

A Framework for the Effect of Language of Survey Administration on the Response Formation Processes

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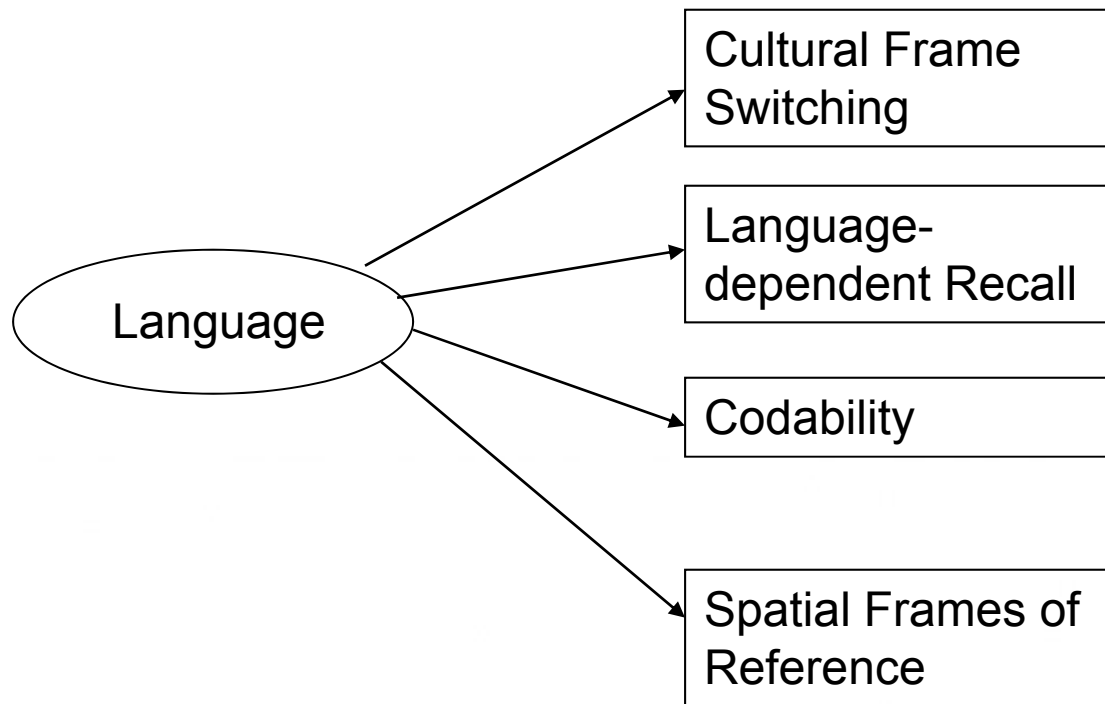
Background

- Cultural frame switching
 - Triandis et al. (1965); Ross, Xun, and Wilson (2002)
- Language-dependent recall
 - Schrauf and Rubin (1998); Marian and Neisser (2000)
- Language codability
 - Kay and Kempton (1984); Lucy and Wertsch (1987)
- Spatial frames of reference
 - Pederson et al. (1998); Wassmann and Dasen (1998); Levinson (2003)

