

Online Spoken Language Comprehension in Heritage Speakers: Evidence from Eye Movements

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What are the factors that characterize online spoken language comprehension in heritage speakers? Does it differ from that of native adults and children? In this talk, I will present the results of three visual world eye-tracking experiments that investigated spoken language comprehension in heritage Russian speakers and compare them with those in native Russian-speaking adults and children. The experimental materials tested heritage speakers' ability to interpret three Russian constructions: prepositional phrase attachment (e.g., *Put the frog on the napkin in the box*), contrastive constituents, and the universal quantifier *every*. In each experiment, both offline (accuracy and reaction time) and online (eye movements) behavioral data were examined. The results indicate that heritage Russian speakers reveal weak sensitivity to morphophonological cues, and that they are less sensitive to pragmatic and referential factors that signal contrastiveness and control interpretation of universal quantifiers.