Multiple Translations in Bilingual Memory: Processing Differences Across Concrete, Abstract, and Emotion Words

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Abstract

Historically, the manner in which translation ambiguity and emotional content are represented in bilingual memory have often been ignored in many theoretical and empirical investigations, resulting in these linguistic factors related to bilingualism being absent from even the most promising models of bilingual memory representation. However, in recent years it was reported that the number of translations a word has across languages influences the speed with which bilinguals translate concrete and abstract words from one language into another (Tokowicz and Kroll in Lang Cogn Process 22:727–779, 2007). The current work examines how the number of translations that characterize a word influences lexical organization and the processing of concrete, abstract, and emotional stimuli. In Experiment 1, Spanish-English bilinguals translated concrete and abstract words with one and more than one translation. As reported by Tokowicz and Kroll, concreteness effects emerged only when words had more than one translation across languages. In Experiment 2, bilinguals translated emotion words with more than one translation. Concreteness effects emerged in both language directions for words with more than one translation, and in the L1–L2 language direction for words with a single translation across languages. These findings are discussed in terms of how multiple translations, specifically for emotion words, might be incorporated into current models of bilingual memory representation.

Keywords

Bilingualism Multiple translations Working memory Concrete Abstract Emotion
Concepts found in this article

- Abstract Word
- Emotion Word
- Concreteness Effect
- Concrete Word

- Language Direction
- Low Frequency Word
- Word Type

- Positive Emotion Word
- High Frequency Word
- Context Availability

- Emotion-laden Word
- Translation Direction

- Bilingual Language Processing
- L1 Word

Related articles containing similar concepts (486 articles)

- Context availability and the recall of abstract and concrete words
  Schwanenflugel, P. · Akin, C., et al. in Memory & Cognition (2011)

- An fMRI study of concreteness effects in spoken word recognition
  Roxbury, T., et al. in Behavioral and Brain Functions (2014)

- Concreteness, context availability, and imageability ratings and word associations for abstract, concrete, and emotion words

- Situated conceptualization and semantic processing: effects of emotional experience and context availability in semantic categorization and naming tasks

- Spanish norms for affective and lexico-semantic variables for 1,400 words
References


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