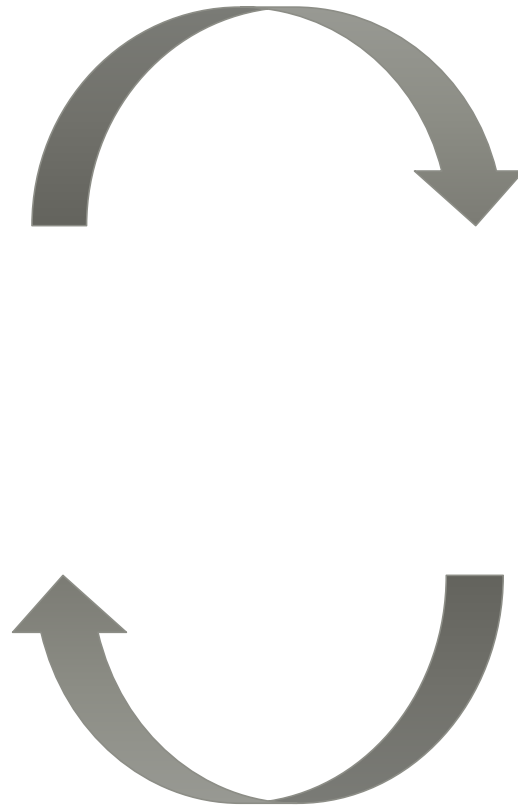


Language and social cognition



SERIAL TRANSMISSION PARADIGM (LYONS & KASHIMA, 2003)

describe more behaviors that are consistent,
versus inconsistent, with stereotypes

CATE IS
ITALIAN.
SHE IS LOVES
SHARING
FOOD WITH
FRIENDS, SHE
DOES NOT
LIKE NOISE.



CATE IS ITALIAN.
SHE COOKS FOR
HER FRIENDS,
TYPICALLY PIZZA
OR SPAGHETTI. SHE
IS VERY WARM AND
AFFECTIONATE. SHE
IS OUTGOING AND
EXPRESSIVE.

THREE METAPHORS OF LANGUAGE



- VESSEL in which thoughts are encapsulated and transmitted from one mind to another



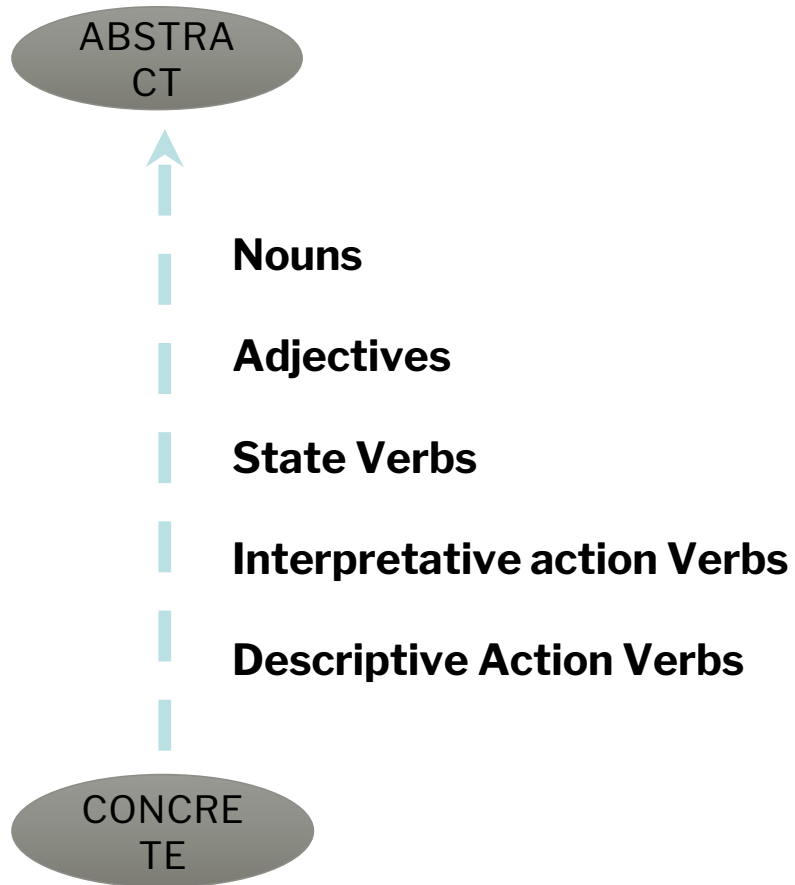
- LENS which focuses cognition on certain aspects of the world and away from others



