

1 **Convergence of semantics and emotional expression within the IFG pars**  
2 **orbitalis**

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4 **Michel Belyk<sup>1,2</sup>, Steven Brown<sup>2</sup>, Jessica Lim<sup>2</sup>, Sonja A. Kotz<sup>1,3</sup>**

5 <sup>1</sup>Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience, University of Maastricht, Maastricht,  
6 The Netherlands

7 <sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour, McMaster University,  
8 Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

9 <sup>3</sup>Department of Neuropsychology, Max Planck Institute for Human and Cognitive  
10 Sciences, Leipzig, Germany

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15 RUNNING TITLE: IFG pars orbitalis

16 Keywords: inferior frontal gyrus, pars orbitalis, emotion, semantics, meta-  
17 analysis, parcellation

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26 *Correspondence to:*  
27 Michel Belyk  
28 Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience  
29 Maastricht University  
30 Universiteitssingel 40  
31 Maastricht, 6200 MD  
32 The Netherlands

33  
34 Phone: +31 43 388 2931 extension 82931  
35 e-mail: belykm@gmail.com

36

37

**38 Abstract**

39 Humans communicate through a combination of linguistic and emotional  
40 channels, including propositional speech, writing, sign language, music, but also  
41 prosodic, facial, and gestural expression. These channels can be interpreted  
42 separately or they can be integrated to multimodally convey complex meanings.  
43 Neural models of the perception of semantics and emotion include nodes for both  
44 functions in the inferior frontal gyrus pars orbitalis (IFGorb). However, it is not  
45 known whether this convergence involves a common functional zone or instead  
46 specialized subregions that process semantics and emotion separately. To  
47 address this, we performed Kernel Density Estimation meta-analyses of  
48 published neuroimaging studies of the perception of semantics or emotion that  
49 reported activation in the IFGorb. The results demonstrated that the IFGorb  
50 contains two zones with distinct functional profiles. A lateral zone, situated  
51 immediately ventral to Broca's area, was implicated in both semantics and  
52 emotion. Another zone, deep within the ventral frontal operculum, was engaged  
53 almost exclusively by studies of emotion. Follow-up analysis using Meta-Analytic  
54 Connectivity Modeling demonstrated that both zones were frequently co-  
55 activated with a common network of sensory, motor, and limbic structures,  
56 although the lateral zone had a greater association with prefrontal cortical areas  
57 involved in executive function. The status of the lateral IFGorb as a point of  
58 convergence between the networks for processing semantic and emotional  
59 content across modalities of communication is intriguing since this structure is  
60 preserved across primates with limited semantic abilities. Hence, the IFGorb may

61 have initially evolved to support the comprehension of emotional signals, being  
62 later co-opted to support semantic communication in humans by forming new  
63 connections with brain regions that formed the human semantic network.

64

**65 Introduction**

66 Humans communicate meaning using a combination of language – based on  
67 arbitrary acoustic or visual symbols – and emotional expression, including  
68 prosodic modulation of speech, but also interjections, facial expressions, and  
69 body gestures (Dietrich et al., 2006; Filippi, 2016; Scherer and Ellgring, 2007).

70 While humans use language to provide each other with information, emotional  
71 communication is a phylogenetically-older channel that may be used to  
72 manipulate the behavior of others (Owren and Rendall, 2001). Some neurological  
73 models of speech perception have argued for decades that language and  
74 emotional expression are mediated by distinct brain areas in opposite  
75 hemispheres (Ross and Mesulam, 1979; Ross and Monnot, 2008). Beyond the  
76 criticisms that such models have faced on empirical grounds (Belyk and Brown,  
77 2014; Fusar-Poli et al., 2009; Witteman et al., 2012, 2014), they raise the  
78 important question of how language and emotional expression become  
79 integrated during communication. An alternative view is that there might be a  
80 convergence of these two facets of communication in particular brain areas,  
81 leading to the hypothesis that such areas might serve as hubs to integrate  
82 semantics and emotion during communication.

83 The pars orbitalis division of the inferior frontal gyrus (IFGorb) is one  
84 candidate for such an integration zone between semantic and emotional  
85 communication. The core semantic network includes the angular gyrus, middle  
86 temporal gyrus, posterior cingulate gyrus, dorsomedial prefrontal cortex, and the  
87 inferior frontal gyrus (Binder et al., 2009; Binder and Desai, 2011). The core

88 network for perceiving emotional expressions includes the posterior superior  
89 temporal cortex, amygdala, anterior insula, basal ganglia, dorsolateral prefrontal  
90 cortex, and the inferior frontal gyrus (Belyk and Brown, 2016; Brück et al., 2011;  
91 Frühholz et al., 2016). In both of these networks, the inferior frontal gyrus,  
92 particularly the IFGorb, has a role in evaluating and acting upon communicative  
93 signals.

94 \*\*\*Insert Figure 1 about here\*\*\*

95

96 Brain imaging studies in humans have demonstrated that the IFGorb  
97 participates in perceiving both semantic content and emotional expression across  
98 sensory modalities. For example, this region is activated when participants make  
99 judgments about the semantic content of speech, written text, and sign language  
100 (Binder et al., 2009; MacSweeney et al., 2002; Rodd et al., 2015), as well as  
101 emotional expression through the voice, face, body, and music (Belyk and  
102 Brown, 2014; Frühholz et al., 2016; Fusar-Poli et al., 2009; Jessen and Kotz,  
103 2015; Lehne et al., 2014; Levitin and Menon, 2003; Lotze et al., 2006; Tabei,  
104 2015; Witteman et al., 2012). This leads to the hypothesis that the IFGorb may  
105 serve as a hub that integrates semantics and emotion during communication.

