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Language is an adaptive system: the role of cultural evolution in the origins of structure

Topics:

- The dynamical systems underpinning language: learning, culture and evolution
- The traditional view of language evolution: evolution of learning. Do we need to worry about cultural transmission? Does it change anything for the evolutionary account?
- Methodology: how to answer this question - computational, mathematical and experimental models of cultural transmission of language
- Summary of the results so far: transmission bottlenecks, compression, expressivity, structure (e.g. compositionality), adaptation
 - How does this affect our evolutionary story for language?
- Co-evolution: genetic assimilation, the Baldwin effect, and the nature of innate constraints
- Pre-adaptations: what is assumed in all the models? Learned complex signalling, and the inference of communicative intent.