
Implicit Causality guides Coherence and Reference Production – Even more so in Creative Language

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In two production and perception experiments, we investigated how the discourse-semantic and pragmatic-biases observed for Implicit Causality (IC) biases might be influenced in a production task explicitly manipulating linguistic creativity:

(1) a. Mary fascinated/adored John ... / b. Mary fascinated/adored John because ...

IC is associated with several remarkably strong biases: After full stops (1a), participants tend to produce Explanations (Kehler et al. 2008, Solstad/Bott 2022). After *because* (1b), those explanations almost exclusively make reference to one of the arguments over the other (depending on verb class; Hartshorne/Snedeker 2013, Solstad/Bott 2022) and coreference is almost exclusively established with a personal pronoun (Bott/Solstad, t.a.). However, these biases may be overridden, the question being whether they are influenced by creative aspects of language use. In our production task, we had participants produce continuations to prompts as in (1) in two blocks. After first writing the "first continuation that comes to mind", we subsequently asked participants to provide creative continuations, that is, in a maximally original and effective/felicitous, way (Runco/Jaeger 2012). Furthermore, we asked a different group of participants to rate the elicited productions with respect to the perception of both originality and effectiveness. These ratings served as a check of the creativity manipulations in the production task and are also used for analyses of particularly creative vs. uncreative language.

Crucially, the results of the rating study revealed that creativity as manipulated via instruction is perceivable to comprehenders: In inferential statistical analyses, we found a highly significant difference in perceived originality between the creative and non-creative blocks in the production study.

The production experiment painted a mixed picture: While the coreference patterns usually observed in (1b) were completely unaltered by the creativity manipulation, we observed an increase in the proportion of explanations in (1a) and an increase in other forms than personal pronouns in creative as compared to "uncreative" continuations. In our presentation we will highlight further linguistic dimensions affected by linguistic creativity.

References: Bott/Solstad (t.a.). *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*. Hartshorne & Snedeker (2013). *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 28(10), 1474–1508. • Kehler et al. (2008). *Journal of Semantics*, 25 (1), 1–44. • Runco & Jaeger (2012). *Creativity Research Journal*, 24(1), 92–96. • Solstad & Bott (2022). *Language, Cognition & Neuroscience*, 37(10), 1311–1340.