106 The IFGorb is bounded between the orbital sulcus and the anterior  
107 horizontal ramus of the lateral sulcus, extending into the frontal operculum. This  
108 anatomical region corresponds approximately to the cytoarchitectonic  
109 designation of Brodmann area (BA) 47 (Brodmann, 1909) schematized in Figure  
110 1. Although Brodmann designated this region with a single cytoarchitectonic

111 label, he noted, based on the research of Oskar Vogt, that much of the inferior  
112 frontal cortex was myeloarchitectonically diverse (Vogt, 1910; see translation by  
113 Judaš and Ceganec, 2010) and thus amenable to further subdivision. Vogt's  
114 coarsest-level division separated the opercular IFGorb from the rest of the  
115 inferior frontal gyrus, a division that is now corroborated by magnetic resonance  
116 imaging parcellation studies in both humans and monkeys (Neubert, Mars,  
117 Thomas, Sallet, and Rushworth, 2014; Neubert, Mars, Sallet, and Rushworth,  
118 2015). This leads to a second hypothesis, that possible anatomical subdivisions  
119 within the IFGorb may have corresponding functional specializations, such as the  
120 comprehension of semantic and emotional signals.

121         We report two voxel-based meta-analyses of published brain imaging  
122 studies that test the hypotheses that the IFGorb contains a zone of convergence  
123 between the semantic and emotional-expression networks and/or that it contains  
124 multiple functionally-specialized subregions. These hypotheses have implications  
125 for the study of both semantic and emotional-expression processing, as research  
126 from both fields has independently attributed certain functions to the IFGorb. The  
127 first meta-analysis used kernel density estimation (KDE) to test whether  
128 published studies reporting loci of activation within the IFGorb during the  
129 perception of semantic meaning and emotional expression, respectively, do so in  
130 a common zone – which would be consistent with a role in integrating these  
131 channels – and/or in spatially distinct zones, which would be consistent with a  
132 further subdivision of this region. A second analysis examined networks of co-

133 activation for functionally defined zones within the IFGorb to further inform the  
134 interpretation of their functions.

135

## 136 **Meta-Analysis 1**

### 137 **Methods**

138 **Database searching.** We searched the BrainMap database ([www.brainmap.org](http://www.brainmap.org))  
139 for brain imaging experiments using Sleuth software v2.3 on September 16<sup>th</sup>  
140 2014 for all brain imaging experiments that reported loci of activation within the  
141 cytoarchitecturally defined Brodmann area 47. This literature searching  
142 strategy is appropriate for testing *where* within BA 47 these functions may be  
143 localized, but not *whether* BA 47 is engaged in these functions. It would be  
144 circular to support the latter inference from this corpus of studies, although  
145 previous meta-analyses (reviewed above) provide ample support for the role of  
146 the IFGorb in these functions.

147       Coordinates for activation loci labeled as either IFG, IFG pars orbitalis, or  
148 BA 47 were extracted from the coordinate tables of each study. Coordinates  
149 reported in MNI space were transformed to Talairach space. Each coordinate  
150 was checked against the Talairach atlas (Talairach and Tournoux, 1988), as  
151 implemented in a digital atlas (Lancaster et al., 1997, 2000), to verify that it fell  
152 within the cytoarchitecturally defined IFGorb. Loci falling outside of this region  
153 were excluded from the analysis. Restricting analyses to this space improves  
154 statistical power for testing a priori hypotheses at the expense of conducting  
155 lower-powered exploratory analyses across the remainder of the brain volume.

156 In light of theories of lateralization of linguistic and emotional  
157 communication, we performed Chi-squared tests on the number of activation loci  
158 and the number of experiments that reported at least one locus of activation in  
159 each hemisphere. Studies of semantic perception were strongly left-lateralized  
160 (total loci:  $\chi^2 = 25.2$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ; experiments:  $\chi^2 = 9$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), whereas studies of  
161 emotion perception showed no evidence of lateralization (total loci:  $\chi^2 = 0.049$ ,  $p$   
162  $= 0.86$ ; experiments:  $\chi^2 = 0$ ,  $p = 1$ ). We therefore restricted our analysis to the left  
163 hemisphere, where both functions could be compared.

164

165 **Study coding.** Each study was manually classified into one of four categories  
166 according to the communicative content (semantic or emotional) and sensory  
167 modality (visual or auditory) of the stimulus. The visual and auditory modalities  
168 were chosen because they encompass the bulk of human communication and  
169 have been the subject of more research than other sensory modalities.  
170 Experiments that could not be classified into these categories were excluded  
171 from further analysis. The search returned 499 loci across 239 experiments from  
172 an initial pool of 1561 loci across 744 experiments that reported activation within  
173 the IFGorb in either hemisphere using any paradigm. Table 1 lists the number of  
174 studies and activation loci in each category of experiment.

175 \*\*\*Insert Table 1 about here\*\*\*

176

177 **Analysis.** We used Kernel Density Estimation (KDE), as implemented in the 'ks'  
178 package in R (v3.1.1), to model the distribution of activation peaks within the



179 IFGorb using a Gaussian kernel with empirically determined bandwidths (Duong,  
180 2013, 2015; R Core Team, 2014; Wand and Jones, 1994). KDE creates a  
181 smooth estimate of the density, or local abundance, of points within a common  
182 space. Although we are not aware of previous brain imaging studies having used  
183 this approach, it is a common approach to spatial data in other scientific  
184 disciplines. For example, KDE has been used to map hot-spots for traffic  
185 accidents in major cities (Harirforoush and Bellalite, in press), to identify  
186 vulnerable habitats (Kenchington et al., 2014), and to model the epidemiology of  
187 infectious diseases (Shiode et al., 2015). Belyk, Brown and Kotz (submitted)  
188 demonstrate the use of KDE for cognitive neuroscience.

189       When applied to the peak activations reported in brain imaging studies,  
190 KDE provides a smooth representation of the local abundance of peak  
191 activations across stereotaxic space. This approach is conceptually similar to  
192 Kernel Density Analysis (KDA) and to the more commonly used Activation  
193 Likelihood Estimation (ALE), which also create smooth estimates of the local  
194 abundance of peak activations (Eickhoff et al., 2012; Turkeltaub et al., 2002;  
195 Wager et al., 2007). Like the other approaches, KDE performs hypothesis testing  
196 by comparing observed local densities (or likelihoods) to an empirical null  
197 distribution estimated by Monte-Carlo simulation. ALE and KDA perform  
198 simulations by redistributing the observed activations to random grey matter  
199 voxels throughout the brain. The comparison of the observed  
200 likelihoods/densities to this random distribution of loci is a valid test of the  
201 convergence of activation loci only if the entire brain volume is sampled in the

202 studies contributing to the analysis. This assumption is not met by the present  
203 data since it is restricted to a single brain region. We instead performed  
204 permutation tests by randomly assigning observed activation loci to conditions,  
205 which makes no assumption about the extent of brain coverage.

