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Prototypes in Europe and North America:
How they reflect gender and cultural differences

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Abstract

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Abstract: The aim of this study was to find out whether Europeans and North Americans differ as to what they consider to be best examples of four categories; namely vehicles, clothes, vegetables, and furniture. I compared the two continents with each other and tried to find out to what extent the cultural differences really influence the best examples chosen by the research participants. Further, I briefly compared the prototypes with European females and males and North American females and males and tried to point out some differences between the two genders. Moreover I tried to connect the differences to cultural and gender related factors. The results show the existence of some good and some bad examples that were the same no matter if we looked at the European list or the North American one. However, as we have found out through our research there seem to be strong cultural reasons for the best examples the participants chose. It is a natural behavior to choose prototypes of categories that are well known by the research participants. The best known items are those which are present in the lives of the participants. So, for example riding a bicycle does not seem to be very common among people in North America. They consider bicycle only a lower average example for the category vehicles, whereas Europeans for example seem to use bicycles much more often. They place it on rank four out of 17. People seem to choose things they know or are interested in.

Nyckelord: Prototype, Basic level term, Categorization, Europe, North America

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1. Introduction and aims

To express thoughts and to communicate with each other humans use words. There has to be a mutual agreement on what each individual word means, otherwise the attempt to communicate would fail. Misunderstandings occur because of lack of clear agreement as to the meaning of words.

Humans generally try to do things as efficiently and economically as possible. This also applies to language usage. Therefore we bundle words into various categories, which allow us to express more with less words (Taylor 2003:35). “By *category* is meant a number of objects that are considered equivalent. Categories are generally designated by names” (Rosch 1999:191) and are “the result of psychological principles” (Rosch 1999: 189). They arise from our desire for efficiency and productivity and because we believe our world is by principle a structured cosmos (Rosch 1999: 190).

However it is not easy to analyze categories scientifically. They are often very fuzzy and unclear groupings. Various problems arise when we attempt to explain what categories are, how they emerge and why we use them. For example words may be borrowed into other languages or cultures and may change their meanings completely. How are we supposed to grasp all of the different meanings a word may have in different places?

There have been many attempts to explain categories. One of them, which has been quite successful, is called the prototype theory. This theory is based on the belief that each individual has a typical member for each category in his/her mind. These members are called prototypes or best exemplars and are often culturally specific. For instance many people find an *apple* to be a very good example of the category *fruit*. Or let us look at the category *sports*. Most people in the United States see baseball as the best example of a sport, whereas when you ask a European they would probably answer *soccer*. Here the question arises whether the choices of good examples are influenced by factors, such as education, social background, age, sex, or culture. Everyone has their own best examples for each category. An example to illustrate the differences in best examples would be that *cricket* is a very popular sport in England among older people. Thus for them *cricket* could be a better example for the category *sports* than for younger people. They would probably choose *soccer* as their best example. In the United States you can find something similar. Some people consider *American football* a

better example of a sport than *baseball*. However this probably does not have anything to do with age difference but more with personal preference.

The aim of this study is to find out whether Europeans and North Americans differ as to what they consider to be best examples of four categories; namely vehicles, clothes, vegetables, and furniture. I want to compare the two continents with each other and see to what extent the cultural differences really influence the best examples chosen by the research participants. Further, I intend to compare the prototypes with European females and males and North American females and males and see if there are differences between the two genders. Moreover I will try to connect the differences to cultural discrepancies or gender related explanations.

2. Background

2.1. History and development of categorization study in semantics

The attempt to solve the problem of how humans organize and categorize their thoughts can be traced back to Aristotle. He suggested that categories have certain fixed features. The most important feature is that the membership of a category is determined by a set of necessary and sufficient conditions. This means that every member of a certain category has to fulfill all criteria to be accepted. If there is one single feature that can not be found in an entity, it will be excluded from this category. The “Features, therefore, are a matter of all or nothing” (Taylor 2003: 21), which means they are binary. They are either present or not, [+] or [-]. There is no middle way. This also explains why Aristotle saw categories as always having clear boundaries (Taylor 2003: 21). Another important classical feature is that all members of a category have equal status; there are no such things as better or worse examples of a category. (Taylor 2003: 21). The biggest advantage that this theory offers is that it makes various things much clearer for analysis. Because it sets clear boundaries, semantic relationships between words and sentences can be described very clearly, and contradictions can be pointed out much more explicitly (Taylor 2003: 35) than when using the approach called prototype theory, which I will be talking about later in my paper.

Even though the classical approach seems very clear and easy to apply there are quite a few irregularities and problems connected to it. The most obvious problem is the question of which features are to be considered necessary and sufficient and which ones not? Where are

we supposed to draw the line? (Aitchison 1994: 43). Moreover if the membership of an entity in a certain category is dependent on whether it fulfills all features necessary to be included in that specific category, the only way to find out if an entity belongs to a certain category is to match it against all the necessary and sufficient conditions that define exactly this one special group. However, if we do so, we will gain no new information on the entity from the insight of the category membership. Therefore this is a useless task (Taylor 2003: 35). Another problem we are confronted with when using the classical approach is that each individual feature belongs to its own category and has its own classical definition via features. So, we end up in a never ending circle of definitions (Taylor 2003: 36). Another limitation is that only a few words of everyday usage can be clearly defined and explained by the classical theory. Most of these words refer to so-called “expert categories”,¹ for example the transparent liquid we all need to drink to stay a live is called by majority of people water. However there are some experts that have the knowledge that water is actually a combination of atoms called H₂O. Other words of everyday use, however, refer to categories which are not so clearly defined. For example if you try to define the word ‘knife’, you could start of by saying a knife is an object that has a handle to hold on to and to be able to use it. But if you look at this statement it is very unclear, because “axes, saws, and chisels” (Taylor 2003: 38) also have handles that help to hold them and to use. Therefore the term and category of handles is not clearly defined (Taylor 2003: 38). Furthermore we probably learn categories “holistically, in the context of our interaction with the world. We do not understand categories by breaking them down into their components, neither do we ‘build-up’, or ‘assemble’ categories out of their defining features, of the kind that might be contained in definitions” (Taylor 2003: 38). Cognitive structures can be understood holistically as gestalt configurations (Taylor 2003: 66).² Besides this I want to point at a further lack of explanation ability of the classical theory. As mentioned before according to the classical theory each category has a fixed number of features that all have the same status. However if you consider the features for a bird you definitely would not say that the feature to fly is as important for a bird to be defined as a bird as the feature of having two feet. There are obvious differences in the feelings of what features are more important than others. Exactly these differences of importance are expressed with the expert term ‘cue validity’. The features are hierarchically ordered from important to less important. Hence the classical approach can not account for

¹ Expert categories are categories that include vocabulary used by professionals in certain fields, like scientists, lawyers, or bureaucrats (Taylor 2003: 38). These “have been specially created, usually in confirmation with Aristotelian principals” (Taylor 2003: 75).

² The key term here is ‘Gestalt configuration’: “the whole might well be perceptually and cognitively simpler than any of its individual parts” (Taylor 2003: 67).

this hierarchical order and is confronted with a problem it can not solve without easing on its principles what a category really is.

2.2. Response to the inadequacies of the classical approach: Prototype theory

After noticing that the classical approach has quite a few problems with handling human categorization processes there was a wave of new researchers working on extending the classical approach, changing it or even developing new theories with new ideas as basis for the following researches. One new theory that won major popularity called the prototype theory was developed by Eleanor Rosch.

2.2.1. From classical to prototype theory

One of the first to react against the inadequacies of the classical approach was the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. He saw categories as “not structured in terms of a set of shared critical features, but rather by a criss-crossing network of similarities” (Taylor 2003: 42). His famous example to illustrate this was the category ‘Spiel’, ‘game’ in English.³ Because no attribute common to all games can be found, the category must be learned on the basis of examples (Taylor 2003: 42-43). Wittgenstein proposes the family resemblance model as the basis of categorization. In categories such as ‘Spiel’ many members, like those in a family, have attributes in common. However, some members have more than others in common, and some have no mutual attributes at all (Rosch 1999: 383). Labov provides empirical support for Wittgenstein’s claim. In his experiment (1973) Labov showed different drawings of shapes looking something like cups, mugs, bowls, and vases to participants and asked them to name these shapes. The results showed that there was no clear cut distinction between the groups (Taylor 2003: 43). “The one category merged gradually into the other” (Taylor 2003: 43). Later on, in 1975, Rosch tested the family resemblance hypotheses as well. Her results were even more interesting, since she found out that family resemblance highly correlates with “ratings of typicality of superordinate categories, for basic level categories and for artificial categories” (Rosch 1999: 384). These terms will be defined at a later point of my paper.

³ Although there are scientists that do not agree on this, e.g. Wierzbicka. She points at the forgotten translations problems in Wittgenstein’s analysis (For more information see Anna Wierzbicka: *Semantics: Primes and Universals* 1996).

