Describing Deferred Acceptance to Participants: Experimental Analysis

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Abstract: The Deferred Acceptance (DA; Gale and Shapley, 1962) matching mechanism is widely used in many matching markets, from assigning students to schools, to matching physicians to hospitals. The traditional way to describe this mechanism attempts to convey to market participants, as directly as possible, how the matching is performed. A celebrated property of DA is that it is strategyproof, that is, one cannot benefit from misrepresenting their preferences. However, increasing evidence suggests that many participants engage in such behavior. Are there principled ways to construct alternative descriptions of DA that make its strategyproofness more evident, salient, and/or interpretable? Motivated by recent theoretical developments, I will present new, promising empirical evidence on this question.