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PRESENTATION TYPE: Paper Symposium
CURRENT REVIEW PANELS: 14 - Language: Biological, Perceptual, & Cognitive Bases | 17 - Attention, Learning, & Memory
Focal Area 1 - Aspect 1: Language, Communication - Word learning/comprehension/vocabulary
Focal Area 1 - Aspect 2:
Focal Area 2 - Aspect 1:
Focal Area 2 - Aspect 2:
TITLE: Disambiguation as a domain-general strategy: Faces-to-voices, animal vocalizations-to-animals, and gestures-to-objects

ABSTRACT BODY:
Integrative Statement: When young children are presented with a novel object and a familiar object as they hear a novel name, they tend to select the novel object. This disambiguation bias is often assumed to reflect children's expectations about the nature of words or expectations about the communicative intention of speakers. The new studies presented in this symposium propose several different challenges to these assumptions. Taken together, they provide evidence that young children use reasoning by exclusion in non-linguistic as well as non-communicative contexts, while failing to use this strategy in contexts that closely parallel the pragmatics of word learning tasks. The first talk shows that children look more at unfamiliar faces when hearing unfamiliar voices in the presence of both familiar and unfamiliar faces. The second talk reports that children look more at unfamiliar animals when hearing novel animal vocalizations in the presence of both familiar and unfamiliar animals. The third talk shows that despite mapping novel words to novel objects, children surprisingly map novel gestures to familiar objects instead. The discussant will integrate and reconcile these findings within a computational framework, showing how disambiguation biases emerge within domains as long as there is competition between stimuli and consistent mappings over time. Using different paradigms (offline and online experimental measures, computational modeling) to examine a diverse array of mappings (words-to-objects, faces-to-voices, animal vocalizations-to-animals, and gestures-to-objects) these studies demonstrate that disambiguation biases are not restricted to linguistic and communicative contexts and instead reflect domain-general strategies based on children's already existing knowledge.

DESIGNATED ROLES:
Ricardo Bion : Chair
Larissa Samuelson : Discussant

AUTHORS (ADDRESS & EMAIL):

Name: Ricardo A. H. Bion
E-mail: ricardoh@stanford.edu

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Name: Prof.Larissa K Samuelson
E-mail: larissa-samuelson@uiowa.edu

AUTHORS/INSTITUTIONS: R.A. Bion, , Stanford University, Stanford, CA;
L.K. Samuelson, , The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA;

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