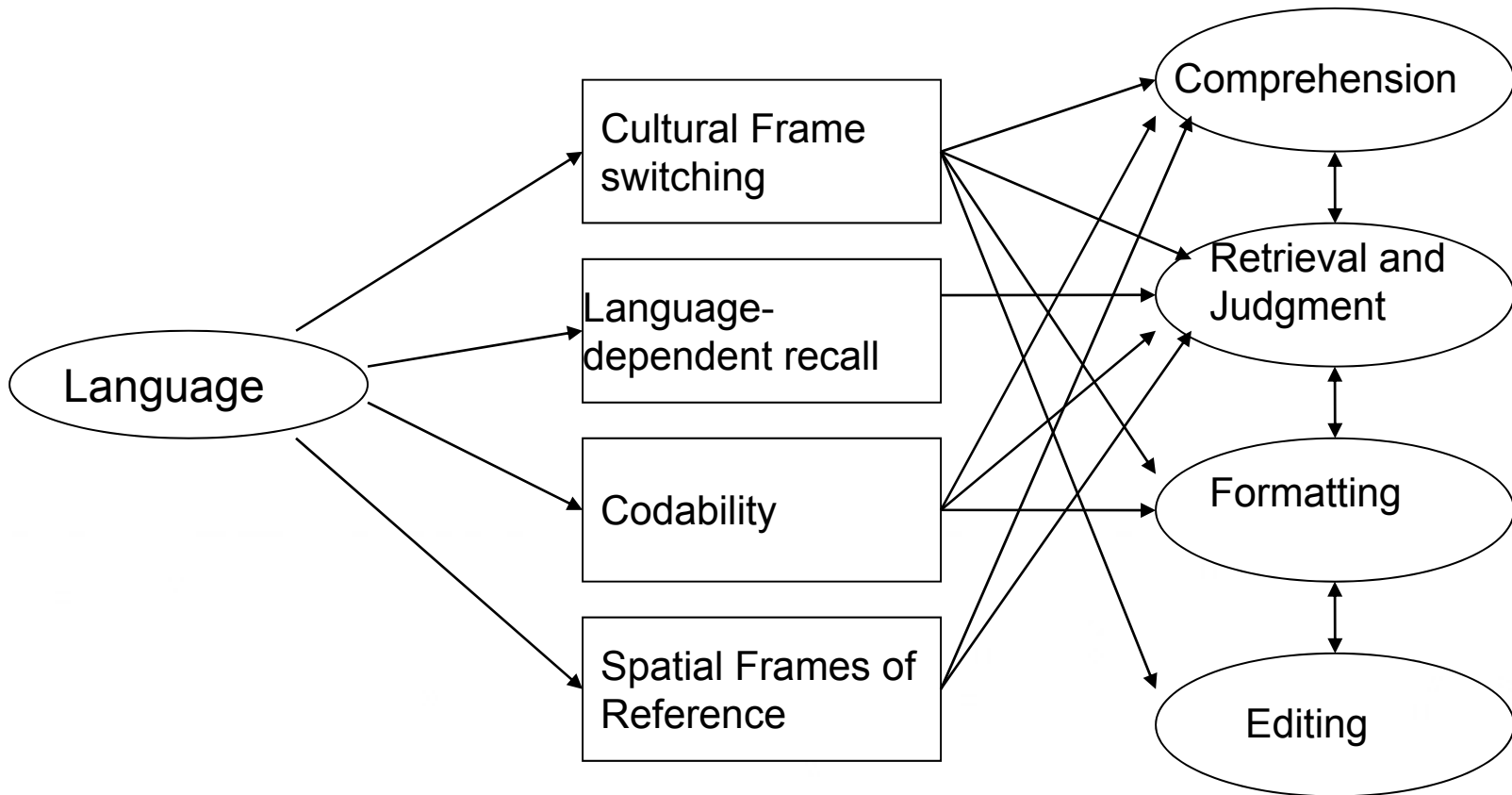
Language and Cognition

- Language
 - can cue what cultural frame to adopt
 - may determine what comes to mind
 - can cue memories
 - may determine to what we pay attention
 - may determine what reference frame we use
 - may influence our ability to draw distinctions

