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Title: Neural networks as cognitive models of syntax

Abstract: Speakers of a language generalize their knowledge of syntax in a systematic way to constructions they have never encountered before. This observation has motivated the influential position in linguistics that humans are innately endowed with syntax-specific inductive biases. The applied success of deep learning systems that are not designed with such biases invites a reconsideration of this position. In this talk, I will review work that uses paradigms from psycholinguistics to examine the syntactic generalization capabilities of contemporary neural network architectures. Alongside some successes, this work suggests that human-like generalization requires stronger inductive biases than those expressed in standard neural network architectures.

For more information about Dr. Tal Linzen, please visit his website <https://tallinzen.net/>.