

Alexandra Carstensen

abc@berkeley.edu

553 Evans Hall
Department of Psychology
University of California, Berkeley

RESEARCH

Human perception is limited to a handful of concrete sensory modalities, from which we manage to construct many complex and highly abstract concepts, categories, and understandings. I'm interested in the cognitive mechanisms responsible for constructing these understandings and the influences of language, environment, and bodily experience in determining how we think. My current research investigates cognitive universals and language-aligned variation in spatial categorization, and the role of spatial information in time perception with regards to theories of analogy, magnitude, and mental metaphor.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Candidate, Psychology (expected graduation: 2016)
Advisor: Terry Regier
University of California, Berkeley

B.A., Psychology with Highest Honors & Departmental Citation, 2011
B.A., Linguistics with Honors & Departmental Citation, 2011
Advisors: Richard Ivry & Terry Regier
University of California, Berkeley

PAPERS

Regier, T., Carstensen, A., and Kemp, C. (2016). Languages support efficient communication about the environment: Words for snow revisited. *PLOS ONE*.

Carstensen, A., Xu, J., Smith, C., and Regier, T. (2015). Language evolution in the lab tends toward informative communication. In R. Dale et al. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 37th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*.

Carstensen, A., Kon, E., and Regier, T. (2014). Testing a rational account of pragmatic reasoning: The case of spatial language. In P. Bello et al. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 36th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*.

Carstensen, A. and Regier, T. (2013). Individuals recapitulate the proposed evolutionary development of spatial lexicons. In M. Knauff, M. Pauen, N. Sebanz, and I. Wachsmuth (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 35th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

Carstensen, A., Pacer, M., and Regier, T. (2012). Grounding spatial language in non-linguistic cognition: Evidence for universal *and* relative spatial semantics in thought. In N. Miyake, D. Peebles, and R.P. Cooper (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 34th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

Carstensen, A. (2011). Universals and variation in spatial language and cognition. Thesis in linguistics, University of California, Berkeley.

Carstensen, A. (2011). Mind the time: Attention mediates cross-domain mappings in time and space. Thesis in psychology, University of California, Berkeley.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Carstensen, A., Xu, J., Smith, C., & Regier, T. (2015, July 24). *Language evolution in the lab tends toward informative communication*. Paper presented at the 37th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Pasadena, California.

Carstensen, A., Xu, Y., Kemp, C., & Regier, T. (2015, July 24). *The space of spatial relations: An extended stimulus set*. Poster presented at the 37th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Pasadena, California.

Carstensen, A., Kon, E., & Regier, T. (2014, July 24). *Testing a rational account of pragmatic reasoning: The case of spatial language*. Paper presented at the 36th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Quebec City, Canada.

Carstensen, A., Holmes, K., van der Meer, A., & Regier, T. (2014, July 24). *Locomotion language in the wild: Biomechanical constraints and caveats*. Poster presented at the 36th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Quebec City, Canada.

Carstensen, A., Neveu, G., Michael, L., & Regier, T. (2013, August 3). *Thinking in ways we don't speak: Evidence for a universal preference in semantic granularity*. Poster presented at the 35th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Berlin, Germany.

Carstensen, A. & Regier, T. (2013, August 2). *Individuals recapitulate the proposed evolutionary development of spatial lexicons*. Paper presented at the 35th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Berlin, Germany.

Carstensen, A., Abbott, J., Ivry, R., & Griffiths, T. (2013, July 7). *Using Bayesian models to discriminate theories of magnitude and metaphor*. Talk presented at the Embodied and Situated Language Processing Conference, Potsdam, Germany.

Carstensen, A., Pacer, M., & Regier, T. (2012, August 4). *Grounding spatial language in non-linguistic cognition: Evidence for universal and relative spatial semantics in thought*. Paper presented at the 34th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Sapporo, Japan.

Carstensen, A., Khetarpal, N., Majid, A., & Regier, T. (2011, July 22). *Universals and variation in spatial language and cognition: Evidence from Chichewa*. Poster presented at the 33rd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

Carstensen, A. & Ivry, R. (2010, September 18). *Time in the mind: Is space an obligatory influence on temporal judgments?* Poster presented at the joint meeting of the Conceptual Structure, Discourse and Language (CSDL) and Embodied and Situated Language Processing (ESLP) Associations, San Diego, California.

