


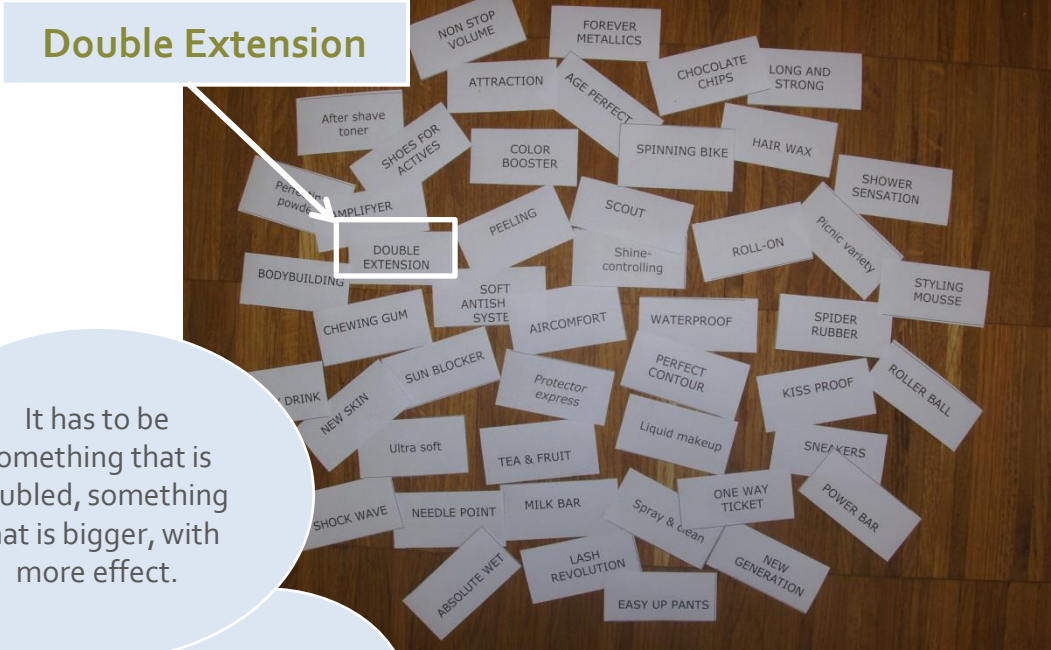
# Séissmograph 2004

**English in the product world – to go shopping with a dictionary!**

Observations of consumer attitudes towards English product names

Report of Fundamental Research

# Starting position



Not English again! I can't stand it anymore!

Nobody knows what that means!

Ah, that's double existence (in German Existenz)

They only want to make money. English simply sells better.

It has to be something that is doubled, something that is bigger, with more effect.

What's that?

Maybe it means double charge.

# Design of study

## Type of study:

Qualitative fundamental research

## Method/place:

48 deep interviews in depth interviews (tape, face-to-face) in Mannheim

## Focus:

2/3 of the sample mainly dealt with the English product language (presented were product names, -types and -terms in neutral typography)

1/3 dealt in the first place with the German-American relation because the USA is the main representative of the English language in the media world

## Spot check:

Women and men from three different age groups

- 11-16 years old, going to different types of school
- 30-50 years old, mainly employed
- 60-80 years old, actively taking part in social life

## Goal:

To point out to manufacturers what they have to consider when naming their products

Validation of the results was made under the consideration of over 1,000 persons who were interviewed in various qualitative research settings by Séissmo in 2004.

Understanding



Types of mental attitudes

Concerning English product names there is no correlation between these areas!

That means:

- ▶ Although the consumer is able to understand everything a reaction of anger might be possible.

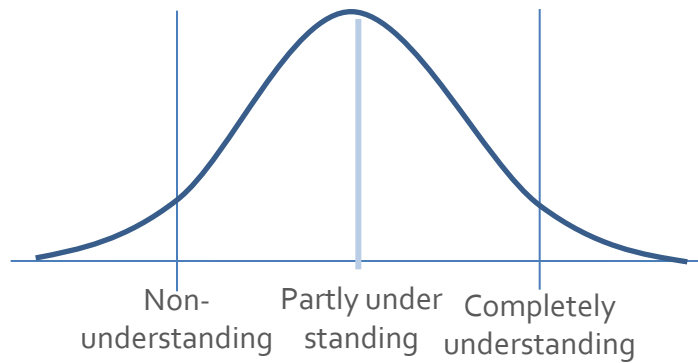
*"sportswear – that is so typical. Why don't I simply say Sportkleidung? That's horrid!"*

- ▶ Or the consumer might encounter difficulties to understand the names but nevertheless have a positive attitude towards English product names.

