

Finding Cultural Models in Everyday Discourse

An example of
Seeing the cognitive aspects of
patterns in activity

Search:

- Look through your interview transcript for evidence of cultural models.
- It may be necessary to go back and listen to your whole interview again to find passages that contain clear cultural models.
- Choose a passage that makes it easy for you to find and document the cultural models involved.

A procedure for finding cultural models

1. Examine the text word by word
2. Look for key words
 1. Logical connectives (but, because, if – then, so, or, not, must, have to, unless, except ...)
 2. Words that name schemas (Halloween, Romeo, Buy, ...)
3. Highlight key words
4. Explore the relations among the clauses
5. Choose interesting example(s)
6. Draw a diagram of the models and their relations. (Go to step 2 and continue)

Analysis:

- Describe the cultural models that are required to make sense of, or establish the meaning of, the passage.
 - Make sure that your description is accurate and clear.
 - You might consider expressing it in a diagram or some other notation.
- Show how these models are used in the passage and how the passage relies on the listener having access to these models.
- Describe any inferences that the passage suggests.
 - How is the listener expected to go beyond what is literally present in the passage? If possible, *provide other evidence (beyond the inference or interpretation that is to be explained) in support of the claim that these models are cultural models.*

Write it up

- **Focus on the cultural models and the connections between the data and the models.**
- **Include a link to the portion of the transcript that you use to the end of the paper.**
- **When you make a claim about the presence of a model, you may wish to include brief excerpts from the transcripts in the body of the paper in support of your claims.**

Interview Excerpt (Relaxed Transcription)

So, I'll tell you what's going on right now in the surf industry. These guys have just come on, and they're on all the chats, Surfer Magazine, Swaylocks, you know and so on. And they're just claiming it. Saying polyurethane is going to die out and there's not going to be any more polyurethane, polystyrene is happening, blah blah blah. And from talking to a friend of mine that's a glasser, and Al Merrick yesterday, it's really interesting. First of all, it's, it's, th, the foam is very hard to shape. There's a huge amount of waste. (Yeah) And then also, what's put out in the atmosphere making polystyrene isn't much different than using toluene making polyurethane.

More Interview Excerpt

Um also, all the guys, and I was down at Kane Garden the other day, and all the guys are saying that epoxy resin is safer. (Um) Now, there's a new article out in Surfer Magazine that I ne.. I still need to read, but Al was telling me and this friend of mine Mike Mirra that knows everything about glassing 'cause he's glassed his whole life. They had both told me that epoxy, the new epoxy resins do not smell. Guys are wearing gloves, but when you breathe it in, because, ne, I can't believe these guys aren't wearing masks. When you breathe it in, it basically acclimates into your system? Whereas polyester resin flushes. (Oh wow) OK? So, to me that's very dangerous. If epoxy mixes in with acetone, then it can ss. It can actually (go in your skin) assimilate into the into the blood through the skin.

Marking for Models

Um also, all the guys, and I was down at Kane Garden the other day, and all the guys are saying that epoxy resin is **safer**. (Um) Now, there's a new article out in Surfer Magazine that I ne.. I still need to read, but Al was telling me and this friend of mine Mike Mirra that knows everything about glassing '**cause** he's glassed his whole life. They had both told me that epoxy, the new epoxy resins do not smell. Guys are wearing gloves, **but** when you breathe it in, **because**, ne, I can't **believe** these guys aren't wearing masks. When you breathe it in, it basically acclimates into your system? **Whereas** polyester resin flushes. (Oh wow) OK? So, to me that's very dangerous. **If** epoxy mixes in with acetone, **then** it can ss. It can actually (go in your skin) assimilate into the into the blood through the skin.

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Begin marking the “Noxious substance” Model

Guys are **wearing gloves**, **but** when you **breathe it [Epoxy] in**, **because**, ne, I can't **believe** these guys **aren't wearing masks**. When you **breathe it in**, it basically **acclimates into your system**? Whereas polyester resin **flushes**. (Oh wow) OK? So, to me that's very **dangerous**. **If** epoxy mixes in with acetone, **then** it can ss. It can actually (go in your skin) **assimilate** into the **into the blood** through the skin.