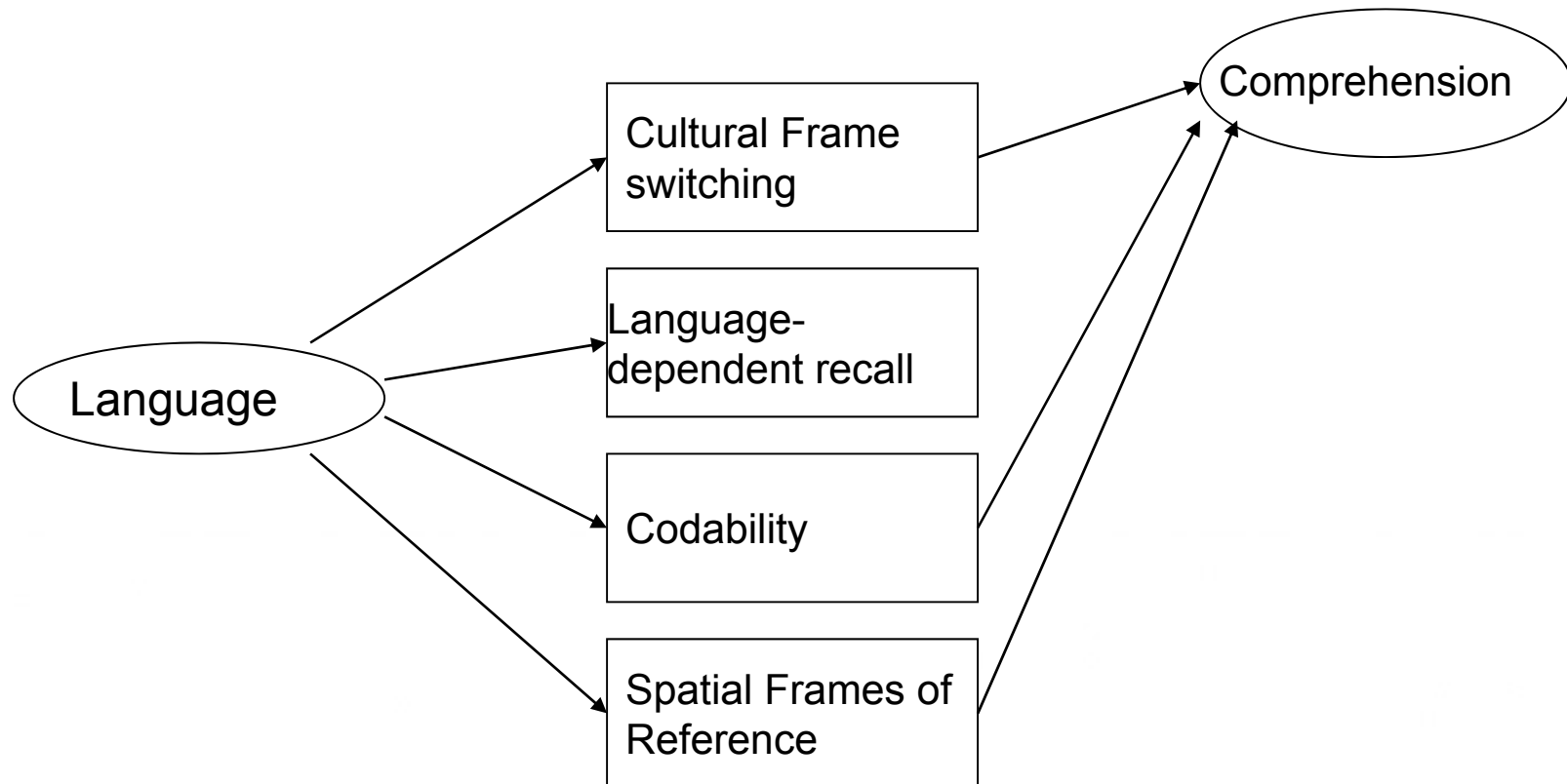
Part 1. Mechanisms Related to Language Effects



