Propositional analysis for Mesoudi, Whiten & Dunbar (2006) Study 2

Gossip – information predicted by the social brain hypothesis to be of particular salience, specifically information about complex social relationships, character motives and deception

Nancy is having an affair with her married college professor. Nancy recently became pregnant with the professor's child. The professor promised Nancy that he would leave his wife, but since Nancy told him she was pregnant, the professor refused to see her. So Nancy told the professor's wife about the affair. The professor's wife was so upset that she left the professor.

Affair -> Pregnancy -> Refuse to see Nancy -> Nancy tells wife -> Wife leaves prof

Word count: 62
Sentences: 5
Propositions: 14

1. HAVE, NANCY, AFFAIR
2. WITH, AFFAIR, COLLEGE-PROFESSOR
3. IS, PROFESSOR, MARRIED
4. IS, NANCY, PREGNANT
5. PREGNANT-BY, NANCY, PROFESSOR
6. PROMISE, PROFESSOR, NANCY, 7
7. LEAVE, PROFESSOR, WIFE
8. SEE, PROFESSOR, NANCY, REFUSE
9. TELL, NANCY, PROFESSOR, 4
10. SINCE, 9, 8
11. TELL, NANCY, WIFE
12. ABOUT, AFFAIR
13. UPSET, WIFE
14. LEAVE, WIFE, PROFESSOR

Social – social interactions between two or more people not concerning complex relationships, deception etc.

Nancy enjoys swimming. Nancy was going to the swimming pool but got lost, so she asked an old man waiting at a bus stop for directions. The old man could not give her directions. A bus arrived at the bus stop and the old man asked the driver for directions. The driver gave Nancy directions to the swimming pool, so Nancy was able to go swimming.

Nancy is lost -> Asks man -> Man can't tell her -> Man asks driver -> Driver tells Nancy

Words: 66
Sentences: 5
Propositions: 14

1. ENJOY, NANCY, SWIMMING
2. GO, NANCY, SWIMMING-POOL
3. LOST, NANCY
4. ASK, NANCY, MAN
5. FOR, DIRECTIONS
6. IS, MAN, OLD
7. WAIT, MAN, BUS-STOP
8. GIVE, MAN, DIRECTIONS, CANNOT
9. ARRIVE, BUS, BUS-STOP
10. ASK, MAN, DRIVER
11. FOR, DIRECTIONS
12. GIVE, DRIVER, NANCY, DIRECTIONS
13. TO, DIRECTIONS, SWIMMING-POOL
14. GO, NANCY, SWIMMING

Individual – a single character interacting with the inanimate world

One morning Nancy's alarm clock broke and she overslept. When she woke up she realised that she was late for an important lecture. She got dressed as quickly as she could, left the house and ran to the lecture theatre. When she got there the lecture theatre was empty. Nancy had missed the lecture.

Broken alarm clock -> Nancy overslept -> Late for lecture -> Ran to lecture theatre -> Missed lecture

Words: 54
Sentences: 5
Propositions: 14

1. BROKE, ALARM-CLOCK
2. IN, MORNING
3. BELONGS-TO, ALARM-CLOCK, NANCY
4. OVERSLEEP, NANCY
5. WAKE-UP, NANCY
6. LATE, NANCY, LECTURE
7. IMPORTANT, LECTURE
8. DRESS, NANCY
9. QUICKLY, DRESS
10. LEAVE, NANCY, HOUSE
11. RUN, NANCY, LECTURE-THEATRE
12. ARRIVE, NANCY, LECTURE-THEATRE
13. EMPTY, LECTURE-THEATRE
14. MISS, NANCY, LECTURE

Physical – no intentional agents in the causal chain

The weather in Colorado gets hot and dry in the summer. This removes moisture from the soil and dries out the plants that grow there. The dry vegetation catches fire easily, leading to frequent forest fires. These fires release smoke containing carbon monoxide into the atmosphere. This smoke contributes to global warming, increasing temperatures further.

Hot weather -> dry plants -> forest fires -> smoke -> global warming

Words: 55
Sentences: 5
Propositions: 14

1. HOT, WEATHER
2. DRY, WEATHER
3. IN, SUMMER
4. REMOVE, MOISTURE, SOIL
5. DRY, PLANTS
6. CATCH-FIRE, VEGETATION
7. EASILY, CATCH-FIRE
8. CAUSE, FOREST-FIRES
9. FREQUENT, FOREST-FIRES
10. RELEASE, SMOKE
11. CONTAIN, SMOKE, CARBON-MONOXIDE
12. INTO, SMOKE, ATMOSPHERE
13. CONTRIBUTE, GLOBAL-WARMING
14. INCREASE, TEMPERATURE