



THE 9TH ANNUAL
SYMPOSIUM FOR
UNDERGRADUATE
PSYCHOLOGY
ENGAGEMENT &
RESEARCH

TO RECOGNIZE & HONOR
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH &
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DURING
THE 2017 – 2018 ACADEMIC YEAR.

April 26th, 2018
The Big 12 Room
Kansas Memorial Union

University of Kansas
Department of Psychology

Symposium for Undergraduate Psychology
Engagement & Research
2018

Awards to be presented at the
Psychology Recognition Ceremony

Best Honors Thesis Project
Best Class Project
Best Independent Study Project

CATEGORY: HONORS THESIS

(1) The Effects of Emotional Arousal on the Speech-to-Song Illusion

Evan Hatley

(Dr. Michael Vitevitch)

Honors Thesis

Illusions are commonly thought of as fun tricks of the brain, but they offer a glimpse into how sensory perception occurs in the brain. In the auditory illusion known as the Speech-to-Song Illusion a spoken phrase is repeated several times, and begins to sound as if it is being sung, suggesting that speech and song perception may share similar cognitive mechanisms (Asaridou & McQueen, 2013). Previous research suggests that a model of speech perception based on links between phonemes, syllables, and word detectors may account for the Speech-to-Song Illusion as well as other auditory perceptual illusions (Vitevitch et al., submitted). The present study examined how emotionally-arousing words affect the Song-to-Speech Illusion. Participants heard lists of words that contained either high-arousal words or low-arousal words, and rated how speech- or song-like each list was using a 5-point Likert scale. The results found no statistically significant relationship between emotional arousal of words and song-like perception of those words. This finding may suggest limits to top-down influences (such as the meaning of the words or their emotional valence) on the Song-to-Speech Illusion, and instead indicate a stronger influence of bottom-up stimulation on the illusion.

(2) The Effect of Familiarity on the Speech-to-Song Illusion

Ashwini Kamat

(Dr. Michael Vitevitch)

Honors Thesis

The Speech-to-Song illusion is an auditory illusion in which the repetition of a spoken phrase leads to words sounding melodious, like a phrase is being sung instead of spoken. Previous studies suggest that the mechanisms found in Node Structure Theory, a model of language processing, might explain how this illusion occurs. Regarding this illusion, what has been explored less is the experience which many people report: once the illusion is experienced with a phrase, the illusion seems to occur almost immediately the next time the phrase is heard. The present study examined the phenomenon of familiarity influencing the illusion by presenting some phrases only once during the experiment and presenting other phrases several times. It was hypothesized that phrases presented multiple times during the experiment will become more familiar, and will be perceived as more musical, or song-like, as compared to novel lists never repeated during the course of the experiment. Preliminary data suggests that across repetitions, song-like ratings of the repeated items increase. Phrases presented multiple times sound more musical than novel phrases. These results show that the Speech-to-Song illusion is affected not just by bottom-up factors as explained by Node Structure Theory, but also by additional top-down factors (e.g., familiarity).

(3) Associations Between Military Sexual Trauma and Eating-Disorder Risk

Taylor McMurty

(Dr. Kelsie Forbush)

Honors Thesis

Previous studies indicate that experiences with military sexual trauma (MST) are associated not only with trauma-related disorders (e.g., PTSD) but also eating disorders. Veterans entering the US Department of Veterans Affairs healthcare system complete a screen for MST. However, the MST screen is brief and comprised of two general questions: "While you were in the military: a) Did you receive uninvited and unwanted sexual attention, such as touching, cornering, pressure for sexual favors, or verbal remarks; or b) Did someone ever use force or threat of force to have sexual contact with you against your will." The purpose of this study is to test the association of specific types of sexual trauma (i.e., touching or sexual assault) measured by the MST screen with disordered-eating behaviors and eating-disorder risk. Participants are being recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) and complete self-report measures that assess eating behaviors, traumatic experiences, and post-traumatic stress symptoms. Based on previous literature, I hypothesize that more "severe" forms of MST (i.e., sexual assault) will have higher associations with eating-disorder risk, particularly for purging (e.g., self-induced vomiting). I also hypothesize that associations between PTSD and disordered eating will be stronger in women (vs. men). Results are expected to lead to an improved understanding of the associations among trauma and disordered eating in veterans which, in turn, may facilitate the development of more targeted prevention and intervention programs for veterans.