206 Four density maps were generated to represent the relative density of  
207 activation loci across the IFGorb for studies of i) semantic judgments or ii)  
208 emotion judgments, and of iii) auditory stimuli or iv) visual stimuli. Density maps  
209 were compared using voxel-wise permutation tests at an isotropic resolution of  
210  $1\text{mm}^3$ . First, an observed density difference map was calculated between pairs of  
211 conditions. We then estimated an empirical null distribution of local differences in  
212 activation loci density by randomly assigning observations to conditions and re-  
213 estimating density difference maps across 1000 permutations. The observed  
214 activation density difference maps were compared to an empirical null distribution  
215 applying a threshold of  $p < 0.01$ . Voxel-wise multiple-comparisons corrections  
216 were not applied because these methods may not be appropriate when making  
217 topological inferences from spatially continuous data (Chumbley and Friston,  
218 2009) and since the number of possible topological features within the study  
219 region was relatively small. To avoid making inferences about regions of  
220 stereotaxic space that contained few observations, analyses were constrained to  
221 volumes where activation loci were found in high density by masking statistical  
222 parametric maps to voxels falling within the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of density for either  
223 map in a pairwise comparison. This volume was selected as a mask because it

224 aligned well with the anatomical boundaries of the IFGorb and contained the  
225 majority of observed loci.

226 For each pairwise comparison, the condition with the larger sample size  
227 was down-sampled to match the sample size of the smaller condition in order to  
228 avoid biasing density estimates towards the larger sample. Down-sampling was  
229 accomplished by estimating the density of a random sample of observations from  
230 the larger set of loci, and taking the mean of the estimates across 1000  
231 iterations. To avoid biasing estimates towards studies that reported multiple loci  
232 of activation within the study region, the contribution of each point was weighted  
233 by the inverse of the number of loci reported within the IFGorb by its experiment  
234 of origin. Hence, each experiment in the dataset contributed equally to the  
235 density maps. Images are displayed on a Talairach-normalized template brain  
236 using Mango v3.4 ([ric.uthscsa.edu/mango](http://ric.uthscsa.edu/mango)).

## 237 **Results**

238 We observed that the bulk of the activation loci in this dataset was found in the  
239 lateral and superficial portion of the IFGorb adjacent to the IFG pars triangularis,  
240 which we will refer to as the lateral zone (centroid: -43, 26, -4). However, while  
241 activations from studies of semantic content perception were primarily restricted  
242 to this lateral zone, activation loci from studies of emotion perception also  
243 extended deep within the frontal operculum adjacent to the ventral anterior  
244 insula, which we will refer to as the opercular zone (centroid: -33, 21, -11). Figure  
245 2 plots density distributions by both judgment task and sensory modality in  
246 stereotaxic space.

247 Direct tests of activation-loci density revealed a significantly greater density for  
248 studies of semantic-content perception in the lateral zone, reflecting the greater  
249 concentration of these studies compared to the more widely distributed studies of  
250 emotional content perception. In contrast, there was a greater density of  
251 activation loci for studies of emotional content processing in the opercular zone,  
252 since few studies of semantics reported activation loci in this zone (see Table 2).  
253 Figure 3 maps density distributions and parametric tests onto a standard  
254 neuroanatomical image. Regarding sensory modality, no differences were  
255 observed between studies using auditory and visual stimuli. The density  
256 distributions of semantic and emotion loci within each sensory modality were  
257 similar to the overall trend (see Supplementary Figure S1).

258 \*\*\*Insert Table 2 and Figures 2 & 3 about here\*\*\*

259

## 260 **Meta-Analysis 2**

### 261 **Methods**

262 We performed a second set of meta-analyses to explore the networks of brain  
263 regions that co-activate with the lateral and opercular zones of the IFGorb using  
264 the method of Meta-Analytic Connectivity Modeling (MACM), as described by  
265 Eickhoff et al. (2011). We searched the BrainMap database using Sleuth  
266 software v2.4 on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2016 for experiments reporting loci of activation i)  
267 within the lateral zone of the IFGorb or ii) within the opercular zone of the IFGorb.  
268 This search was conducted using region-of-interest masks of Emotion AND  
269 Semantics (identifying the lateral zone) and Emotion NOT Semantics (identifying

270 the opercular zone). Separate meta-analyses were conducted for the lateral and  
271 opercular zones using ALE (Eickhoff et al., 2009, 2012; Turkeltaub et al., 2002),  
272 as implemented in GingerALE (v2.3.6). Experiments were grouped according to  
273 participant pools, as suggested by Turkeltaub et al. (2012). These searches  
274 yielded 6850 loci across 417 experiments for the lateral zone, and 2579 loci  
275 across 168 experiments for the opercular zone. The conjunction of co-activation  
276 network maps for the lateral zone and opercular zone, as well as contrasts  
277 between these maps, were assessed with a cluster-wise threshold of  $p < 0.05$   
278 from 1000 permutations and a cluster-forming threshold of  $p < 0.001$ , following the  
279 recommendations of Eickhoff et al. (2016).

280

## 281 **Results**

282 Both the lateral zone and opercular zone were consistently co-activated with a  
283 sensorimotor network (see Figure 4 and Table 3), including the bilateral inferior  
284 frontal gyrus (BA 47/45/44) extending into the precentral gyrus (BA 6), thalamus,  
285 ipsilateral superior temporal sulcus (BA 22), fusiform gyrus (BA 37), inferior  
286 parietal lobule (BA 39), anterior cingulate cortex (BA 32), medial frontal cortex  
287 (BA 9), and contralateral putamen. Both zones co-activated with the ipsilateral  
288 amygdala. The lateral zone further co-activated with a prefrontal network,  
289 including the middle frontal gyrus (BA 9), dorsal anterior cingulate cortex (BA 32),  
290 and supplementary motor area (BA 6). Separate analyses of experiments that  
291 used auditory or visual stimuli had broadly similar results, with differences  
292 primarily in auditory and visual association areas (see Figure S2, Supplementary

293 Tables 1 and 2). These coactivation profiles should not be confused with  
294 “functional connectivity”. They only reflect a set of brain areas that respond to  
295 similar experimental manipulations, not temporally-correlated brain areas, as  
296 required by the formal definition of functional connectivity (Friston, 1994, 2011).

