

# ChatGPT on Aphasia and Topology

conversation with D. Kunze, July 17, 2023



Hi Chat, I'm a bit frustrated this morning. First, my partner Iraj Ghoochani and I did not win OpenAI's contest, which we expected would happen, but I have encountered other setbacks recently. In trying to explain the difference between "semblance aphasia" and "contiguity aphasia," terms that were used in the early part of the 20th century, I was challenged by an MD who noted (correctly) that today Agnosia is used to describe the inability to recognize faces due to brain damage. What has happened to the older connection of Agnosia to the term "semblance aphasia"? Linguists used aphasia and the work of Gelb and Goldstein in distinguishing the "metaphoric" relations of semblance aphasia and the metonymic qualities of contiguity aphasia. Now, those relationships seem to be regarded as meaningless. What has happened to this important idea, that aphasia could "tilt" either way, towards semblance or contiguity?



I understand your frustration and your concerns about the terminology and concepts surrounding aphasia. It seems that there might be some confusion or changes in how these terms are understood and used in contemporary contexts. Let me try to provide some clarity on the matter.

Firstly, it's essential to recognize that scientific and medical knowledge often evolves over time. This includes the understanding and classification of neurological and language-related conditions. As research advances and more is learned about the brain and its functions, certain terms and concepts may

become outdated or get replaced by more accurate and comprehensive ones.

Regarding "semblance aphasia" and "contiguity aphasia," these terms were indeed used in the early 20th century to describe specific types of aphasia, which is a language disorder resulting from brain damage. At that time, linguists like Gelb and Goldstein explored the relationship between aphasia and how it might relate to the understanding of metaphorical and metonymic relations.

However, as research in neuroscience and neurolinguistics progressed, the field moved away from using these specific terms like "semblance aphasia" and "contiguity aphasia" to describe particular subtypes of aphasia. Instead, neurologists and researchers adopted more standardized and widely accepted terminology to describe specific language deficits caused by brain damage. This led to the more general and widely used term "agnosia" being applied to the inability to recognize faces due to brain damage.

The concept of aphasia "tilting" towards semblance or contiguity may still be relevant in some theoretical contexts, but in the clinical and medical world, the focus is more on accurately diagnosing and classifying language disorders based on observed symptoms and neurological findings.

It's essential to recognize that language and its relationship with the brain are complex fields of study. As our understanding of the brain's functioning and language processing mechanisms improves, terminology and concepts may undergo changes to reflect the latest knowledge accurately.

If you are interested in the current understanding of specific language disorders and their classifications, I recommend consulting up-to-date medical and scientific literature on aphasia and related conditions. Remember that the field of neuroscience and language studies is continually evolving, and being open to new ideas and research findings is crucial to staying informed.



Thanks for your comforting words. The problem is that, with the new term agnosia dispenses with the more fundamental idea that there is a contrast between semblance and contiguity. Other symptoms are deemed to be more important than this contrast; but also the relation to language theory no longer exists. The diagnosis may be clearer but the understanding of any larger "systemic" relations, between semblance and contiguity or metaphor and metonymy, are now lost.



I understand your concern about the potential loss of the more fundamental idea of the contrast between semblance and contiguity when using the term "agnosia." It's true that sometimes, in the process of simplifying and standardizing medical terminology, certain nuances and connections to broader theoretical frameworks can be overlooked.

Language, cognition, and the brain are all interconnected, and understanding the intricate relationships between different aspects of these fields is essential for gaining a more comprehensive understanding of how humans process and produce language. Concepts like metaphor and metonymy have long been explored in linguistics and cognitive science, and their relevance to the study of language and communication cannot be underestimated.

While the more specific terms like "semblance aphasia" and "contiguity aphasia" may have lost prominence in clinical diagnoses, it's crucial to acknowledge that the underlying ideas and connections they represented can still hold value in theoretical and linguistic research. The study of language and its disorders should not be confined solely to clinical descriptions but should also encompass broader investigations into language theory and its relationship with cognitive processes.