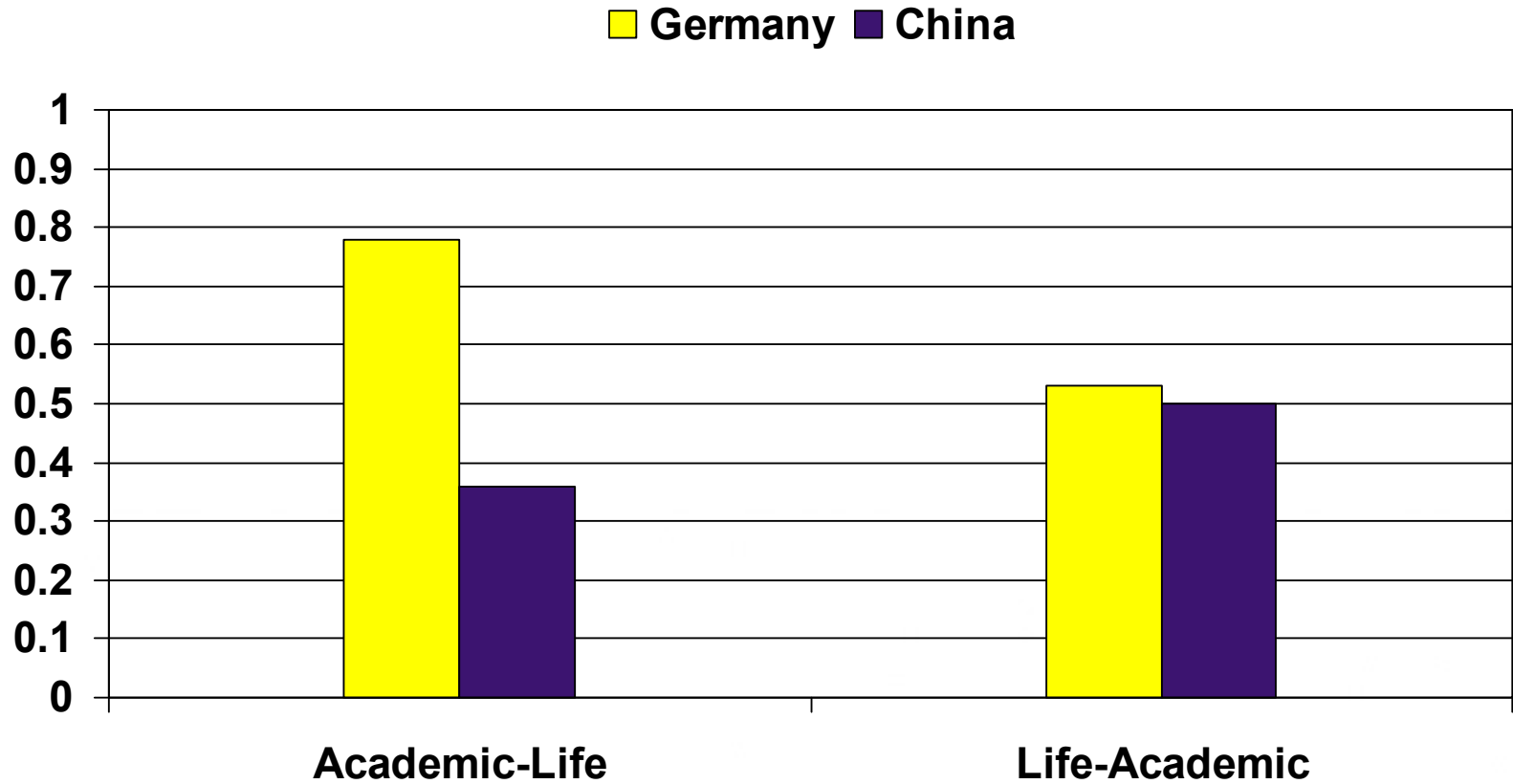
Theoretical Framework



Theoretical Framework



Comprehension Example



Haberstroh et al., (2002)

