

Cognition Colloquium

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Memory and predictive processing across the lifespan

Episodic memory (EM) refers to memory about events that are bound to specific times and places in the past. It allows humans to re-experience multiple aspects of events that happened from minutes to years ago. The ability to remember past experiences increases during childhood and declines in old age. At first sight, it may appear that changes in adulthood are a reversal or mirror image of changes during childhood. However, the development of EM (and cognition in general) is driven by a constellation of factors, including changes in regional brain structural and functional integrity. In my presentation, I will provide an overview of common and unique mechanisms underlying memory functioning across different age periods. Furthermore, it is increasingly recognized that memory is not only important for remembering past experiences but also serves predictive functions for the future. Related to this, both match and violation between new information and prior knowledge have been reported to enhance memory. I will present our ongoing work that aims at resolving the apparent paradox of enhanced memory for prediction-matching events vs. prediction-violating events, as well as the age differences therein. The findings thus far underscore that the relationship between memory and predictive processing is far from being well characterized.



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