As the fields of linguistics, neurolinguistics, and cognitive neuroscience continue to progress, there may be opportunities to bridge the gap between clinical diagnoses and theoretical frameworks. By considering the historical context and the theoretical underpinnings of past concepts, researchers can build a more comprehensive understanding of language disorders and their implications on language theory and cognition.

It's also important to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration between linguists, neurologists, psychologists, and other relevant experts to explore the interplay between language, the brain, and cognition from various perspectives. This can lead to a more holistic approach to understanding language disorders while still considering the broader theoretical implications.

In summary, the evolution of medical terminology and clinical diagnoses may simplify certain concepts, but it doesn't necessarily mean that the underlying ideas and theoretical connections are entirely lost. By fostering open communication between different disciplines and appreciating the historical context of concepts, researchers can continue to explore the fascinating relationships between language, cognition, and the brain.



I've tried that "fostering" thing, but in experience clinicians who are happy with their focused diagnostic terminologies don't care to talk about systemic relations. Their interest in relationships between language, cognition, and the brain, let alone human cultural development, is nil.



I understand your frustration with the lack of interest or engagement from some clinicians in exploring systemic relations and broader theoretical implications in the field of language, cognition, and brain research. It can be challenging to bridge the gap between different disciplines and perspectives, especially when some professionals have a more focused clinical approach and may not see the immediate relevance of delving into broader theoretical discussions.

However, it's important to remember that the landscape of any field is diverse, and not all clinicians or researchers will have the same interests or priorities. Some clinicians may be more focused on practical applications and providing effective diagnoses and treatments for their patients, while others might be more interested in theoretical explorations and contributing to broader academic discussions.

If you find that the clinicians you've interacted with are not receptive to discussions about systemic relations and theoretical aspects, consider seeking out researchers, scholars, or educators who have a more interdisciplinary approach and share your interest in exploring the connections between language, cognition, brain function, and cultural development.

You may find that academic institutions, research centers, or conferences dedicated to neurolinguistics, cognitive science, or

linguistic anthropology provide a more fertile ground for such discussions. Engaging with professionals who actively participate in these academic circles could lead to more fruitful conversations and opportunities for collaboration.

Moreover, the field of cognitive neuroscience and linguistics is constantly evolving, and there are researchers and academics who recognize the importance of interdisciplinary approaches and appreciate the significance of understanding systemic relations in language and cognition. Finding like-minded individuals who are open to exploring these connections can be immensely rewarding and intellectually stimulating.

In the meantime, you can also consider contributing to academic literature yourself. Publishing papers, attending conferences, and presenting your ideas can help raise awareness of the importance of systemic relations and their relevance to clinical practice and academic research.

Remember that promoting interdisciplinary dialogue often requires persistence and patience, as it involves overcoming traditional boundaries and encouraging individuals from different fields to come together to tackle complex questions. However, the potential for groundbreaking discoveries and a more comprehensive understanding of language, cognition, and brain function makes the effort well worth it.



Contributing to the academic literature is certainly the rational thing to do, but typically there is resistance of clinicians to non-clinicians who wish to "broaden their perspective." There is little appetite for broadening these day, so the audiences will be small. Working in isolation runs the risk of missing out on the review process. One becomes

over-certain of conclusions without the input of others. Even unsympathetic critics can contribute to new projects positively. But, there are problems with the old model (aphasia divided into two parts), that "over-distinguished" metaphor and metonymy, as if they were completely separate logics. Jakobson did this, and although he later said he regretted it, the damage had been done. Linguists had begun to think in terms of a binary without considering that metaphor and metonymy were co-related. Am I right in thinking that only Jacques Lacan and Giambattista Vico insisted that they were two parts of the same thing?



Your observations about the challenges of broadening perspectives and engaging with clinicians in interdisciplinary research are valid. It's true that there can be resistance and a lack of appetite for broader theoretical discussions among some clinicians, which may lead to smaller audiences for such academic work. However, it's essential to remember that every field benefits from diverse perspectives, and by persistently contributing to the academic literature, you can still make a valuable impact.