INVITED TALKS

- 2016 Cognition and Neuroscience Seminar (FriSem), Stanford University
- 2016 Cognition Colloquium, Psychology Department, UC Berkeley
- 2016 CogSci 98/198 (Berkeley Review of Cognitive Science Articles), UC Berkeley
- 2015 CogNetwork Forum, Linguistics Department, UC Berkeley
- 2015 Berkeley-Stanford Talks, Psychology Department, UC Berkeley
- 2015 Cognitive Science Student Association, Cognitive Science Program, UC Berkeley
- 2014 CogSci 98/198 (Berkeley Review of Cognitive Science Articles), UC Berkeley
- 2014 Cognition Coalition Cognitive Science Day, Psychology Department, UC Berkeley
- 2013 CogNetwork Forum, Linguistics Department, UC Berkeley
- 2013 Institute of Cognitive and Brain Science Colloquium, UC Berkeley
- 2013 Cognition, Brain, and Behavior Colloquium, Psychology Department, UC Berkeley
- 2013 Cognition Coalition Cognitive Science Day, Psychology Department, UC Berkeley
- 2012 Berkeley-Stanford Talks, Psychology Department, UC Berkeley
- 2012 Cognition Coalition Cognitive Science Day, Psychology Department, UC Berkeley
- 2011 Institute of Cognitive and Brain Science Colloquium, UC Berkeley
- 2011 Cognition, Brain, and Behavior Colloquium, Psychology Department, UC Berkeley
- 2010 California Cognitive Science Conference, Cognitive Science Program, UC Berkeley

TEACHING

Lecturer, Language and Thought
University of California, Berkeley: Summer 2016

Graduate Student Instructor, Language and Thought
University of California, Berkeley: Spring 2015

Graduate Student Instructor, Introduction to Cognitive Science
University of California, Berkeley: Fall 2012

Graduate Student Instructor, Psychology of Sleep
University of California, Berkeley: Fall 2011

Course Designer and Facilitator, Psychology Publications DeCal
(DeCals are officially registered student-led courses at UC Berkeley)
University of California, Berkeley: Spring 2010, Fall 2010, Spring 2011

Volunteer Teacher, Health and Environmental Conservation
World Camp for Kids, Lilongwe, Malawi: Summer 2009

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Ad Hoc Reviewer: Cognition, Journal of Neurophysiology, Cognitive Science Conference,
Evolution of Language Conference

Conference Organizer
Berkeley-Stanford Talks: 2011-2013

Editor-In-Chief
Undergraduate Journal of Psychology at Berkeley
University of California, Berkeley: 2009-2011

College of Letters and Science Student Representative
Student Advisory Council on Undergraduate Education
University of California, Berkeley: 2009-2011

Founding Director
Psychology Undergraduate Research Conference
(now Berkeley Interdisciplinary Research Conference)
University of California, Berkeley: 2009

SUMMER SCHOOL

Graduate Summer School: Probabilistic Models of Cognition
Institute for Pure and Applied Mathematics
University of California, Los Angeles, 2011

HONORS & AWARDS

Psychology Travel Award, UC Berkeley, 2015
Graduate Division Conference Travel Grant, UC Berkeley, 2015
Graduate Assembly Travel Award, UC Berkeley, 2014
Graduate Division Conference Travel Grant, UC Berkeley, 2014
Psychology Travel Award, UC Berkeley, 2013
Honorable Mention, Ford Foundation Fellowship Program, 2012
Psychology Travel Award, UC Berkeley, 2012
Honorable Mention, National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program, 2011
Psi Chi Regional Research Award, 2010
Phi Beta Kappa, 2010
Swan Undergraduate Research Award in Psychology, UC Berkeley Psychology, 2009 & 2010
Mortar Board National College Senior Honor Society, 2009
National Society of Collegiate Scholars, 2009
Psi Chi International Society in Psychology, 2008

SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS

Institute of Cognitive and Brain Sciences Research Grant, UC Berkeley, 2013
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, 2012
Institute for Pure and Applied Mathematics Travel Scholarship, UCLA, 2011
Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, UC Berkeley, 2010
Letters & Science Undergraduate Research Fellowship, UC Berkeley, 2010
Conceptual Structure, Discourse, and Language (and ESLP) Conference Travel Scholarship, 2010
Western Psychological Foundation Student Scholarship, 2010
Regents' and Chancellor's Scholarship, UC Berkeley, 2007-2011
National Merit Scholarship, 2007-2011