

1 Language and Memories in the Judicial System

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2 Overview

- This article discusses how the connotation of a particular word or the presupposition contained within an utterance may influence the testimony of a witness
- The phrasing of a question can bias an answer and even change a person's existing memory of an event.

3 Articles: The vs. A

- Experimental results
- Subjects viewed a film of an automobile accident and then answered questions about events that did and did not occur in the film.
- Did you see the broken light?
- Did you see a broken light?

4 Quantifiers: Some vs. Any

- Experimental results
- Ninety-four students viewed a film of an automobile accident and then answered 16 questions about events that did and did not occur in the film.
- Did you see any broken glass?
- Did you see some broken glass?

5 Tag questions

- Experimental results
- 140 participants watched a short film and then answered questions about it.
- One version of the film contained a bicycle parked along of the side of a road while the other did not.
- Did you see a bicycle?
- You did see a bicycle, didn't you?

6 Presuppositions

- Experimental results
- Subjects viewed a film of a traffic accident and then answered questions which contained a presupposition that was either true or false.
- How fast was the car going when it ran the stop sign?
- Did you see a stop sign?

7 Why questions

- Experimental results
- 74 subjects were shown a series of 30 color slides depicting successive stages in an auto-pedestrian accident.

- Immediate after viewing the slides, the subjects answered questions.
- Why didn't the pedestrian look when he crossed the street?
- Why did the pedestrian look when he crossed the street?
- Three days later
- Did you see the pedestrian looking in the direction of the cars before crossing the street?

8 Verbs of contact

- How fast were the cars going when they smashed into each other?
- How fast were the cars going when they collided / bumped into each other?
- One week later
- Did you see broken glass?