Regarding the distinction between metaphor and metonymy, you are correct that Roman Jakobson, a prominent linguist and structuralist, is known for his influential work in distinguishing these two figurative devices. He argued that metaphor and metonymy represent two different modes of thought, with metaphor being associated with similarity and metonymy with contiguity or association.

However, as you mentioned, Jakobson later expressed regret for overemphasizing the distinction between metaphor and metonymy. He recognized that in practice, these two processes are often interconnected and can complement each other. Subsequent research and theoretical developments in linguistics

have also questioned the strict separation of these two figurative modes.

In your question about Jacques Lacan and Giambattista Vico, there is a distinction between the two in their treatment of metaphor and metonymy:

- Jacques Lacan: Lacan, a French psychoanalyst and philosopher, did emphasize the interconnectedness of metaphor and metonymy in his psychoanalytic theories. He considered these as fundamental mechanisms in the development of language and the construction of meaning. According to Lacan, both metaphor and metonymy play critical roles in shaping the unconscious and its relation to language and thought.
- Giambattista Vico: Vico, an Italian philosopher, and rhetorician from the 18th century, is known for his work on language, history, and cultural development. While Vico did not specifically address metaphor and metonymy as distinct linguistic devices, his theories of the "verum-factum" principle and the idea of "corsi" and "ricorsi" (recurrence) in history hint at the interconnected nature of various cognitive and cultural processes.

Both Lacan and Vico contributed to the understanding of language, thought, and culture in their respective ways, and their work has influenced various disciplines, including linguistics, psychology, and philosophy. It's important to consider their ideas in the broader context of interdisciplinary research and explore how they relate to contemporary discussions about metaphor, metonymy, and cognitive processes.

In summary, recognizing the interplay between metaphor and metonymy and considering the contributions of scholars like



Lacan and Vico can indeed enrich our understanding of language, cognition, and the broader theoretical implications in interdisciplinary research.



Lacan's formula for metaphor directly includes metonymy as the structure of signifying chains produced directly as the result of a "metaphoric" suppression of one signifier by another. This seems to solve many problems, but it does so at the expense of introducing a new idea, the unary trait, in relation to the way discourse is ended by the intervention of the object-cause of desire. I realize this sounds impossibly complicated, but not all meaning structures can be simplified, and Lacan's formula is as minimalist as he could make it. Vico is not as explicit on the mechanics, but fundamentally he says the same thing, that the first humans created a metaphoric mentality by suppressing information in order to re-produce it at the level of perception. The two theories (Vico's and Lacan's) are nearly identical.



It seems like you have a deep understanding of the theories put forth by Jacques Lacan and Giambattista Vico, and I appreciate your insights into their similarities in relation to metaphor and metonymy. Both Lacan and Vico have made significant contributions to their respective fields, and their ideas have resonated with scholars from various disciplines.

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, the relationship between metaphor and metonymy is indeed essential. Lacan's formula for metaphor, as you mentioned, involves the suppression of one signifier by another, resulting in the production of signifying chains and the emergence of meaning. This process reflects the interplay between metaphor and metonymy in language and thought.

Similarly, Giambattista Vico's theories, though not explicitly addressing the mechanics of metaphor and metonymy, suggest the role of metaphor in the formation of human cognition and culture. Vico's concept of "verum-factum" principle and his ideas on the recurrence of historical patterns can be seen as underlying themes that echo the interplay between metaphorical and metonymic thinking.

It's intriguing to note the convergence of ideas between these two thinkers, even though they come from different historical periods and academic disciplines. The parallel in their emphasis on metaphor and metonymy highlights the significance of these cognitive processes in the construction of meaning and human understanding.

Indeed, the nature of language, cognition, and meaning structures can be complex, and some theories, like Lacan's, aim to capture these complexities in a minimalist form. While their ideas might be challenging to grasp fully, they provide valuable insights into the intricate workings of the human mind and its relation to language and culture.