*"amplifyer? (spoken Ampelfeier) Oh, oh, oh,... a traffic light (in German: Ampel) comes into my mind, red, green, yellow. (...) But it's no problem that the names are in English, they are modern, they sound good. They are nice to pronounce as well."*

# Head vs. heart (2)

Understanding

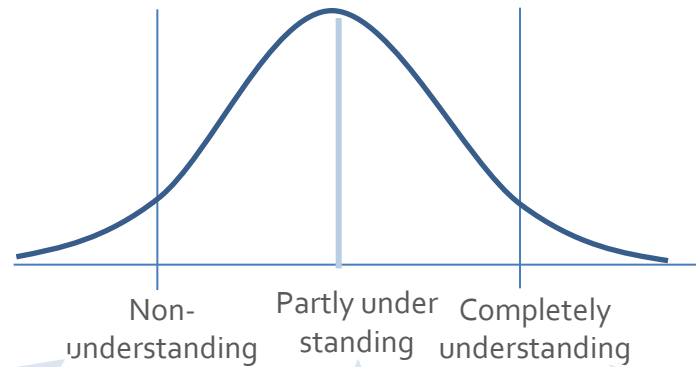


Types of mental attitudes



Concerning English product names there is no correlation between these areas!

# Head vs. heart (2)



**bread** – "a board (German: Brett)"

**mailbox** – "box for flour (Mehl)"

**body lotion** – "appliance for floor (Bodenmittel)"

**lash revolution** – "a revolution, without effect, it is weak (lasch), only a few people and they aren't organized."

**body-cocoon** – "a body lotion, tendering skin and smelling like coconut because of cocoon"

**remote control** – "control (Kontrolle)"

**color booster** – "colour is Farbe, that is clear, and booster certainly means something with building up or dressing the hair extremely"

**waterproof** – "the manufacturer called it like that so the consumers know that it has something to do with water."

**sneakers** – "derived from to sneak, so a kind of shoe"

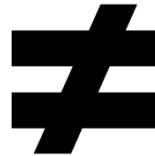
**peeling** – "in the sense of to rub of or to emerise"

**bodycocoon** – "body, for women, has to do with body (Körper), cocoon, silk caterpillar, cocoon (Kokon), might be a body lotion"

