

The Department of Linguistics
is pleased to present

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speaking on

Aligning parsing and generation

Thursday, January 26, 2017

1:30 PM

Location: HUM 1 - Room 210

Abstract:

We use our grammatical knowledge in at least two ways. On one hand, we use our grammatical knowledge to say what we want to convey to others. On the other hand, we use our grammatical knowledge to understand what others are saying. In either case, we need to assemble the structure of sentences in a systematic fashion, in accordance with the grammar of our language. Despite the fact that the structures that comprehenders and speakers assemble are systematic in an identical fashion (i.e., obey the same grammatical constraints), the two ‘modes’ of assembling sentence structures might or might not be performed by the same system. The potential existence of two independent systems of structure building underlying speaking and understanding doubles the problem of linking the theory of linguistic knowledge and the theory of linguistic performance, making the integration of linguistics and psycholinguistic harder. In this talk, I will discuss whether it is possible to design a single system that does structure building in comprehension, i.e., parsing, and structure building in production, i.e., generation, so that the linking theory between knowledge and performance can also be unified into one. I will discuss both existing and new experimental data pertaining to how sentence structures are assembled in understanding and speaking, and attempt to show that the unification between parsing and generation is plausible.