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Review

- Thomas Ullmann/Wolfgang Prinz, Research in Perception:
Contributions from German-Speaking Countries to the Fields of
Attentive Processes, the Links Between Perception and Action, and
Gestalt Psychology 1

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The estimated coefficients of reliability, consistency, and specificity showed that all five coping scales exhibited satisfying reliability coefficients. Furthermore, the coefficients of consistency and specificity show that all coping forms are neither exclusively trait-like coping styles nor are they determined by situational demands. Concerning the magnitude of these coefficients, the proportion of variance explained by the "person" was much higher than that accounted for by situational and/or interactional effects. Therefore, the coping behavior of our cancer patients was primarily explained by stable interindividual differences.

It is finally shown that the latent state-trait structure of LST models may provide some valuable conceptual refinement and clarification when applied to a series of widely used concepts in coping research.

Reference

Klauer, T., Filipp, S.-H., & Ferring, D. (1989). Der "Fragebogen zur Erfassung von Formen der Krankheitsbewältigung": Skalenkonstruktion und erste Befunde zu Reliabilität, Validität und Stabilität. *Diagnostica*, 35(4), 316-335.

No. 22 Galliker, M. (1990). To speak and to remember: On the affinity hypothesis concerning verbal references to the past. [*Sprechen und Erinnern: Zur Entwicklung der Affinitätshypothese bezüglich verbaler Vergangenheitsverweise.*] Göttingen: Hogrefe. (281 Pgs., 223 Ref.)

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This is a study on remembering in its natural context. The constitution of the past as a moment in the flow of speech can be revealed by text analysis.

This is neither a linguistic nor a cognitive study. It actually belongs to the realm of language psychology. Everyday language is the starting point as well as the point of reference of the analysis. With it or using it, the following psychological problem can be clarified: What happens when the speaker switches to the past tense?

Method: A sample of 102 female and male adults of varying occupational backgrounds were interviewed concerning their current situation at work and in their private lives. The interviews lasted one hour. The 12 interviewers, who were trained psychotherapists, started the interviews with one general opening question. Later on, they only rephrased the last sequence preceding a pause. No further content-related questions were asked.

The 2,700 pages of transcribed conversations were scanned for reference to the past (present participle in everyday German language). This resulted in a total of 707 references.

The problem of interpretation was bypassed by strictly measuring past-related phrase against present-related phrase. No standards were used.

Results: Text analysis shows that there are two types of references to the past that can be distinguished:

- 1) The past is portrayed as being in the present which is not yet in existence.

- 2) The past is displayed as being in the present in its temporal, local, and causal aspects.

The past appears as a "negative" or a "scanning" of the present language (referring back to the settled or unsettled past). To summarize: The presentation of a past event can be identified as a (mostly minimal) variation of the present-related phrase by which it was introduced.

The most important result is the fact that speakers always stay in the present tense with their language if they construct a reality of language that can be expressed within speech-act theory. Only if the precondition of a speech act in the sense of the formula $R(P)$ is not fulfilled, if no explicit or implicit illocution (R) can be isolated from a proposition (P), can there emerge a difference between constituted presence and present constituting, a dimension of depth that can be interpreted as a reference back to the past. This way of talking is an affinitive mode that should be distinguished from the definitive character of speech acts (e.g. constative sentences). The units of language follow each other, neither eliminating reality nor reifying it. This can be expressed by the formula $E \approx E' \approx E'' \dots E^n$.

Only affinitive sentences are followed by references to the past. Though the preconditions of remembering are invariants (starting point and criterion of memories), genuine remembering happens by varying or repeatedly speaking aloud minimal differences.

Interpretation: The hypothesis of affinity challenges the widely held hypothesis of reconstruction. It is a hypothesis of coincidence that cannot refer to a (re)constructive activity. (Re)construction may occur in creating a frame for remembering. For the occurrence of reminiscences, active and cognitive moments are important only as far as they are relevant.

Affinitive speech has an unconstrained, flowing character: it is "libidinous." However, if the subject (or one of its objects) is definitely cathected, frequency of speech, ability to remember and performance of memory are reduced.

Affinitive language can be understood as reflecting *id*. In free conversation where "one word leads to the other," the participants are lead by the flow of their speech. "Not *I* am speaking, not *you* are speaking, but *id* is speaking" is not only a sentence describing communicative behavior but also a sentence on the precondition of the possibility of remembering.

A speaker exposing himself to the always newly emerging difference, which goes beyond identity and contradiction, also has access to the permanent recurrence of language and its multiple possibilities of mediation. A poststructuralistic understanding of memory is outlined which surpasses linguistic formalisms and cognitivist representations.