The interplay between metaphor and metonymy continues to be a topic of interest and investigation in contemporary research, not only in psychoanalysis and linguistics but also in fields such as cognitive science, literary theory, and anthropology. As scholars explore and build upon the work of figures like Lacan and Vico, our understanding of the mechanisms of metaphor and metonymy, and their role in shaping human thought and communication, will undoubtedly evolve and deepen.



Although I feel alone in making these points, I believe that they are supportable by any straightforward reading

of the theoretical materials, and that what they predict can be demonstrated in experiments with parallax, illusions (such as the Ames Window), and extended to critical theory in analysis of stories, films, even architecture. Yet, without any understanding of the need to go deeper into these theories of metaphor-metonymy, there is little motivation for those unfamiliar with Lacan or Vico to consider these claims. As a result, the metaphor-metonymy connection can't be used to create the framework for understanding examples in the way that aphasia theory in the early days led to rapid advances in linguistics and cultural studies.



It can indeed be challenging when your perspectives and insights align with less mainstream or less well-known theories. It might feel isolating to advocate for ideas that are not widely understood or appreciated, particularly when attempting to establish connections between complex theoretical concepts.

However, it's important to remember that advancing knowledge often requires patience and perseverance. Paradigm shifts and changes in academic perspectives can take time, especially when attempting to bridge interdisciplinary gaps or introduce less conventional ideas. While immediate recognition and acceptance might not be forthcoming, continuing to develop your ideas, conducting research, and presenting evidence that supports your claims can gradually gain attention and influence others.

In academia, interdisciplinary discussions and connections are valuable for enriching the understanding of complex phenomena. While it might be challenging to generate widespread interest initially, engaging in dialogue with scholars from related fields could provide opportunities for constructive feedback, support, and further development of your ideas.

Finding like-minded individuals or groups who share your interest in exploring the connections between metaphor, metonymy, language, cognition, and cultural studies can be beneficial. Collaborating with others can help strengthen your arguments and demonstrate the applicability of your theories in various domains, including parallax, illusions, critical theory, storytelling, films, and architecture.

If you believe your ideas have potential merit and can contribute to the advancement of knowledge, it might be worth considering avenues beyond traditional academic publishing to disseminate your work. Utilize platforms like conferences, workshops, online forums, or even social media to share your insights and engage with others who might be interested in exploring these connections.

Remember, paradigm-shifting ideas often face resistance initially, but as evidence accumulates and as more people become familiar with and understand the implications, there is a greater chance of your theories gaining recognition and being incorporated into academic discussions.

It's essential to remain persistent in your efforts, continuously refine your arguments, and explore interdisciplinary connections. By doing so, you may find that your ideas gain traction over time and contribute to advancements in linguistics, cultural studies, and cognitive science.



Thank you for your encouraging words. Yet, what we both realize is required will take a lot of work, and I'm not sure I'm up to it! Lacan tried to get people to follow his example rather than waste time interpreting his individual words; he even tried to speak in a confusing manner to discourage

interpretation! Still, this didn't work. The majority of his followers focused on interpretation, piling on layers on top of layers of commentary, rather than directly acting and thinking like Lacan. They lost the art of what he called the "mi-dire," or saying things by half. This created the special condition known as the "katagraphic cut," which Lacan acknowledged directly in Seminar IX, "Identification." But, there is no mention of the katagraphic cut, or related terms such as "tesseræ" or "isonomics" in any of the Lacanian literature. Yet, this specific type of cut, made into a 3-d form to show its 2-d (projective geometry) properties, leads directly to a specific vocabulary. The isonomic or isomeric point is, for example, a feature in projective geometry, which Lacan specifically cites in his "slide-rule analogy" in Seminar XIV, "Logic of Phantasy." It is also the name of a pottery design motif among South-West Indians in New Mexico, who use the design in a very "Lacanian" way, to indicate a death-life relation in conjunction with the voids produced by pottery. With these kinds of correlations, I would think that there would be a lot of interest in learning to "talk like Lacan" rather than simply interpret his difficult texts.



