

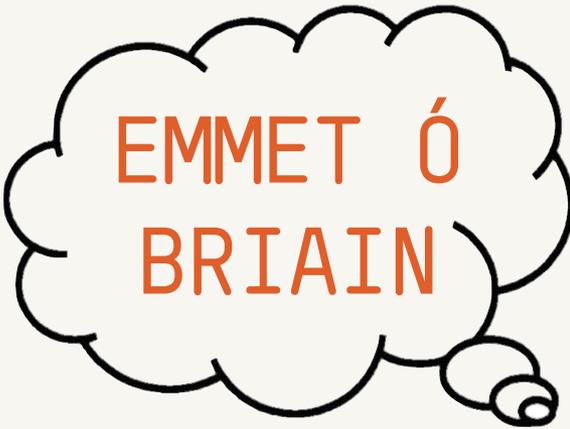
# LANGUAGE, THOUGHT & THE LANGUAGE OF THOUGHT



CHRIS  
WEST

id

*verbal* **identity**



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QUIDDITY

# HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE WORDS WE USE?

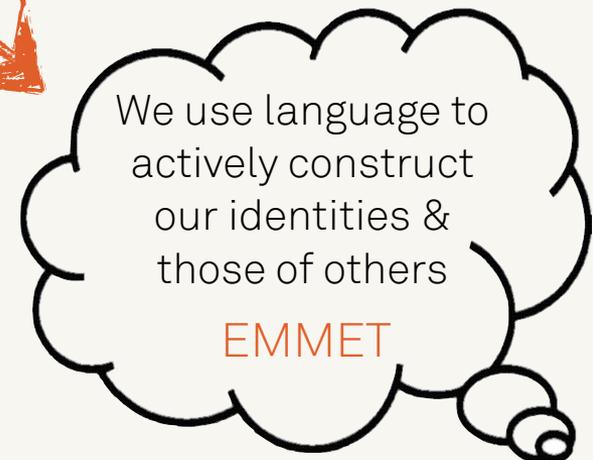
Can changing the words in a conversation change what people think about the underlying topic or themselves?

What happens if you put **these** thoughts together...?



id

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**QUIDDITY**



# *verbal* **identity**

## 1. Premise

People use language to intimate their thoughts & ideas to each other



## 2. And obviously

Within a group, linguistic variations are used to generate a consensus as to the “correct” conception of an idea and also helps the group cement its own identity



## 3. But also...

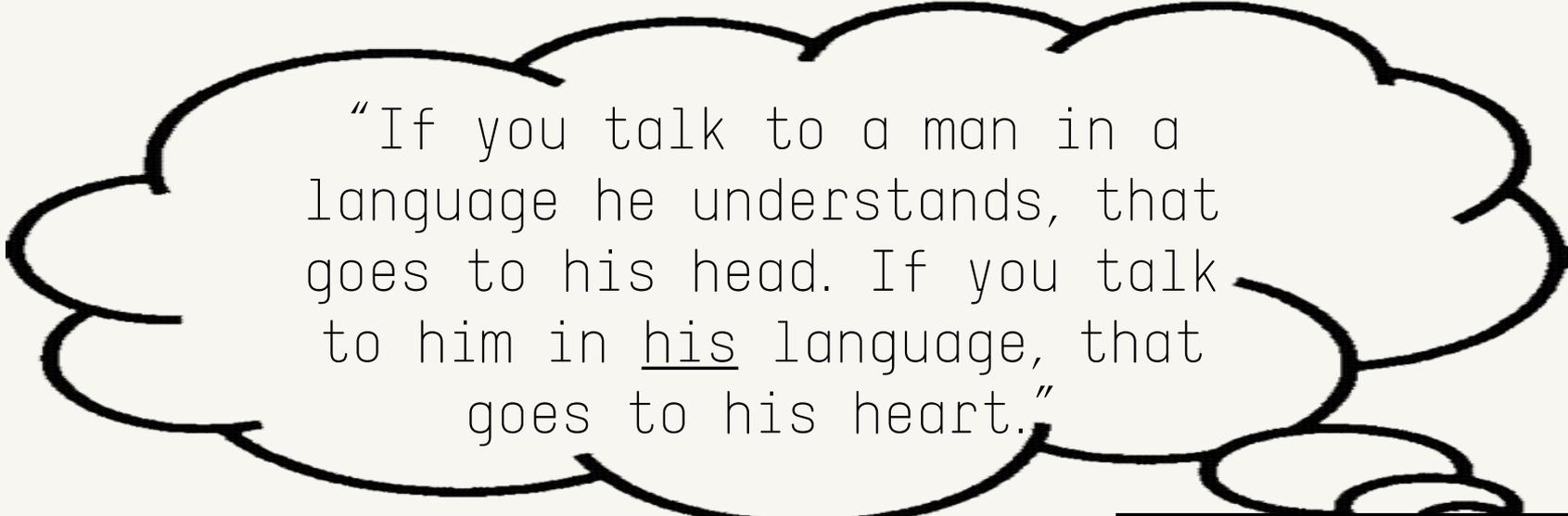
By introducing the group to new language with new or pre-existing meanings, we can cause them to reassess a particular situation, and reconfigure their own identity, both at individual and group level



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WHAT MIGHT THAT MEAN FOR BUSINESS?