2.2.2. Explanation and definition of prototypes

Scientists in the field of linguistics were looking for explanations and solutions to the problems posed by the classical theory. One of the first scientists to try to overcome these problems was Ludwig Wittgenstein in 1945 (Taylor 2003: 42). This was also the time period when Eleanor Rosch started her research on the phenomena she called prototypes. She wanted to test “what we have in mind when we use words which refer to categories” (Aitchison 1998: 227). Her research was based on a questionnaire, which had the following layout: the category name was written on the top of the page and underneath about 50 examples followed. The participants were asked to rate how good of an example of the stated category each word was (Aitchison 1998: 227). The results were very interesting. Humans overall agreed on what were good examples of a category and what were not, even if there were disagreements on the boundaries of the various categories (Rosch 1999: 197). For example most people agree on prototypical colors, like which red is the best example for the category red. However where we are supposed to draw the distinguishing line to next color, like orange or purple has always caused discussions. Psychologists (Armstrong et al. 1983) that repeated these tests on the other side of the United States, the eastern coast of the United States, came up with results similar to those of Rosch (Aitchison 1998: 228). For every individual test participant there was one “mental representation of a” (Taylor 2003: 67) best example for each category. This example is called the prototype of a category. (Later in this paper I will explain the difference between prototype and best example.) It is one component of a category in a person’s mind (Taylor 2003: 67). The other entities “are assigned membership in a category in virtue of their similarity to the prototype; the closer an entity to the prototype, the more central its status within the category” (Taylor 2003: 65).

The investigators then asked themselves where these rankings come from. The interesting aspect of prototypes is that they were not chosen “primarily on the basis of appearance” (Aitchison 1998: 229). *Peas* and *carrots* were both at the top of the examples list for the vegetable, although they have no visual characteristics in common. If visual characteristics played a role, we “would [have] expected vegetables which look similar, such as *carrots*, *parsnips*, and *radishes*, to be clustered together” (Aitchison 1998: 229). Besides this the judgments for the prototypes were not made based on the functions the entities fulfill. If this would have been the case, *bench* and *chair* would have had to come up at the top of the list of

examples for furniture together. However, only *chair* was seen as a very good example of this category; *bench*, on the other hand, was ranked after *bookcase* (Aitchison 1994: 229).

The most common explanation to where prototypes come from is to say that people react to entities they encounter during their life more often than to others. But “Rosch [...] warns us to be suspicious of frequency as an explanation of prototypicality” (Taylor 2003: 56). For example children always color skies blue, even if they live in an environment where the sky is more grey than blue. This is the case because children draw what they imagine as the best example of a thing (Taylor 2003: 57). Another possible origin of prototypes is, according to Pullman (1983) that we learn them through our culture (Taylor 2003: 57).⁴ Others claim that “the prototypes might embody the mean values of variable attributes” (Taylor 2003: 57).

Despite these explanations, researchers still have to admit that it is unclear how people decide what the prototypes of categories are. However, it is indisputable that prototypes exist. For example research results have shown that children learn prototypes first before they start grasping the poorer examples of a category (Rosch 1999: 198).⁵ Support for this has been found “in language acquisition and language breakdown: generally speaking, children learn prototypical examples of categories first, and aphasics make more errors in naming peripheral examples of categories than prototypical examples” (Tsohatzidis 1990: 384). Research by Gleitman, Armstrong & Gleitman, 1983, has also shown that people even feel that prototypes exist in cases of such traditional classical categories as numbers. Participants of a research project by Gleitman felt the number ‘3’ to be a better example of an odd number than ‘7’ is (Rosch 1988: 386).

2.2.3. Advantages of the prototype theory

Many problems confronting the classical approach can be resolved by prototype theory. One of the main differences between the prototype theory and the classical approach is that the former can account for degree of membership. An entity does not have to have a set number of features to be considered a member of the category; if there are some features missing it can still be a peripheral member of the same category (Aitchison 1998: 226). Accordingly, the problem of deciding which features are necessary and sufficient does not exist any longer. Another advantage is that prototype theory allows our categories “the flexibility demanded by

⁴ Pulman (1983) agrees on this origin of prototypes (Taylor 2003: 57).

⁵ Experiment carried out by Rosch:.

an ever-changing environment” (Taylor 2003: 58). Members can become more central or can be relegated more to the peripheral. Finally, the use of hedges such as ‘*strictly speaking*’ can be explained by prototype theory. They represent a language intern method of showing the degree of category membership (Taylor 2003: 78). Hedges can limit or extend prototypical categorization boundaries, showing the importance of flexibility in categories themselves (Taylor 2003: 82).

Prototype theory can account for much more. It can explain how we can cope with untypical or damaged examples of a category (Aitchison 1998: 229). We can still categorize a robin with one wing as a bird, or a German shepherd with only three legs as a dog although they do not have all the features of a prototypical bird or dog. This would not have been possible with the classical theory. Furthermore prototypes seem to work for actions as well. ‘Murder’ is considered to be a better example of killing than executing or commit suicide; or ‘stare’ is a better example of looking than peering or squinting is (Aitchison 1998: 230). The notion of prototypes also “explains how words can be used with slightly different meanings” (Aitchison 1998: 237). There is a prototypical meaning of a word and there are those meanings that can be seen as peripheral; all meanings are bundled together in one word. The differences between them can be made clear by comparing the peripheral meanings to the prototypical meaning. For example if you take the category dog and compare a Pekinese with the common prototype of dogs, a German Shepard, the differences between these two breeds will be much clearer than if you would have compared the Pekinese with a terrier (Taylor 2003: 57). Prototypes also make the contrast with other prototypes very clear since the categories’ central members are clearly distinguishable from each other (Taylor 2003: 57); basketball is clearly a different sport than soccer.

All in all, in contrast to classical theory, Prototype theory offers us insight into “the fact that they have a ‘core’ and a ‘periphery’” (Tsohatzidis 1990: 384).

2.2.4. Disadvantages of the Prototype Theory

“The notion of similarity [...] underlies all categorization processes” (Taylor 2003: 65). However this notion of similarity presents one of the problems the prototype theory has to struggle with. “Similarity is a graded concept” (Taylor 2003: 65) and it “is also a subjective notion” (Taylor 2003: 65). Not all humans grade the same features as equally important. Since judgments are very subjective as to whether an entity belongs to a category or not we have to

be careful of how scientific these categories really are. Can we really account for them by using scientific methods? Another problem concerning the features of the prototype is that each attribute considered important to the member is very often a prototype category of its own, with its own features describing it (Taylor 2003: 66). So, we could go on categorizing on the basis of other categories and never come to an end. Besides this, prototype categories have very fuzzy boundaries, which makes it difficult to restrict them. Categories must, however, be restricted in some way, because otherwise we could have a separate category for everything, clearly not an economical solution (Taylor 2003: 67, 69).

Human beings acquire and store knowledge of the world. How this knowledge interacts with the prototypes is still unclear and we can therefore not say what impact this knowledge has on our prototypes (Aitchison 1994: 65). “This indicates that finding out the characteristics of a prototype is enormously difficult” (Aitchison 1994: 65). An example is the word ‘pet fish’. From where do we gain our knowledge of a prototypical ‘pet fish’? Do we take a prototypical *pet* and a prototypical *fish* and mix all of their characteristics? Or do we create a new prototype, completely independent of the two prototypes hinted in at the individual words of the compound? (Rosch 1988: 385). This problem can not be solved by the traditional prototype theory. Another big problem with this approach is that there is no proof that knowledge of a prototype is enough to account for all data in a category. How do we know that we are not forgetting a very important characteristic of a category by merely looking at the prototype? Also prototypes are often misused and, as a result, convey wrong information. For example overextension of meanings of prototypes is a very common mistake. If children learn to categorize an animal as a dog they will probably first have a definition something like ‘an animal of a certain height with four legs and a tail is a dog’. However that this description would also fit a prototypical cat does not come to the minds of those children. So, features of a prototypical dog have been extended without specifying the differences to the other categories. Or, how are we to understand that we can be productive if we only organize our thoughts via prototypes and their fuzzy boundaries? We would all be blocked for productivity and creativity (Posner 1986: 56-57). We have to have the opportunity to develop and change our opinions on things or extend our knowledge otherwise we can not invent anything new or extraordinary in this world. Prototypes can limit our fantasy and stop our production of new and bright ideas.

The prototype offers many advantages when comparing it to the classical approach but as we have seen in my last chapter this theory also has problems it can not deal with.⁶

2.3. Differences in Prototype Categories

Words can be classified according to whether they refer to taxonomic or heterogeneous concepts. *Bird* for example is a taxonomic category because it refers to a certain “kind of creature” (Wierzbicka 1996: 155). If we want to imagine a prototype of the category *bird*, we would probably extract the most important features from all *birds* we know and create our imaginary perfect *bird*. Our individual prototype of *bird* does not even have to exist in reality. However it still comprises certain necessary conditions required to be the perfect *bird* for us.