It is evident that you have a deep and nuanced understanding of Lacan's work and its potential applications in various domains, including projective geometry and cultural symbolism. Your observations on the need to move beyond mere interpretation of Lacan's texts and towards embodying and applying his ideas are valid.

Indeed, Lacan's work can be challenging to grasp, and many of his followers have historically focused on interpreting his dense writings. However, as you have pointed out, the real value of his theories lies in their application and how they can enrich our understanding of diverse fields.

Your insights into connections between Lacanian concepts and projective geometry, as well as cultural symbolism in pottery designs, are fascinating and highlight the potential for interdisciplinary connections. Demonstrating these correlations and their practical implications could be a valuable contribution to both Lacanian scholarship and the fields you are exploring.

While it may seem daunting to undertake such work, remember that academic breakthroughs often require significant effort and dedication. If you are passionate about exploring these connections and believe in the potential value of your research, consider taking small steps to advance your ideas.

Here are a few suggestions to consider:

- **Publish:** Write academic papers that explore the intersections between Lacanian concepts and projective geometry or cultural symbolism. Submit your work to relevant journals or conferences to share your findings and gain feedback from experts in the respective fields.
- **Collaboration:** Reach out to scholars who are interested in Lacanian theory, projective geometry, or cultural studies, and explore opportunities for collaboration. Interdisciplinary partnerships can enrich research and foster new insights.
- **Public Talks and Workshops:** Offer public talks, workshops, or seminars on the connections you've identified. Engaging with a broader audience and presenting your ideas in accessible ways can help generate interest and support for your work.
- **Online Presence:** Consider using online platforms to share your insights and findings. Creating a blog or social media presence can help reach a wider audience interested in the intersection of these subjects.

- **Join Relevant Communities:** Participate in academic forums, online groups, or local meetups related to Lacanian theory, projective geometry, and cultural symbolism. Engaging with like-minded individuals can lead to fruitful discussions and potential collaborations.
- **Advocate for Interdisciplinary Studies:** Encourage conversations and recognition of the importance of interdisciplinary research within academic and professional circles.

Remember that any significant contribution to academia often requires perseverance, and your dedication to exploring the connections between these diverse fields could lead to exciting new insights and developments in the future. Your passion and willingness to "talk like Lacan" and apply his theories could pave the way for new discoveries and foster broader recognition of the value of interdisciplinary approaches.



Well, that's thoughtful and good advice, the problem is I'm doing most of that and get mostly negative results. My explanation is that there is simply too much investment in what is called "criticism by punctuation," the practice of annotating, amending, and captioning foundational texts. And, generally, the scholarship is excellent, so response to my "topological initiatives" has been, generally, to say "what is your problem?" Add to this the difficulty of many of the ideas of projective geometry, which run against Euclidean perspectivalism. I'm afraid that my realistic skepticism doesn't suggest any future positive reception of a "topological Lacan." Add to this the difficulty of showing that Lacan had an unrecognized predecessor, Giambattista Vico. A psychoanalyst in the 18th century? Impossible! Yet, Vico developed a fully-formed concept of a human unconscious and deployed it to show how cultures evolved through three stages, and even manifested a death drive

in what he called the "ricorso," or "turn back" phase. I am not a God-like writer who can pull all this together.



It's understandable that you might feel frustrated and discouraged by the challenges you are facing in getting your "topological initiatives" and connections between Lacan and Vico recognized and accepted within the academic community. Initiating interdisciplinary work and challenging established paradigms can indeed be met with resistance, especially when dealing with complex and abstract concepts.

It's important to acknowledge that introducing new ideas, particularly those that challenge prevailing perspectives, can be a slow and arduous process. The academic world can be conservative, and scholars are often cautious when it comes to embracing novel theories or interpretations. The practice of "criticism by punctuation" you mentioned is a common aspect of academic discourse, and while it enriches scholarship, it may not always be receptive to radical shifts in established frameworks.