(4) Embodiment in Signed Language: What ASL Can Teach Us about Emotion and Metaphor in Language

Emma Murrugarra

(Dr. Ruth Ann Atchley)

Honors Thesis

Despite many of the stigmas that society has against being deaf, many users of Sign Language report taking great pride in the emotional and metaphorical complexity that their language offers them. The purpose of the present study is to investigate the role of embodied cognition in language through Sign Language, and how we can apply this knowledge to studying emotional salience and learning in metaphorical space. To investigate how Sign Language shapes perception, both d/Deaf native-signers of American Sign Language (ASL) and hearing native-speakers of English are being recruited for a three-part study. The first and second part of this study focuses on investigating differences in emotional valence and arousal between users of ASL and users of English in both language production and perception. The third part of the study targets the different metaphorical elements that contribute to the comprehension and learning of new ideas through use of gestural/signing space. In this third study, participants are randomly split into different conditions and shown videos of a person telling made-up stories in either metaphor-congruent gestural patterns, i.e., "power is up", or metaphor-incongruent patterns, i.e., "power is down". It is hypothesized that participants in the incongruent condition, particularly users of ASL, are less likely to learn and remember information presented in the story. Implications for this research include gaining a better understanding of the cultural relativism of an underrepresented and stigmatized population, and better appreciating the rich complexity that languages like ASL have to offer.

(5) The Relationship Between Facial Feedback and Emotional Cognition

Elizabeth Waldberg, Sabrina Gregersen, Erik Benau
(Dr. Ruth Ann Atchley)
Honors Thesis

How does body movement contribute to the intangible, technicolor experience of emotion? Embodiment experiments suggest that physical phenomena such as posture (Price, Dieckman, and Harmon-Jones, 2012) and language (Davis, Winkielman, & Coulson 2015) can influence our phenomenal experience of emotion. The facial feedback hypothesis claims that "facial feedback has a small but reliable moderating effect on the emotional experience and on the evaluation of emotional stimuli" (Strack, Martin, & Stepper, 1988; 768). This project will test the facial feedback hypothesis by manipulating facial responses to emotional stimuli of three valences – positive, negative, and neutral. It will further examine whether the animacy of stimulus content matters to the strength of the emotional response by presenting stimuli with and without humans. Its methodology utilizes EEG and EMG to measure brain ERPs and facial muscle movements, which in turn can be analyzed to determine the intensity of the emotional response. Ultimately this research could help verify the facial feedback hypothesis while simultaneously contributing new knowledge about the impacts of content animacy to the embodiment literature.

(6) "Like" Me Now: The Impact of Narcissistic Traits on Social Media Discounting

Gita Nadinda
(Dr. Ruth Ann Atchley)
Honors Thesis

The popular press and psychologists (Twenge, Miller, & Campbell, 2014; Paris, 2014) have described millennials as being higher on the personality trait of narcissism than other generations. Possibly one correlate of this is the fact that millennials comprise a large number of users of social networking sites (SNS). The ease of accessibility of SNS may increase the likelihood of

cellphone addiction (Salehan & Negahban, 2013) which may lead to distracted driving. Previous research has evaluated the effects of social media, narcissism, and distracted driving. The current study aims to understand the decision-making process that underlies social media usage through delay discounting methods, while also considering the relative impact of narcissistic traits on these processes. Participants from the introductory psychology research pool and Mturk completed an online survey comprised of a monetary choice questionnaire, delay discounting task, impulsivity measure and a narcissism measure. In the delay discounting task, participants were asked to imagine six different hypothetical scenarios where they receive SNS notifications via Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram while driving. In each scenario, they were asked to choose between checking their notifications immediately and receiving a smaller reward, or waiting to check their notification to receive a larger reward. We predict the rate of discounting, or the urgency to respond, differs depending on the population, narcissistic personality, type of social media, and content of notifications.