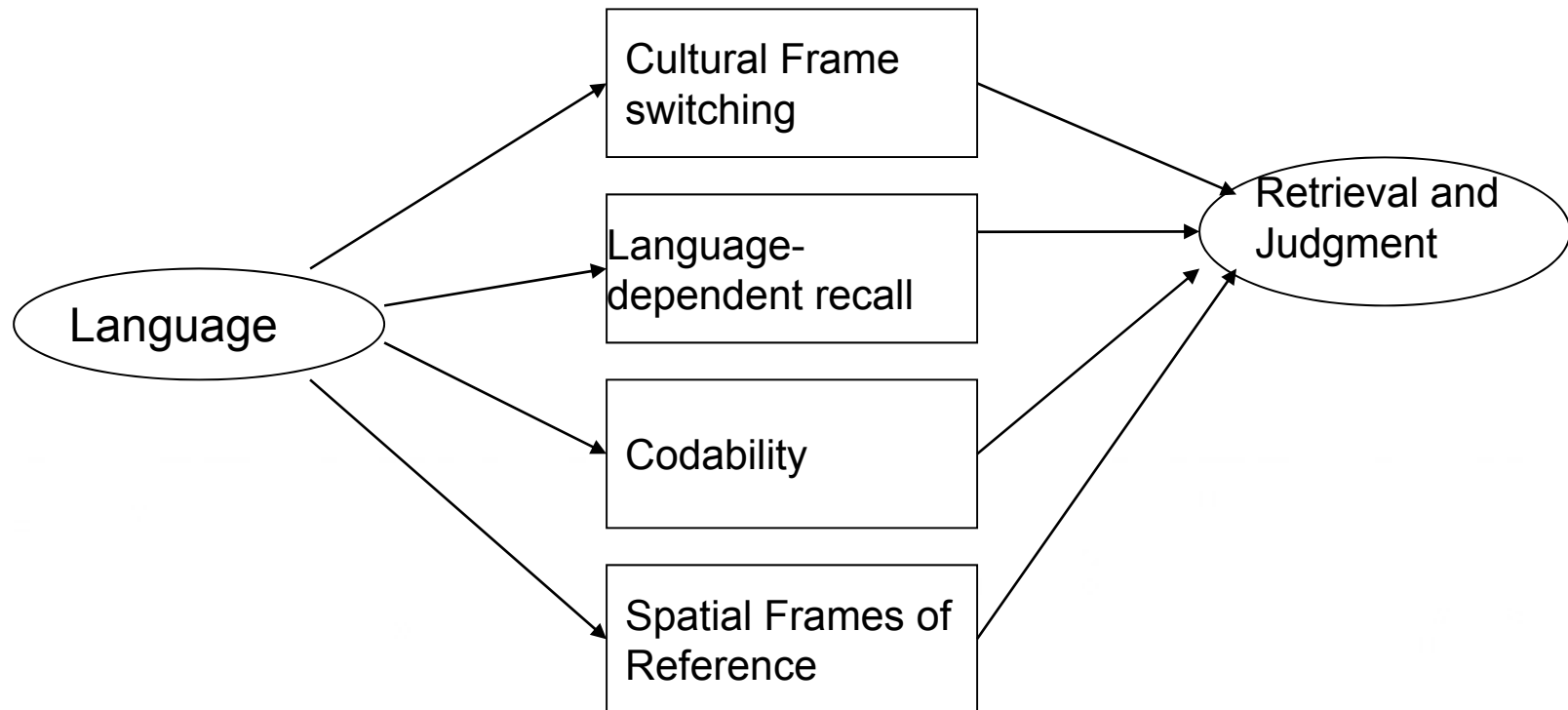
Comprehension

- Cultural frame switching
 - context sensitivity
 - endorsement of cultural values and norms
- Spatial frames of reference
 - Egocentric vs. allocentric frames of reference
- Codability
 - question target representation