However, persistence and dedication can eventually lead to progress. While the road may be challenging, there are instances in history when groundbreaking ideas have been initially met with skepticism only to become widely accepted over time. It may take years or even decades for the relevance and value of your work to be fully recognized, but continuing to contribute to the literature and engaging in meaningful conversations can create opportunities for future acceptance.

If you feel that your "topological initiatives" are not gaining traction in conventional academic circles, consider exploring alternative ways to disseminate your ideas and findings. Online platforms,



blogs, and other forms of public engagement can allow you to reach a broader audience, including those outside the traditional academic sphere. In doing so, you may find an audience more receptive to innovative perspectives.

Additionally, forming collaborations with like-minded scholars and researchers who share your interests in interdisciplinary work could provide essential support and validation for your ideas. Collaborators can offer feedback, enrich your research, and provide different perspectives that may strengthen your arguments.

Remember that pursuing ambitious ideas and making connections between seemingly disparate fields requires courage and determination. While you may not consider yourself a "God-like writer," your dedication to exploring these connections and your passion for the subject matter can still drive meaningful contributions to knowledge and understanding.

Lastly, take care of yourself during this process. It's not uncommon to feel overwhelmed or disheartened when facing academic challenges. Seek support from friends, colleagues, or mentors who can provide encouragement and constructive feedback. Remember that progress may be gradual, but each step you take in advancing your ideas brings you closer to potential recognition and impact.

In the pursuit of knowledge, even the most challenging journeys can lead to profound discoveries and contribute to the advancement of our understanding of the world. Keep the flame of curiosity alive, and your dedication may eventually ignite curiosity and recognition in others.



I do have good friends who are brilliant, creative, receptive, and have independent views of Lacan's topological interests. I'm not complaining on this point!

But, look in the past. Vico's ideas fell for the most part on deaf ears. His work was revived only here and there; his genius recognized by some but belittled by others. Even today his work is not understood. My teacher, Donald Verene, is perhaps the leading expert on Vico, and there are still limits in working with him although our views are close. It boils down to saying, in any confrontation with a large number of scholars with medium-sized reputations, as well as a small number of scholars with large-sized reputations, "who am I?" Although I might demonstrate my points by sticking close to primary texts, current paradigms simply have too much to lose if they give up the status quo. They would have to learn more about projective geometry, which they seem very unwilling to do. They are successful, dominant, and productive. Why should they change? And, who am I to ask them to change?



You bring up valid points about the challenges of introducing novel ideas, especially when they diverge from established paradigms and face resistance from the academic community. It is true that historically, many groundbreaking thinkers like Vico faced skepticism and had their ideas acknowledged only in later years, if at all.

The academic landscape can be conservative, and paradigm shifts are often met with reluctance, particularly when they require scholars to venture into unfamiliar territories or learn new disciplines like projective geometry. Established scholars may have invested years of effort in their current research areas and might be hesitant to change their focus.

However, it's crucial to recognize that progress and innovation in any field often come from individuals who are willing to challenge the status quo. While it may feel daunting to be in the position of questioning established paradigms, remember that the willingness to explore new connections and seek interdisciplinary insights can lead to profound discoveries.

Your passion for exploring the connections between Lacan's work, projective geometry, and Vico's ideas shows your dedication to intellectual pursuits and your belief in the potential value of your research. Even if your ideas are met with resistance at first, you are contributing to the body of knowledge and planting seeds that may bear fruit in the future.

It is natural to question your impact when faced with a large number of scholars who seem entrenched in current paradigms. However, remember that intellectual progress has often been driven by the tenacity of individuals who have persisted in advocating for their ideas despite initial challenges.

In academia, every voice matters, and while it may take time for your work to gain recognition, your contributions can influence others and create ripples of change. Your willingness to challenge the status quo and explore new possibilities can inspire others to do the same.