On the other hand, the word *furniture* refers to a collective or taxonomic concept. Different kinds of furniture, such as chairs, tables, bookcases, drawers and so on, are grouped together into one category. These individual items have few features in common. They are obviously related via the notion of Wittgenstein’s family resemblance, but we can not find features common to all. This makes it difficult to create a prototype in the same way we do for taxonomic categories. Hence, we use a different way to create a prototype. We decide on one example of the category that best represents, in our view, the whole category. Our choice is no longer a prototype in the classical/ original sense, putting features together and creating an image, but is better explained as a best example of a category. We could sum up the difference between the two categories saying that a prototype of a taxonomic category represents ‘a kind of something’, whereas the heterogeneous category is represented by “things of different kinds” (Wierzbicka 1996: 156). “The fact that *bird* is a “count noun” (e.g. *three birds*) whereas *furniture* is a “mass noun” (e.g. * *three furnitures*) is not accidental, but reflects and provides evidence for this difference in the conceptualization” (Wierzbicka 1996: 156). To illustrate that these two categories really exist here is a little test. Imagine you want to draw a non -specific bird; you could do that with no problems at all. A head, a beak, two wings, and feathers, and your bird is finished. However, if you try to draw a non-specific furniture or toy you will run into problems. There is no chance of doing so; you would have to decide on one example of the category to create a visual image of this group (Wierzbicka 1996: 157). In this case you would probably choose your best example of the category in question.

⁶ There have been linguists that have worked and adapted the prototype theory to try to be able to account for these problems. The most famous and convincing approach is given by Anna Wierzbicka: *Semantics: Primes and Universals* 1996).

In this study, I will only deal with heterogeneous categories. I will briefly define two important terms that will come up in my discussion of best examples: superordinate and hyponym. Hyponyms and superordinates stand in a hierarchical relationship to one another. Each category has various members, for example the category *fruit* includes *apples*, *pears*, *oranges*, *strawberries* and so on. These individual category members are called the hyponyms of the category *fruit*, whereas *fruit* is referred to as the superordinate. Accordingly, *fruit* is the superordinate of *pear* and *pear* is one hyponym of the category *fruit*.

These terms are very important for my paper, because the best examples, which I will be working with, are considered to be a hyponyms of categories. A best example is the hyponym that represents the specific category best. So, we can say that hyponymy are examples of a category in a hierarchical order without clear definitions or boundaries (Cruse 2004: 151-152).

3. Method

The aim of this study is to find out whether Europeans and North Americans differ as to what they consider to be best examples of four categories; namely vehicles, clothes, vegetables, and furniture. I want to compare the two continents with each other and see to what extent cultural differences influence the best examples chosen by the research participants. Further, I intend to compare the prototypes selected by European females and males and North American females and males to see if the choices reflect gender differences. Moreover I will try to relate the differences to cultural or gender related issues, like for instance men not considering bra a good example for the category *clothes*.

Participants were asked to rate the goodness of the various examples listed below the category name using a 7-point-scale. A specific score of 1.00 represents a very good example while a score of 7.00 shows that the participants considered this example to be either a very bad one or not even an example of the category in discussion. A score of 4.00 indicated an average example of the category in question while the numbers in between showed varying degrees of category membership. I asked 10 Europeans and 10 North Americans between the age of 19 and 29 to answer my questionnaire. The informants were 50 % men and 50 % women. The Europeans questioned came from Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, and Norway and the North Americans came from Canada and the USA. I chose not to translate the questionnaire

from English into all other mother tongues used by the participants because there were too many languages involved.

To collect the necessary information I composed four slightly different questionnaires. The four questionnaires differed only in the order I listed the examples of the various categories. There were no other alterations made. By switching the examples around I tried to avoid influencing my participants by certain rankings of words.

After I received the questionnaires back I divided them up into four groups: female Europeans and male Europeans on the one hand, and female North Americans and male North Americans on the other. Then I calculated the scores for each individual group and went on to calculate the over all scores for the two continents. After that, I compared the results of the questionnaires, first looking at gender related differences in the scores for each continent and then focusing on the overall comparison of the scores for the two continents.

4. Analysis and results

4.1. Gender differences within the continent boundaries

Within each continent men and women showed certain differences in their choices of good and bad examples. These differences can partly be explained through the unwritten rules society lays on us, such as for example it is seen as strange if men walk around in women's clothes. It is not forbidden to do so, but it is seen as strange behavior and considered an irrational life style.

In the following I first want to briefly look at the gender differences in Europe and then shift my attention to those in North America. I will be taking examples from each category from the questionnaire and will try to relate them to cultural and social norms of each continent.

4.1.1. Men and Women in Europe

4.1.1.1. Vehicles

Table 1

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
1	Car	1.20	1	Car	1.00
2	Bus	1.40	2	Bus	1.20
3	Bicycle	2.00	3	Motorbike	1.40
4	Scooter	2.40	4	Airplane	1.60
5	Motorbike	2.60	5	Taxi	1.80
6	Train	2.80	6	Train	2.20
7,5	Airplane, Moped	3.20	7,5	Boat, Streetcar	2.60
9	Taxi	3.60	9	Bicycle	2.80

11	Boat, Underground, Streetcar	4.00	10	Scooter	3.20
13	Skateboard	5.60	11	Underground	3.60
14,5	Canoe, Rollerblades	5.80	12	Moped	3.80
16	Kickboard	6.00	13	Kickboard	5.40
17,5	Zeppelin, Rocket	6.40	14,5	Submarine, Rollerblades	5.60
20	Submarine, Horse, Hot-air balloon	6.80	16,5	Horse, Canoe	5.80
			18	Skateboard	6.20
			19	Zeppelin	6.40
			20	Hot-air balloon	6.60
			21	Rocket	6.80

When looking at the scores of the category *vehicles* we can see that men, in this case, have more nuanced notions as to the goodness of examples than women do. They have divided the 21 examples into 18 different levels of “goodness”, whereas women distinguished only 14 levels. Another difference between the genders is reflected in the rankings of special examples. Men, for example, ranked *submarine* as a low average example of this category; whereas women are not even sure whether to consider this example a *vehicle* at all. They placed it as the worst example. *Airplane* was another example where men and women disagreed. Men ranked it among the top four examples of their list while women scored it as an average example on theirs. Nevertheless, both genders did agree on the best examples of this category. They rated *car* the best example and *bus* the second best.

4.1.1.2. Clothes

Table 2

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
1	Jeans	1.00	1,5	T-Shirt, shirt	1.00
2,5	T-shirt, Pullover	1.20	3	Jeans	1.20
4,5	Pants, Sweatshirt	1.40	4,5	Underwear, Sweatshirt	1.40
6	Jacket	1.60	7	Pullover, Jacket, Skirt	1.60
7	Shirt	1.80	9	Pants	1.80
8	Coat	2.00	10,5	Shorts, Coat	2.00
9	Skirt	2.20	12	Socks	2.20
10	Dress	2.40	13,5	Boxer shorts, Dress	2.40
11,5	Bra, Underwear	2.80	15	Shoes	2.80
13	Socks	3.00	16	Bra	3.80
14,5	Shorts, Shoes	3.20	17,5	Leggings, Scarf	4.00
16	Scarf	3.60	19,5	Cap, Gloves	4.60
18	Boxer shorts, Leggings, Gloves	4.20	21,5	Hair-band, Ring	5.80
20	Cap	5.00	23	Earrings	6.40
21	Earrings	5.60	24	Eyeglasses	6.60
22	Hair-band	5.80	25	Piercing	7.00

23	Eyeglasses	6.00
24,5	Piercing, Ring	6.80

The category *clothes* shows a different pattern in scoring from the previous category in discussion. If we take away the typical female *clothes*, such as *bra*, *leggings*, *skirt*, or *dress*, we can see a strong similarity in the rankings of the examples by women and men. Both generally agree on good and bad examples and tend to cluster the same examples close to one another. Good examples are for instance, *jeans*, *T-shirt*, *shirt*, and *pullover*, whereas bad examples are clearly *hair-band*, *earring*, *eyeglasses*, *ring*, and *piercing*. Women seem to group items that are related more closely to each other. For example they place all clothes that are normally worn underneath other clothes together, such as *bra*, *socks*, or *underwear*. Men on the other hand tend not to pay too much attention to grouping items like this. They consider each example individually.

