

best research topics for psychology

best research topics for psychology encompass a broad range of areas that delve into human behavior, cognition, emotion, and social interaction. Psychology, as a diverse field, offers numerous opportunities for exploration, from developmental stages and mental health to neuropsychology and behavioral studies. Selecting an appropriate topic is crucial for conducting meaningful research that contributes to academic knowledge and practical applications. This article outlines some of the most compelling and current areas for psychological inquiry, providing a comprehensive guide to the best research topics for psychology students, educators, and professionals. The topics are categorized to cover various branches of psychology, ensuring a well-rounded approach to research possibilities. The following table of contents presents the main sections covered in this article for easy navigation.

- Developmental Psychology Research Topics
- Clinical and Abnormal Psychology Topics
- Cognitive Psychology Research Topics
- Social Psychology Research Topics
- Neuropsychology and Biological Psychology Topics
- Health Psychology Research Topics
- Industrial-Organizational Psychology Topics

Developmental Psychology Research Topics

Developmental psychology focuses on the growth and changes that occur throughout a person's lifespan. Research in this area investigates physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development from infancy through old age. Topics in developmental psychology often explore how environmental and genetic factors influence development.

Child Development and Learning

Research on child development examines how children acquire language, motor skills, and social behaviors. Studies may investigate the impact of parenting styles, early education, or technology exposure on cognitive and emotional growth.

Adolescent Psychological Changes

Adolescence is a critical period characterized by identity formation and emotional regulation. Topics in this domain explore peer influence, risk-taking behaviors, and mental health challenges during

teenage years.

Aging and Cognitive Decline

Research focusing on older adults addresses issues such as memory loss, dementia, and coping strategies for aging-related changes. Studies may assess interventions that promote cognitive health in the elderly.

- Effects of early childhood education on cognitive development
- Influence of social media on adolescent self-esteem
- Impact of aging on memory and executive function
- Role of attachment styles in childhood emotional regulation
- Developmental disorders such as autism spectrum disorder

Clinical and Abnormal Psychology Topics

Clinical and abnormal psychology examine mental health disorders, their diagnosis, treatment, and prevention. Research in this field is vital for improving therapeutic techniques and understanding psychopathology.

Depression and Anxiety Disorders

Studies often focus on the causes, symptoms, and treatment options for depression and anxiety, which are among the most common mental health issues worldwide.

Psychotic Disorders and Schizophrenia

Research in this area investigates the biological and environmental factors contributing to psychotic disorders and evaluates the effectiveness of antipsychotic medications and psychotherapy.

Substance Abuse and Addiction

Exploring the psychological and physiological mechanisms behind addiction helps develop prevention and rehabilitation programs for substance abuse.

- Effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral therapy for anxiety disorders

- Genetic predispositions to schizophrenia
- Impact of trauma on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Role of family therapy in treating substance abuse
- Innovative treatments for bipolar disorder

Cognitive Psychology Research Topics

Cognitive psychology studies mental processes such as perception, memory, problem-solving, and decision-making. This branch investigates how people acquire, process, and store information.

Memory Formation and Retrieval

Research often focuses on how memories are encoded, stored, and retrieved, including the study of false memories and memory disorders.

Attention and Perception

Studies explore how individuals focus on specific stimuli while ignoring others and how sensory information is interpreted by the brain.

Language Acquisition and Processing

This topic investigates how humans learn and understand language, including bilingualism and language disorders.

- Impact of sleep on memory consolidation
- Neural mechanisms underlying attention control
- Role of working memory in problem-solving
- Effects of aging on cognitive processing speed
- Language development in children with developmental delays

Social Psychology Research Topics

Social psychology examines how individuals' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by the presence of others. This includes studies on social interaction, group dynamics, and attitudes.

Social Influence and Conformity

Research explores how people conform to social norms, the role of peer pressure, and obedience to authority figures.

Prejudice and Discrimination

This area investigates the psychological roots of bias, stereotyping, and the effects of discrimination on individuals and communities.

Interpersonal Relationships

Studies focus on attraction, communication, conflict resolution, and attachment styles within friendships and romantic partnerships.

