BCS II Course
9.012

Categorization

Study Questions

1. Explain the chicken-egg relationship between categorization and similarity and describe some empirical evidence that may resolve this problem. Why have people claimed that similarity is a "sham", or a vacuous notion when it comes to explanations of categorization? How can you salvage the notion of similarity?

2. Please read the paper on Latent Semantic Analysis and visit the LSA site (http://lsa.colorado.edu/), which includes an interactive copy of the model. Snoop around the site, play with the model, and figure out three things that LSA is bad at (think in terms of principled points about human knowledge representation and understanding).

3. Much evidence has been collected that both supports and undermines the so-called Whorfian hypothesis. Give an empirical example of both types of evidence & explain how these findings can be reconciled into a coherent view of the interaction between language and thought.

4. Describe the relationship between language-acquisition and conceptual development. Which comes first?