4.1.1.3. Vegetables

Table 3

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
1	Spinach	1.20	1,5	Tomato, Spinach	1.00
2	Lettuce	1.40	3	Carrots	1.20
3	Zucchini	1.60	4	Onions	1.40
4	Broccoli	2.20	5,5	Lettuce, Beans	1.60
5.5	Carrot, Tomato	2.40	10	Cucumber, Pea, Cauliflower, Broccoli, Bean sprouts, Artichoke, Eggplant	2.00
7.5	Cucumber,	2.80	14	Mushrooms	2.20

Cauliflower					
9.5	Corn, Bean sprouts	3.00	16	Zucchini, Garlic, Field garlic	2.40
11	Pea	3.20	19,5	Corn, Pepper, Pumpkin, Cabbage	3.20
12	Eggplant	3.40	22	Pickle	3.80
13.5	Mushrooms, Artichoke	3.60	23	Melon	5.20
15.5	Onion, Cabbage	3.80	24	Rice	5.40
17	Field garlic	4.20	25	Peanuts	5.80
18	Pumpkin	4.60			
19	Rice	4.80			
20,5	Pepper, Garlic	5.40			
22	Melon	6.20			
23	Pickle	6.40			
24	Peanuts	6.60			

Now we are reaching the first category where women differentiate considerably more levels than the men do. Out of 24 examples of *vegetables* women distinguished 18 different levels of goodness. Men only distinguished 12. However, both genders clustered most of the examples in the middle field. Women tended to rate even more examples as average examples than men did. For the worst example they agreed on the same type of *vegetable*, which was *peanut*. The top example was the same on the men's and women's list, *spinach*. Nevertheless men also considered *tomato* to be on the top of their examples list. Women rated *tomato* as only an upper average example. A possible explanation could be that men consume fast food more often than women do and tomatoes can be found quite often in fast food as an alibi vegetable to make it seem healthier. For instance men could think of tomatoes on pizza or tomatoes as

ketchup. Whereas when women think of tomato they think of them as the vegetables they are, for instance used in salad.

4.1.1.4. Furniture

Table 4

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
1	Chair	1.20	2	Closet, Night table, Bed	1.00
2	Closet	1.40	4	Chair	1.20
3,5	Sofa, Table	1.60	6,5	Shelf, Sofa, Bookcase, Table	1.40
5	Desk	1.80	9,5	Desk, Coffee table	1.60
6	Bed	2.00	11	Drawers	2.00
7	Night table	2.20	12	Bench	2.20
8	Bookcase	2.40	13,5	Mirror, Rocker	3.20
9	Coffee table	2.80	15	Lamp	3.80
10	Lamp	3.00	16	Rug	4.20
11,5	Shelf, Mirror	3.40	17	Television	4.80
13	Bench	3.80	18	Piano	5.40
15,5	Rug, Refrigerator, Drawer, Rocker	4.00	19,5	Pillow, Refrigerator	5.60
18	Clock	4.20	21	Clock	6.00
19	Television	4.40	22	Toilet	6.20

20	Pillow	5.00	23,5	Telephone, Radio	6.40
21,5	Radio, Toilet	5.40			
23,5	Telephone, Piano	5.60			

The category *furniture* reflects strong agreement by both genders as to which examples are to be considered bad ones. Things you use your hands with or that can be moved around very easily for various purposes are rated quite low, like *electronic equipment* or *instruments*. On the other hand *furniture* which can not be moved too easily or is connected with some special body movement, as sitting down, lying down, bending down, or opening something with the arms and hands, is ranked at the top of the “goodness list”, like *chair*, *table*, *sofa*, or *closet*. There was one example where the ranking differed markedly between women and men: *shelf*. The example *shelf* was considered a top example by men, but only a lower average level example by women.

4.1.2. Women and Men in North America

4.1.2.1. Vehicles

Table 5

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
1	Car	1.00	1	Car	1.00
2	Taxi	2.20	2	Motorbike	1.40
3	Bus	2.60	3	Airplane	1.60
4	Motorbike	3.20	4	Bus	2.00
5	Streetcar	3.60	5	Taxi	2.20
6,5	Train, Airplane	4.20	6,5	Train, Boat	2.40
8,5	Scooter, Moped	4.40	8	Moped	3.00

10	Bicycle	4.60	9	Streetcar	3.40
11	Boat	4.80	10	Scooter	3.60
12	Rocket	5.60	11	Bicycle	4.00
13	Submarine	5.80	12	Zeppelin	4.20
14,5	Hot-air balloon, Rollerblades	6.20	13	Submarine	4.40
16	Underground	6.40	14	Rocket	5.00
17	Canoe	6.60	15	Canoe	5.20
19	Horse, Kickboard, Zeppelin, Skateboard	6.80	17	Horse, Underground, Hot-air balloon	5.40
			19,5	Skateboard, Rollerblades	5.60
			21	Kickboard	5.80

The category *vehicles* shows that North American male and female participants divided their ratings of goodness of examples in about the same number of ranks. Both genders placed *car* very clearly as their best example. However, the following ranks differed considerably. Men chose *motorbike* and *airplane* as their number two and three examples of this category, whereas women placed *motorbike* fourth and *airplane* as low as sixth. The other way around we can find a somewhat similar picture: women ranked *taxi* number two, but men ranked it only five. A further difference in ranking of goodness is also the example *zeppelin*. Men see it as an average example, ranking it twelve out of twenty, while girls are not even sure whether it should be considered a *vehicle* and place it at the very end of their scoring list. Otherwise the genders agree on all other ratings of goodness for the examples.

4.1.2.2. Clothes

Table 6

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
2	Dress, Shirt, Pants, Pullover, Jeans, Jacket, Skirt, Sweatshirt	1.00	2	Pants, Jeans, Shirt	1.00
9,5	Boxer shorts, Shorts	1.20	4,5	T-shirt, Socks	1.20
12	Bra, Underwear, Leggings	1.80	6	Pullover	1.40
14	T-shirt, Coat, Socks	2.20	8	Jacket, Shoes, Shorts	1.60
17	Cap	3.20	9,5	Sweatshirt, Underwear	1.80
18,5	Gloves, Shoes	3.60	11	Boxer shorts	2.00
20	Scarf	3.80	12,5	Dress, Skirt	2.40
21	Eyeglasses	6.20	14	Bra	2.60
22,5	Earrings, Hair-band	6.40	15	Coat	3.20
24	Ring	6.60	16,5	Leggings, Scarf	4.20
25	Piercing	7.00	18	Cap	4.60
			19	Gloves	4.80
			20,5	Earrings, Eyeglasses	5.20

22	Ring	5.40
23	Hair-band	5.60
24	Piercing	6.00

Looking at the results of the category *clothe*, the first thing that you notice is the ranking list of the women and see that they had problems rating the different examples in terms of goodness. Out of 24 examples they only differentiated 11 levels of “goodness” while men, on the other hand men distinguished 16 levels. Women rated eight out of the 24 items as best examples, two as second best, and three as third and fourth best. This means that about 67% of the examples were placed on the top four levels of the list. Only the so-called *accessories* were clearly seen as very bad examples of this category. A possible explanation for this could be that women consider fashion very important and that they find all types of clothes to be equally important. Although men distinguished their goodness rankings a bit more precisely than women did, they agreed with the latter on which examples are to be considered bad and which are to be considered the best examples, like *pants*, *jeans*, *shirt*, and *T-shirt*. An obvious difference between the lists of the two genders is that men certainly do not see typical female *clothes* as good examples of this category. They normally do not wear *dresses* or *skirts* and therefore do not find them too important and rank them lower than females do.

4.1.2.3. Vegetables

Table 7

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
2	Broccoli, Corn, Zucchini, Pea, Lettuce, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Carrot, Spinach	1.00	1	Lettuce	1.00
10,5	Beans, Artichoke	1,4	2,5	Onion, Corn	1.40

12,5	Mushroom, Pickle	1.60	4	Carrot	1.60
14	Onion	1.80	5,5	Cauliflower, Broccoli	1.80
16,5	Bean sprouts, Eggplant, Cucumber, Pepper	2.20	7,5	Cucumber, Spinach	2.00
19	Peanut	3.60	9,5	Zucchini, Beans	2.20
20,5	Field garlic, Tomato	4.60	11,5	Mushrooms, Pepper	2.60
22	Garlic	4.80	13,5	Pea, Cabbage	2.80
23	Pumpkin	5.20	15,5	Bean sprouts, Eggplant	3.00
24,5	Rice, Melon	7.00	17	Pumpkin	3.20
			19	Garlic, Tomato, Artichoke	3.40
			21	Field garlic	3.80
			22	Pickle	4.00
			23	Peanuts	4.40
			24,5	Rice, Melon	5.00

With the next category, *vegetables*, we can find a similar trend as with the previous category. Females ranked the 24 examples on a scale of only 10 degrees of goodness. Men distinguished 15. Once again, we can also find the same pattern with both genders when looking at the worst examples of the category. The biggest difference between men and women is really the way they cluster their answers. Men chose one top example for this category, *lettuce*. Women agree that *lettuce* is one of the top examples of *vegetables*, but they place eight others at the top of their list: *broccoli*, *corn*, *zucchini*, *pea*, *cauliflower*, *cabbage*, *carrot*, and *spinach*. There are further minor differences in the rankings of the two genders, for instance untypical *vegetables*, like *beans* and *artichoke* which are ranked second place on the female list and can only be found much further down on the male list. Perhaps the social

pressure for women to be thin and look good has made them open up to and consume more vegetables than men usually do. This could also be the explanation for the strong clustering at the top of the women's list. They find all vegetables very important for their everyday consumption.