(7) Memory and Cognitive Control: What Executive Functions Are Related to Memory Problems?

Zachary Douglass Green, Mirjana Ivanisevic
(Dr. Ruth Ann Atchley)
Honors Thesis

Aging is often accompanied by declines in physical in mental health which results in a loss of functional independence. These declines are societally and financially destructive, thus many older adults worry about declines in their mental faculties. One of the most common complaints presented to clinicians from older adults is that of memory complaints. Executive functions, sets of cognitive control processes important for decision-making, can be measured through neuropsychological testing and may provide insight into individual differences in memory difficulties.

Mäntylä and colleagues (2010) showed that performance on these tasks can be related to both objective and subjective measures of metamemory. This study attempted to reveal if a similar relationship between subcomponent measures of executive functioning and self-report measures of metamemory might be found in a sample of healthy older adults ($N=23$). Results indicate that only the executive function subcomponent associated with monitoring of working memory was associated with reports of memory difficulties. Future research should be directed towards better characterizing these executive functions to evaluate how closely they are associated with metamemory.

(8) Impact of mobile phone accessibility on psychological and physiological processes

Sergej Grunevski
(Dr. Bruce Liese)
Honors Thesis

Most individuals have immediate, ongoing access to their mobile phones and form healthy attachments to their phones – almost as they might to other people. However, some individuals form unhealthy attachments to their mobile phones and, as a result, experience lower GPAs, higher levels of anxiety, depression, and attention-related problems. The purpose of this study was to investigate how accessibility to mobile phones affects individuals and whether mobile phone dependency has a moderating effect. KU undergraduates ($N = 20$: 12 males & 8 females, $Age = 19.50$, $SD = 1.54$) were recruited through SONA and were randomly assigned to one of two groups (brief access or no access to their mobile phones during the study). Both groups had their mobile phones taken away, their mobile phone dependency surveyed, and changes in their anxiety and physiological (heart rate) arousal measured throughout the study. There was no significant difference found between the groups in anxiety ($F(3,51) = .690$, $p = .56$.), heart rate ($F(2,34) = 1.430$, $p = .25$), or heart rate variability ($F(2,34)$

1.687 , $p = .20$). However, trends in the data suggest that those with no mobile phone access had higher anxiety, heart rate, and heart rate variability than those with brief mobile phone access. Limitations of sample size are discussed along with directions for future research.

(9) Being Gay or Homosexual: The Effect of Labeling on Stereotype Endorsement

Chad Miller
(Dr. Monica Biernat)
Honors Thesis

Social group labels impact public perception of the groups they describe. For example, gay slurs, as opposed to category labels (gay/homosexual), cue negative impressions of gay individuals. However, research tends to assume “gay” and “homosexual” to be equally neutral. In response, a previous study showed that male participants exhibited more prejudice toward “homosexual” people as opposed to “gay” people. In an effort to further explore the role of social group labels in group perception, the current study examined the effects of category labeling on evaluations of gay women/men as a function of participant sex. We predicted that participants would continue to report greater anti-gay prejudice toward homosexual men than toward gay men. We also predicted that participants would endorse traits/stereotypes differentially depending on the label used to describe gay people, particularly expecting participants to endorse negative traits more readily for target groups described as “homosexual” rather than as “gay.” To test our predictions, we recruited 589 heterosexual participants from Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (an online research system). All participants relayed the extent to which they endorsed traits/stereotypes for either gay men, gay women, homosexual men, homosexual women, or lesbian women and completed an anti-gay prejudice measure. Results suggest that male participants only showed differential evaluations of a target's warmth, competence, and morality depending on whether the target is described as “gay” or “homosexual.” Target gender effects also emerged but only for “gay” targets.

