

Reading Journal for “Language and Psychology, 1950-Present: A Brief Overview,” by Morton Ann Gernsbacher and Michael P. Kaschak

Here is the main definition from the chapter: “The focus on building a broad theory ultimately led to the notion of a ‘Universal Grammer’ (UG), which is an innate set of rules or principles that were hypothesized to underlie/govern the structure of all languages of the world” (838). This UG framework is explored through sentence processing, discourse processing, language acquisition, computer models (which seem wildly outdated due to recent advancements), and conversational and social approaches. I came into this article general believing that I was not interested in psychology, and I came away with belief only strengthened. The sentence processing section makes me scratch my head a little. It gives “the horse raced past the barn fell” as the most famous example, which is straightforward enough I suppose. But then we get, “the cups dried in that machine melt.” This sentence makes less sense to me. I think this is just the best example of my apathy towards this chapter.