# Head vs. heart (3)

Understanding

Types of mental attitudes

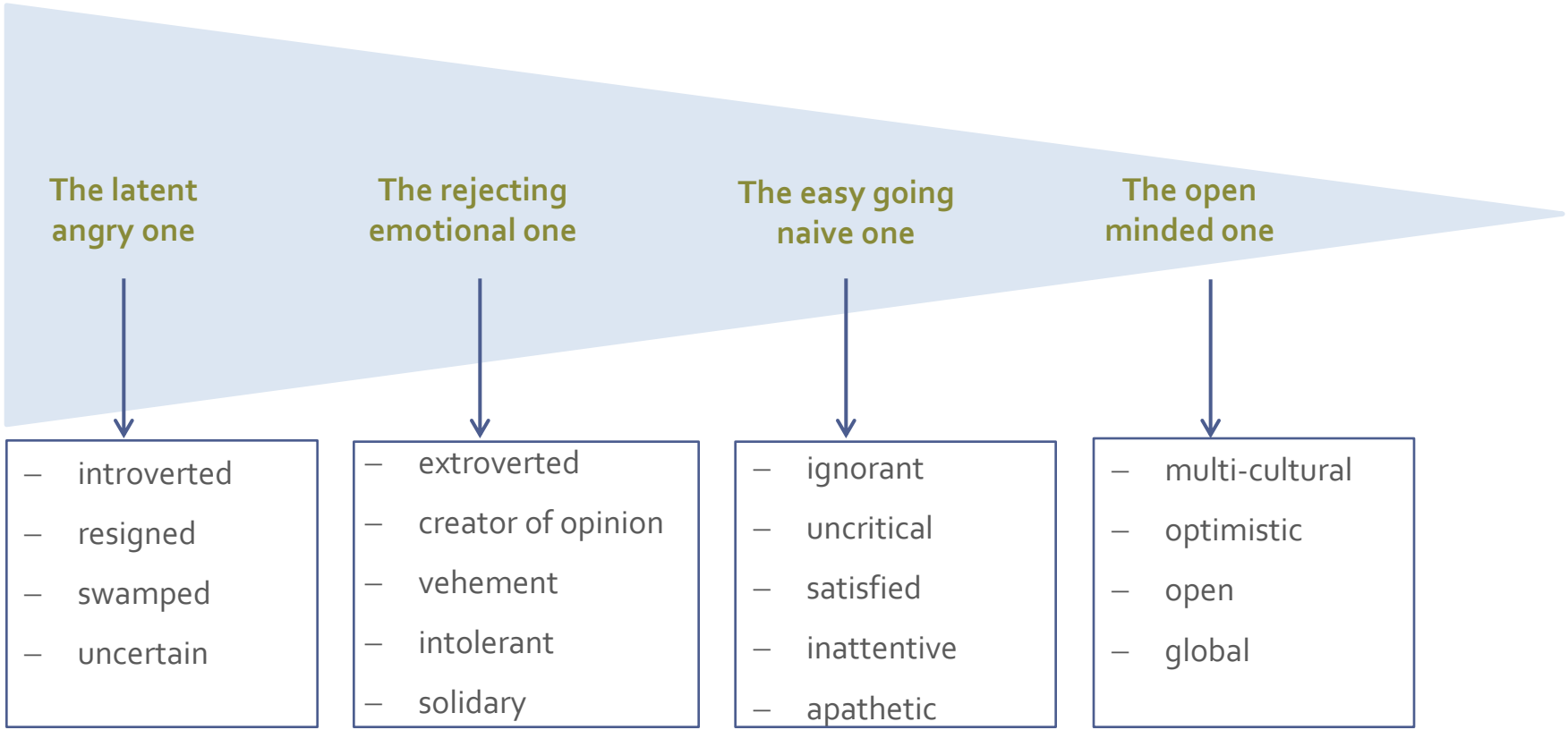


The latent angry one    The rejecting emotional one    The easy going naive one    The open minded one

Concerning English product names there is no correlation between these areas!