297

298 \*\*\*Insert Table 3 & Figure 4 about here\*\*\*

299

### 300 **General Discussion**

301 Our analyses revealed two distinct functional zones within the IFGorb. First, a  
302 lateral zone, located immediately below the anterior horizontal ramus of the  
303 lateral sulcus, contained the highest density of activation loci from experiments  
304 that reported activation within the IFGorb across study categories. A second  
305 zone, extending from the ventral surface adjacent to the orbital gyrus into the  
306 ventral frontal operculum, contained the greatest density of loci from studies in  
307 which participants made judgments about the emotional content of  
308 communicative signals, such as vocal, facial, gestural, and musical expressions  
309 of emotion. The convergence of semantics and emotion in the lateral IFGorb  
310 provides evidence for a neural hub that might integrate the semantic and  
311 expressive aspects of communication.

312 Both historical and contemporary research using a range of  
313 methodological approaches corroborates this division of the IFGorb into distinct  
314 lateral and opercular zones. The parcellation aligns with the hierarchical  
315 classification of Vogt (1910) based on myeloarchitecture, in which the ventral

316 frontal operculum (Vogt's areas 63-66) is distinct from the remainder of the IFG  
317 (Vogt's areas 57-62). Modern parcellation, based on neuroimaging-based  
318 measurements of structural and functional connectivity, has observed a similar  
319 division into lateral and opercular zones in both humans and monkeys (Neubert,  
320 Mars, Thomas, Sallet, and Rushworth, 2014; Neubert, Mars, Sallet, and  
321 Rushworth, 2015). Based on receptor architectonics, Amunts et al. (2010)  
322 observed that the human frontal operculum contains two sub-regions, although  
323 they were located more dorsally than the opercular zone and were most strongly  
324 related to the IFG pars triangularis and pars opercularis of Broca's area, rather  
325 than to the IFGorb. The parcellation of Amunts et al. (2010) did not identify  
326 subregions in the IFGorb, suggesting that differences between the lateral and  
327 opercular zones are not related to differences in neurotransmitter receptors. A  
328 recent atlas of the human brain based on the combination of cortical myelin  
329 content, cortical thickness, task-based fMRI, and resting functional connectivity  
330 observed still finer parcellation throughout the IFG, consistent with Vogt's early  
331 findings (Glasser et al., 2016).

332

### 333 *The lateral zone*

334 Among studies reporting activations within the IFGorb, the lateral zone of the  
335 IFGorb was common to studies in which participants processed either semantic  
336 or emotional content across sensory modalities. This finding suggests that the  
337 lateral zone is a major point of convergence for the perception of semantic and  
338 emotional signals during communication. The multi-functionality of the lateral

339 zone is supported by its tendency to coactivate with both limbic nuclei and the  
340 prefrontal cortex. The lateral zone is also multimodal, since it is implicated in  
341 communicative functions across modalities, for instance the semantics of both  
342 spoken and signed words, and the expression of emotion in the voice, face, and  
343 body. This integration is consistent with the coactivation of the IFGorb with both  
344 auditory and visual association cortex. These networks match the major  
345 anatomical connections of the IFGorb with auditory association cortex via the  
346 arcuate fasciculus (Frühholz et al., 2015) and uncinate fasciculus (Kier et al.,  
347 2004), with visual cortex via the inferior fronto-occipital fasciculus (Sarubbo et al.,  
348 2013), as well as with prefrontal cortex and basal forebrain limbic areas  
349 (Anwander et al., 2007; Catani et al., 2012; Yeterian et al., 2012). In addition to  
350 receiving projections from unisensory auditory and visual cortices, the IFGorb  
351 was strongly connected with the pSTS, which has a very similar response profile  
352 to the IFGorb as a multisensory area that combines expressive cues across the  
353 voice, face, and body (Biau et al., 2016; Campanella and Belin, 2007; Deen et  
354 al., 2015; Kreifelts et al., 2009). This is supported by structural connectivity  
355 between the pSTS and IFGorb (Frühholz, et al., 2015), suggesting that the role of  
356 the IFGorb may go beyond integrating information across sensory modalities,  
357 since some of the inputs that it receives may have been already integrated in  
358 other brain areas.

359         The position of the lateral zone between networks for semantic and  
360 emotion perception, the input it receives from auditory and visual pathways, as  
361 well as its connectivity with both the semantic network and limbic system



362 (Neubert et al., 2014) all suggest that it may aggregate information across  
363 multiple channels of communication. This integration may support the  
364 comprehension of not only literal linguistic meanings – where semantic and  
365 emotional cues support a common message – but also non-literal meanings,  
366 such as sarcasm, hyperbole, euphemism, banter, metaphor, and irony, where the  
367 information gleaned by combining semantic and emotional cues may be greater  
368 than the sum of their parts. Indeed, a meta-analysis of brain imaging studies of  
369 non-literal language comprehension observed the strongest association with a  
370 cluster centered in the left anterior horizontal ramus of the lateral sulcus (Rapp et  
371 al., 2012), which is the macroanatomical landmark that separates the lateral  
372 IFGorb from Broca’s area.

373         Emotional vocalizations are auditory objects just as emotional faces and  
374 postures are instances of visual objects (Schirmer and Kotz, 2006). These  
375 objects are processed with increasing integration and complexity as they  
376 progress through their respective sensory systems. The IFGorb appears to be an  
377 early point of contact of higher-order auditory and visual association areas with  
378 the prefrontal cortex. The convergence of multiple channels of emotional and  
379 semantic communication in the lateral zone suggests that it may combine  
380 information across modalities to form an integrated evaluation of the message  
381 being communicated. Coactivation of the lateral zone and prefrontal cortical  
382 areas, such as the middle frontal gyrus, ACC, and SMA, that are involved in  
383 outcome monitoring and goal-directed action selection (Ridderinkhof et al.,

384 2004), suggests that it may inform the selection of behavioral responses to an  
385 individual's social environment.

