

# Idealized Cognitive Models of GIRL in American English

Words

Culture

# 1 Discussion

Yasui (1976) mentions that attributive adjectives vary in degree of subjectivity and emotive value of a speaker. Yasui takes examples of adjective sequences. An adjective sequence consists of a determiner, attributive adjectives and a noun. (7) a strange, green, metallic object According to Yasui (1976), an adjective with stronger emotive value or subjectivity comes closer to the determiner. In (7), the adjective strange indicates that a speaker perceives the referent of the noun as strange, and therefore this adjective has stronger emotional value than green and metallic. Quirk also points out the same point as Yasui (Quirk et al. 1985: 429). Dirven (1999) classifies attributive adjectives into categories based on their function. Dirven also focuses on examples of adjective sequences to find out differences among different attributive adjectives. Figure 2: General Structure of Adjective Sequences Dirven (1999: 58) Based on these criteria, strange in (7) is a qualifying adjective that expresses subjective evaluation of a speaker. Idealized Cognitive Models proposed by Lakoff (1985) is one of useful Figure 3: The Result of Top 10 Adjectives Figure 4: The Distribution of Top 50 Adjectives<sup>5</sup> Each group has the following adjectives. Age group (10845 hits): young (4868), teenage (1234), old (1170), new (1146), 14-year-old (332), 16-year-old (316), 12-year-old (307), 15-year-old (287), 13-year-old (277), older (219), 17-year-old (201), 10-year-old (165), younger (165), 11-year-old (158). Physical size group (19245 hits): little (18042), big (934), small (269). Qualifying adjective group (10319 hits): good (2651), pretty (1341), beautiful 12 others (6296) 14 age (10845) 23 physical size (19245) 41 qualifying (10319) 22

frameworks that accounts for categorization. This framework defines category structures by means of ICMs. Several linguists conducted re-

search on specific topics such as MOTHER and CHILD models using the framework.

However, the framework of ICM has one problem. Lakoff does not propose a definitive way to describe Idealized Cognitive Models of a given category. Researchers such as Lakoff and Hirose do not mention what kind of evidence their models are based on. It is quite probable that their arguments are solely dependent on introspection. Thus, their models are very likely to reflect only their own personal knowledge. Not all people in a given community have the same models as those researchers. Therefore, this paper proposes a research method based on linguistic data from corpora. The method can give additional evidence, which leads to better ICMs that can reflect social and cultural background of a wider range of people. In addition, this method can enable researchers to propose new models even without enough background knowledge in a specific society.

Another thing to note is that CHILD models by Hirose (1989) do not take gender into account in his research. As Lakoff (1985) showed, each ICM has an abundant of social and cultural backgrounds with an aid of frames. It is likely that a speaker recognizes a child, a boy or a girl very differently. And therefore, further research on GIRL or BOY category is likely to reveal many other remarkable facts. This paper just focuses on GIRL category and models. The research here tries to investigate what kind of inherent attributes of girl are more likely to be mentioned in linguistic data, and then propose a cluster of GIRL models in comparison with CHILD and BOY.