

Knowledge Map: Language, thought and communication (1)

This topic looks at how individuals and cultures develop language and its impact on thought process. It also looks at key differences between animal and human communication.

Memory	Perception	Development	Research methods	Social influence	Language thought and communication	Brain and neuropsychology	Psychological problems
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Piaget's theory of language and thought	Sapir-Whorf hypothesis	Von Frisch's bee study	Yuki's study of emoticons
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Our view of the world

Do words influence how you think about the world?

Recall of events	
Native Americans: Hopi Hopi don't distinguish between past, present, and future which affects the way they think about time.	Native Americans: Hopi Only one individual was studied
Memory of pictures Carmichael et al. discovered that the recall of pictures was severely affected by written labels.	Memory of pictures Studies that use ambiguous pictures, such as Carmichael's study, do not replicate real life.

Recognition of colours	
Native Americans: The Zuni Zuni have only one word for shades of orange and yellow. Brown and Lenneberg found that The Zuni had more difficulty in distinguishing those colours.	Native Americans: The Zuni Non-English speakers, such as The Zuni, may not fully understand the task.
Language and recall Roberson et al. found that the Berinmo people, who only have 5 words for colour, had difficulty recalling colours.	Language and recall Rosch and Oliver found that the Dani people had no problem matching colours despite only have 2 words for colour.

Human and animal communication

The exchange of information between animals of the same species

Animal communication
Survival Vocal signals – Vervet monkeys communicate danger with an alarm call. Visual signals – Rabbits lift their tails and pin their ears back to communicate danger. The behaviour enhances the survival of the individual and the group.
Reproduction Peacocks stretch out the feathers to communicate genetic fitness and suitability to breed.
Territory Rhinos leave piles of dung to communicate territorial boundaries.
Food Ants leave pheromone trails to communicate the path to a food source.

Human communication
Plan ahead Humans can communicate things that aren't present or haven't happened yet. Animals focus on the present.
Creativity Humans can combine any number of words and physical actions together to communicate any subject (open system). Animals have a closed system that can communicate limited subjects.
Multiple channels Humans can use multiple channels to communicate – spoken, written, sign language, social media etc. Animals use few channels or even a single channel.

Non-verbal communication

Without words

Eye contact	
When two people look at each other's eyes at the same time.	
Regulating flow of conversation Participants look away when they are about to speak and make eye contact when they are about to finish.	Application People with autism are taught to increase eye contact to improve social skills.
Signalling attraction Conway et al. found that people who make eye contact are judged as being more attractive.	Rating scales Rating attractiveness using a scale can be subjective.
Expressing emotion Adams and Kleck found that emotions are judged more intense if faces are looking straight at them.	

Body language	
Communication through unspoken movements and gestures.	
Posture Closed -crossing arms and legs-shows disagreement. Open - uncrossed-shows acceptance McGinley et al. found that arguments given by a person with an open posture are more likely to be accepted.	Application People can use body language to build good relationships.
Postural echo Tanner and Chartrand found that rated a new product more highly when its presenter copied their body language.	
Touch Fisher found that participants rated a librarian more favourably if the librarian touched their hands.	

Personal space	
The distance we keep between ourselves and others	
Cultural differences Sommer discovered that English peoples personal space ranges from 1.0-1.5m. Arabic peoples were less. Collet discovered that Arabic peoples like English people more if they stand closer.	Application Useful in everyday life – Doctors can use information to help deal with patients depending on culture or gender.
Gender differences Fisher and Bryne found that Women feel more uncomfortable if their space is invaded from the side. Males feel more uncomfortable if their space is invaded from the front.	
Status Zahn – People with similar status stand closer than those of unequal status.	

Knowledge Map: Language, thought and communication (2)

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Explanations of non-verbal behaviour

Nature vs. nurture

Evolutionary theory

Darwin

Genes for behaviours that promote reproduction or survival are passed on to the next generation.

Non-verbal communication

Animals evolved to express emotion. Baring teeth is adaptive as it reduces the chance of death in conflict.

Sensory deprived

An animal or human without sensory ability (blind and deaf). Thompson found that blind children show similar facial expressions to sighted children.

Comparisons with human behaviour

Open eyes widely is adaptive as it allows more light in and gives a higher chance that a route to safety would be seen. This behaviour is passed to humans.

Serviceable habits

Behaviours – such as baring teeth – used by our ancestors and passed on. They may now not serve the same purpose.

Neonates

Neonate behaviour – smiling, disgust is present shortly after birth. Some of these behaviours cause other to provide care. They are therefore adaptive.

Cultural differences

Differences in personal space shows that some behaviour is learnt.