Centrality and generativity within a linguistic family: Toward a conceptual base theory of groups.
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AB Two studies examined a linguistic family consisting of a proverb, an interpretation of the proverb, and 2 scenarios that illustrated the proverb. In Exp I, centrality was assessed through 32 undergraduates' judgments of semantic similarity between family members and answers to questions regarding the representativeness, centrality, and redintegrative value of family members. Results indicate that the interpretations were the most central family members. A prompted recall task was used in Exp II to assess the generative "power" of each family member. 64 college students studied the families and then were given one of the family members, specified in acquisition, as a recall cue for the remaining members. Recall performance was best when the interpretations served as prompts. Assessment of the relationships between the experiments indicates that centrality and generativity were related directly. Results are modeled best by treating the sentences as integral members of a dynamic, conceptually based system or group rather than as items varying in semantic distance as a function of feature overlap.