386

387 *The opercular zone*

388 The opercular zone had a clear specialization for processing signals that  
389 communicate emotion, and its coactivation profile was more strongly weighted  
390 towards the limbic system. Rather than conveying information, the goal of  
391 emotional communication may be to influence the behavior of conspecifics,  
392 possibly by evoking automatic physiological responses in the perceiver (Owren  
393 and Rendall, 2001). For example, the high amplitude and sharp onset of distress  
394 calls makes them well suited to the purpose of rapidly attracting the attention of  
395 potential allies. This view is supported by the emergence of "structural-  
396 motivational" rules that govern the form of emotional expressions across species  
397 (Morton, 1977; Owings and Morton, 1998). One possibility is that the opercular  
398 zone may mediate affective and physiological responses to perceiving the  
399 emotions of others. Previous studies have observed correlations between  
400 activation in the opercular zone and autonomic responses in the peripheral  
401 nervous system (Nugent et al., 2011; Park and Thayer, 2014). However, the  
402 observation that the IFGorb is more strongly engaged during explicit recognition  
403 tasks than during passive perception is difficult to reconcile with the automatic  
404 nature of autonomic responses (Witteman et al., 2011). An alternative possibility  
405 is that the opercular zone may probe the limbic system for information on an  
406 individual's current affective state, which may influence the perception of the

407 emotions of others vis-a-vis embodied cognition (Neal and Chartrand, 2011;  
408 Niedenthal, 2007). Neubert et al. (2014, 2015) observed that, whereas the  
409 strongest prefrontal connections of the lateral zone are with the IFG pars  
410 triangularis, IFG pars opercularis, and middle frontal gyrus, the strongest  
411 prefrontal connections of the opercular zone are with the amygdalae and medial  
412 prefrontal cortex. The latter area is a key node in the mentalizing network  
413 (Schurz et al., 2014). Our MACM analysis supports a strong connection between  
414 the opercular zone and the medial prefrontal cortex. Still, this pattern of  
415 coactivation indicates that, unlike the lateral zone, whose coactivation profile is  
416 strongly suggestive of an involvement in speech and language, the opercular  
417 zone may have a greater involvement in social cognition. Indeed, machine-  
418 learning algorithms can decode emotional states from patterns of activation in the  
419 opercular zone, suggesting that this area may track the emotional states of  
420 others (Kotz et al., 2013).

421

#### 422 *Lateralization and lack thereof*

423 The classical neurological perspective attributes propositional language to the left  
424 cerebral hemisphere and the expression of emotions to the right cerebral  
425 hemisphere. This position was founded, in part, on the views of Hughlings-  
426 Jackson (1878, 1879), who observed in his medical practice that aphasia,  
427 resulting from trauma to the left cerebral hemisphere, primarily affected  
428 propositional speech, but could spare certain automatic speech patterns, such as  
429 interjections in emotional contexts. Neurological studies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

430 disproportionately sampled patients with right hemisphere lesions, leading to the  
431 belief that impairments of emotional communication were a syndrome of the right  
432 hemisphere, parallel to aphasia as a syndrome of the left hemisphere (Gorelick  
433 and Ross, 1987; Ross and Mesulam, 1979). However, meta-analysis and  
434 broader sampling practices later demonstrated that, while the effect of right  
435 hemisphere damage results in marginally more severe deficits in emotional  
436 expression, such deficits are as likely to result from damage to either hemisphere  
437 (Witteman et al., 2011). This bilaterality is also supported by neuroimaging  
438 studies of both facial and vocal emotional expression (Belyk and Brown, 2014;  
439 Fusar-Poli et al., 2009; Fusar-Poli et al., 2009; Witteman et al., 2012).

440 Our meta-analyses revealed strong left lateralization of IFGorb activation  
441 in the neuroimaging literature on the perception of semantic content, but a lack of  
442 lateralization in the neuroimaging literature on emotion perception across  
443 communicative domains. This follows from an emerging perspective that  
444 emotional expression across domains may be processed by a common bilateral  
445 network (Brück et al., 2011; Frühholz et al., 2016).

446

#### 447 *An evolutionary paradox*

448 Given that non-human primates readily employ emotional expressions but are  
449 relatively poor in symbolic language use (Arbib et al., 2008), how did the lateral  
450 IFGorb come to acquire semantic functionality from an ancestral area whose  
451 function was likely emotional? The IFGorb (BA 47) in humans corresponds to  
452 Walker's area 12 in macaques (*Macaca mulatta*; Petrides and Pandya, 2002).

453 Importantly, this area's parcellation into lateral and opercular zones appears to  
454 be shared between species. In humans, the functional connectivity profile of a  
455 region approximating the lateral zone is most similar to the macaque area 47/12,  
456 while that of a region approximating the opercular zone is most similar to the  
457 functional connectivity of the macaque's lateral agranular insula (Neubert et al.,  
458 2014, 2015). The relatively large phylogenetic distance between humans and  
459 macaques within the primate order suggests that this correspondence may hold  
460 across primates and may therefore be representative of a common primate  
461 ancestor.

462         Although great apes can identify objects and their likely uses, their ability  
463 to use symbols in place of objects is limited to approximately the level of human  
464 children (Lyn et al., 2011). With extensive training, chimpanzees (*Pan*  
465 *troglodytes*) and gorillas (*Gorilla gorilla*) can learn dozens or hundreds of  
466 vocabulary items in American Sign Language (Gardner and Gardner, 1985;  
467 Patterson and Cohn, 1990). In addition, there is some evidence that a minimal  
468 form of these behaviors occurs in the wild in some species (Arbib et al., 2008).  
469 While such findings do demonstrate some capacity for semantic communication  
470 in great apes, their abilities fall short of the extent of the human vocabulary and  
471 the ease with which it is acquired.