4.1.2.4. Furniture

Table 8

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
2	Desk, Sofa, Rocker, Bench, Chair, Coffee table, Table	1.00	1	Sofa	1.00
8,5	Night table, Bookcase	1.20	2,5	Chair, Table	1.20
10	Bed	2.20	4,5	Night table, Coffee table	1.40
11	Drawers	4.00	7	Lamp, Desk, Bed	1.80
12,5	Rug, Television	5.60	9	Bookcase	2.00
13	Refrigerator	5.80	10	Rocker	2.20
14	Piano	6.00	11,5	Drawers, Shelf	2.40
15	Mirror	6.20	13	Mirror	3.00
16	Shelf	6.40	14,5	Rug, Bench	3.20
17,5	Pillow, Closet	6.60	16	Television	3.80
20	Clock, Radio, Toilet, Telephone, Lamp	6.80	17	Pillow	4.00
			18	Closet	4.60

19,5	Piano, Refrigerator	4.80
21,5	Radio, Clock	5.20
23	Toilet	5.60
24	Telephone	5.80

The scores of the category *furniture* show other tendencies than the previous ones. Men and women strongly agree on what examples are good ones of a category and which are to be considered bad examples. The best examples men chose can also be found in the top ranks of the female list. Women cluster many examples at the top of their list and many at the bottom. The midrange examples, on the other hand, have been ranked with different “goodness-degrees” and therefore reflect finer distinctions in placement. Men, by contrast divide the items in more levels of goodness than women. They do not cluster the items the way women do but rather differentiate them in more detail. Finally, there is only one example where the rankings differ markedly: *bench*. Women consider *bench* as one of the best examples, whereas men rank it only 14 out of 24.

4.2. European vs. North American prototype examples

4.2.1. Vehicles

Table 9

Europe			America		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
1	Car	1.10	1	Car	1.00
2	Bus	1.30	2	Taxi	2.20
3	Motorbike	2.00	3,5	Bus, Motorbike	2.30
4,5	Airplane, Bicycle	2.40	5	Airplane	2.90
6	Train	2.50	6	Train	3.20

7	Taxi	2.70	7	Streetcar	3.50
8	Scooter	2.80	8	Boat	3.60
9,5	Boat, Streetcar	3.30	9	Moped	3.70
11	Moped	3.50	10	Scooter	4.00
12	Underground	3.80	11	Bicycle	4.30
13,5	Kickboard, Rollerblades	5.70	12	Submarine	5.10
15	Canoe	5.80	13	Rocket	5.30
16	Skateboard	6.00	14	Zeppelin	5.50
17	Submarine	6.20	15	Hot-air balloon	5.80
18	Horse	6.30	17	Rollerblades, Canoe, Underground	5.90
19	Zeppelin	6.40	19	Horse	6.10
20	Rocket	6.60	20	Skateboard	6.20
			21	Kickboard	6.30

Both continents clearly have the same opinion which example is the best one for the category *vehicle – car*. However, there is a difference as to how strongly the North Americans and Europeans feel this to be the one and only best example for this category. On the European ranking list *car* ranked first with a specific score of 1.10. The second best example *bus* had a specific score of 1.30 and third place *motorbike* had a score of 2.00. There is no big score difference between the first and second example of the list. Moreover, the score of the third ranked item is not too different either. So we can say that all these *vehicles* are considered good examples by Europeans with minor differences in notions of goodness for this category. However, if we take a look at the second and third rank on the North American examples list, we will see a big difference in specific scores. *Car* was seen as the only best example for this category. It reached the first position with the best possible score of 1.00. The next best

example, a subcategory had a score of 2.20. So we can see how important a vehicle the car is for the North American people as opposed to the Europeans.

There are further differences in the ranking of the examples that immediately caught my interest. Since all participants were students I expected them to choose cheap transportation possibilities as typical examples for themselves. This was the case with the European results, where the example *bicycle* was seen as a very good example for this category. It was rated fourth out of 17. On the North American list, however, I found it only placed number 10 out of 18. This shows that there is a big difference in how good the participants saw this example as one of the category in discussion. The only explanation I can think of is that European students use bicycles much more as transportation possibilities than North Americans do. This probably is rooted in the cultural differences between the two continents. The bicycle is not used as much in North America as in Europe and therefore not as common to the people. Other minor differences will not be discussed here.

4.2.2. Clothes

Table 10

Europe			America		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
1,5	Jeans, T-shirt	1.10	2	Shirt, Pants, Jeans	1.00
3,5	Pullover, Sweatshirt	1.40	4	Pullover	1.20
5,5	Pants, Jacket	1.60	5	Jacket	1.30
7	Skirt	1.90	6,5	Sweatshirt, Shorts	1.40
8	Coat	2.00	9,5	Dress, Skirt, T-shirt, Socks	1.70
9	Underwear	2.10	12	Underwear	1.80
10	Bra	2.30	13	Boxer shorts	2.00

11	Dress	2.40	14	Bra	2.20
12,5	Socks, Shorts	2.60	15	Shoes	2.60
14	Shoes	3.00	16	Coat	2.70
15	Boxer shorts	3.30	17	Cap	2.90
16	Scarf	3.80	18	Leggings	3.00
17	Leggings	4.10	19	Gloves	3.80
18	Gloves	4.40	20	Scarf	4.00
19	Cap	4.80	21	Eyeglasses	5.70
20	Hair-band	5.80	22	Earrings	5.80
21	Earrings	6.00	23	Hair-band	6.00
22,5	Eyeglasses, Ring	6.30	24	Ring	6.10
24	Piercing	6.90	25	Piercing	6.70

Both continents divided the 25 examples of the category *clothes* into 19 distinct levels of goodness. They also agreed that members of a special subcategory of *clothes* were very bad examples of this category. All kinds of *jewelry*, like *ring*, *piercing*, *eyeglasses*, *earrings*, and *hair-band*, were placed in the last ranks of the lists. Here there seem to be some shared notions of goodness, or in this case, badness. Europeans and North Americans also agree on one best example for *clothes*, which is the *jeans*. However, both continents have further examples at the very top of their lists. While Europe chose *T-shirt* as another best example, North America went for *shirt* and *pants*. Nevertheless there are some differences between the two lists that are worth taking a look at. The examples, *coat*, *shorts*, and *boxer shorts* were treated quite differently. Europeans placed *coat* as an average example, 8, while North Americans placed it quite a bit further down the list, 16. *Boxer shorts* were treated exactly the opposite. North America placed them at 7, while they only ranked eleventh on the European list. And the last difference that is worth mentioning is the ranking of the example *shorts*.

North America sees *shorts* as one of the top four examples, whereas Europe only considers it as a low average one.

4.2.3. Vegetables

Table 11

Europe			America		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
1	Spinach	1.10	1	Lettuce	1.00
2	Lettuce	1.50	2	Corn	1.20
3	Tomato	1.70	3	Carrot	1.30
4	Carrots	1.80	4,5	Cauliflower, Broccoli	1.40
5	Zucchini	2.00	6	Spinach	1.50
6	Broccoli	2.10	7,5	Zucchini, Onion	1.60
7,5	Cucumber, Cauliflower	2.40	9	Beans	1.80
9	Bean sprouts	2.50	10,5	Pea, Cabbage	1.90
10,5	Pea, Onion	2.60	12,5	Mushrooms, Cucumber	2.10
12	Eggplant	2.70	14	Artichoke	2.40
13	Artichoke	2.80	15,5	Bean- sprouts, Eggplant	2.60
14	Mushroom	2.90	17	Pickle	2.80
15	Corn	3.10	18	Peanut	3.00
16	Field garlic	3.30	19	Tomato	4.00
17	Cabbage	3.50	20,5	Field Garlic, Pumpkin	4.20

18,5	Pumpkin, Garlic	3.90	22	Garlic	5.10
20	Pepper	4.30	23,5	Rice, Melon	6.00
21,5	Rice, Pickle	5.10			
23	Melon	5.70			
24	Peanuts	6.20			

This seems to be the category where the opinions of the continents differed the most. There are so many differences between the notions of “goodness of example” that it is difficult to talk about all of them, so I will pick out the examples that differ the most. But first I will look at the best examples for both continents. North Americans chose *lettuce* as the best example while Europeans placed it as their second best example. The best example for Europeans was *spinach* while for North Americans, it only ranked sixth. Overall both continents agreed on the best examples of the category, with one exception. In Europe *tomato* is considered a very good example of the category *vegetables*. On the North American side, however, we have to look at the bottom of the list to find *tomato* at all. It seems as if *tomato* is not really considered a *vegetable* in North America. Many even regard it as a fruit. However, there are examples where the reverse is true, i.e., an item is at the top of the North American list and at the bottom of the European one. One example is *corn*. North Americans ranked it as the second best example, while Europeans ranked 15 out of 24. Further differences between the two lists are reflected in the scores for *pepper*, *pickle*, *peanuts*, *cauliflower*, and *broccoli*. However, I will not go into detail about the differences here.

