

Language and Cognition

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Gabriella Vigliocco investigates how our brains integrate language and cognition, examining a variety of languages, both spoken and signed, and using tools from several disciplines, including neuroscience and experimental psychology. Over the years, her work has contributed to our understanding of how we represent meaning, how cognition shapes languages and how language shapes cognition. She has challenged many traditional ideas about language, like the notion that language is a modular and purely symbolic system that does not entail direct links with our sensory-motor and affective experience. She has developed theoretical and computational models of how meaning is represented and how sentences are produced that account for language performance in terms of interactions among different types of linguistic and non-linguistic information. She is now using these models to tackle questions like how abstract concepts such as justice and courage are formed and processed in our brains.