affected their choices during that particular encounter. Thus, we conclude that speakers learn community-level knowledge by extrapolating linguistic information from interpersonal-level experiences.