4.2.4. Furniture

Table 12

Europe			America		
Rank	Example	Specific Score	Rank	Example	Specific Score
1,5	Chair, Closet	1.20	1	Sofa	1.00
4	Sofa, Table, Bed	1.50	2,5	Chair, Table	1.10

6	Night- table	1.60	4	Coffee Table	1.20
7	Desk	1.70	5	Night table	1.30
8	Bookcase	1.90	6	Desk	1.40
9	Coffee-table	2.20	7,5	Bookcase, Rocker	1.60
10	Shelf	2.40	9	Bed	2.00
11,5	Bench, Drawers	3.00	10	Bench	2.10
13	Mirror	3.30	11	Drawers	3.20
14	Lamp	3.40	12	Lamp	4.30
15	Rocker	3.60	13,5	Rug, Shelf	4.40
16	Rug	4.10	15	Mirror	4.60
17	Television	4.60	16	Television	4.70
18	Refrigerator	4.80	17	Piano	5.40
19	Clock	5.10	18	Closet	5.60
20	Pillow	5.30	19,5	Clock, Radio	6.00
21	Piano	5.50	20	Toilet	6.20
22	Toilet	5.80	21	Telephone	6.30
23	Radio	5.90			
24	Telephone	6.00			

Once again North Americans and Europeans had about the same notions as to how many levels there should be for the given examples of the category *furniture*. They also agreed on which examples were to be considered bad ones, like *clock*, *piano*, *toilet*, and *radio*. *Telephone* was clearly seen as the worst example. I am not even sure that the participants even thought of *telephone* as a kind of *furniture*. Moving towards the top of the examples list, we

can also find some differences in ranking. The example *rocker* is seen as lower average example in Europe, while in North America it is seen as a high average one. Also, the best examples show some differences. For example, *bed* is ranked the second best by the Europeans, but the North American participants only rank it 9 out of 21. Moreover, for Europeans best examples were *chair* and *closet*. While North Americans agree with the ranking of the example *chair*, they completely disagreed with the placing of *closet*. They see *closet* as a poor example for *furniture*. In North America, closets are not normally large pieces of furniture which can dominate a room. Rather, closets in America are almost always built into the wall. This might be a reason why North Americans do not see *closet* as a real piece of *furniture*, but perhaps even as a piece of the house.

4.3. Comments

It is not easy to find reasons for why certain best examples are chosen by certain groups of people. However, most differences between the two continents North America and Europe can be explained by the different cultural norms in both societies. So, if driving a bicycle is not common to people in one culture, it will be difficult for them to see it as a typical vehicle. One always chooses something that one knows or is interested in. Besides the differences between men and women within the continent boundaries can also be traced back to unwritten rules of society, as I have mentioned in the introduction. One unwritten rule for example is that it is more natural for women, rather than men to select *skirt* as a good example of *clothes*, since it is a female piece of clothing.

5. Conclusion

When we conceptualize we do so by means of prototypes, as research cited above and this short study suggests. Even if the categories do not always have clear boundaries and some examples are seen as better or worse than others by different people, members usually have similarities one can point to. There are always some good and some bad examples that are the same no matter if we look at the European list or the North American one. However, as we have found out through our research there seem to be strong cultural reasons for the best examples the participants chose. It is a natural behavior to choose prototypes of categories that are well known by the research participants. The best known items are those which are present in the lives of the participants. For example a prototypical *boot* in Texas would look quite different to a prototypical *boot* anywhere in Great Britain. In Texas the picture the people have in their minds when thinking of *boots* will probably be some kind of *cowboy*

boot, while British people would perhaps imagine something like an *army boot* (Taylor 2003: 59). Or when going back and looking at the results of *vegetables*, it is clear that the participants chose those examples of vegetables that grow and are consumed in their region much more often as good examples than the other alternatives. For example, *corn* is consumed in Europe, however not as much as in North America. Americans have many ways to prepare and eat this kind of vegetable. For instance, they have corn on the cob, cooked corn, and cold corn in the salad, mashed corn, or even corn bread. On the other hand, in Europe corn is seen as an average vegetable, eaten and consumed in masses that are neither extremely high nor extremely low.

All the participants in this study were university students between 20 and 30 years old. For further researches it would be interesting to take a look at other age groups of people and see if their prototypes differ from those found with students. Perhaps we could compare students with young adults that started working right after school. Or see if there are differences between middle aged people who grew up in a time that still was influenced by the war and the adult generation which is around 30/35 years old.

Another interesting study could be to see if people in one culture have different prototypes depending on where they live in that one country, north south, east, or west. For example, one could look at Germany and see if the former East and West really have reunited, or if they are still different. Prototypes could be a start for analyzing the situation. Or we could look at Spain and see if Catalonia and the Basque country are really so different to the rest of Spain as they claim to be.

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Appendix

Questionnaire 1

Gender: Male
 Female

Age:

Nationality:

Current place of residence:

Place of residence between birth and the age of 13:

Instructions:

“This study has to do with what we have in mind when we use words which refer to categories. [...] Think of dogs. You all have some notion of what a “real dog,” a “doggy dog” is. To me a retriever or a German shepherd is a very doggy dog while a Pekinese is a less doggy dog. Notice that this kind of judgment has nothing to do with how well you like the thing. [...] You may prefer to own a Pekinese without thinking it is the breed that best represents what people mean by dogginess.

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Don't worry about why you feel that something is or isn't a good example of the category. And don't worry about whether it's just you or people in general who feel that way. Just mark it the way you see it.” (Rosch *Cognitive Representations*, 198)

Vehicles

Bus_____

Train_____

Rollerblades_____

Taxi_____

Underground_____

Airplane_____

Moped_____

Bicycle_____

Horse_____

Streetcar_____

Car_____

Motorbike_____

Scooter_____

Skateboard_____

Hot-air balloon_____

Canoe_____

Boat_____

Kickboard_____

Submarine_____

Zeppelin_____

Rocket_____

Clothes

Socks_____

Pants_____

Underwear_____

Ring_____

T-shirt_____

Pullover_____

Bra_____

Jacket_____

Cap_____

Leggings_____

Earrings_____

Gloves_____

Eyeglasses_____

Shorts_____

Boxer shorts_____

Shoes_____

Hair-band_____

Piercing_____

Skirt_____

Dress_____

Shirt_____

Jeans_____

Coat_____

Sweatshirt_____

Scarf_____

Vegetables

Tomato_____

Melon_____

Cucumber_____

Corn_____

Pickle_____

Rice_____

Zucchini/ Courgette_____

Peanut_____

Eggplant/ Aubergine_____

Carrot_____

Broccoli_____

Onion_____

Pepper_____

Garlic_____

Pumpkin_____

Pea_____

Cauliflower_____

Mushroom_____

Bean sprouts_____

Cabbage_____

Field garlic_____

Artichoke_____

Lettuce_____

Spinach_____

Beans_____

Furniture

Shelf _____

Sofa _____

Rocker _____

Desk _____

Closet _____

Telephone _____

Night table _____

Radio _____

Bookcase _____

Lamp _____

Television _____

Drawers _____

Mirror _____

Piano _____

Pillow _____

Bench _____

Refrigerator _____

Clock _____

Bed _____

Coffee table _____

Rug _____

Table _____

Chair _____

Toilet _____

Thank you very much for your time and help!

Jenny

Questionnaire 2

Gender: Male
 Female

Age:

Nationality:

Current place of residence:

Place of residence between birth and the age of 13:

Instructions:

“This study has to do with what we have in mind when we use words which refer to categories. [...] Think of dogs. You all have some notion of what a “real dog,” a “doggy dog” is. To me a retriever or a German shepherd is a very doggy dog while a Pekinese is a less doggy dog. Notice that this kind of judgment has nothing to do with how well you like the thing. [...] You may prefer to own a Pekinese without thinking it is the breed that best represents what people mean by dogginess.

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Don't worry about why you feel that something is or isn't a good example of the category.

