

# How weird is that? Predictability and cognitive difficulty in dialogue

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Many psycholinguistic processes appear to be sensitive to the probabilities of the available choices with extra processing, production, or learning where an option's probability is low. This talk will discuss evidence for a similar principle within the cognitive difficulty of dialogue. Using designed but unscripted dialogue corpora, I will show 1) that when dialogue structure demands sequences of low predictability, difficulty rises; 2) that priming in dialogue, a force for increasing the probability of matching actions in adjacency pairs, is very broadly based; 3) but that its effects may be limited, in particular, by differences between interlocutors' tasks. Finally, I will spend some time showing how a proprietary dialogue protocol is designed to control predictability in uncertain and dangerous circumstances.