Using the “Folk Model of the Mind”

- “I can't **believe** these guys **aren't wearing masks**.”
 - I **believe** X.
-
- ```

graph TD
 subgraph Top
 A[State of Affairs In the World] -- "Direction of Fit" --> B[State of Mind Belief]
 end
 subgraph Bottom
 C[State of Mind Plan, intention] -- "Direction of Fit" --> D[State of Affairs In the World]
 end
 B --- E[Correspondence] --- D
 D --- F[Correspondence] --- A

```

## Speech Act Forces

- “Can I borrow your pen?”
- Locutionary force = a question: is this possible?
- Illocutionary force = a request: allow me to use your pen
- Perlocutionary force = an effect produced: you give me your pen (temporarily)

### Speech Acts of “I don’t believe X.”

- The utterance does many kinds of work:
  - Describe a state of mind
    - What the words mean: Locutionary force
  - Assert something about the world
    - That X is not true! Illocutionary force.
    - Information that indicates X is true must be mistaken
- I am making sense of the world, but I do not trust the information about it.

### I can’t believe X.

- I can not believe X.
- “Can” is a modal (can, might, should, would) indicates contingency of verb.
- What is the belief contingent upon?
- It is contingent upon the course of normal inference.
- Something about X upsets the course of normal inference. What?

### Speech Acts of “I can’t believe X.”

- The utterance does many kinds of work:
  - Describe a state of mind
    - What the words mean: Locutionary force
  - Assert something about the world
    - That X is true! Illocutionary force
    - But X being true is somehow improbable or defies reason
  - Asserts something about a stance with respect to X
    - X should not be true: Perlocutionary act
- I’m reading the world correctly, but it does not make sense.

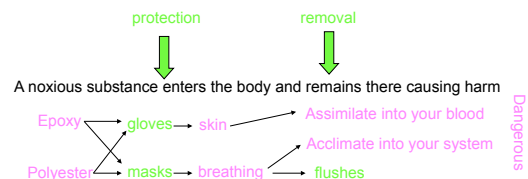
### Belief models

- I don’t believe X -> the situation makes sense, but the information about it is bad.
- I can’t believe X -> info is good, but something about the situation does not fit natural inferences.

### Return to the data

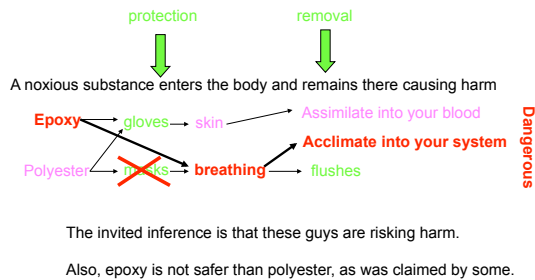
Guys [who laminate boards with epoxy] are wearing gloves, but when you breathe it [Epoxy] in, because, ne. I can’t believe these guys aren’t wearing masks. When you breathe it in, it basically acclimates into your system? Whereas polyester resin flushes. (Oh wow) OK? So, to me that’s very dangerous. If epoxy mixes in with acetone, then it can ss. It can actually (go in your skin) assimilate into the into the blood through the skin.

### The noxious substance model



## The noxious substance model

"These guys aren't wearing masks."



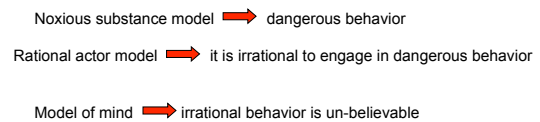
## Combining "Noxious substance" with "Rational Actor" model

- Rational actors do not cause themselves harm or expose themselves to unnecessary danger.
- Handling epoxy without a mask is dangerous
- Therefore "these guys" are not behaving rationally.

## The "I can't believe it!" Model

- I can believe people acting rationally.
  - If I assume rational behavior, then reasoning can produce an explanation for behavior that "makes sense."
- I can't believe people acting irrationally.
  - If rational behavior cannot be assumed, then it is not possible to derive explanations for behavior that "make sense."

## Summary of Relations Among Models



## What are Cultural Models?

- Mental constructs that exist inside the brains of people?
- OR
- Regular patterns that appear in the behavior of people?

What about the rest of the text in the excerpt?

### Interview Excerpt (Marking more models)

"So, I'll tell you what's going on right now in the **surf industry**. These guys have just come on, and they're on all the **chats**, **Surfer Magazine**, **Swaylocks**, you know and so on. And they're just claiming it."

**Cultural Models:**

Surf Industry: Production of surfboards – a dirty business. The environmentally conscious surfer's dilemma.

Contested Vision: Which is the best technology for making surfboards? Polyester and Polyurethane or Epoxy and Polystyrene.