- Effect of social media on group behavior
- Psychological mechanisms of prejudice reduction
- Role of empathy in prosocial behavior
- Influence of group identity on decision-making
- Impact of cultural differences on social interaction

Neuropsychology and Biological Psychology Topics

Neuropsychology and biological psychology study the relationship between brain function and behavior. Research in this field often involves neuroimaging, brain injuries, and neurological disorders.

Brain Injury and Cognitive Impairment

Studies assess the effects of traumatic brain injury on memory, attention, and emotional regulation, as well as rehabilitation strategies.

Neurodevelopmental Disorders

This topic includes research on conditions such as ADHD and autism spectrum disorder, focusing on brain development and function.

Neurotransmitters and Behavior

Research investigates how chemical messengers in the brain influence mood, motivation, and behavior.

- Role of the prefrontal cortex in decision-making
- Impact of serotonin levels on depression
- Brain plasticity following injury
- Genetic factors in neurodegenerative diseases
- Effects of sleep deprivation on brain function

Health Psychology Research Topics

Health psychology focuses on how psychological factors influence physical health and illness. Research topics include stress management, health behaviors, and patient compliance.

Stress and Coping Mechanisms

Studies examine how individuals respond to stress and the effectiveness of coping strategies in maintaining health.

Behavioral Change and Health Promotion

Research focuses on interventions designed to promote healthy behaviors such as exercise, diet, and smoking cessation.

Chronic Illness and Psychological Well-being

This topic explores the psychological impact of chronic diseases and methods to improve quality of life for patients.

- Effectiveness of mindfulness in stress reduction
- Psychological predictors of medication adherence
- Role of social support in chronic illness management
- Impact of health anxiety on patient behavior
- Behavioral interventions for obesity prevention

Industrial-Organizational Psychology Topics

Industrial-organizational psychology studies workplace behavior and how to improve employee performance, satisfaction, and well-being.

Employee Motivation and Productivity

Research explores factors that influence motivation and strategies to enhance productivity in various organizational settings.

Leadership Styles and Organizational Culture

This area examines how different leadership approaches affect employee morale and company culture.

Workplace Stress and Mental Health

Studies focus on identifying sources of work-related stress and developing interventions to promote mental health in the workplace.

- Impact of remote work on employee engagement
- Role of diversity and inclusion initiatives
- Effectiveness of leadership training programs
- Psychological factors influencing job satisfaction
- Strategies for conflict resolution in teams

Frequently Asked Questions

What are some of the best research topics in cognitive psychology?

Some of the best research topics in cognitive psychology include memory and recall processes, decision-making and problem-solving, cognitive biases, attention and perception, and the impact of technology on cognitive functions.

Which research topics in psychology are currently trending in 2024?

Trending psychology research topics in 2024 include the psychological effects of social media, mental health impacts of remote work, neuroplasticity and brain-computer interfaces, the role of mindfulness in stress reduction, and the psychology of climate change behavior.

What are some good research topics related to developmental psychology?

Good research topics in developmental psychology include language acquisition in children, effects of parenting styles on child development, adolescent risk-taking behaviors, cognitive development in early childhood, and the impact of technology on adolescent social skills.

How can I choose a relevant research topic in clinical psychology?

To choose a relevant research topic in clinical psychology, consider current mental health trends such as anxiety and depression treatment efficacy, trauma and PTSD interventions, impact of COVID-19 on mental health, integration of teletherapy, and exploring stigma around mental illness.

What are some interdisciplinary research topics combining psychology with technology?

Interdisciplinary research topics combining psychology and technology include the impact of artificial intelligence on human behavior, virtual reality therapy for phobias and PTSD, human-computer interaction and user experience, psychological effects of social robots, and ethical considerations in neurotechnology.

Additional Resources

1. *Exploring Contemporary Research Topics in Psychology*

This book provides an in-depth overview of current and emerging research areas in psychology. It covers a wide range of topics including cognitive neuroscience, social psychology, developmental psychology, and mental health. The text is designed to help students and researchers identify relevant and impactful topics for study.