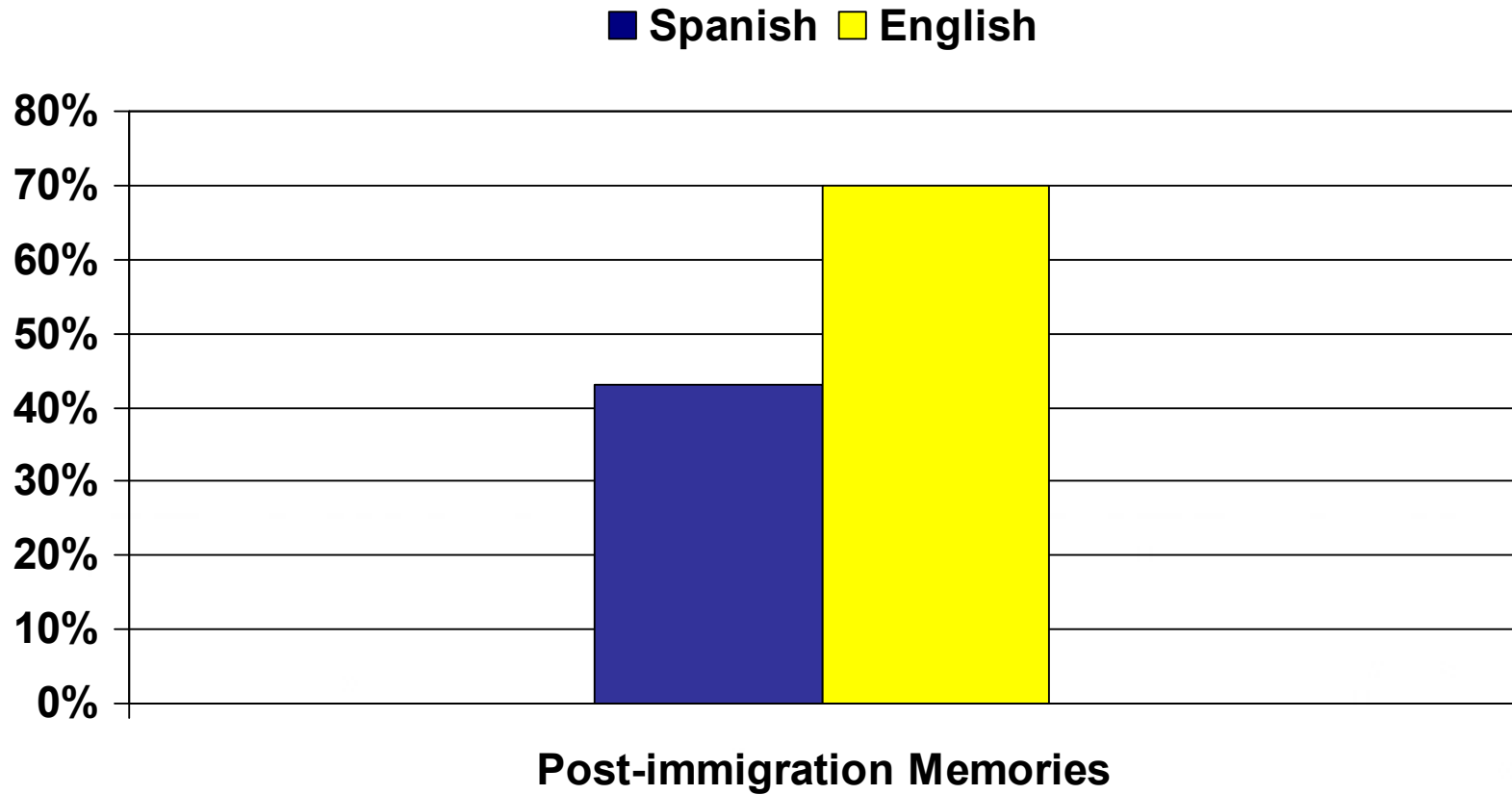
Comprehension - Consequences

- Language can cue the interpretive frame adopted by bilingual respondents
- Speakers of languages that use different frames of reference may interpret survey visual images and response scales differently
- Interpretational differences due to use of general vs. concrete word for question target

Theoretical Framework



Retrieval Example



Bugelski (1977)

Retrieval and Judgment

Behavioral reports

- Language dependent recall
 - language of encoding and recall
- Spatial frame of reference
 - differential perceptual tuning
- Codability
 - easy-to-code vs. difficult-to-code words

Retrieval and Judgment Cont.

