

## Two interpretive systems for natural language?

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The desiderata for a theory of language interpretation include at least the following: explaining how humans compute the meaning of novel sentences, including implausible ones; characterizing the incrementality of interpretation; accounting for how interpretation processes relate to conscious awareness; explaining the existence and nature of widespread context effects, characterizing the complexity profile of interpretation (e.g., why DE contexts are more complex than non-DE contexts) and accounting for semantic illusions. The field of psycholinguistics is making successful forays into various aspects of interpretation, e.g., semantic 'coercion,' compositionality, scalar meanings, focus and the role of alternatives, implicatures, presupposition, counterfactual contexts, and the rapid impact of various types of stereotypical knowledge, to give only a few examples. I will argue that we also need to recognize the existence of two distinct systems for pairing form and meaning. One is the familiar type-based system that operates whether a sentence has an interpretation that describes a plausible real world situation or an implausible one. The other is token-based and involves the interpretation of repaired utterances, producing plausible meanings only; it depends on details of particular utterances as well as an implicit knowledge of the performance systems. Understanding the 'performance pairing' of form and meaning removes the need for the grammar to explain certain puzzling linguistic facts, and it helps to explain certain semantic illusions.