(10) Action Identification and How Meaning is Created in Light of Mortality Awareness

Alex Ogan, Trevor Swanson, Alyssa Brown
(Dr. Mark Landau)
Honors Thesis

People imbue their lives with meaning and construct abstract and complex understandings of the world around them through a variety of methods. The objective of this study is to explore how the concepts of Terror Management Theory (TMT) affect meaning-making. Action identification processes – adopting higher and/or lower-level construals of events in the world – are what allow people to effectively interact with the surrounding environment and cope with psychological threats when they arise (Vallacher & Wegner, 1985, 1987). TMT has explored the reasons *why* people defend their worldviews and seek self-esteem, but this study is interested in *how* people do this. Utilizing various measures of abstract, high-level thinking, the hypothesis of this study is that individuals faced with mortality threats will perform better on tasks that require abstract, high-level problem solving to complete when given a self-affirmation prime beforehand. The self-affirmation prime will allow participants to reaffirm their meaningful worldview and shift back to a high construal level to better complete these abstract tasks.

(11) Mindfulness meditation; a comparative analysis

Erik Gunderson
(Dr. Stephen Ilardi)
Honors Thesis

I propose to investigate the relationship between mindfulness- the experience of attention to the present moment without judgment- and the practice of mindfulness meditation in a student sample, as measured by mindfulness scales such as the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS). The aim of this project is to describe the

differences in types/levels of mindfulness between practitioners of mindfulness meditation and those who demonstrate characteristics of mindfulness but who may have little to no experience with mindfulness meditation techniques per se. Much research has been done on the clinical potential of mindfulness as both a therapy protocol and therapeutic skill but little to no research has been conducted investigating the link between nontraditional mindfulness practice and levels of mindfulness in those who inadvertently practice mindfulness. The practice of mindfulness meditation is hypothesized to be associated with higher levels of mindfulness and mindfulness related skills (Vinchurkar, S. A., Singh, D., & Visweswarajah, N. K. 2014). I predict that those who regularly practice mindfulness meditation will have higher levels of mindful awareness than those who do not have a mindfulness meditation regimen in place.

(12) Relational Mobility and Objectification Level across Different Cultures

Jinni Yu, Xian Zhao
(Dr. Omri Gillath)
Honors Thesis

In the current study, we examined the association between relational mobility and objectification across different cultural backgrounds. Relational mobility refers to the degree to which a particular society or group provides individuals with opportunities to choose relational partners based on their personal preferences (Yuki et al., 2007). Objectification manifests as focus on physical attributes instead of the mental and moral qualities of a potential partner (Nussbaum, 1995). Ongoing research in the Gillath lab shows that there is an association between relational mobility and objectification in the U.S. Here, we expanded this research by looking at different cultural backgrounds, by comparing Chinese in China (n = 150), with Chinese immigrants in the U.S. (n = 145), and non-Chinese Americans (n = 150). Our hypotheses were: (1) non-Chinese Americans will

score higher on relational mobility and objectification than Chinese who have recently relocated to America (new Chinese immigrants and Chinese international students), and both groups will be higher than Chinese in China; (2) Relational mobility will mediate the association between culture background and objectification.

Participants completed an online battery, which included various self-report measures assessing relational mobility and objectification as well as other personality scales. Initial analysis revealed a significant difference between the three samples on relational mobility supporting our hypothesis (Chinese in America reported higher relational mobility than Chinese in China, and Americans in America had the highest score). The analysis also revealed a difference between the samples on objectification. However, contradicting our hypothesis, Chinese in China scored higher on objectification than Chinese in America, who scored higher than Americans in America. Looking at the correlation between relational mobility and objectification, across the three samples, only in the American sample, the body shame factor of the objectification scale was negatively correlated with relational mobility. A mediation analysis showed that relational mobility mediated the association between culture and objectification, specifically body shame. In summary, our results revealed that cultural background is an important predictor of relational mobility and objectification and their association. These differences in our findings is likely due to cultural difference but measurement issues (see different reliabilities) may have also contributed.