2. Innovations in Psychological Research: Methods and Topics

Focusing on the latest methodologies, this book explores innovative approaches in psychological research. It highlights cutting-edge topics such as neuroimaging, behavioral genetics, and artificial intelligence applications in psychology. Readers gain insights into how new techniques are shaping the future of psychological science.

3. Top Research Themes in Clinical Psychology

This volume delves into pressing research questions within clinical psychology, including anxiety disorders, depression, and therapeutic interventions. It offers a comprehensive guide for researchers interested in mental health and clinical practice. The book also discusses ethical considerations and evidence-based approaches.

4. Social Psychology: Emerging Research Areas and Trends

Focusing on social behavior and interactions, this book examines trending research topics like social influence, group dynamics, and prejudice reduction. It provides a critical look at how social psychology is evolving in response to global societal changes. The text is ideal for researchers seeking to explore social phenomena.

5. Developmental Psychology: Key Research Questions and Methods

This book addresses major research topics in developmental psychology, including cognitive development, language acquisition, and lifespan changes. It emphasizes both theoretical frameworks and practical research methods. The content is suitable for those interested in human growth from infancy to old age.

6. Neuroscience and Psychology: Bridging the Gap in Research

Highlighting the intersection of neuroscience and psychology, this book explores topics such as brain-behavior relationships, neuroplasticity, and mental disorders. It provides a multidisciplinary approach to understanding psychological phenomena through biological lenses. Researchers will find valuable information on integrating neuroscience into psychological studies.

7. Psychology of Motivation and Emotion: Current Research Perspectives

This book offers an exploration of cutting-edge research on motivation and emotion, including theories, experimental findings, and real-world applications. Topics such as emotional regulation, intrinsic motivation, and affective neuroscience are covered in detail. It is a useful resource for researchers interested in the emotional aspects of human behavior.

8. Health Psychology: Research Topics and Practical Implications

Focusing on the psychological aspects of health and illness, this book reviews research topics including stress, coping mechanisms, and behavioral health interventions. It highlights the role of psychology in promoting wellness and managing chronic conditions. The book is valuable for researchers aiming to impact public health through psychological research.

9. Cognitive Psychology: Advances and Research Frontiers

This book presents the latest developments in cognitive psychology, covering attention, memory, decision-making, and problem-solving. It discusses experimental paradigms and technological advancements that drive research in cognition. The text serves as a comprehensive guide for those interested in understanding mental processes.

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best research topics for psychology: The Psychology of Ageing Ian Stuart-Hamilton, 2012-05-15 This well-established text has been completely revised in this expanded fifth edition. Each chapter has been updated to reflect current thinking, and a new chapter on death, dying and bereavement has been added. This new edition is essential reading for all those working with older people, and a key text for students.

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best research topics for psychology: Engaging Undergraduates in Publishable Research: Best Practices Traci A. Giuliano, Jeanine L. M. Skorinko, Marianne Fallon, 2019-11-20 Although many articles and books have been written about conducting research with undergraduates, there is a dearth of research on the process of publishing with undergraduates. Thus, in this research topic, we assembled a collection of 43 articles from 98 researchers worldwide who are passionate about—and have had success in—publishing high quality peer-reviewed journal articles with undergraduates. The diverse articles represent a wide range of practices to help researchers publish with undergraduates, including structuring the curriculum to promote undergraduate research and publication, optimizing research experiences for undergraduates, training students in implementing advanced techniques, accessing special populations, or conducting research in off-campus settings, addressing institutional and career challenges for faculty, and increasing inclusion and diversity. Each article provides a unique and diverse perspective that nevertheless resonates across contexts and situations. We hope that the ideas, models, techniques, and practices in these articles will motivate and inspire readers to begin, continue, or rethink how they engage undergraduates in publishable research; we also hope to stimulate empirical and quantitative research on the effectiveness of these ideas, models, techniques, and practices.