And don't worry about whether it's just you or people in general who feel that way. Just mark it the way you see it.” (Rosch *Cognitive Representations*, 198)

Vehicles

Train_____

Submarine_____

Taxi_____

Boat_____

Kickboard_____

Underground_____

Airplane_____

Moped_____

Zeppelin_____

Bus_____

Horse_____

Streetcar_____

Car_____

Motorbike_____

Scooter_____

Skateboard_____

Hot-air balloon_____

Bicycle_____

Canoe_____

Rollerblades_____

Rocket_____

Clothes

Socks_____

Hair-band_____

Piercing_____

T-shirt_____

Boxer shorts_____

Pants_____

Pullover_____

Jacket_____

Cap_____

Leggings_____

Earrings_____

Scarf_____

Gloves_____

Bra_____

Shorts_____

Underwear_____

Ring_____

Shoes_____

Skirt_____

Dress_____

Shirt_____

Eyeglasses_____

Jeans_____

Coat_____

Sweatshirt_____

Vegetables

Melon_____

Cucumber_____

Rice_____

Tomato_____

Zucchini/ Courgette_____

Pea_____

Cauliflower_____

Carrot_____

Broccoli_____

Corn_____

Pickle_____

Onion_____

Spinach_____

Pepper_____

Garlic_____

Pumpkin_____

Mushroom_____

Bean sprouts_____

Cabbage_____

Field garlic_____

Artichoke_____

Lettuce_____

Beans_____

Peanut_____

Eggplant/ Aubergine_____

Furniture

Telephone_____

Shelf_____

Sofa_____

Rug_____

Closet_____

Night table_____

Radio_____

Bookcase_____

Clock_____

Lamp_____

Television_____

Piano_____

Pillow_____

Bench_____

Refrigerator_____

Drawers_____

Toilet_____

Mirror_____

Bed_____

Rocker_____

Desk_____

Coffee table_____

Table_____

Chair_____

Thank you very much for your time and help!

Jenny

Questionnaire 3

Gender: Male
 Female

Age:

Nationality:

Current place of residence:

Place of residence between birth and the age of 13:

Instructions:

“This study has to do with what we have in mind when we use words which refer to categories. [...] Think of dogs. You all have some notion of what a “real dog,” a “doggy dog” is. To me a retriever or a German shepherd is a very doggy dog while a Pekinese is a less doggy dog. Notice that this kind of judgment has nothing to do with how well you like the thing. [...] You may prefer to own a Pekinese without thinking it is the breed that best represents what people mean by dogginess.

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And don't worry about whether it's just you or people in general who feel that way. Just mark it the way you see it.” (Rosch *Cognitive Representations*, 198)

Vehicles

Underground_____

Train_____

Submarine_____

Kickboard_____

Zeppelin_____

Bus_____

Rocket_____

Horse_____

Canoe_____

Streetcar_____

Car_____

Taxi_____

Boat_____

Motorbike_____

Scooter_____

Skateboard_____

Hot-air balloon_____

Bicycle_____

Rollerblades_____

Airplane_____

Moped_____

Clothes

Hair-band _____

Dress _____

Piercing _____

Boxer shorts _____

Pants _____

Socks _____

Pullover _____

Jeans _____

Jacket _____

Earrings _____

T-shirt _____

Scarf _____

Bra _____

Shorts _____

Underwear _____

Ring _____

Shoes _____

Skirt _____

Shirt _____

Eyeglasses _____

Cap _____

Gloves _____

Leggings _____

Coat _____

Sweatshirt _____

Vegetables

Zucchini/ Courgette_____

Melon_____

Pumpkin_____

Mushroom_____

Rice_____

Pea_____

Cucumber_____

Carrot_____

Lettuce_____

Broccoli_____

Corn_____

Pickle_____

Spinach_____

Pepper_____

Garlic_____

Cauliflower_____

Bean sprouts_____

Cabbage_____

Field garlic_____

Tomato_____

Artichoke_____

Beans_____

Peanut_____

Onion_____

Eggplant/ Aubergine_____

Furniture

Television_____

Pillow_____

Sofa_____

Closet_____

Night table_____

Radio_____

Bookcase_____

Toilet_____

Telephone_____

Shelf_____

Toilet_____

Clock_____

Lamp_____

Piano_____

Bench_____

Refrigerator_____

Drawers_____

Mirror_____

Bed_____

Chair_____

Rocker_____

Desk_____

Coffee table_____

Rug_____

Thank you very much for your time and help!

Jenny

Questionnaire 4

Gender: Male
Female

Age:

Nationality:

Current place of residence:

Place of residence between birth and the age of 13:

Instructions:

“This study has to do with what we have in mind when we use words which refer to categories. [...] Think of dogs. You all have some notion of what a “real dog,” a “doggy dog” is. To me a retriever or a German shepherd is a very doggy dog while a Pekinese is a less doggy dog. Notice that this kind of judgment has nothing to do with how well you like the thing. [...] You may prefer to own a Pekinese without thinking it is the breed that best represents what people mean by dogginess.

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And don't worry about whether it's just you or people in general who feel that way. Just mark it the way you see it.” (Rosch *Cognitive Representations*, 198)

Vehicles

Underground_____

Horse_____

Car_____

Taxi_____

Hot-air balloon_____

Scooter_____

Train_____

Submarine_____

Kickboard_____

Rollerblades_____

Zeppelin_____

Bus_____

Rocket_____

Bicycle_____

Canoe_____

Airplane_____

Streetcar_____

Boat_____

Motorbike_____

Skateboard_____

Moped_____

Clothes

Earrings_____

Dress_____

T-shirt_____

Shoes_____

Piercing_____

Shirt_____

Boxer shorts_____

Bra_____

Coat_____

Shorts_____

Pants_____

Socks_____

Pullover_____

Jeans_____

Jacket_____

Hair-band_____

Scarf_____

Underwear_____

Ring_____

Eyeglasses_____

Cap_____

Gloves_____

Leggings_____

Skirt_____

Sweatshirt_____

Vegetables

Broccoli_____

Corn_____

Zucchini/ Courgette_____

Field garlic_____

Pumpkin_____

Bean sprouts_____

Mushroom_____

Rice _____

Eggplant/ Aubergine_____

Pea_____

Cucumber_____

Artichoke_____

Lettuce_____

Pickle_____

Garlic_____

Cauliflower_____

Melon_____

Cabbage_____

Tomato_____

Carrot_____

Beans_____

Peanut_____

Onion_____

Spinach_____

Pepper_____

Furniture

Piano_____

Shelf_____

Desk_____

Pillow_____

Sofa_____

Mirror_____

Bed_____

Closet_____

Night table_____

Clock_____

Radio_____

Rocker_____

Bookcase_____

Toilet_____

Telephone_____

Lamp_____

Bench_____

Refrigerator_____

Rug_____

Drawers_____

Chair_____

Coffee table_____

Table_____

Television_____

Thank you very much for your time and help!

Jenny

Original tables

Men and Women in Europe

Vehicles

Table 13

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Car	6	1	Car	5
2	Bus	7	2	Bus	6
3	Bicycle	10	3	Motorbike	7
4	Scooter	12	4	Airplane	8
5	Motorbike	13	5	Taxi	9
6	Train	14	6	Train	11
7	Airplane, Moped	16	7	Boat, Streetcar	13
8	Taxi	18	8	Bicycle	14
9	Boat, Underground, Streetcar	20	9	Scooter	16
10	Skateboard	28	10	Underground	18
11	Canoe, Rollerblades	29	11	Moped	19
12	Kickboard	30	12	Kickboard	27
13	Zeppelin, Rocket	32	13	Submarine, Rollerblades	28
14	Submarine, Horse, Hot- air balloon	34	14	Horse, Canoe	29
15			15	Skateboard	31
16			16	Zeppelin	32
17			17	Hot-air balloon	33
18			18	Rocket	34

Clothes

Table 14

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Jeans	5	1	T-Shirt, shirt	5
2	T-shirt, Pullover	6	2	Jeans	6
3	Pants, Sweatshirt	7	3	Underwear, Sweatshirt	7
4	Jacket	8	4	Pullover, Jacket, Skirt	8
5	Shirt	9	5	Pants	9
6	Coat	10	6	Shorts, Coat	10
7	Skirt	11	7	Socks	11
8	Dress	12	8	Boxer shorts, Dress	12
9	Bra, Underwear	14	9	Shoes	14
10	Socks	15	10	Bra	19
11	Shorts, Shoes	16	11	Leggings, Scarf	20
12	Scarf	18	12	Cap, Gloves	23
13	Boxer shorts, Leggings, Gloves	21	13	Hair-band, Ring	29
14	Cap	25	14	Earrings	32
15	Earrings	28	15	Eyeglasses	33
16	Hair-band	29	16	Piercing	35
17	Eyeglasses	30	17		
18	Piercing, Ring	34	18		

Vegetables

Table15

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Spinach	6	1	Tomato, Spinach	5
2	Lettuce	7	2	Carrots	6
3	Zucchini	8	3	Onions	7
4	Broccoli	11	4	Lettuce, Beans	8
5	Carrot, Tomato	12	5	Cucumber, Pea, Cauliflower, Broccoli, Bean sprouts, Artichoke, Eggplant	10
6	Cucumber, Cauliflower	14	6	Mushrooms	11
7	Corn, Bean sprouts	15	7	Zucchini, Garlic, Field garlic	12
8	Pea	16	8	Corn, Pepper, Pumpkin, Cabbage	16
9	Eggplant	17	9	Pickle	19
10	Mushrooms, Artichoke	18	10	Melon	26
11	Onion, Cabbage	19	11	Rice	27
12	Field garlic	21	12	Peanuts	29
13	Pumpkin	23	13		
14	Rice	24	14		
15	Pepper, Garlic	27	15		
16	Melon	31	16		
17	Pickle	32	17		
18	Peanuts	33	18		

