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## FOXP2 as the Genetic Basis for the Capacity to Shift Between Analytic and Associative Modes of Thought

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**Abstract:** It was previously proposed that the burst of creativity in the Middle/Upper Paleolithic following the appearance of anatomically modern humans was due to the onset of contextual focus, the capacity to shift between an associative mode of thought conducive to forging connections and breaking out of a rut, and an analytic mode conducive to logical problem solving. Hominids could then generate ideas in an associative mode, and refine them in an analytic mode, and process representations at multiple levels of detail, and from different perspectives. This resulted in richer understandings of their world. It is proposed that the FOXP2 gene, which evolved at this time, is responsible for onset of contextual focus. FOXP2 thereby created an unprecedented need for language to (a) keep track of representations for oneself, and (b) capitalize on different perspectives of others. This explains why FOXP2 is implicated in language but not uniquely associated with it.