

MAYA TALIAFERRO

mjt10029@nyu.edu
MayaTaliaferro98@gmail.com

EDUCATION

- 2023 - Present **Ph.D. Psychology**
New York University - New York, New York
Advisor: Dr. Esti Blanco-Elorrieta
- 2017-2021 **B.A. Neuroscience** *GPA: 3.75 Latin Honors: Magna Cum Laude*
Hamilton College – Clinton, New York
- 2021 **Semester Abroad**
Doshisha University – Kyoto, Japan

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Multilingualism, Communication, Language Processing & Acquisition, Behavioral & Neural Correlates

FELLOWSHIPS & GRANTS

- 2025 - 2028 **National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Fellowship** (\$144,500)
- 2023 - 2028 **NYU GSAS Dean's Doctoral Fellowship** (\$51,200)
- 2023 - 2025 **NYU MacCracken Fellowship** (\$32,880)
- 2017 - 2021 **Ellis Foundation Scholarship** (\$4,000)

AWARDS & HONORS

- 2025 **NYU Dean's Conference Award** Period 3 (\$500)
- 2025 **Travel Award** Cognitive Science Society (\$1000)
- 2024 **Travel Award** Society for Neurobiology of Language (\$550)
- 2022 **MIT School of Science Quality of Life Grant** (\$3000)
- 2021 **Dr. Phillip I. Bowman Scholarship Prize** (\$3000)
- 2021 **Sigma Xi** International Scientific Research Honor Society
- 2021 **Phi Sigma Iota** International Foreign Language Honor Society
- 2020 **Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship** (\$5000)
- 2019 **Psi Chi** National Honors Society in Psychology

JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

Malik-Moraleda, S., **Taliaferro, M.**, Shannon, S., Jhinkan, N., Swords, S., Frommer, P., Peterson, D., Okrand, M., Sims, J., Cardwell, R., Freeman, C., Fedorenko, E. (2025). Constructed languages are processed by the same brain mechanisms as natural languages. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

Bridgers, S., Qian P., Parece, K., **Taliaferro, M.**, Schulz, L., Ullman, T. (2025). Loopholes: A window into value alignment and the communication of meaning. *Cognition*

Malik-Moraleda, S., Jouravlev, O., **Taliaferro, M.**, Mineroff, Z., Cucu, T., Mahowald, K., Blank, I., Fedorenko, E. (2024). Functional characterization of the language network of polyglots and hyperpolyglots with precision fMRI. *Cerebral Cortex*

Qian, P., Bridgers, S., **Taliaferro, M.**, Parece, K., Ullman, T. (2024). Ambivalence by design: A computational account of loopholes. *Cognition*

Tuckute, G., Sathe, A., Srikant, S., **Taliaferro, M.**, Wang, M., Schrimpf, M., Kay, K., Fedorenko, E. (2023) Driving and suppressing the human language network using large language models. *Nature Human Behavior*

Kauf, C., Hee So, K., Lee, E., Jhingan, N., She, J., **Taliaferro, M.**, Gibson, E., Fedorenko, E. (*under review*). Linguistic inputs must be syntactically parsable to fully engage the language network. *bioRxiv*.

Bridgers, S., **Taliaferro, M.**, Parece, K., Ullman, T., Schulz, L. (*under review*). Loopholes: A window into value alignment and communication of meaning. *Psyarxiv*.

PEER-REVIEWED PROCEEDINGS PUBLICATIONS

Taliaferro, M.*, Imel, N.*, Zaslavsky, & Blanco-Elorrieta, E. (2025). Bilinguals exhibit semantic convergence while maintaining near-optimal efficiency. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (Vol. 47).

Singh, A.*, **Taliaferro, M.***, Lindsay, G., & Blanco-Elorrieta, E. (2025). Blending Boundaries: A Computational Approach to How Bilinguals Reconcile Cross-Linguistic Categorization. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (Vol. 47).

Bejjanki, V*., Gaillard, E., **Taliaferro, M.**, & Taylor, J.* (2025). Influence of Task Complexity on Visuomotor Adaptation. *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (Vol. 47).

Taliaferro, M., & Schulz, L. (2024). Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? Speakers use more redundant color adjectives when speaking to children than adults. *Proceedings of Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society* (Vol. 46).

PRESENTATIONS

Taliaferro, M., Diriani, J., & Blanco-Elorrieta, E. (2025). “Neural Evidence for Shared Conceptual Representations in Bilinguals.” Poster Presentation. *Society for Neurobiology of Language 2025*, Washington DC, USA.