- BAROMETER reveals a communicator's cognition to the audience

LINGUISTIC ABSTRACTION

Linguistic Category Model (Semin & Fiedler, 1988); Nouns (Carnaghi et al. 2008)



LINGUISTIC ABSTRACTION

Linguistic Category Model (Semin & Fiedler, 1988); Nouns (Carnaghi et al. 2008)

Nouns ☐ **Category a person belong to** ☐ **Eg: a genius, a criminal**

Adjectives ☐ **characteristics of a person** ☐ **Eg: intelligent, aggressive**

State Verbs ☐ **cognitive or emotional states, perduring in time, without specific beginning and end** ☐ **Eg: admire, hate, appreciate, ecc..**

Interpretative action Verbs ☐ **verbs referring to a set of actions with a specific beginning and end** ☐ **Eg: help, provoke, avoid, ecc..**

Descriptive Action Verbs ☐ **verbs referring to a single action with a specific beginning and end** ☐ **Eg: hit, scream, walk, ecc..**

LINGUISTIC INTERGROUP BIAS (Maass, 1999)



Abstraction -> focus to stability



+ve ingroup behaviors & -ve outgroup

behaviors

If communicators use abstract language to describe a person's negative behavior and concrete language for their positive behavior, they are also seen as having negative attitudes and intentions (Douglas & Sutton, 2006)



generalization of positive behaviors to the entire ingroup

generalization of negative behaviors to the entire outgroup

Nouns (vs. adjectives)

Carnaghi et al. 2008



- Promote essentialization
- facilitate stereotype-congruent inferences
- inhibit incongruent ones
- Inhibit alternative classifications.
- Transmit prejudice



Reynaert and Gelman (2007)

he has baxtermia", "*he is baxtermic*", "*he is a baxtermic*"

Illness permanence-----



Verbs as carriers of AGENCY

Formanowicz et al. 2017, 2021



- Pseudo-Verbs are perceived as more agentic



- Verbs appears more often in association to agentic social targets (male, young etc)



- Verbs enhance persuasiveness of a message



Research suggests that verbs are linguistic markers of agency, a fundamental dimension in social perception.

- Studies have found that verbs are associated with higher agency compared to other grammatical categories like nouns and adjectives (Formanowicz et al., 2017; Pietraszkiewicz & Formanowicz, 2023; Weis et al., 2022).
- This association extends to natural language use, with verb usage positively correlating with agentic word use (Pietraszkiewicz & Formanowicz, 2023).
- Furthermore, verbs demonstrate a stronger implicit association with the self compared to nouns, suggesting a triad between self, agency, and verbs (Weis et al., 2022).
- The agency-verb link has practical implications for communication effectiveness. Messages framed using verbs rather than adjectives have been found to increase message effectiveness across various contexts, including NGO and corporate campaigns (Formanowicz et al., 2021).

These findings highlight the meta-semantic effects of verbs and underscore the importance of grammatical choices in social cognition and communication outcomes.

Generic masculine

- linguistic convention in English has long had it that masculine terms such as “man”, “his”, and the collective noun “Man”, can be used without reference to gender.
- *fireman*
- *native language* rather than *mother tongue*, *police officers* rather than *policemen*, *humans* rather than *men* to refer to human beings)

Generic masculine



- **masculine generic inhibits the availability of female exemplars (Stahlberg et al., 2007).**



- **the ratio of male to female pronouns reflected the status of women in the United States (1.2 million U.S. books, 1900–2008; Google Books database; Twenge et al., 2012)**

