

# To what extent can language shape our beliefs?

[Linguistics](#), [Language](#)



TO WHAT EXTENT CAN LANGUAGE SHAPE OUR BELIEFS? Language is all around us. We use it for all kinds of things like expressing our feelings, describing things, talking with our friends and family and writing literature. We may think that we know what language really means, but can we really be sure about that? More importantly, to what extent can language actually shape our beliefs? Well I think it depends on different people. With some examples I will try to show that usage of language is more complicated than many of us think. If we look how scientists express themselves. Most of them believe in some kind of facts.

They believe that everything on this planet can be explained by facts, with words that we can find in different dictionaries. And these words are not so hard to explain. So if I would be a scientist, I would probably say, that the most important theory of meaning is the definition theory. I would say that, because I would believe that I can explain anything, let's say mathematics, with words that we found in dictionaries. And definition theory says that meanings are to be found in dictionary. So if we believe in something, that has a meaning in dictionary, can we know what we believe in?

But if we look at artists, how can they express themselves? How can they express what they believe in? Definitely, they do not support definition theory. If an actor wants to express love, he cannot look in dictionary and find its definition. He must make some kind of image in his head for which he thinks, it is the best meaning of love. In that case, image theory is the most appropriate one, because this theory says that meanings are found in our minds. He just makes an image and he can tell everybody else, what they believe that love is.

But, if we cannot find the exact meaning of word, can we believe in something that we just thought about ourselves? Can we believe in our image without thinking about ideas of other people? In my opinion, you cannot express yourself completely by definition theory or image theory. You must believe in both of them. If you find a word in a dictionary, you only know what it means and I think that is not enough. You can know its meaning, but sometimes you must make your own image in your head. But in the other hand, if you find meanings mostly in your head, you can make mistakes and change the true meaning of the word.

So mathematician shouldn't just rely on facts, he should also express his own ideas, even if they are not proved. And an artist should know that there are some meanings, that just cannot be changed and he must leave them as they are. I think that everybody in this world is more a scientist or more an artist. We must know that there are certain facts that we must believe in like a scientist does, but there are also a lot of things, which we can give our own meaning and believe in them. Language can't totally shape our beliefs, but it is up to us, if we stick to language as it is or if we look beyond it.