best research topics for psychology: Research Methods for Social Psychology Dana S. Dunn, 2012-11-28 The 2nd edition of Research Methods for Social Psychology offers information on how to conduct empirical research in social psychology. The author teaches readers to think like experimental social psychologists, that is, to use or develop explanatory theories and to manipulate and measure variables in order to explain the origin or purpose of some aspect of social life. It provides information to perform research projects on human social behavior from start to finish, from selecting a research topic to collecting and analyzing data to writing up and the results using the American Psychological Association’s required format (i.e., APA-style). Along the way, they will learn about the particular ethical issues social psychologists face, the logic of experimental design, alternative research approaches, sorting accuracy from error in research, and how to orally present their findings, among other issues. This book contains up-to-date scholarship and emphasizes active learning through pedagogical activities and exercises designed to help students design and execute

their own social psychological research.

best research topics for psychology: *Research Methods* Ben Gorvine, Karl Rosengren, Lisa Stein, Kevin Biolsi, 2018 Research Methods: From Theory to Practice guides students through the entire research process-from choosing a research question and getting Institutional Review Board approval to presenting results at conferences and submitting work for peer review. KEY FEATURES *Provides students the practical skills needed to conduct their own research *Encourages critical thinking to help students become educated consumers of research presented in journal articles and the popular media *Considers the influence of rapidly changing technology on research methods, including statistical and neuroscience methods *Inside Research features personalize research by highlighting real-life examples of researchers working in a variety of fields *Media Matters features analyze and evaluate how a particular research study or general topic relevant to the chapter is portrayed in the media *Flowchart Figures present key concepts of the research process in a clear and simple visual overview

best research topics for psychology: Conducting Psychological Research Danijela|Bourne Serbic (Victoria), 2025

best research topics for psychology: *Neuroimaging and Neuropsychology of Meditation States* Barbara Tomasino, Franco Fabbro, 2017 Neurophysiological and psychological modifications induced by meditation practice have been consistently addressed by neuroscience. Training meditation practice induced plasticity (Barinaga, 2003; Knight, 2004), and as a consequence several benefit for mental and physical health (Davidson & McEwen, 2012), and cognitive performance. One goal of meditation is to achieve the light of consciousness observing with equanimity (the right distance) clouds of the mind wandering. This Frontiers Research Topic brings together studies from groups of authors whose research focus on neuropsychological systems involved in meditation demonstrating how meditation activates and can modify brain areas, cognitive mechanisms and well-being.

best research topics for psychology: Best Practices in Teaching Statistics and Research Methods in the Behavioral Sciences Dana S. Dunn, Randolph A. Smith, Bernard C. Beins, 2007-03-27 This book provides a showcase for best practices in teaching statistics and research methods in two- and four-year colleges and universities. A helpful resource for teaching introductory, intermediate, and advanced statistics and/or methods, the book features coverage of: ways to integrate these courses how to promote ethical conduct how to create writing intensive programs novel tools and activities to get students involved strategies for teaching online courses and computer applications guidance on how to create and maintain helpful web resources assessment advice to help demonstrate that students are learning tips on linking diversity to research methodology. This book appeals to veteran and novice educators and graduate students who teach research methods and/or statistics in psychology and other behavioral sciences and serves as an excellent resource in related faculty workshops. Downloadable resources with activities that readers can customize is included.

best research topics for psychology: Neuropsychology of Consciousness Silvia Savazzi, Anna Maria Berti, Juha Silvanto, Cecilia Guariglia, 2019-11-05

best research topics for psychology: Forensic Neuropsychology Glenn J. Larrabee, 2011-12-06 With increasing frequency neuropsychologists are being asked to serve as experts in court cases where judgements must be made as to the cause of, and prognosis for brain diseases and injuries. This book describes the application of neuropsychology to legal issues in both the civil and criminal courts. It emphasizes a scientific basis of neuropsychology. All of the contributors are recognized as scientist-clinicians. The chapters cover common forensic issues such as appropriate scientific reasoning, the assessment of malingering, productive attorney-neuropsychologist interactions, and ethics. Also, covered are the determination of damages in personal injury litigation, including pediatric brain injury, mild, moderate, and severe traumatic brain injury in adults (with an introduction to life care planning); neurotoxic injury; and forensic assessment of medically unexplained symptoms. Civil competencies in the elderly persons with dementia are addressed a

separate chapter, and two chapters deal with the assessment of competency and responsibility in criminal forensic neuropsychology. This volume will be an invaluable resource for neuropsychologists, attorneys, neurologists, clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, and their students and trainees.

