How are compound words stored in the mental lexicon?  

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

RQ1: Are compound words stored as two separate lexical entries in the mental lexicon?  

RQ2: Does the semantic transparency of the compound word affect how quickly we access the word?  

**HYPOTHESIS**

**H1:** Compound words are stored as two separate entities within the mental lexicon, alluding to the Partial Decomposition Model with access to compound words being slower than simple.

**H2:** Notions of semantic transparency will allow for quicker access of the compound words which are opaque as opposed to semantically transparent terms.

**ETHICS**

There is a very low risk of any psychological or physical harm being inflicted on the participant's or the researcher, and there are no issues regarding personal safety as the study will be conducted on the University campus.

We will not be using participants who could be considered to be vulnerable.  

Written consent from all participants will be received before the study begins.  

All of the data collected will not be shared with anybody else, and will be kept in a secure location when not in use.

**METHODOLOGY**

**LEXICAL DECISION TASK**

1. The participant will see an individual word on the screen  

2. Participant will choose either word or 'non-word' and press the corresponding button  

3. Time between the word appearing and the participant pressing the button will be recorded

**EXPECTED RESULTS**

**EXHIBIT 1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partial Decomposition Model</th>
<th>Full Decomposition Model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st: Control &amp; SOCW</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why?:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because each has their own entry in the mental lexicon.</td>
<td>Because each has their own entry in the mental lexicon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd: STCW</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why?:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Because participants must access the two separate parts of the word, and then compound them together, and then decide whether it is an existing word or not.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3rd: PCW</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Why?:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Because the compound word has been decomposed, participants must access the two separate parts of the word, and then compound them together.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REFERENCES**

- Libben (2006)  
- Jarema, 2006. These ideas can relate to the opacity and transparency of the compound word, which may affect the rate of access. It was therefore necessary to be judicious in choosing our test stimuli; an expansion of our experiment and press the corresponding button.  

**FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

- **Headedness:** The importance of the first component of the compound word assigns grammatically and holds a key role in lexical access. (Libben & Jarema, 2006). These ideas can relate to the opacity and transparency of the compound word, which may affect the rate of access. It was therefore necessary to be judicious in choosing our test stimuli; an expansion of our experiment and press the corresponding button.  

- **Cross-linguistic implications:** Future directions of our work could include transferring our experiment to a cross-linguistic context, in order to see if cognitive processes involved in the storage and representation of English compounds are generalizable across languages.

**SUMMARY**

In this experiment we aimed to study the nature of compound words and hoped to shed light on the issue of how they are stored and processed in the mental lexicon. More specifically, our main objective was to uncover whether compounds are stored separately or as a whole lexical unit and whether transparency underlies this process in representation and access.  

Our results will provide an interesting context in the FLH and Decomposition debate.  

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