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People are more likely to purchase meat described as “75% lean rather than a “25% fat,” to support a car on-reduction program described as an “offset rather than a “tax,” and to recommend street patrols when crime is described as a “pest rather than a “virus.”

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— effects of specific words and rhetorical structures on people's attitudes and judgments—are well-documented across a variety of decision-making contexts. However, these effects have been studied largely in isolation, and there is no unified account of the cognitive mechanisms driving them. Several recent studies point to a common mechanism: - "#' \$%&'()*+,-./:0123456789:;<=>?@A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z [\] ^ _ ` { | } ~ ¡ ¢ £ ¤ ¥ ¦ § ¨ © ª « ¬ ® ¯ ° ± ² ³ ´ µ ¶ · ¸ ¹ º » ¼ ½ ¾ ¿

or the ability to recognize the implicit information communicated by speakers through their choice of language. On this account, speakers choose specific phrases because they communicate well-informed beliefs, and listeners infer those beliefs from a speaker's chosen phrase. For example, the syntactic structure of the statement “girls are as good as boys at math” implies that the speaker believes boys are superior, and phrase effects elicited by this statement have been shown to be driven by listeners' ability to infer the speaker's belief. Given evidence that rhetorical reasoning is involved in several different types of phrase effects, we propose to explore the rhetorical reasoning account of linguistic phrase in on a large scale by conducting two studies. In study 1, we will validate a rhetorical reasoning measure newly developed in our lab by examining correlations between its subscales (corresponding to different types of phrase in), and between our measure and several similar but distinct cognitive constructs (e.g., reflective thinking, social sensitivity). In study 2, we will examine the extent to which rhetorical reasoning for different types of phrase predicts a range of previously documented phrase effects. We expect that rhetorical reasoning ability for a given type of phrase (e.g., syntactic “girls are as good as boys”) will strongly predict its corresponding phrase effect (e.g., the likelihood of choosing boys as superior). However, we also predict that rhetorical reasoning ability for a given type of phrase will predict other types of phrase effects (e.g., equivalence: “75% lean vs. “25% fat”). These studies have the potential to inform a

eta or, and syntactic). We expect that rational reasoning ability for a specific linguistic structure or expression will be a strong predictor of fraction effects for that structure or expression, but will also predict other seemingly disparate fraction effects (H₂

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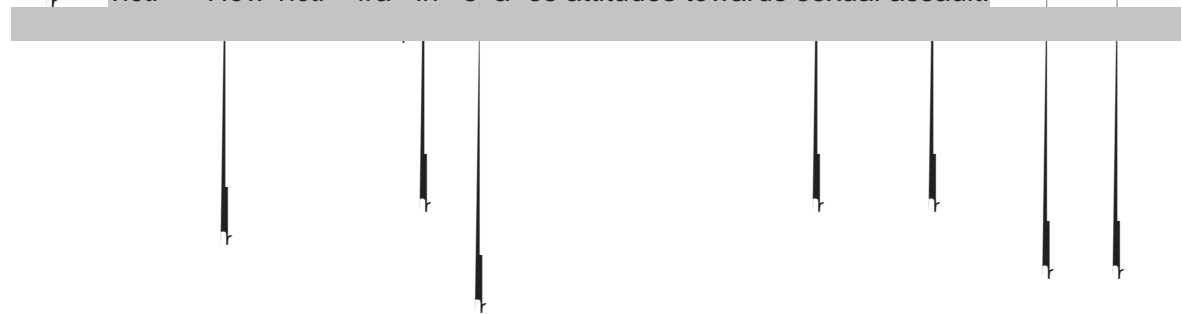
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Study 1: Validating our novel measure of rational reasoning ability
¹3 = 240 participants on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk; www.mturk.com) who currently reside in the U.S.

Study duration: 15 minutes

²Participant remuneration: \$1.50/ participant = \$360

Amazon Mechanical Turk commission (20%) = \$72

Cloud research fee (10%) = \$36

Study 2: Does rational reasoning ability predict different types of framing effects?

¹3 = 400 participants on MTurk who currently reside in the U.S.