

New Research From Psychological Science

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Read about the latest research published in *Psychological Science*:

[The Missing-Phoneme Effect in Aural Prose Comprehension](#)

Jean Saint-Aubin, Raymond M. Klein, Mireille Babineau, John Christie, and David W. Gow, Jr.

Studies repeatedly show that when people read text for comprehension while searching for a target letter, they miss a great number of the target letters that appear in function words such as “the” and “of.” In this study, one group of native French speakers read two texts for comprehension while searching for a target letter; another group listened to a narration of the same two texts while listening for the target letter’s corresponding phoneme. The experiment revealed a missing-phoneme effect in the listening task that was similar to the missing-letter effect that occurred in the reading task. Listeners took longer to detect target phonemes and missed them more frequently when they were embedded in function words rather than content words. The researchers conclude that both reading and listening involve common cognitive processes: People allocate less attention to function words than to content words when they are reading or listening for comprehension.

[Forgetting Patterns Differentiate Between Two Forms of Memory Representation](#)

Talya Sadeh, Jason D. Ozubko, Gordon Winocur, and Morris Moscovitch

Scientists have long discussed whether forgetting is caused by decay over time or by interference. This preregistered study investigated the hypothesis that strong memories based on recollection are forgotten through decay, but weaker memories based on familiarity are forgotten through interference. Participants studied and were tested on their recognition of unrelated words and then completed a distractor task that varied in length and in difficulty. As part of a final recognition test, they reported whether they remembered the words through recollection or familiarity and rated how confident they were in their memories. Compared with familiarity-based memories, recollection-based memories were more adversely affected by the longer distractor task, suggesting that they were more prone to decay. Conversely, memories based on familiarity were more susceptible to the challenging distractor task, indicating that they were more prone to interference. The researchers conclude that forgetting arises from both decay and interference.