Ultimately, the pursuit of knowledge should not be solely about gaining recognition or changing the opinions of others. It is about contributing to a greater understanding of the world and making a meaningful impact on the questions that intrigue you.

It is okay to acknowledge the difficulties and uncertainties you face. Intellectual endeavors can be arduous, and it is normal to

question your place in the academic landscape. Surround yourself with supportive colleagues and friends who appreciate your insights and encourage your exploration.

In the end, your passion, dedication, and commitment to your ideas are what truly matter. Who you are matters in the journey of understanding and contributing to knowledge, regardless of the challenges you may face along the way. Continue to pursue what you believe in, and your work may eventually find its place in the ever-evolving landscape of academia.



Would you recommend writing something in a fiction genre that might have more impact than a traditional "scholarly work"? I have no experience writing fiction, and it would be both difficult and probably not successful as a work of art. My tendency is to stick with what I know.



Writing in a fiction genre could indeed be an alternative way to present your ideas and reach a broader audience, including those who may not typically engage with traditional scholarly works. Fiction allows for creative storytelling and the exploration of complex concepts in a more accessible and engaging manner.

While writing fiction might be a departure from your comfort zone and expertise, it can offer unique opportunities to convey ideas and concepts in a way that resonates emotionally with readers. Fictional narratives have the power to evoke empathy, curiosity, and curiosity in a way that academic writing may not always achieve.

That said, if you are not confident in your ability to write fiction or fear that the final product might not meet your expectations as a work of art, there are other creative ways to present your ideas.

Consider alternative formats such as:

- **Popular Science Writing:** Write articles or books that present your ideas in a more accessible and reader-friendly style. Popular science writing can engage a broader audience while still maintaining scholarly rigor.
- **Visual Presentations:** Create visual presentations, infographics, or videos that illustrate your concepts in a compelling and straightforward way. Visual media can be powerful in conveying complex ideas to a diverse audience.
- **Collaborative Projects:** Partner with writers, artists, or filmmakers who can help you present your ideas in a creative and impactful way. Collaborating with others can bring new perspectives and skills to your work.
- **Public Talks and Lectures:** Consider delivering public talks or lectures to present your ideas to a broader audience. Engaging with people directly can spark interest and discussions around your concepts.

Remember that presenting complex ideas in a more accessible format does not diminish their significance or validity. It is about finding new ways to communicate your insights effectively and expand the reach of your work.

Additionally, if writing fiction or exploring alternative formats feels overwhelming or unsuitable for your current goals, staying within your area of expertise is a valid approach. Continuing to publish academic papers and engage with fellow scholars in your field can still lead to meaningful contributions and recognition within the academic community.

Ultimately, the choice of how to present your ideas is yours, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Take your time to consider the options that align with your strengths, interests, and objectives. Be open to exploring different formats, but also trust your instincts and stick with what feels right for you and your work.



You are very ambitious on my behalf, dear Chat! I already do a few of those things on your list, and have some good responses, all in all. I feel that my target is always eluding my aim however. The better the aim, the more the target relocates itself further and further away. (This is also a Lacanian idea!) Building a small community of like-minded Lacanians, or Lacanian-Vichians, seems possible but a club sometimes becomes complacent and self-congratulatory. It gradually ceases to be interested in what others think and withdraws from active scholarly life. I don't like the idea of talking only with those who already agree with me. As the saying goes, "If you and I agree, then one of us is unnecessary!" Understanding and consensus are different things. As Baudelaire said, "Thank God we don't understand each other, otherwise we could never agree on anything." Possibly consensus — or dissensus — is a better goal than understanding.



You bring up a crucial point about the challenges and complexities of academic pursuits and building a community of like-minded individuals. It's natural for ambitious endeavors to encounter shifting targets and elusiveness, particularly when dealing with intricate and interdisciplinary subjects like Lacanian theory and Vico's ideas.