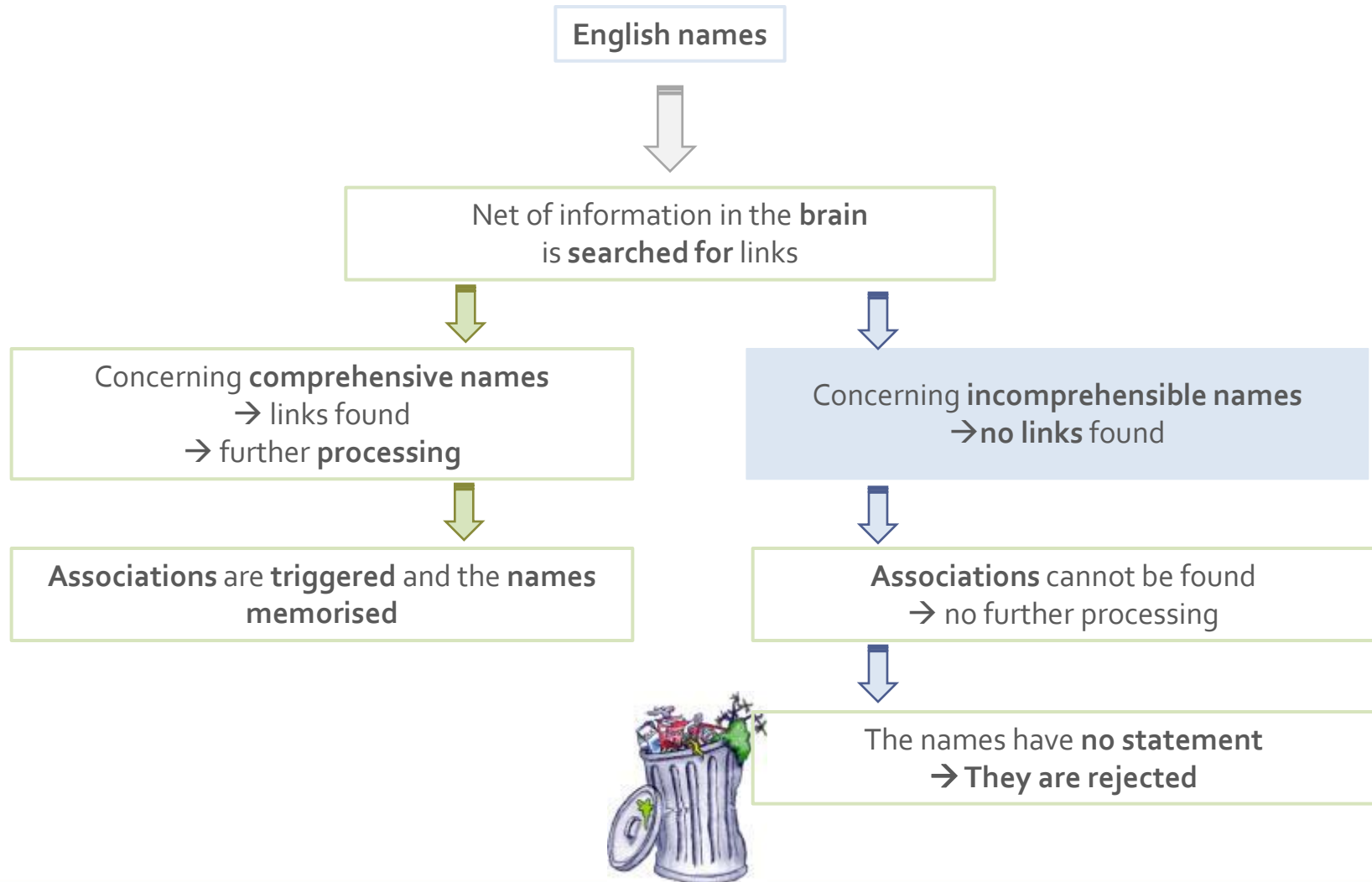
# Head vs. heart (3)

## Types of mental attitudes



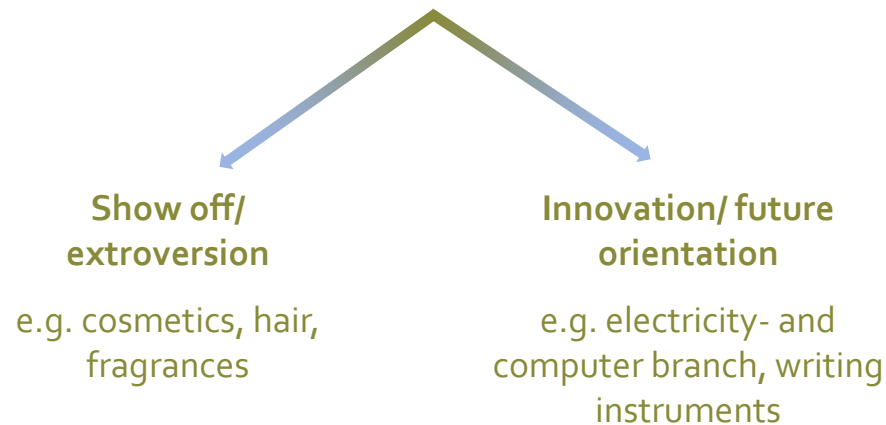


# Incomprehensible product names: Impact – negative report



# English is not a cure all

The **English language** has its **own history**. It cannot be seen free of values and detached of this because it carries **two unsaid attributes**. These are transferred to the products.



**Leading question** for the manufacturer when using the English language:  
**Do these values/attributes fit my product?**

# Instructions for use

Basic criteria for a successful naming



Acceptance problems on emotional und rational level when these criteria are not taken into account.