best research topics for psychology: Psychotic experiences, social cognition and pragmatic communication in the psychosis continuum Marta Bosia, Alberto Parola, Guillermo Soto, Ricardo R. Garcia, 2023-04-19

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best research topics for psychology: *Visual Dysfunction in Schizophrenia: A View into the Mechanisms of Madness?* Randolph Blake, Steven Silverstein, Brian P. Keane, Michael Green, Szabolcs Kéri, 2015-05-11 Research on visual perception in schizophrenia has a long history. However, it is only recently that it has been included in mainstream efforts to understand the cognitive neuroscience of the disorder and to assist with biomarker and treatment development (e.g., the NIMH CNTRICS and RDoC initiatives). Advances in our understanding of visual disturbances in schizophrenia can tell us about both specific computational and neurobiological abnormalities, and about the widespread computational and neurobiological abnormalities in the illness, of which visual disturbances constitute well-studied, replicable, low-level examples. Importantly, far from being a passive sensory registration process, visual perception is active, inferential, and hypothesis-generating, and therefore can provide excellent examples of breakdowns in general brain functions in schizophrenia. Despite progress made in understanding visual processing disturbances in schizophrenia, many challenges exist and many unexplored areas are in need of examination. For example, the directional relationships between perceptual and cognitive disturbances (e.g., in attention, memory, executive function, predictive coding) remain unclear in many cases, as do links with symptoms, including visual hallucinations. The effect of specific visual disturbances on multisensory integration in schizophrenia has also not been explored. In addition, few studies of vision in schizophrenia have used naturalistic stimuli, including real-world objects, and almost no studies have examined processing during interaction with objects or visual exploration, which can provide important data on functioning of the perception for action pathway. Relatedly, studies of visual processing in schizophrenia have also not been conducted within contexts that include emotional stimulation and the presence of reinforcers - characteristics of many real-world situations - and the consequences of this are likely to be an incomplete view of how and when perception is abnormal in the condition. An additional important area involves treatment of visual disturbances in schizophrenia. Two major questions regarding this are: 1) can visual processing be improved in cases where it is impaired (and by what types of interventions affecting which cognitive and neurobiological mechanisms)? and 2) what are the clinical and functional benefits of improving specific visual functions in people with schizophrenia? Other important and understudied questions concern: 1) the extent to which indices of visual functioning can serve as biomarkers such as predictors of relapse, treatment response, and/or recovery; 2) the potential role of visual functioning in diagnosing and predicting illness; 3) the extent to which some visual perception disturbances are diagnostically specific to schizophrenia; and 4) the extent to which visual disturbances are truly manifestations of disease, as opposed to aspects of normal variation that, in combination with disease, serves to modify the clinical presentation. This Frontiers Research Topic explores some of these, and other issues facing this exciting interface between vision science and schizophrenia research. We include papers that span the entire range of different Frontiers paper types, including those that are data driven (using psychophysics, electroencephalography, neuroimaging, computational and animal models, and other methods), reviews, hypotheses, theories, opinion, methods, areas of impact, and historical perspectives.

