



# Implicit Association Test (IAT)

*“Every man has reminiscences which he would not tell to everyone but only his friends. He has other matters in his mind which he would not reveal even to his friends, but only to himself, and that in secret. But there are other things which a man is afraid to tell even to himself, and every decent man has a number of such things stored away in his mind.”*

*Fjodor Dostojewski*

It is well known that people don't always 'speak their minds', and it is suspected that people don't always 'know their minds'. Understanding such divergences is important for the management of diversity issues.

For the evaluation of implicit attitudes we make use of a so far unique instrument: the **Implicit Association Test**. Implicit attitudes could be seen as spontaneous automatic and primarily unconscious processes of making decisions. Related to the issue of diversity they reflect the implicit representation a person has about the organisation and the working group.

The IAT was introduced by Anthony Greenwald and Mahzarin Banaji, Yale University, to assess attitudes related to race and gender issues.

eye square develops and implements full service solutions for online based marketing and personnel research issues. In close cooperation with you our experts in market research, psychology, design and information technology develop individual solutions to improve your customer communication and your personnel management.

Advantages of using the IAT:

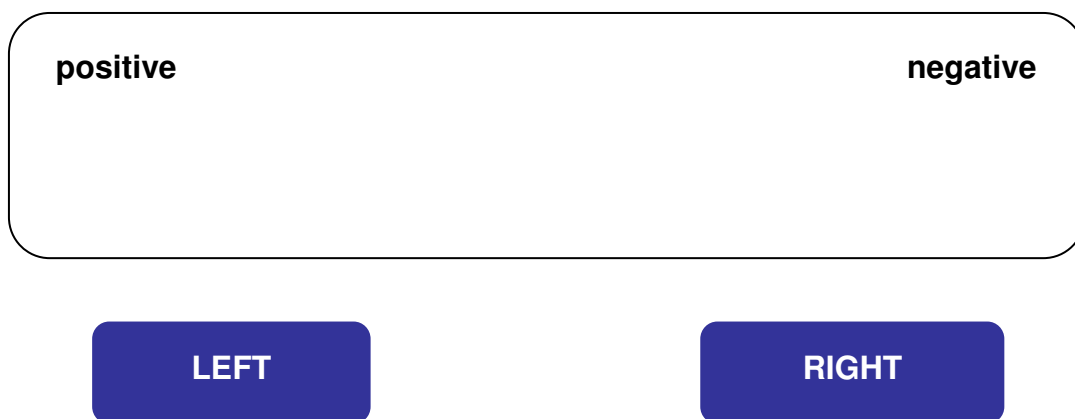
- The IAT measures the automatic implicit representations of diversity issues.
- The IAT is not influenced by intentional judgement biases (e.g. social expectations).
- The IAT is extremely efficient in terms of time and costs (it takes about 3 minutes).
- The IAT reveals a high test acceptance by users.
- Online version compromises a time efficient and cost efficient tool.
- High test acceptance.
- Picture IAT`s are well suited for intercultural research.

eye square offers you the IAT as an online implementation. Speak with our experts about implementing the IAT for your personnel management.

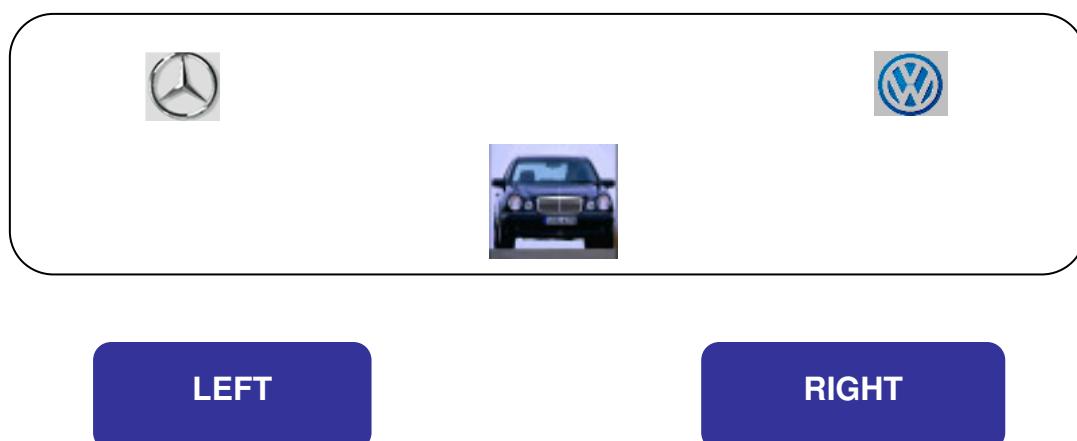
## Case Study Mercedes – Volkswagen

We adopted the IAT for the evaluation of implicit branding success. Therefore we conducted a study in which we compared the assessment of Mercedes and Volkswagen. Participants were 56 students of the Technical University Berlin.