(13) Innate Storytelling: The Role of Arousal in Narrative Creation

Gavin Portman, Emma Murrugarra
(*Dr. Michael Vitevitch, Dr. Ruth Ann Atchley*)
Honors Thesis

Current literature suggests that there is a relationship between emotion and narrative

transportation, or how easily a reader gets immersed into a story. For example, someone who experiences emotions more readily might have the tendency to describe their surroundings and life in a more story-oriented way. The purpose of this study was to further explore that relationship by specifically examining arousal and narrative creation. In order to investigate these ideas, participants were shown different words in English and were asked to rate the words for emotional arousal. They were then asked to look at emotional pictures and either verbally describe or write down their observations. It was hypothesized that participants that rate words as being more arousing will have a higher likelihood of creating story narratives to describe the content of the pictures. Exploring this relationship between arousal and narrative creation could uncover catalysts in the creation of text that allows for narrative transportation, while advancing our understanding of the innate relationship between storytelling and personal experience.

(14) The Role of Sunlight, Temperature, Humidity, and Rain in Summer Mood Decreases

Emily Casteen, S. EW Punt
(*Dr. Stephen Ilardi*)
Honors Thesis

A specifier of depression, seasonal pattern, subsumes both winter seasonal pattern (WSP), in which symptoms appear in the winter and remit in the summer, and summer seasonal pattern (SSP), in which symptoms appear in the summer and remit in the winter. Prior research suggests that WSP originates from inadequate sunlight exposure and is effectively treated with bright light therapy. Yet the extent to which weather contributes to SSP has been scarcely investigated; several studies indicate increased temperature and humidity are associated with its onset, but little is known about the role of sunlight and rain, and the relative significances of these four meteorological variables have yet to be disentangled. Accordingly, this survey study will examine the individual

contributions of sunlight, temperature, humidity, and rain to summer mood decreases among individuals with SSP symptomatology. Participants will be workers on Amazon Mechanical Turk, meet criteria for SSP or subsyndromal SSP, and imagine themselves outdoors and appropriately dressed for the weather in fifteen scenarios differing in levels of sunlight, temperature, humidity, and rain (N=350). For each scenario, participants will report anticipated sadness, anxiety, energy, irritability, and well-being. We anticipate: a) temperature, humidity, and sunlight will be unequally associated with summer mood decreases; b) one of these variables will emerge as substantially more significant than the others; and c) rain will be protective against summer mood decreases. Given the efficacy of bright light therapy in WSP, identifying meteorological variables significant to SSP may propel the development of novel treatments that address its underlying cause.

(15) Self-Complexity Theory and How It Relates to Mood

Kelby Clements, Trevor Swanson, Rachel Johnson
(Dr. Mark Landau)
Honors Thesis

People's personality tends to change when an individual's self-aspects are distinct or integrated into a single self-concept. In this project, we will be looking at the two extremes on the continuum of self-complexity, compartmentalization and integrated. People usually differ on if they are more compartmentalized or integrated in their self-aspects, but these can change and fluctuate based on different situations. From the past research, they have found conflicted findings on how these different self-structures relate to mood. The research team is looking at how the individuals organize their self-concepts in different ways, and how they change in relation to external stressors. We will then look at those changes in the self-concept over time, and how vulnerable people are to negative influences. To look at the changes in the self-concept we will look at how people adapt to stressors by re-organizing concepts of their identity across different situations and time. This

research aims to find out how and when different self-structures react when dealing with mood and external stressors.