472         We are not aware of similar studies conducted with the species of  
473 primates for which comparative neuroscience data are available (such as  
474 macaques), although it may be presumed that the semantic abilities of these  
475 species are even more limited. Hence, the IFGorb appears to have evolved in

476 lower primates even in the absence of a strong capacity for referential semantics  
477 with which it is associated in humans. The preserved morphology, but marked  
478 change in function, of the IFGorb across the primate order therefore presents  
479 somewhat of a paradox.

480         One possible solution is that the human IFGorb may have acquired new  
481 connections as part of the evolution of the semantic network. The human and  
482 monkey lateral zones share extensive frontal and temporal connectivity (Neubert  
483 et al., 2014). Hence, many of the connections between the IFGorb and brain  
484 areas that would become important to other aspects of language, such as the  
485 IFG pars triangularis (BA 45) and IFG pars opercularis (BA 44) that are  
486 implicated in syntactic and phonological processes, may have been in place prior  
487 to the evolution of language. We hypothesize that the human lateral IFGorb may  
488 have formed novel connections with more distal brain regions, allowing it to  
489 interface with the emerging semantic network. A candidate for such a target of  
490 connectivity is the angular gyrus (Neubert et al., 2014), which in humans is  
491 involved in both semantics and social cognition (Binder and Desai, 2011; Schurz  
492 et al., 2014). The IFGorb may have initially evolved to support the  
493 comprehension of emotional signals, being later co-opted to support semantic  
494 communication in humans by forming new connections with brain regions that  
495 formed the human semantic network.

496

497

498

499 *Conclusion*

500 The IFGorb contains at least two functionally specialized divisions that we have  
501 referred to as the lateral and opercular zones. The lateral zone may be a locus of  
502 convergence between semantic and emotional channels of communication, while  
503 the opercular zone may be more specialized for understanding the social  
504 meanings of the emotional states communicated by others. This finding has  
505 implications for the further study of both semantic and emotional-expression  
506 processing, as both fields have independently attributed domain-specific  
507 functions to the IFGorb. The convergence of semantics and emotional  
508 expression in the lateral zone suggests that these functions may be more  
509 meaningfully studied together than apart. The IFGorb may provide a mechanism  
510 by which channels of communication are integrated to support the interpretation  
511 of statements with the rich nuances of meaning typical of human communication,  
512 including sarcasm, hyperbole, euphemism, banter, metaphor, and irony.

513

514

**Acknowledgments**

515 This work was funded by grants from the Auditory Cognitive Neuroscience  
516 Society (ACN) to MB and SAK, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research  
517 Council (NSERC) of Canada to SB, and the Biotechnology and Biological  
518 Science Research Council (BBSRC) of the UK to SAK.

519

**Figure Legends**

520

521

522 **Figure 1:** Location of the IFGorb (purple) in the left hemisphere from the

523 Harvard-Oxford probabilistic cortical map (Craddock et al., 2012).

524

525 **Figure 2:** (A) Density maps for activation loci from studies of semantic (blue) and

526 emotion (red) judgments, and (B) density maps for activation loci from studies

527 using auditory (yellow) and visual (green) stimuli, before corrections for sample

528 size and number of loci per study (see Methods). Translucent and opaque

529 surfaces represent the 50<sup>th</sup> and 95<sup>th</sup> percentiles of density, respectively.

530

531 **Figure 3:** (A) The 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of density maps for studies of the processing of

532 the semantic (blue) or emotional (red) content of communicative signals after

533 carrying out corrections for sample size and number of loci reported per study,

534 and as mapped onto a template brain in Talairach space. (B) Parametric map of

535 the statistical contrast between emotion and semantic density maps. A volume

536 deep within the ventral frontal operculum (red) was more densely populated by

537 loci from studies of emotion judgments, since few studies of semantic processing

538 were observed in this zone. A volume on the lateral surface (blue) was more

539 densely populated by loci from studies of semantic processing. However, we

540 note that the lateral zone was not exclusive to loci from semantic studies and that

541 there was also a high density of loci from emotion studies. Rather, studies of

542 semantic processing only engaged the lateral zone, resulting in a greater density

543 of semantic loci in this zone.



544

545 **Figure 4:** Meta-analytic connectivity maps showing regions that co-activate with  
546 both zones of the IFGorb (purple), more often with the lateral zone (blue), or  
547 more often with the opercular zone (red). We applied a cluster-wise threshold of  
548  $p < 0.05$  to these maps, calculated from 1000 permutations and an initial cluster-  
549 forming threshold of  $p < 0.001$ . ACC: anterior cingulate cortex; aSTG: anterior  
550 superior temporal gyrus; IFG: inferior frontal gyrus; MFG: middle frontal gyrus;  
551 MPFC: medial prefrontal cortex; PrCG: precentral gyrus; pSTG: posterior  
552 superior temporal gyrus; SMA: supplementary motor area.

553

554 **Figure S1:** Comparison of activation density maps for studies of the processing  
555 of (A) semantic and (B) emotional content of communicative signals. Density  
556 distributions are roughly similar for the visual (purple) and auditory (orange)  
557 modalities. Small differences in the centers-of-mass across stimulus modalities  
558 suggest some potential for further subdivision, but this could not be reliably  
559 detected.

560 **Figure S2:** Meta-analytic connectivity maps showing regions that co-activate with  
561 the lateral (A) and opercular (B) zones for experiments using auditory (green) or  
562 visual (orange) stimuli and the statistical conjunction between the two (purple).  
563 ACC: anterior cingulate cortex; aSTG: anterior superior temporal gyrus; IFG:  
564 inferior frontal gyrus; MFG: middle frontal gyrus; MPFC: medial prefrontal cortex;  
565 PrCG: precentral gyrus; pSTG: posterior superior temporal gyrus; SMA:  
566 supplementary motor area.

567

568 **Tables**

569

	Number of Loci		Sum
	Emotion	Semantics	
Audition	24	52	76
Vision	231	193	424
Sum	255	245	499

	Number of Experiments		Sum
	Emotion	Semantics	
Audition	17	27	44
Vision	145	92	237
Sum	162	119	281

570

571 **Table 1:** Summary of the number of activation loci and the number of

572 experiments contributing to the kernel density analysis.

