10.3: Psycholinguistics of Word Meanings

Behavioural psycholinguistic experiments can give us some insights into how word meanings are represented in the mind. The results of these experiments suggest that prototypes and fuzzy categories do play a part in our mental representations of word meanings, and that related word meanings are connected to each other in our minds.

A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/linguistics/?p=216

Check Yourself

1. Which of the following words would we expect to prime a target word *carrot*?

   - Power.
• Broccoli.
• Cattle.
• Car.

2. Which of the following words would we expect to prime a target word happy?

• Rabbit.
• Umbrella.
• Sad.
• Zoo.

3. Which of the following words would we expect to prime a target word week?

• Month.
• Actor.
• Goal.
• Unit.

Answers