

Evaluating Research

Read the abstract – identify any terms you don't understand – you will skim for these terms in the intro – may want to make some preliminary notes re: answers to questions below.

Read first paragraph – usually gives you the big picture – again, look for terms you don't know

Skim intro for unknown terms from abstract -- alternatively, read first sentence of each paragraph – if interesting or confusing read rest of paragraph.

1. Purpose(s) or goal(s) or research question(s) – **read paragraph before methods section; if multiple experiments, read paragraph before exp 1 and first paragraph of exp 1**
Investigate contribution of phonological and lexical reps to word learning by examining effect of ND and PP on adult word learning. Secondary goal = determine which aspect of word learning influenced by each: triggering vs. integration.
2. Participant information (#, age, type of disorder, characteristics of disorder) – **read participants section – just get the basics**
32 normal college students
3. Independent variable (what was manipulated) -- **possibly in stimuli, design, treatment section – varies by study – sometimes need to look in results (labels of table or x-axis or bar/lines on figure or stats test)**
Phonotactic probability of words to be learned – likelihood of occurrence of sounds – low vs. high
Neighborhood density of words to be learned – number of words that sound similar – low vs. high
(Amount of exposure – figure this out from procedures or from ANOVA or from figures)
4. Dependent variable (what outcome was measured) – **possibly in procedures, measures, dependent variable, outcome variable – sometimes need to look in results (measurement in a table or y-axis of figure)**
Proportion correct – partially correct & completely correct
5. Procedure/task overview (what does the participant do during the research) – **usually labeled procedures or treatment**
Stimuli were delivered via computer. Session started with baseline test. Participant shown nonobject and asked to guess name. Then, participant listened to story showing the nonobjects while the nonword was played auditorially. Participants were tested in same picture naming task as baseline. Story and naming repeated two more times for a total of 3 presentations and tests. Then, 2nd story administered following same procedures.
6. Analysis approach (descriptive, statistical) – **analysis section of methods or first paragraph of results or first sentence of each results paragraph or section**

repeated measures ANOVA – 2 PP x 2 ND x 3 Exposures

7. Results (main findings: how did the independent variable affect the dependent variable) – **results section – can read this full section or possibly just look at tables and figures – first paragraph of discussion may summarize the results**
 - Low > High phon prob
 - High > Low density
 - Later > Earlier exposures
8. Conclusion (take-home message; what did we learn from this study) – **see first paragraph of discussion or possibly conclusion section or draw your own conclusion – may want to go back and read other sections of the discussion in more detail after you get the take-home conclusion from the conclusion section**
 - Phon rep involved in detecting new word and triggering learning
 - Lex rep involved in stabilizing a new rep
9. How does this research inform clinical practice – **your opinion**
10. How do findings/results for this population compare to groups discussed in class – **your opinion; look for BOTH similarities and differences**