

DOES THE LANGUAGE YOU SPEAK SHAPE THE WAY YOU THINK?
CROSS-LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES IN TENSE, ASPECT, AND THE REPRESENTATION OF
ACTIONS.

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Does the language you speak shape the way you think about the world? I will report a series of studies investigating how English and Indonesian speakers encode and represent action events. Unlike English, Indonesian verbs do not include tense or aspectual markers. Indonesian speakers are not required to indicate whether an event has already occurred, is happening now, or will occur in the future on the verb. Does needing to include temporal information to speak English grammatically change the way English speakers pay attention to, encode and remember events? We find cross-linguistic differences in memory, similarity, and categorization judgments between English and Indonesian speakers, as well as between Indonesian-English bilinguals tested in English and Indonesian. Further, we have investigated how these cognitive differences emerge in the course of linguistic development.