(16) The qualities of higher education institutes that produce top ranked clinical psychology faculty

Toni Ruffedt, Alexandra Monzon, Michael Roberts
(Carl Lejuez)

Considerable focus is placed on graduate school education for preparation for a faculty position in a clinical psychology program. Previous research found that the number of articles published by graduates of a clinical psychology program, was positively correlated with the ranking of the graduate program (Roy, Roberts, Stewart, 2006). Research has mainly focused on graduate school preparation, however there has been limited research that examines the role that the faculty member's undergraduate institution plays in their preparation for faculty positions at top ranked schools. The first aim of this project examines which undergraduate institutions produce the most faculty members in clinical psychology. The second aim analyzes the characteristics of those undergraduate institutions to see which are related to the number of current clinical psychology faculty produced by that institution. To measure the prestige of the institution, this project utilized the rankings provided by the USNEWS and World Report. Data was collected from each clinical psychology faculty's curriculum vitae that was listed on the university's clinical psychology department web page. This project will analyze the data by running simple descriptive analyses as well as a regression analysis. The results of this research project will increase our understanding of which undergraduate institutions produce the most clinical psychology faculty, and to identify the characteristics of those undergraduate institutions that produced the highest number of clinical psychology faculty.

CATEGORY: CLASS PROJECT

(17) Task Switching: The Effect of Task Similarity on Stress and Performance

Ellen Honas, Joseph Denning, Sergej Grunevski, Brianna Marsh, and Drew Mutschelknaus
Class Project *PSYC 625*; Dr. *Evangelia Chrysikou*

In our modern society, we are often expected to juggle many tasks that may span a broad range of topics and skill sets. Although the available literature on the topics of multitasking and task switching has come to a consensus that both activities cause stress, our group was interested to find out whether task similarity mediates stress and performance while task switching; we hypothesized that dissimilar tasks may cause greater stress. We recruited 20 participants to switch between A) two similar tasks and B) two dissimilar tasks while we recorded stress levels via heart rate and skin conductance response. These physiological measures showed a marked increase in stress levels while completing a task as compared to a no-task baseline; however, no significant difference was found between the similar and dissimilar tasks conditions. Self-report stress surveys, however, did show that the participants reported feeling more stressed in the dissimilar tasks condition. We concluded that task switching with dissimilar tasks may be more stressful, but this difference may be too small to detect physiologically without a larger sample size. If true, this would imply that grouping similar tasks may be less psychologically taxing and more efficient in terms of mental energy than grouping dissimilar tasks. *Keywords*: task-similarity, stress, performance

CATEGORY: INDEPENDENT STUDY

(18) Adult Attachment Style and Aggressive Response to Provocation

Garrett Girard, Emma Murrugarra
(Dr. *Omri Gillath*)
Independent Study

The association between adult attachment and aggression following provocation is being investigated in a two study design. In the first study, participants will be asked online to write an essay and then get a negative feedback as a way to provoke them. Following the provocation participants will be asked to do the Voodoo Doll task, which assesses aggression (more pins applied to the doll reflects higher aggression). Finally, participants will complete questionnaires measuring mood, aggression, state hostility, attachment style, and demographics. The second study will be similar to Study 1, with the addition of either a security or neutral priming prior to the provocation essay. Another difference would be that aggression will be assessed via punches to a Punching Bag. The purpose of the first study is to determine whether individuals with secure attachment style exhibit a lower aggressive response than those with an insecure attachment style. We expect insecure people (high on anxiety or avoidance) to exhibit more aggression following the provocation, whereas those low on anxiety and avoidance (secures) will show less aggression. In the second study, we will examine whether priming individuals to enhance their sense of attachment security (as compared with a neutral prime) will result in lower aggression following provocation. Results from these studies will shed light on aggression, ways to cope with it, and its outcomes.