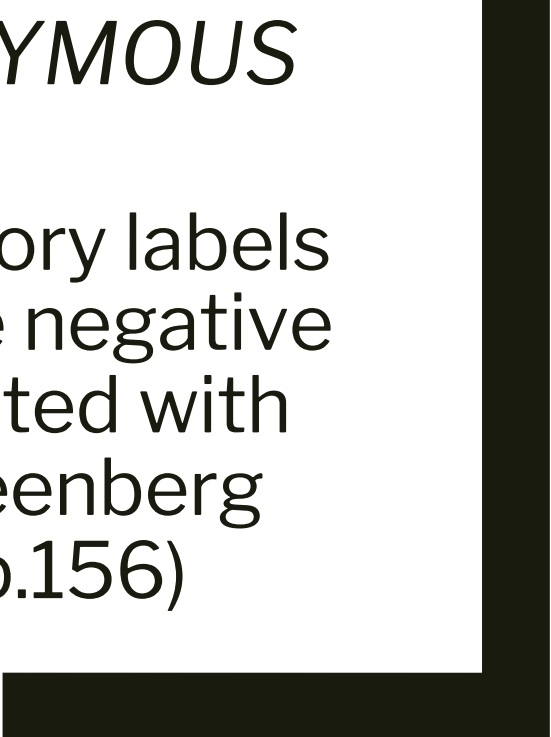


- **Countries with grammatical gender languages had lower levels of social gender equality than countries with natural gender languages or genderless languages (Prewitt-Freilino et al., 2012)**
- **participants with modern sexist beliefs were found to use more traditional, gender-unfair language (Swim et al., 2004).**



DEROGATORY LABELS:
*FAG IS NOT A SYNONYMOUS
OF GAY*

“the overhearing of derogatory labels would automatically activate negative feelings and beliefs associated with the group in question” (Greenberg and Pyszczynski, 1985, p.156)



people may infer that prejudice is normative when they hear others using hate terms.

-> self-perpetuating cycle of prejudice

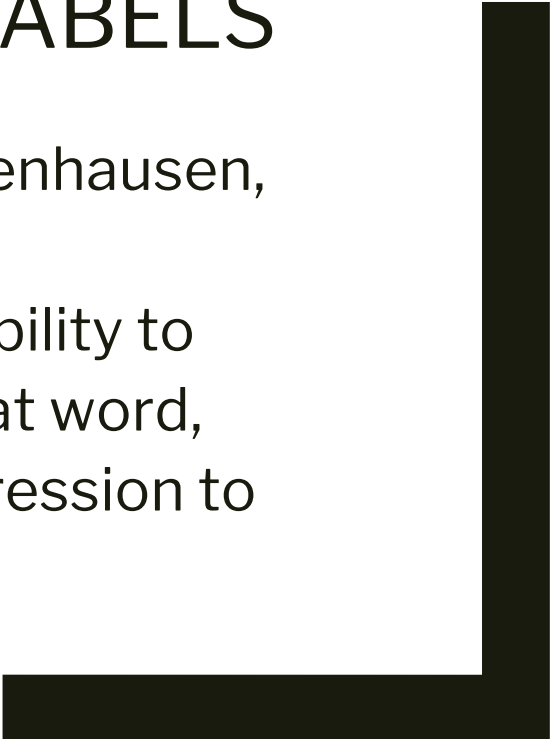




REAPPROPRIATION OF DEROGATORY LABELS

Galinsky, Hugenberg, Groom, & Bodenhausen,
[2003](#)

a stigmatized group has the possibility to
renegotiate the connotation of that word,
transforming it from a negative expression to
an empowering one.



Order and comparison asymmetry



Primacy effect: first mentioned target is more likely to capture the attention, is better remembered, is more likely to be perceived as the cause (e.g., Bettinsoli et al.; see also pasive)



the partner possessing more stereotypically masculine traits is mentioned first (Hegarty et al. 2001).

Humanity -> central factor that gives rise to the different word orders found in the world's languages (Meier et al., 2017)



when men are presented as referent group (e.g., compared to males, females are ...), gender differences in status were perceived as larger and more legitimate (Bruckmüller et al. 2012)