Abstract:
Frames are cognitive structures of knowledge grounded in people’s social interaction in recurrent socio-cultural activities or individual incidences. In language, the concept underlying a word, a phrase, a sentence, or a text can activate a frame of semantic knowledge about an evoked concept; in gesture, manual movements can also depict frame knowledge about the concept. For instance, in a conversational topic about two students walking together, the speaker utters the statement 他們兩個走路, whereas the hand simultaneously gestures an upward direction – a core element in the frame of self-motion walking. While language and gesture convey semantic information about the same concept together in real-time interaction, the question arises as to how meaning from both modalities is processed in the brain. The talk reports an ongoing ERP study that examines how gestures bearing frame knowledge are integrated with speech during language comprehension.