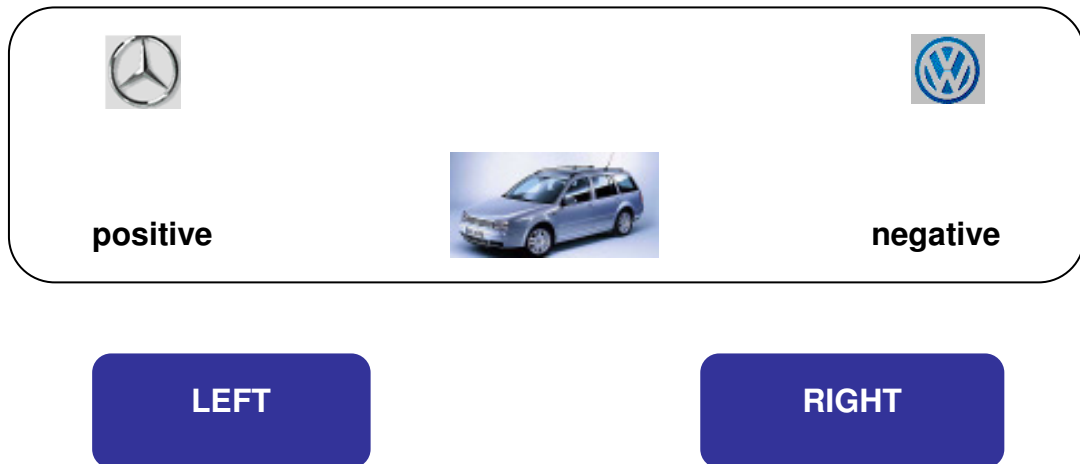
The Implicit Associations Tests consist of a series of semantic classification tasks on a computer. For the first trial participants have to classify evaluative unambiguous adjectives according to being either positive or negative. Here you see, how the computer screen looked like:



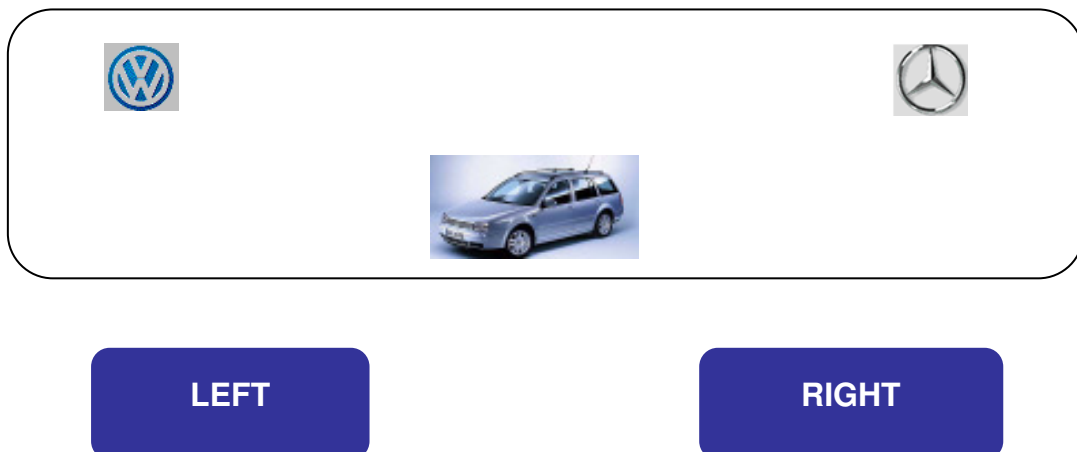
The stimuli were presented here (showing) in the middle of the screen. These were adjectives, like happy, or lazy etc. The participants task is to press a left key as fast as possible, if the presented adjective is a positive one, and a right key as fast as possible, if the stimulus is negative. Since the adjectives are evaluative unambiguous, this task is easy and everyone can do it very fast.



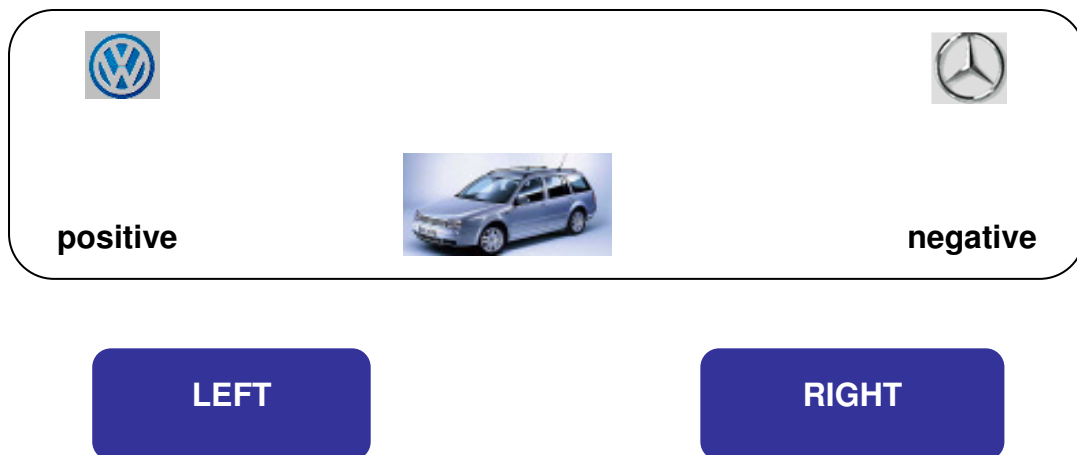
In the second trial, the stimuli were pictures of a Mercedes or a Volkswagen. The participants task was to press the left key, if the picture was a Mercedes and the right key, if it was a Volkswagen. Again, this task was pretty easy for our participants.



