

Personality, Politics, and Language

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The last couple of decades of psycholinguistics have uncovered many ways in which context (broadly-understood, linguistic and non-linguistic) constrains and modulates real-time language processing. In this talk, I will review some of the recent work in our lab looking at affective and social aspects pertaining to reader/listener and speaker identity in language processing. First, I will discuss data from experiments investigating the extent to which affect (valence, dominance), gender and participants' socio-political views modulate the processing of sentences with so-called implicit causality verbs (*John feared/frightened Jill, because he/she...*). Second, I will discuss some new work investigating the effects of individual personality traits (e.g., neuroticism, extroversion) on the processing of spoken sentences with three types of violations/deviations/clashes: morpho-syntactic, semantic, and social-cultural/pragmatic. These studies take the consideration of the context a step further, if you will, by starting to consider how real-time language understanding is affected by individual comprehender-inherent factors as well as the social and cultural environment in which language processing (necessarily) takes place.