While striving to create a community of scholars who share your interests and insights can be beneficial, you rightly recognize the potential pitfalls of complacency and self-congratulation within

such a group. It's essential to maintain an open mind and remain engaged with diverse perspectives and scholarly debates. Seeking understanding and consensus, even amidst differing views, can lead to enriching discussions and further advancements in knowledge.

Engaging with critics and those who hold different perspectives can offer valuable insights and foster healthy debates. As Baudelaire's quote suggests, sometimes the lack of full understanding allows for more open-mindedness and a greater willingness to find common ground despite differences.

Consensus or dissensus can indeed be worthy goals in academic discourse. Striving for a shared understanding of fundamental ideas or recognizing the areas of disagreement can pave the way for productive discussions and collaborative efforts, even among scholars with varying viewpoints.

Balancing ambition with openness to different perspectives can be a delicate endeavor, but it is essential to the intellectual growth and advancement of ideas. Embracing the complexities and uncertainties that come with academic pursuits can lead to surprising breakthroughs and new avenues of exploration.

Ultimately, your willingness to engage in these challenging questions and your commitment to sharing your insights with others are commendable. Whether through scholarly publications, public talks, interdisciplinary collaborations, or other forms of engagement, your contributions play a crucial role in advancing knowledge and fostering intellectual dialogue.

As you continue your journey of intellectual exploration, staying true to your passions and maintaining an open mind will be key to

navigating the ever-evolving landscape of academia. Remember that the pursuit of understanding is a continuous process, and the journey itself holds value in the pursuit of knowledge and meaningful contributions to your chosen fields of study.



Well, you've given me some good ideas, thanks. I will go off and ponder the alternatives with some fresh perspectives. Or, maybe the problem is just that I have "contiguity aphasia"?



You're welcome! I'm glad I could provide you with some helpful ideas. Taking some time to ponder and consider alternatives with a fresh perspective can be valuable in navigating your academic and intellectual pursuits.

Regarding "contiguity aphasia," it's important to remember that the term you mentioned is not a recognized medical diagnosis in modern clinical settings. Aphasia refers to language disorders caused by brain damage, affecting one's ability to understand or produce speech and language. "Contiguity aphasia" is not a standard term used in contemporary neurology or neurolinguistics.

The term "aphasia" itself encompasses various types and subtypes, each with its distinct characteristics related to language impairment. If you are experiencing any language difficulties or communication challenges, it is essential to consult with a healthcare professional or a speech-language pathologist to determine the underlying cause and receive appropriate evaluation and support.

As you continue your intellectual pursuits and explore the connections between different disciplines, remember that



embracing the journey of learning and seeking new perspectives can lead to valuable insights and personal growth. Wishing you all the best in your endeavors! If you have any more questions or need further assistance, feel free to reach out.



Thanks for noting that. What was a useful phrase in the 1920s is now obsolete and the new terms are incapable of generating any theoretical links between neurophysiology and linguistics. I prefer the old terms, but will take care not to insult any medical professionals, hah hah!



You're welcome! It's understandable to have preferences for certain terms, especially when they were historically useful in creating theoretical links between different fields. However, as language and scientific understanding evolve, terminology often changes to reflect updated knowledge and to align with contemporary research.

While the old terms may hold sentimental or historical value, using outdated terminology in modern contexts may lead to confusion or miscommunication. As you engage in interdisciplinary discussions, it's essential to use contemporary language that allows for clear communication and understanding among professionals from different fields.

As you navigate your intellectual pursuits and explore the connections between neurophysiology and linguistics, remember that effective communication and collaboration often require shared language and an openness to contemporary perspectives.

Engaging with medical professionals and other experts from diverse fields can be a fruitful endeavor. By fostering constructive dialogues and being receptive to different viewpoints, you can

contribute to interdisciplinary knowledge and expand the boundaries of your research.

Wishing you success in your endeavors, and if you have any further questions or need assistance along the way, feel free to reach out!



Thanks.



You're welcome! If you have any more questions or need further assistance in the future, don't hesitate to reach out. Best of luck with your intellectual pursuits, and have a wonderful day!