

# 'The raw and the conceptualized'

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## Abstract:

Darwin's correlation between the beak morphology in Galapagos finches and their respective foraging behaviours stands as a milestone in the history of science. Could the naturalist have considered these birds' neurological anatomy in any detail, Darwin may well have explored whether the finches' neurological development registered physiological correlates to these systematic differences in behavioural psychology.

A fundamental tenet to categorization in cognitive science posits a basic level around which conceptual taxonomies emerge in a subject's ontological development (Murphy 2002). This basic level represents an optimization within a matrix formed from both subjects' range of perception and their gamut of behaviours. In terms of language, lexis presents the most readily observable indicators for determining a subject's basic-level conceptualization (Lakoff 1987).

As basic levels are determined by the optimal interaction of perception and behaviour, they remain relative to these parameters (Tanaka & Taylor 1991). While comparisons of languages, along with the respective cultures to which these are endemic, were already a tried heuristic of cultural anthropology in Darwin's generation, today's research into relativity can be distinguished by ever finer degrees of analysis over more comprehensive scopes in observation.

This paper assesses possible neuro- and psycho-linguistic correlates to the development of functional specialization within the careers of *chefs de cuisine*. The linguistic evidence will focus on chefs' terminology for techniques of food preparation and the instruments which these involve. The languages considered will be English, insofar as it is used by a professional community whose dynamic includes the active importation of exotic elements, as well as Italian and French, as cultures whose culinary traditions have emanated high degrees of influence beyond that otherwise effected through their national languages.

A correlation of the type Darwin pioneered requires adequate behavioural evidence. The fundamental purpose of this paper will be to establish guidelines for the development of heuristics of this type in light of current neuro- and psycho-linguistic experimental designs. Particular focus will be placed upon the development of the routines of motor action which chefs must master in order to achieve professional virtuosity in their cooking. Difficulties which the professional translator finds in reproducing a recipe in a non-native language variety (cf. Kubaszczyk 1999) may well correlate to challenges which master chefs face when attempting to integrate ethnically other culinary techniques into their professional repertoire.

**References:**

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