Furniture

Table 16

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Chair	6	1	Closet, Night table, Bed	5
2	Closet	7	2	Chair	6
3	Sofa, Table	8	3	Shelf, Sofa, Bookcase, Table	7
4	Desk	9	4	Desk, Coffee table	8
5	Bed	10	5	Drawers	10
6	Night table	11	6	Bench	11
7	Bookcase	12	7	Mirror, Rocker	16
8	Coffee table	14	8	Lamp	19
9	Lamp	15	9	Rug	21
10	Shelf, Mirror	17	10	Television	24
11	Bench	19	11	Piano	27
12	Rug, Refrigerator, Drawer, Rocker	20	12	Pillow, Refrigerator	28
13	Clock	21	13	Clock	30
14	Television	22	14	Toilet	31
15	Pillow	25	15	Telephone, Radio	32
16	Radio, Toilet	27	16		
17	Telephone, Piano	28	17		

Women and Men in North America

Vehicles

Table 17

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Car	5	1	Car	5
2	Taxi	11	2	Motorbike	7
3	Bus	13	3	Airplane	8
4	Motorbike	16	4	Bus	10
5	Streetcar	18	5	Taxi	11
6	Train, Airplane	21	6	Train, Boat	12
7	Scooter, Moped	22	7	Moped	15
8	Bicycle	23	8	Streetcar	17
9	Boat	24	9	Scooter	18
10	Rocket	28	10	Bicycle	20
11	Submarine	29	11	Zeppelin	21
12	Hot-air balloon, Rollerblades	31	12	Submarine	22
13	Underground	32	13	Rocket	25
14	Canoe	33	14	Canoe	26
15	Horse, Kickboard, Zeppelin, Skateboard	34	15	Horse, Underground, Hot-air balloon	27
16			16	Skateboard, Rollerblades	28
17			17	Kickboard	29

Clothes

Table 18

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	1. Dress, Shirt, Pants, Pullover, Jeans, Jacket, Skirt, Sweatshirt	5	1	Pants, Jeans, Shirt	5
2	Boxer shorts, Shorts	6	2	T-shirt, Socks	6
3	Bra, Underwear, Leggings	9	3	Pullover	7
4	T-shirt, Coat, Socks	11	4	Jacket, Shoes, Shorts	8
5	Cap	16	5	Sweatshirt, Underwear	9
6	Gloves, Shoes	18	6	Boxer shorts	10
7	Scarf	19	7	Dress, Skirt	12
8	Eyeglasses	31	8	Bra	13
9	Earrings, Hair-band	32	9	Coat	16
10	Ring	33	10	Leggings, Scarf	21
11	Piercing	35	11	Cap	23
12			12	Gloves	24
13			13	Earrings, Eyeglasses	26
14			14	Ring	27
15			15	Hair-band	28
16			16	Piercing	30

Vegetables

Table 19

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Broccoli, Corn, Zucchini, Pea, Lettuce, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Carrot, Spinach	5	1	Lettuce (5)	5
2	Beans, Artichoke	7	2	Onion, Corn	7
3	Mushroom, Pickle	8	3	Carrot	8
4	Onion	9	4	Cauliflower, Broccoli	9
5	Bean sprouts, Eggplant, Cucumber, Pepper	11	5	Cucumber, Spinach	10
6	Peanut	18	6	Zucchini, Beans	11
7	Field garlic, Tomato	23	7	Mushrooms, Pepper	13
8	Garlic	24	8	Pea, Cabbage	14
9	Pumpkin	26	9	Bean sprouts, Eggplant	15
10	Rice, Melon	35	10	Pumpkin	16
11			11	Garlic, Tomato, Artichoke	17
12			12	Field garlic	19
13			13	Pickle	20
14			14	Peanuts	22
15			15	Rice, Melon	25

Furniture**Table 20**

Female			Male		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Desk, Sofa, Rocker, Bench, Chair, Coffee table, Table	5	1	Sofa	5
2	Night table, Bookcase	6	2	Chair, Table	6
3	Bed	11	3	Night table, Coffee table	7
4	Drawers	20	4	Lamp, Desk, Bed	9
5	Rug, Television	28	5	Bookcase	10
6	Refrigerator	29	6	Rocker	11
7	Piano	30	7	Drawers, Shelf	12
8	Mirror	31	8	Mirror	15
9	Shelf	32	9	Rug, Bench	16
10	Pillow, Closet	33	10	Television	19
11	Clock, Radio, Toilet, Telephone, Lamp	34	11	Pillow	20
12			12	Closet	23
13			13	Piano, Refrigerator	24
14			14	Radio, Clock	26
15			15	Toilet	28
16			16	Telephone	29

European vs. North American prototype examples

Vehicles

Table 21

Europe			America		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Car	11	1	Car	10
2	Bus	13	2	Taxi	22
3	Motorbike	20	3	Bus, Motorbike	23
4	Airplane, Bicycle	24	4	Airplane	29
5	Train	25	5	Train	32
6	Taxi	27	6	Streetcar	35
7	Scooter	28	7	Boat	36
8	Boat, Streetcar	33	8	Moped	37
9	Moped	35	9	Scooter	40
10	Underground	38	10	Bicycle	43
11	Kickboard, Rollerblades	57	11	Submarine	51
12	Canoe	58	12	Rocket	53
13	Skateboard	60	13	Zeppelin	55
14	Submarine	62	14	Hot-air balloon	58
15	Horse	63	15	Rollerblades, Canoe, Underground	59
16	Zeppelin	64	16	Horse	61
17	Rocket	66	17	Skateboard	62
18			18	Kickboard	63

Clothes

Table 22

Europe			America		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Jeans, T-shirt	11	1	Shirt, Pants, Jeans	10
2	Pullover, Sweatshirt	14	2	Pullover	12
3	Pants, Jacket	16	3	Jacket	13
4	Skirt	19	4	Sweatshirt, Shorts	14
5	Coat	20	5	Dress, Skirt, T-shirt, Socks	17
6	Underwear	21	6	Underwear	18
7	Bra	23	7	Boxer shorts	20
8	Dress	24	8	Bra	22
9	Socks, Shorts	26	9	Shoes	26
10	Shoes	30	10	Coat	27
11	Boxer shorts	33	11	Cap	29
12	Scarf	38	12	Leggings	30
13	Leggings	41	13	Gloves	38
14	Gloves	44	14	Scarf	40
15	Cap	48	15	Eyeglasses	57
16	Hair-band	58	16	Earrings	58
17	Earrings	60	17	Hair-band	60
18	Eyeglasses, Ring	63	18	Ring	61
19	Piercing	69	19	Piercing	67

Vegetables

Table23

Europe			America		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Spinach	11	1	Lettuce	10
2	Lettuce	15	2	Corn	12
3	Tomato	17	3	Carrot	13
4	Carrots	18	4	Cauliflower, Broccoli	14
5	Zucchini	20	5	Spinach	15
6	Broccoli	21	6	Zucchini, Onion	16
7	Cucumber, Cauliflower	24	7	Beans	18
8	Bean sprouts	25	8	Pea, Cabbage	19
9	Pea, onion	26	9	Mushrooms, Cucumber	21
10	Eggplant	27	10	Artichoke	24
11	Artichoke	28	11	Bean- sprouts, Eggplant	26
12	Mushroom	29	12	Pickle	28
13	Corn	31	13	Peanut	30
14	Field garlic	33	14	Tomato	40
15	Cabbage	35	15	Field Garlic, Pumpkin	42
16	Pumpkin, Garlic	39	16	Garlic	51
17	Pepper	43	17	Rice, Melon	60
18	Rice, Pickle	51	18		
19	Melon	57	19		
20	Peanuts	62	20		

Furniture

Table 24

Europe			America		
Rank	Example	Score	Rank	Example	Score
1	Chair, Closet	12	1	Sofa	10
2	Sofa, Table, Bed	15	2	Chair, Table	11
3	Night- table	16	3	Coffee Table	12
4	Desk	17	4	Night table	13
5	Bookcase	19	5	Desk	14
6	Coffee-table	22	6	Bookcase, Rocker	16
7	Shelf	24	7	Bed	20
8	Bench, Drawers	30	8	Bench	21
9	Mirror	33	9	Drawers	32
10	Lamp	34	10	Lamp	43
11	Rocker	36	11	Rug, Shelf	44
12	Rug	41	12	Mirror	46
13	Television	46	13	Television	47
14	Refrigerator	48	14	Piano	54
15	Clock	51	15	Closet	56
16	Pillow	53	16	Clock, Radio	60
17	Piano	55	17	Toilet	62
18	Toilet	58	18	Telephone	63
19	Radio	59	19		
20	Telephone	60	20		