(19) Perceptions of Depression from Black and Latinos and the role of spirituality and religion as a way to cope with depressive symptoms

Tabitha Brooke Moore, Darlington Atakere

(Dr. Tamara Baker)

Independent Study

Depression is a devastating and fairly common mental illness. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, depression affects 6.7 percent of Americans who are 18 and up. This percentage translates to 6.7 percent of Americans per year. This is a startling statistic that should put into perspective of why depression is something that needs to be evaluated and researched because it afflicts so many people. There are a variety of factors that can contribute to someone developing depression. Some of these factors are bullying, abuse of all kinds, economic status, hunger, genetic predisposition and being raised by a caregiver or parent that is suffering with depression. The purpose of this research is to more specifically investigate individuals who identify as Black or Latino who are 18 or older and how they view depression and if they choose to cope with depression or depressive symptoms by means of religious or spiritual means. Religion being defined as a set of spiritual beliefs and customs that people believe in that involve one God or multiple gods or a higher power. Examples of religion: Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. Spirituality being defined as an individual's beliefs about a variety of spiritual doctrine or religious beliefs involving the soul. Examples of spirituality: Santeria, Voodoo, or New Age beliefs. The purpose of this research is to investigate how Black and Latino adults between the ages of 18-25 perceive depression and to assess the influence of spirituality and religion as a method of coping with depression and depressive symptoms. The goals of this research are to acquire more data on the perceptions that Black and Latino adults have about depression. And to delve deeper into why spirituality and religion are sometimes used as a method of coping with depression and depressive symptoms. The hypothesis of this study

is that Black and Latino adults between the ages of 18-25 might have some distrust for the mental health care systems but due to them being part of the younger generation they may be more inclined to seek out mental health professionals if they find themselves experiencing depression or depressive symptoms than those of older generations. A cause for this could be the destigmatization of mental illnesses and psychiatric conditions in today's society.

(20) First Impressions and Sexual Partner Value

Tristan Hayes

(Dr. Omri Gillath)

Independent Study

Little research focuses on the impact of first impressions on the selection of sexual mates. Here we examined two potential factors that are likely to predict positive evaluation of sexual partners in the process of first impressions. According to a recent meta-analysis, bilateral symmetry is associated with higher ratings of attractiveness. Likewise, studies show that people look for others who are similar to them, and prefer others that reflect higher hygiene. Based on these findings we hypothesize that bilateral facial symmetry, fit of race (white/black), and hygiene (absence of acne) will all positively predict positive first impression of a target individual as an appropriate sexual partner. We used 20 faces per sex (group), half African-Americans and half Caucasians. Half of each group of faces were symmetrical and half asymmetrical, and finally, half looked clean and hygienic and half not hygienic with acne, smear and residual in the area of the nose/mouth.

(21) Lexical Competitors and Word Recognition

Sadra Gerami, Dr. Cynthia Siew

(Dr. Michael Vitevitch)

Independent Study

When listening to spoken language multiple words are activated and compete to be recognized. The present study examined what kinds of lexical competitors might be activated during spoken word recognition; words related phonologically, orthographically or both phonologically and orthographically (a.k.a. phonographically related). A total of 40 undergraduate students from the University of Kansas were asked to listen to a target word being spoken to them and then move a computer mouse to click on one of four words that appeared on the screen to identify the word they heard. The MouseTracker program allowed us to determine which type of lexical competitor might slow down responses and "pull" the mouse trajectories away from the target word (phonologically related, orthographically related, phonographically related, or a control word that was neither phonologically or orthographically related). The results of the experiment showed that all three types of competitors delayed reaction time to click on the target word indicating that all three types of competitors were partially activated in this task. Perhaps due to the visual nature of the task the orthographic competitors caused the largest deviation in mouse trajectory, indicating that they were strong competitors early on in the recognition process. Phonographic competitors had the largest area under the curve, indicating that they acted as competitors throughout the recognition process. These results show that multiple types of lexical competitors are activated by spoken words, and that their influence on recognition may vary as more of the word is processed.

Please visit us at:

www.facebook.com/KUPSYC

www.psych.ku.edu/super-poster-session