best research topics for psychology: Sugar and Spice, and Everything Nice: Exploring Prosocial Development Through Infancy and Early Childhood Chris Moore, Markus Paulus, Amanda Williams, 2015-05-18 Prosocial behaviors such as sharing, helping, and comforting begin to emerge early in development. The presence of these prosocial behaviors is important not only in childhood, but throughout one's lifetime, as behaving prosocially is important for social functioning and maintaining social relationships. For many years researchers have been interested in how and when these behaviors develop, as well as how these behaviors are influenced by a variety of factors. Recently however, exciting new research has shown novel and surprising findings, particularly on the early development and ontogenetic origins of prosocial behavior. Research in this area is important, as by understanding what influences prosocial behavior, we may be better able to sustain and support the development of prosociality. Further, a richer understanding may help us to be better able to mediate factors that impede or negatively influence positive social behaviors, as well as negate triggers that may lead to negative social behaviors. Many theoretical views guide different streams of developmental research in this field. Here, we will bring together scholars from various theoretical backgrounds, to collectively explore the development of early prosocial behaviors from early infancy to early school aged children. Contributors will offer insights using a variety of methodologies, from various resource allocation paradigms derived from economist game theorists, to looking time paradigms and more. Together we seek to broadly explore questions pertaining to prosocial development, for example- at what age do prosocial behaviors, moral understanding, or social selectivity emerge? Contributors will individually address unique research questions across a spectrum of topics. For example, how prosocial behaviors are influenced by underlying mechanisms, such as moral emotions (e.g. guilt and sympathy), will be explored, as will how children's expectations may shape their behaviors, and how they come to care about others. Questions surrounding different contexts will also be investigated. For example, how does empathy influence prosociality? Do children treat partners differently depending on their past behaviors, wealth, or other characteristics? Does whether there is a cost associated with behaving prosocially influence decision-making? By incorporating the work of numerous researchers in the field of prosocial development, who contribute comprehensive reviews of past research, unique theoretical perspectives and empirical approaches, the proposed research topic endeavors to provide new insights into a breadth of prosocial behaviors. In sum, the proposed research topic will contribute to our understanding of prosocial development in the early years by highlighting the relevant factors and contexts under which prosocial behavior emerges.

best research topics for psychology: The role of body and environment in cognition Dermot Lynott, Judith Holler, Louise Connell, 2014-08-25 Recent evidence has shown many ways in which our bodies and the environment influence cognition. In this Research Topic we aim to develop our understanding of cognition by considering the diverse and dynamic relationship between the language we use, our bodily perceptions, and our actions and interactions in the broader environment. There are already many empirical effects illustrating the continuity of mind-body-environment: manipulating body posture influences diverse areas such as mood, hormonal responses, and perception of risk; directing attention to a particular sensory modality can affect language processing, signal detection, and memory performance; placing implicit cues in the environment can impact upon social behaviours, moral judgements, and economic decision making. This Research Topic includes papers that explore the question of how our bodies and the environment influence cognition, such as how we mentally represent the world around us, understand language, reason about abstract concepts, make judgements and decisions, and interact with objects and other people. Contributions focus on empirical, theoretical, methodological or modelling issues as well as opinion pieces or contrasting perspectives. Topic areas include, perception and action, social cognition, emotion, language processing, modality-specific representations, spatial representations, gesture, atypical embodiment, perceptual simulation, cognitive modelling and perspectives on the future of embodiment.

best research topics for psychology: Individual differences in associative learning Robin

A. Murphy, Rachel M. Msetfi, 2014-09-24 Theories of associative learning have a long history in advancing the psychological account of behavior via cognitive representation. There are many components and variations of associative theory but at the core is the idea that links or connections between stimuli or responses describe important aspects of our psychological experience. This Frontiers Topic considers how variations in association formation can be used to account for differences between people, elaborating the differences between males and females, differences over the life span, understanding of psychopathologies or even across cultural contexts. A recent volume on the application of learning theory to clinical psychology is one example of this emerging application (e.g., Hazelgrove & Hogarth, 2012). The task for students of learning has been the development, often with mathematically defined explanations, of the parameters and operators that determine the formation and strengths of associations. The ultimate goal is to explain how the acquired representations influence future behavior. This approach has recently been influential in the field of neuroscience where one such learning operator, the error correction principle, has unified the understanding of the conditions which facilitate neuron activation with the computational goals of the brain with properties of learning algorithms (e.g., Rescorla & Wagner, 1972). In this Frontiers Research Topic, we are interested in a similar but currently developing aspect to learning theory, which is the application of the associative model to our understanding of individual differences, including psychopathology. In general, learning theories are monolithic, the same theory applies to the rat and the human, and within people the same algorithm is applied to all individuals. If so this might be thought to suggest that there is little that learning theory can tell us about the how males and females differ, how we change over time or why someone develops schizophrenia for instance. However, these theories have wide scope for developing our understanding of when learning occurs and when it is interfered with, along with a variety of methods of predicting these differences. We received contributions from researchers studying individual differences, including sex differences, age related changes and those using analog or clinical samples of personality and psychopathological disorders where the outcomes of the research bear directly on theories of associative learning. This Research Topic brings together researchers studying basic learning and conditioning processes but in which the basic emotional, attentional, pathological or more general physiological differences between groups of people are modeled using associative theory. This work involves varying stimulus properties and temporal relations or modeling the differences between groups.

