
Integrating social information into pragmatic reasoning in real time

Andrea Beltrama^{*†1}, Florian Schwarz^{‡1}, and Joyce He^{§1}

¹University of Pennsylvania – United States

Abstract

We explore the time-course of the integration of social and linguistic information in pragmatic reasoning. Results from a picture selection task show that numeral interpretation is shaped by both speakers' social identity and comprehenders' relation to it; and that these social considerations emerge relatively late in the interpretation process. This suggests that social information, while crucial to resolving meaning, is processed and integrated separately from other semantic and pragmatic information, opening a novel perspective on how the sociolinguistic, pragmatic and descriptive dimensions of meaning are processed and integrated.

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*Speaker

†Corresponding author: andrea.beltrama@gmail.com

‡Corresponding author: florians@sas.upenn.edu

§Corresponding author: joycehe@sas.upenn.edu