



The University of Chicago  
Department of Statistics  
Master's Seminar

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**“Cultural Differences in Perspective Taking”**

**FRIDAY, July 29, 2005 at 11:00 am  
110 Eckhart Hall, 5734 S. University Avenue**

**ABSTRACT**

A 2x2 factorial design was implemented to examine how Chinese and Americans performed differently in perspective taking in comprehension. In order to investigate the different mental processes that underlie such perspective taking for these two groups of people, we tracked their eye movements while they were following instructions to manipulate objects. Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) revealed an obvious discrepancy between Chinese and Americans: while American listeners considered objects as potential referents even when the speaker could not see them, Chinese participants rarely did that. Regression with robust standard errors was used to deal with heteroskedasticity between the two groups. Model selection and assumption testing were also discussed. The results found could be explained by a more general cultural difference in Chinese's contextual versus Americans' relatively egocentric processing of information. However, the Americans' egocentric heuristic might not always be disadvantageous.