573

574

Semantic > Emotion					
Zone	Size (mm <sup>3</sup> )	z-score	x	y	z
Lateral	351	3.74	-40	28	-9
Lateral	140	3.17	-50	33	-4
Lateral	18	3.17	-32	18	-4
Lateral	5	2.44	-49	25	0

Emotion > Semantic					
Zone	Size (mm <sup>3</sup> )	z-score	x	y	z
Opercular	320	3.54	-24	20	-14
Opercular	222	4.07	-39	19	-16
Opercular	65	3.72	-25	30	-4
Opercular	9	2.59	-35	31	-7

575

576

577

**Table 2:** Coordinates of cluster centroids from permutation tests on the density

578

distributions of loci of activation from brain imaging studies of semantic-content

579

perception and emotion perception. There was a local increase in the density of

580

loci related to semantic-content perception in the lateral IFGorb, where these loci

581

were found almost exclusively. There was a local increase in the density of loci

582

related to emotion perception in the opercular IFGorb, where semantic-content

583

experiments rarely reported activation loci.

584

Conjunction				
Region	x	y	z	Size(mm <sup>3</sup> )
IFG/PrCG (BA 47/45/44/6)	-38	21	0	22567
ACC (BA 32)	-6	24	41	2379
MPFC (BA 9)	-4	50	26	2245
pSTS (BA 22)	-55	-40	2	3049
aSTS (BA 22)	-52	-7	-8	1619
Fusiform gyrus (BA 37)	-41	-58	-14	2887
IPL (BA 39)	-40	-63	33	135
Amygdala	-20	-3	-11	2677
Thalamus	-11	-10	6	1239
IFG (BA 47/45/44/6)	38	20	4	17579
Thalamus	11	-6	4	249
Putamen	23	-1	3	129

Lateral Zone > Opercular Zone				
Region	x	y	z	Size(mm <sup>3</sup> )
Lateral Zone (BA 47)	-46	24	2	3324
Mid. FG (BA 9)	-54	10	24	992
SMA (BA 6)	-2	13	47	786
ACC (BA 32)	-6	11	45	280

Opercular Zone > Lateral Zone				
Region	x	y	z	Size(mm <sup>3</sup> )
Opercular Zone (BA 47)	-29	15	-14	8163

585

586

**Table 3:** Coordinates of cluster centroids for meta-analytic connectivity maps for

587

the conjunction [Lateral Zone  $\cap$  Opercular Zone], and the contrasts [Lateral Zone

588

> Opercular Zone] and [Opercular Zone > Lateral Zone]. We applied a cluster-

589

wise threshold of  $p < 0.05$  to these maps, calculated from 1000 permutations of

590

an initial cluster-forming threshold of  $p < 0.001$ . ACC: anterior cingulate cortex;

591

aSTG: anterior superior temporal gyrus; IFG: inferior frontal gyrus; IPL: inferior

592

parietal lobule; MFG: middle frontal gyrus; MPFC: medial prefrontal cortex;

593 PrCG: precentral gyrus; pSTG: posterior superior temporal gyrus; SMA:  
594 supplementary motor area.

595

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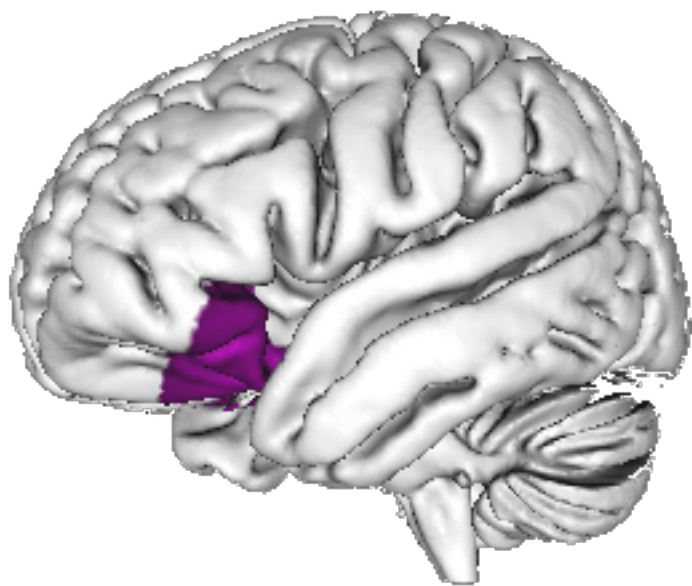
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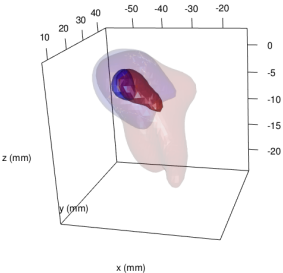
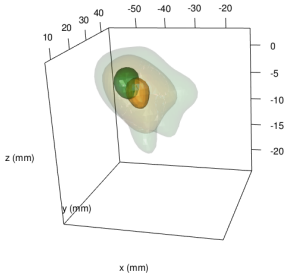
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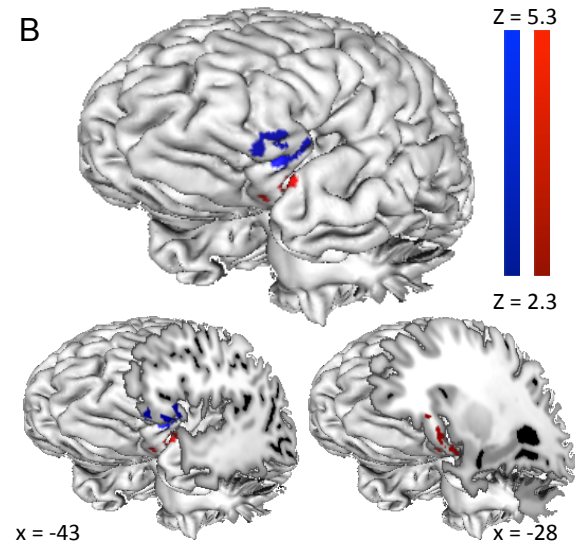
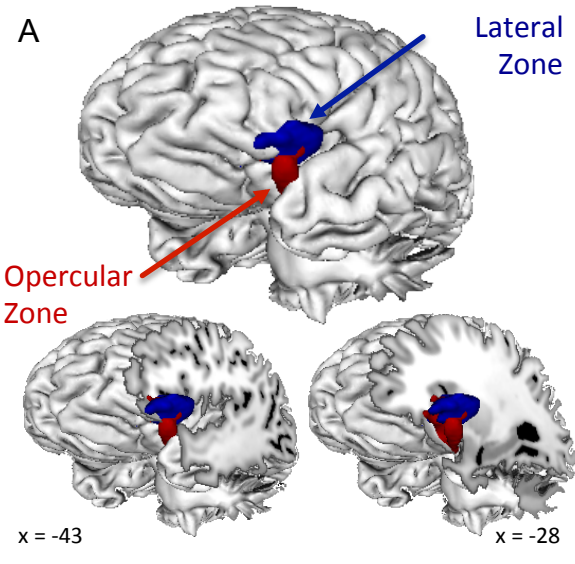
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**A****Judgment Task****B****Sensory Modality**



