From individual cognition to social cognition: the case of speaking in social interaction

Anna Kuhlen (RWTH Aachen University)

In social interactions, language use is a collaborative effort, shaped by both individual cognition and the interaction partner's actions. This presentation explores how word retrieval during speech production is influenced by social interaction. I will discuss three key cognitive mechanisms: (1) partner-adapted processing, where word selection is influenced by representations of partner characteristics; (2) prediction of a partner's actions through internal simulation, impacting own lexical retrieval; and (3) offloading to a partner, where part of a linguistic task is transferred to a partner, optimizing own performance. Through chronometric experiments on word retrieval, I will demonstrate how these mechanisms shape individual cognitive processes and social actions during language production. This research provides insight into the cognitive underpinnings of language production in social interaction, offering relevance to the interdisciplinary audience interested in the intersection of cognition, language, and social interaction.