**Ambiguous words: Quantifying dual valence representation and individual differences in a novel stimulus set**

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# intro

## Ambiguous stimuli and individual differences (what is valence bias?)

### People make emotional judgments about a wide range of stimuli (i.e., faces, scenes, and words)

### Individuals differ (trait) in their tendency to interpret ambiguous images (faces and scenes), like a surprised face.

### Despite the bias—there is an initial negativity bias and positivity is associated with emotion regulation

### Behavioral data support the initial negativity hypothesis (focus on things that could be shown in the words…)

#### Faster RTs for negative interpretations (Neta & Whalen 2009)

#### Give it time: Slowing and considering options shifts bias

## Ambiguity in words

### Many words have more than one meaning, sometimes including a positively and negatively valenced meaning.

Ambiguity is a problem in language comprehension (Rodd, Davis, & Johnsrude, 2005; see MacDonald, Pearlmutter, & Seidenberg, 1994)

#### Emotional tone guides interpretation of potentially ambiguous homophones (Nygaard & Lunders, 2002)

#### Emotional states can guide interpretations of

## The present study

### In this study, we predict:

#### *H1: There will be larger SDs of ambiguous words than clearly valenced words*

#### *H2: There will be a positive correlation between ratings of ambiguous faces and ambiguous words*

#### *H3: There will be a positive correlation between ratings of ambiguous scenes and ambiguous words*

#### *H4: There will be a positive correlation between ratings of ambiguous faces and ambiguous scenes*

#### *H5: RTs for ambiguous words rated as negative will be faster than words rated as positive*

# Methods

## Stimuli

Describe faces, IAPS, words

## Procedure

## Data Analysis

# Results

**Subjective Ratings**

**Reaction times**

# DISCUSSION

## Summary of the results

## Importance of understanding interpretations of ambiguity (clinical)

### Children with anxiety consistently interpret ambiguous homophones in a negative, rather than neutral, manner (Taghavi et al., 2010)

## New set of words expands on previous homophone designs which primarily used neutral-vs-negative?

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