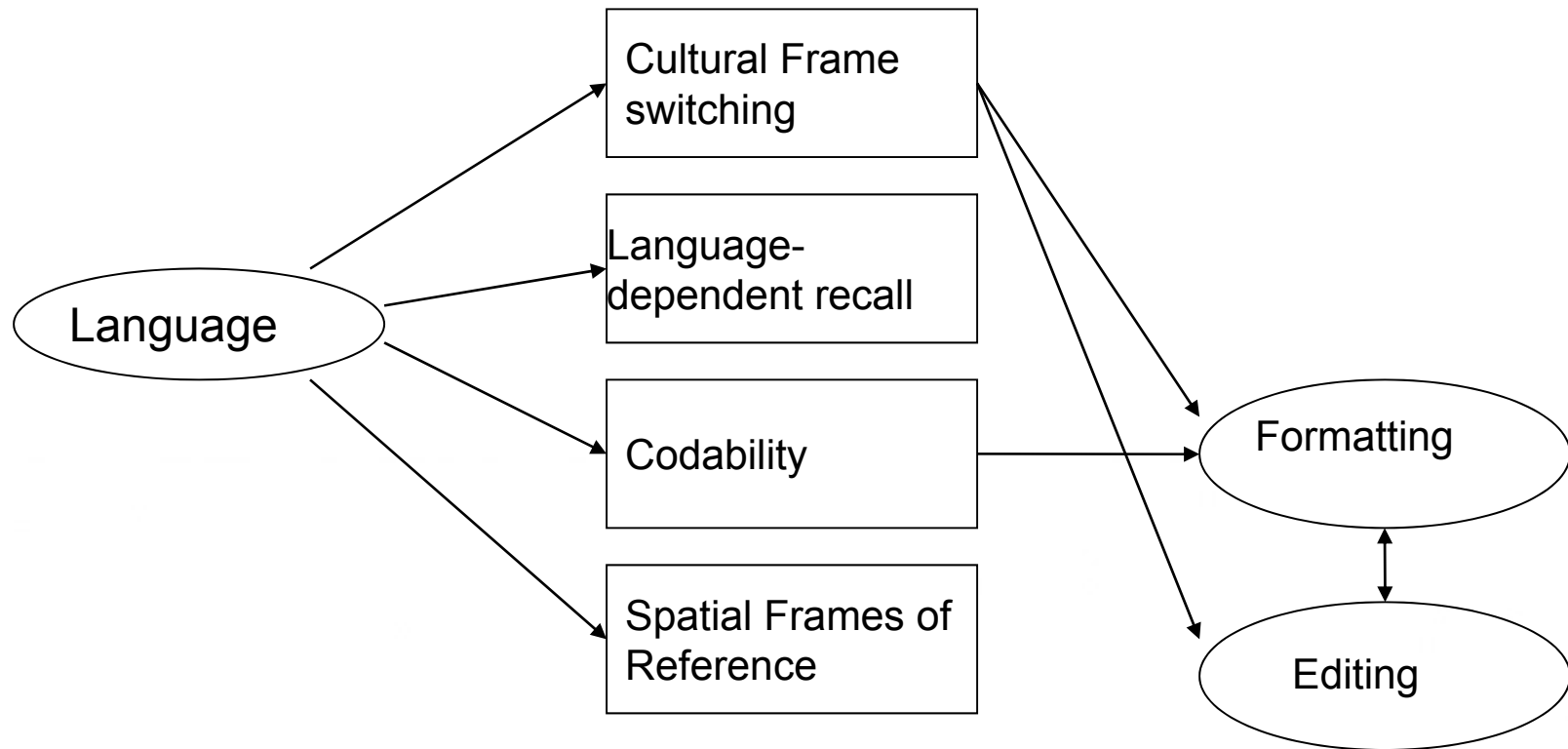
Attitudes

- Cultural frame switching
 - question affective characteristics
 - accessible information
 - knowledge organization
- Codability
 - scale labeling

