

The dynamics of reading comprehension: reading for meaning across development, learning, and contexts

VENERDI' 4 SETTEMBRE 2026 ORE 10.00

AULA B (GALLERIA) DI PSICO3

APERITIVO DALLE 12:00, COMMON ROOM, CASA DELLO STUDENTE (PSICO 5)

KATE CAIN
University of Lancaster, UK



Abstract

Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive activity that involves the coordination of multiple skills and knowledge bases in real time. Therefore, it is not surprising that some children – and adults – experience persistent difficulties understanding what they read, even with age-appropriate word reading. I will examine reading comprehension from three complementary perspectives. (1) I show how of the dynamics of reading for meaning provides insight into the knowledge and processes that support deep comprehension, and sources of reading comprehension failure. (2) I review longitudinal studies that identify key skills and knowledge that influence reading comprehension development, and their relation to knowledge growth. (3) I consider how the context of reading – including factors such as reading purpose and medium – affect how readers engage with text and what they learn from it. Drawing from these perspectives, I conclude with recommendations for effective reading comprehension instruction and for timely intervention to reduce the risk of reading comprehension difficulties.

Eye Contact & the Meeting of Minds

VENERDI' 18 SETTEMBRE 2026 ORE 10.30

AULA 2B - PSICO2

APERITIVO DALLE 12:00, COMMON ROOM, CASA DELLO STUDENTE (PSICO 5)

JARI K. HIETANEN
University of Tampere, Finlandia



Abstract

Eye gaze is a powerful social stimulus. It is used to regulate interaction and to express intimacy. Over the past two decades, researchers have extensively studied the perception of direct and averted gaze, as well as the effects of gaze on face perception, attention, and affective responses. One key finding has been that perceiving another person's direct gaze (eye contact) appears to evoke a positively valenced affective reaction. An interesting question has been to what extent the effects of eye contact on affect are purely stimulus-driven, that is, reactions to eyes as visual stimuli, and to what extent they reflect the deeper psychological meanings associated with seeing eyes as the "windows to the soul" and with the experience of oneself being the focus of another person's attention and mind. In my lecture, I will present experimental studies conducted by our research group on perception of eye contact. Most of our research has focused on the perception of other people's direct gaze. However, over the past few years, we have expanded our work to examine the effects of gaze interactions between humans and humanoid robots as well.