

PSYb2861 The Psychology of Language - Assessment criteria

Essay

In order for an essay to be considered of a passable standard, it must:

- be written in English;
- be 1500 - 2000 words long excluding references (in APA standard);
- be clear, concise, and appropriate in its writing and structure;
- address a question in the field of psycholinguistics;
- use empirical evidence to argue a point;
- draw from and compile multiple sources (including primary research studies);
- use valid argumentation to make a point;
- critically reflect on the current state of knowledge in the area

The question ought to be concerned with some issue or debate within psycholinguistic theory or research practice. For example:

- 1) Are arguments from the poverty of the stimulus compelling in language acquisition?
- 2) Does evidence from speech errors support a particular model of language production?

You can use one of the main discussion questions or formulate one of your own. In the latter case, you are recommended to consult your choice with the lecturer first.

By addressing a question, we mean that you need not only answer it, you may also argue that there is currently not enough evidence to settle it and propose what research could be done to do so, or you may even “question the question” and suggest that it cannot be answered.

Pay close attention to the wording of your question. For instance, example (2) asks whether a particular type of evidence supports some model over another. However, what it does not ask is which of these models is actually true. Therefore, any other type of evidence (for example experimental evidence) in your argumentation would be irrelevant.

In terms of writing and structure, your essay should have a clear introduction, main body, and conclusion (you need not include subheadings however). The writing should be clear and in the appropriate academic style. The use of examples is highly encouraged since this helps clarity.

Support your argumentation with relevant scientific evidence in the form of studies or conceptual arguments. Explain how a given study provides evidence for a particular conclusion a briefly describe its design and results (this need not be done with every cited study).

Discussion

In order for your performance in the colloquium to be considered of a passable standard, you must:

- engage in the discussion;
- reflect on your essay feedback;
- demonstrate the ability for cogent argumentation

The colloquium itself is primarily a discussion over your essay and your topic of choice. You are encouraged to engage in the discussion and argumentation, ask questions, and address points of disagreement or confusion. It will not be held against you if you admit that you do not know something or that you do not understand something. The colloquium is meant to assess your ability to reflect and learn, not rote-learned knowledge!