**MAKE SURE YOU USE THEIR LANGUAGE  
(AND NOT THAT OF A NEARBY CATEGORY)!**

A large, hand-drawn style thought bubble with a thick black outline, containing a quote.

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart."

Nelson Mandela

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## 1. Premise

People use language to  
organise their thoughts  
& ideas



## 2. And obviously

We can only talk about  
concepts we can  
describe verbally



## 3. But also...

We tend to think about concepts in  
terms we can describe verbally. In  
this sense, language profoundly  
shapes the way we view and  
interact with the world

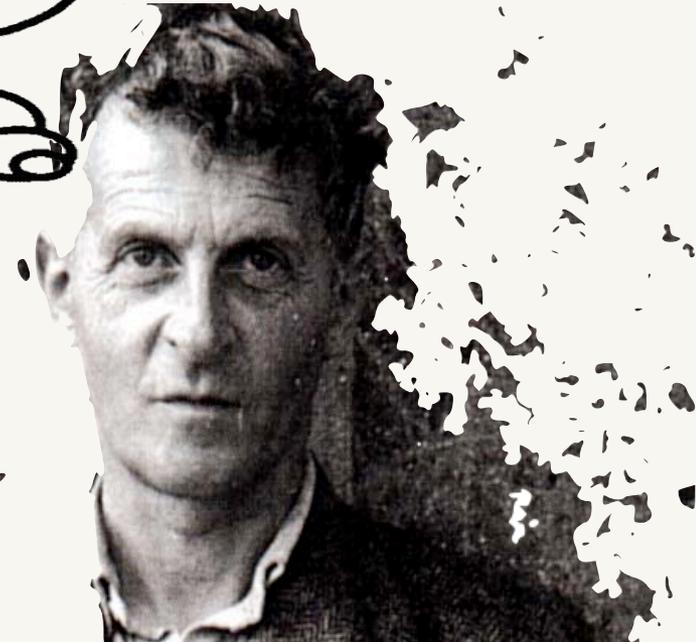
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"The limits of my  
language mean the  
limits of my world"

*Proposition 5.6, Tractatus*

*Logico-Philosophicus*

**LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN**



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WHAT MIGHT THAT MEAN FOR BUSINESS?

## **LANGUAGE IN - LANGUAGE OUT**

If our ultimate purpose is to create effective words for a brand, shouldn't we also use words as the currency of our research?



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CHANGING A GROUP'S LANGUAGE CHANGES  
HOW THE GROUP SEES ITSELF

## **MORE THAN WORDS**

Language not only describes what we are talking about...

## **SELF-ACTUALISATION**

The choice of words, language and styles (aka **Verbal Identity**) shapes the image that we as a group project of ourselves (to others and to ourselves), and thus overwhelmingly informs our own personal identity

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MAKING SURE YOUR BRAND MESSAGE  
ENGAGES ITS AUDIENCE

## **UNDERSTAND THE SHARED MEANINGS**

Encoded in the language used by particular groups

## **DIFFERENT GROUPS, DIFFERENT WORDS, ONE IDEA**

By tapping the style, vocabulary, and cultural touchstones of particular groups, the same idea can be more effectively conveyed to those groups



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## PUTTING THE WORDS TO WORK

### **CHANGE THE WORDS, CHANGE THE GROUP'S THINKING**

Language can change the way people think about things (and themselves)

### **CHANGE THE WORDS, CHANGE THE EXPECTATIONS**

A different set of words can recalibrate someone's expectation of a brand

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## **TO CHANGE YOUR BRAND'S LANGUAGE**

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## **TO UNDERSTAND HOW YOU AND YOUR CUSTOMERS USE LANGUAGE:**

Contact Emmet Ó Briain

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**QUIDDITY**



**Verbal Identity** works with some of the world's most interesting brands, “creating language which creates value for our clients.”

We help our clients engage with their audiences by developing tone of voice guidelines, language strategy, brand narrative, copywriting product naming and text analytics.

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# QUIDDITY

QUIDDITY is devoted to making sense of consumer culture, popular opinion and public life through careful research and detailed analysis.

We help organisations understand the cultural context in which they operate and how people make sense of brands and communications within that culture by focusing on the analysis of naturally occurring data and unstructured data, including language, complaints, online sentiment and cultural data.