Venues for production of inscriptions: chats

Act of asserting a position in agonistic encounter: claiming it

### Interview Excerpt (Marking more models)

They are "Saying polyurethane is going to **die out** and there's **not going to be any more** polyurethane, polystyrene is **happening**, **blah blah blah blah**."

**Cultural Models:**

Verbal Interaction: speaker, listener, speech, listener attention

Predicted outcome of Competition: die out / happening

### Contested Vision I An Agonistic Encounter

| Inscriptions | Venues              | Advocates/<br>Experts | Claims                                                                                                                          |
|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ?            | Chats<br>Surfer Mag | These guys            | <div style="text-align: center;">↓</div> <p>E+Psty <b>happening</b>      <b>blah, blah...</b></p> <p>Pyst+Pu <b>die out</b></p> |

"Happening" and "die out" are a contrast set.

"Blah, blah..." Imitative schema: talk not worthy of attention

Blah X 5 = lots of it

### Interview Excerpt (Marking more models)

And from talking to a **friend of mine that's a glasser**, and **Al Merrick** yesterday, it's really interesting. **First of all**, it's, it's, th, the **foam is very hard to shape**. There's a **huge amount of waste**. (Yeah)

**Cultural models:**

Expert testimony: **trust a friend with knowledge, Industry icon**

Enumeration: **First of all...**

Efficiency of Process: **waste**

### Interview Excerpt (Marking more models)

And then **also**, what's **put out in the atmosphere** making polystyrene **isn't much different than** using toluene making polyurethane. (Um)

**Cultural models**

Enumeration: second point - **also**

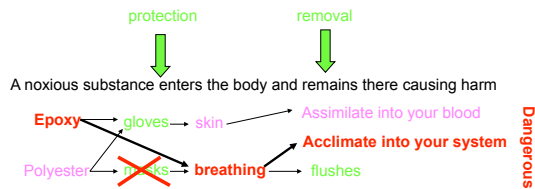
Industrial process: **no environmental difference between** polystyrene and polyurethane

### Marking for Models

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## The noxious substance model

"These guys aren't wearing masks."



The invited inference is that these guys are risking harm.

Also, epoxy is not safer than polyester, as was claimed by some.

## Contested Vision II

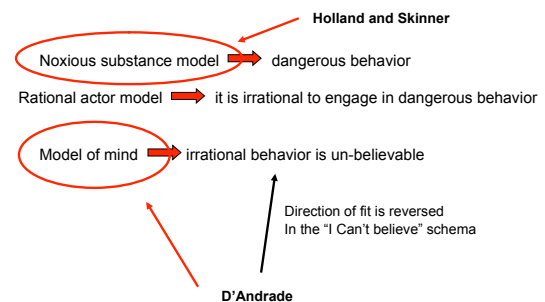
"It's really interesting"



## Strategies for writing up

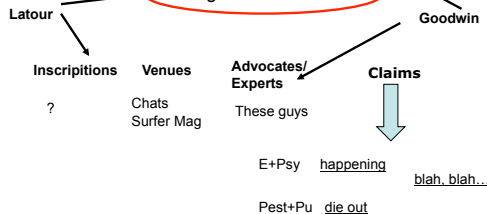
- presentation:
  - Organization of the paper, grammar, spelling, clarity
  - Relevance to readings
- Concept and execution
  - Choice of material
  - Clear description of models (figures, diagrams? )
  - Clear analysis (**link findings to data**)
  - Evidence of "cultural model" status
    - experience leads to expertise model: "practice makes perfect" proverb
    - Noxious substance model: hazardous materials practices.

## Relevance to Readings



## Contested Vision I

An Agonistic Encounter



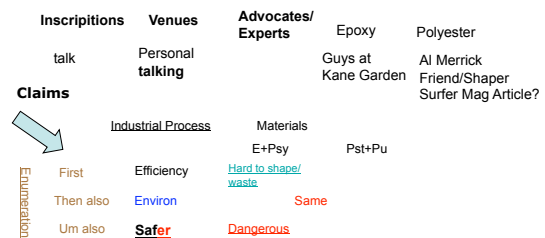
"Happening" and "die out" are a contrast set. They form a complex model.

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## Contested Vision II

"It's really interesting"



### The distribution of cultural knowledge

- High consensus codes
  - The grounding of communication
  - Intersubjective understanding
- High consensus informants
  - Intelligence
  - Education
  - Normal experience
- Implication: choosing a good informant is not that difficult

### Cognitive Aspects

- Learning cultural models: Explicit and Implicit learning.
- How much of culture is carried in language?
- Relations among models – the flexible assembly of complex conceptual structures