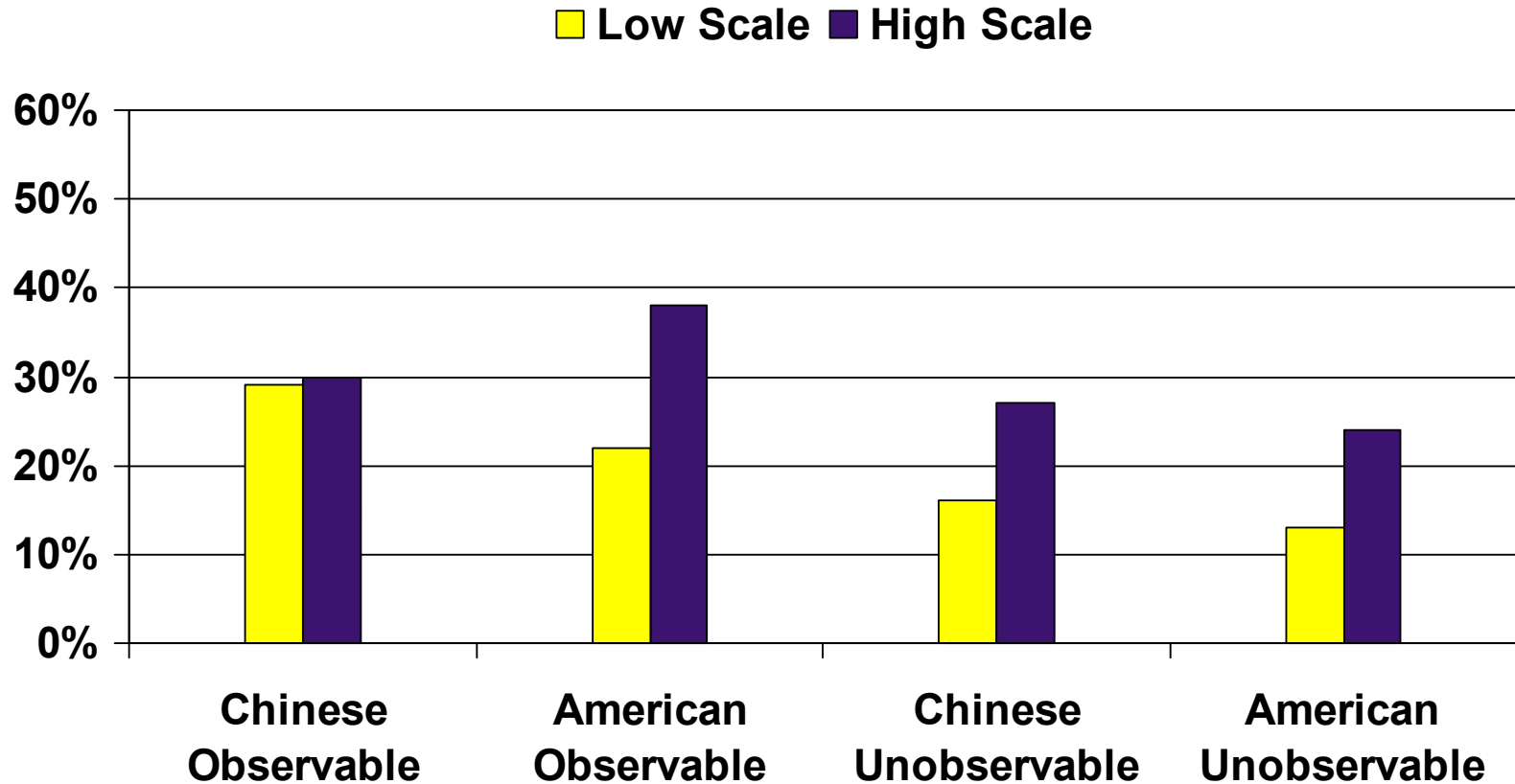
Retrieval and Judgment - Consequences

- The choice of language of survey administration would affect both quality and quantity of recall
- The frames of reference used in a language to describe specific situations are likely to induce the same frame of reference in the nonlinguistic coding of the same situations for memory
- What information is accessible to form an opinion will vary depending on language of survey administration
- Scales may be judged differently depending on whether scale labels are easily codable in both languages

Theoretical Framework



Response Formatting Example



Ji, Schwarz and Nisbett (2000)

Response Formatting and Editing

- Cultural frame switching
 - use of frequency scales
 - scale anchoring
 - question affective characteristics
- Codability
 - scale labeling

Formatting and Editing - Consequences

- Depending on the cultural identity primed by the language of interview, different estimation strategies may be employed
- The same question may be perceived to have different levels of socially desirable content depending on the respondent's cultural identity

Conclusions

- Any observed cross-country differences in respondents' answers may be due to
 - actual differences in attitudes or behavior
 - differences in response processes related to language
 - differences in response processes related to cognition
 - unknown mix of all
- Need to understand the underlying processes to avoid cross-cultural “surprises”