

NYU Semantics Group
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Title. Events in language and mind

Abstract. Understanding how humans represent, recognize, remember and talk about events is important for several disciplines that focus on the human mind and brain. In this talk I will bring together an interdisciplinary set of tools to address the nature of event representation. I will present experimental evidence showing that abstract properties of event structure underlie both the conceptual and the linguistic encoding of dynamic events; furthermore, in several crucial respects, the representation of events resembles that of objects. I will argue that notions of boundaries and structure underlie mental units in both the event and the object domain, and that such notions explain otherwise mysterious similarities in cross-domain correspondences. These findings have implications for both cognitive and linguistic theories, as well as the relation between language and thought.