In the third trial, these two simple classification-tasks were combined, such that the participants did not know, whether there would appear an adjective or a picture on the screen. Their task was to press the left key, if it was a Mercedes or a positive adjective. By the same token, they had to press the right key, if the presented stimulus was a Volkswagen or a negative adjective.



In the fourth trial, there were the same pictures from the trials before presented once again. However, this time respective keys were changed. Now the participants task was to press the left key for East-German cities and the right key for West-German ones.



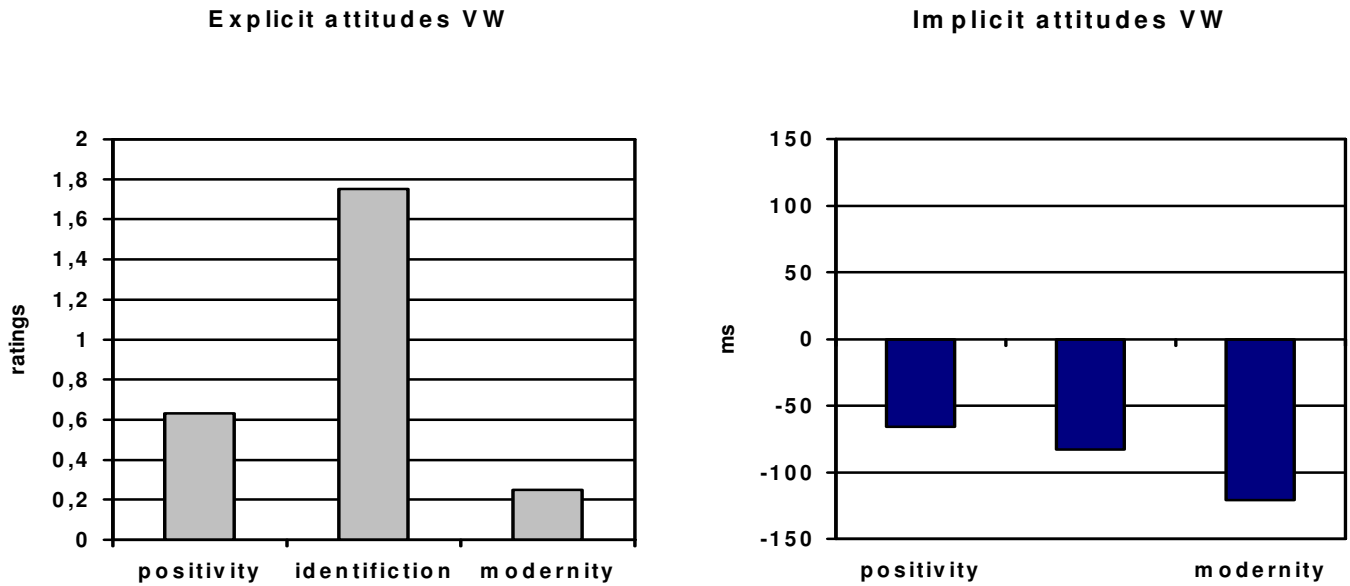
In the last trial, the two classification tasks were again combined, and again all stimuli were presented. This time, the left key shared the categories Volkswagen for pictures and positive adjectives, while the right key shared the categories for Mercedes and negative adjectives.

The relevant trials for measuring implicit associations are only the two combined sequences. Note, that we of course counter-balanced the order, in which the two combined tasks appeared.

If the two categories in the combined trials shared by one response key, are evaluatively associated with each other (they are compatible), the task is easier and therefore the time people need to complete the task (the response latencies) is shorter than if the two categories are evaluatively incompatible. The "IAT-effect" is then computed as the difference of mean latencies in the incompatible and in the compatible trials. The higher this score, the more pronounced a respondent implicitly evaluates one category as more positive than the other one. In this study our participants were faster in the Mercedes positive condition than in the Volkswagen positive condition. Implicitly Mercedes is evaluated more positive than the Volkswagen, this is reflected by the shorter reaction times people need in the Mercedes positive condition relatively to the Volkswagen positive condition.



Diagrams show the mean IAT scores for VW.



Diagrams show the average implicit and explicit attitudes towards Mercedes and Volkswagen. Positive scores are pro Volkswagen and negative scores are pro Mercedes. Participants judged Mercedes implicitly more positive than Volkswagen but they explicitly judged Volkswagen better than Mercedes.