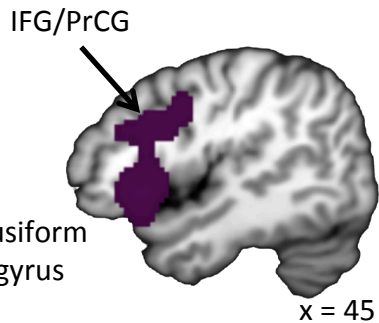
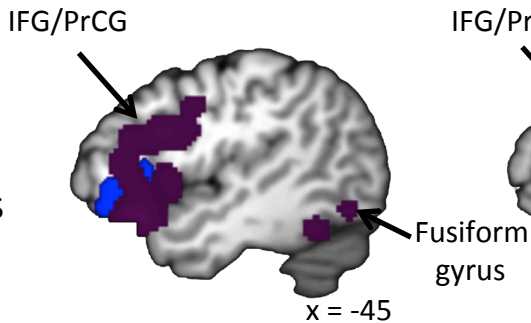
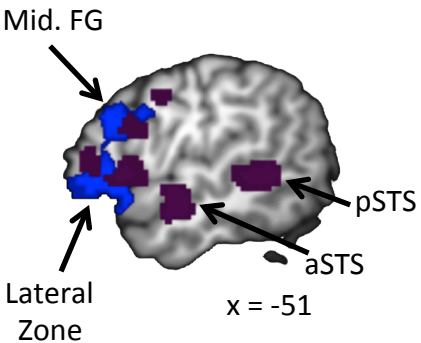
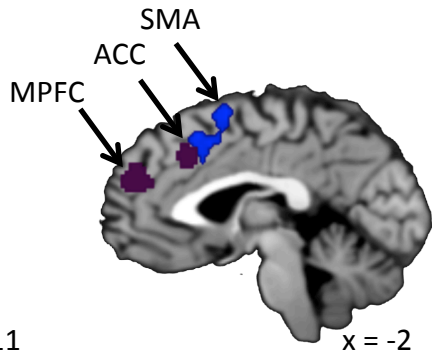
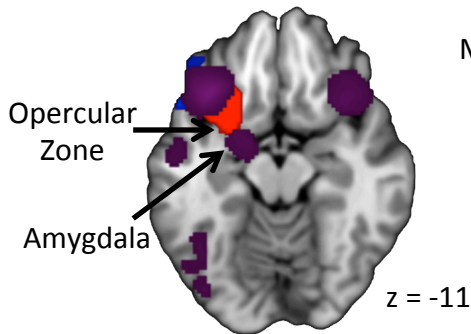
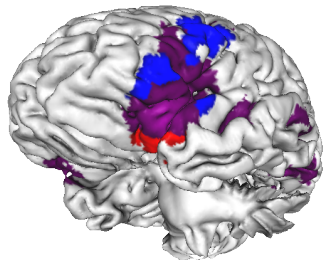


Table 1

	Number of Foci		Sum
	Emotion	Semantics	
Audition	24	52	76
Vision	231	193	424
Sum	255	245	499

	Number of Experiments		Sum
	Emotion	Semantics	
Audition	17	27	44
Vision	145	92	237
Sum	162	119	281

Table 2

Semantic > Emotion					
Zone	Size (mm <sup>3</sup> )	z-score	x	y	z
Lateral	351	3.74495	-40	28	-9
Lateral	140	3.16927	-50	33	-4
Lateral	18	3.1717	-32	18	-4
Lateral	5	2.44177	-49	25	0

Emotion > Semantic					
Zone	Size (mm <sup>3</sup> )	z-score	x	y	z
Opercular	320	3.53789	-24	20	-14
Opercular	222	4.06788	-39	19	-16
Opercular	65	3.71974	-25	30	-4
Opercular	9	2.58856	-35	31	ç

Table 3

Conjunction				
Region	x	y	z	Size(mm3)
IFG/PrcG (BA 47/45)	-38	21	0	22567
ACC (BA 32)	-6	24	41	2379
MPFC (BA 9)	-4	50	26	2245
pSTS (BA 22)	-55	-40	2	3049
aSTS (BA 22)	-52	-7	-8	1619
Fusiform gyrus (B <sub>l</sub> )	-41	-58	-14	2887
IPL (BA 39)	-40	-63	33	135
Amygdala	-20	-3	-11	2677
Thalamus	-11	-10	6	1239
IFG/PrcG (BA 47/45)	38	20	4	17579
Thalamus	11	-6	4	249
Putamen	23	-1	3	129

Lateral Zone > Opercular Zone				
Region	x	y	z	Size(mm3)
Lateral Zone (BA 4)	-46	24	2	3324
Mid. FG (BA 9)	-54	10	24	992

SMA (BA 6)	-2	13	47	786
ACC (BA 32)	-6	11	45	280

**Opercular Zone > Lateral Zone**

Region	x	y	z	Size(mm3)
Opercular Zone (BA	-29	15	-14	8163