Singh, A.*, **Taliaferro, M.***, Lindsay, G., & Blanco-Elorrieta, E. (2025). “Blending Boundaries: A Computational Approach to How Bilinguals Reconcile Cross-Linguistic Categorization.” Slides Presentation. *Cognitive Science Society Conference 2025*, San Francisco, USA.

Taliaferro, M.*, Imel, N.*, Zaslavsky, N., & Blanco-Elorrieta, E. (2025). “Bilinguals exhibit semantic convergence while maintaining near-optimal efficiency.” Poster Presentation. *Cognitive Science Society Conference 2025*, San Francisco, USA.

Taliaferro, M., & Blanco-Elorrieta, E. (2024). “Evidence for Language-Shaped Conceptual Representations: Bilinguals Converge on Representations Interposed Between Monolinguals.” Poster Presentation. *Society for Neurobiology of Language 2024*, Brisbane, Australia.

Taliaferro, M., & Schulz, L. (2024). “Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see? Speakers use more redundant color adjectives when speaking to children than adults.” Slides Presentation. *Cognitive Science Society Conference 2024*, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Malik-Moraleda, S., **Taliaferro, M.**, Shannon, S., Jhinkan, N., Swords, S., Frommer, P., Peterson, D., Okrand, M., Sims, J., Cardwell, R., Freeman, C., Fedorenko, E. (2023). Slides Presentation. “Constructed languages are processed by the same brain mechanisms as natural languages” *MIT Research Scholars Showcase*, Cambridge, MA

INVITED TALKS

2. *Research Talk & Panelist. Annual Alumni Event* Hamilton College, USA (October 2025)
1. *Panelist. "The Bilingual Brain: Unlocking Nature's Super Power"* New York, USA (October 2025)

TEACHING & MENTORSHIP

- 2025-2026 **Afterschool STEM Mentoring Program (ASMP) Instructor**
New York Academy of Sciences – New York, NY
- 2025- **Application Support Group Mentor for NYU Psychology Department** New York, NY
Helped PhD applicants through free general application review, 1-on-1 mentorship, and personalized insight into the NYU and other US-based programs
- 2023 **Instructor (“Curve fitting in Python”)**
MIT Quantitative Methods Workshop – Cambridge, MA
- 2022 **MIT Summer Research Program Mentor** Cambridge, MA
Mentored 2 undergraduate students in research conducted over the summer at MIT
- 2018-2021 **Research Tutor**
Hamilton College Library and IT Services – Clinton, NY
- 2019-2021 **Ellis Scholar Student Mentor**
Aid underrepresented students in the transition from high school to college
- 2021 **Japanese Tutor**
Hamilton College Language Center – Clinton, NY
- 2021 **Japanese Grader (JAPN 101 & 200)**
Hamilton College Asian Studies Department – Clinton, NY
- 2020 **Cognitive Science Teaching Assistant (PSYCH 202)**
Hamilton College Psychology Department – Clinton, NY

SERVICE & OUTREACH

- 2025-2026 **Student Representative for NYU Cognition and Perception Program** New York, NY

- Represented student perspectives by attending C&P and Psychology faculty meetings, maintaining communication with students, and assisting in organizing the annual C&P student–faculty meeting
- 2025 **Ad hoc reviewer** for Cognitive Science Society (CogSci)
- 2024-2025 **Social Chair for NYU Cognition and Perception Program** New York, NY
Organized and led program-wide social activities to strengthen community within C&P PhD program
- 2017-2021 **Hamilton Autism Advocates for NeuroDiversity – Vice President** Clinton, NY
Coordinated directly with Kelbermann Center to plan and initiate fun activities for children with autism spectrum disorder to encourage social skill development and promote awareness for ASD in local community
- 2018-2020 **Hamilton Association for Volunteering, Outreach, and Charity** Clinton, NY
Recruited volunteers and organized trips to senior living facility 4 times a semester

COMPUTER SKILLS

Proficient in MATLAB (PsychToolbox), R, Python, JavaScript (jsPsych), Microsoft (Excel, Word, PowerPoint), Qualtrics

Working knowledge in Blender, Adobe AfterEffects, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator

LANGUAGES

English: Native Language

Japanese: Intermediate Listener, Intermediate Speaker, Intermediate Reading and Writing