best research topics for psychology: Audiovisual Speech Recognition: Correspondence between Brain and Behavior Nicholas Altieri, 2014-07-09 Perceptual processes mediating recognition, including the recognition of objects and spoken words, is inherently multisensory. This is true in spite of the fact that sensory inputs are segregated in early stages of neuro-sensory encoding. In face-to-face communication, for example, auditory information is processed in the cochlea, encoded in auditory sensory nerve, and processed in lower cortical areas. Eventually, these “sounds” are processed in higher cortical pathways such as the auditory cortex where it is perceived as speech. Likewise, visual information obtained from observing a talker’s articulators is encoded in lower visual pathways. Subsequently, this information undergoes processing in the visual cortex prior to the extraction of articulatory gestures in higher cortical areas associated with speech and language. As language perception unfolds, information garnered from visual articulators interacts with language processing in multiple brain regions. This occurs via visual projections to auditory, language, and multisensory brain regions. The association of auditory and visual speech signals makes the speech signal a highly “configural” percept. An important direction for the field is thus to provide ways to measure the extent to which visual speech information influences auditory processing, and likewise, assess how the unisensory components of the signal combine to form a configural/integrated percept. Numerous behavioral measures such as accuracy (e.g., percent correct, susceptibility to the “McGurk Effect”) and reaction time (RT) have been employed to assess multisensory integration ability in speech perception. On the other hand, neural based measures such as fMRI, EEG and MEG have been employed to examine the locus and or time-course of

integration. The purpose of this Research Topic is to find converging behavioral and neural based assessments of audiovisual integration in speech perception. A further aim is to investigate speech recognition ability in normal hearing, hearing-impaired, and aging populations. As such, the purpose is to obtain neural measures from EEG as well as fMRI that shed light on the neural bases of multisensory processes, while connecting them to model based measures of reaction time and accuracy in the behavioral domain. In doing so, we endeavor to gain a more thorough description of the neural bases and mechanisms underlying integration in higher order processes such as speech and language recognition.

best research topics for psychology: Olfactory Consciousness across Disciplines

Benjamin D. Young, 2015-03-05 Our sense of smell pervasively influences our most common behaviors and daily experience, yet little is known about olfactory consciousness. Over the past decade and a half research in both the fields of Consciousness Studies and Olfaction has blossomed, however, olfactory consciousness has received little to no attention. The olfactory systems unique anatomy, functional organization, sensory processes, and perceptual experiences offers a fecund area for exploring all aspects of consciousness, as well as a external perspective for re-examining the assumptions of contemporary theories of consciousness. It has even been suggested that the olfactory system may represent the minimal neuroanatomy that is required for conscious processing. Given the variegated nature of research on consciousness, we include original papers concerning the nature of olfactory consciousness. The scope of the special edition widely incorporates olfaction as it relates to Consciousness, Awareness, Attention, Phenomenal- or Access-Consciousness, and Qualia. Research concerning olfaction and cross-modal integration as it relates to conscious experience is also address. As the initial foray into this uncharted area of research, we include contributions from across all disciplines contributing to cognitive neuroscience, including neurobiology, neurology, psychology, philosophy, linguistics, and computer sciences. It is our hope that this Research Topic will serve as the impetus for future interdisciplinary research on olfaction and consciousness.

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