

John R. Starr

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EDUCATION

2020 – Present	Ph.D. Linguistics (Advisor: Marten van Schijndel) Dissertation: <i>Dynamic interaction of linguistic streams during processing: a computational psycholinguistic approach</i>	Cornell University
2023	M.A. Linguistics	Cornell University
2020	B.A. Linguistics, B.A. English Writing (Minor: Persian)	University of Pittsburgh

PUBLICATIONS

under review	John R. Starr , Ashlyn Winship, & Marten van Schijndel. “Approximating Cognitive Representations Using Space.” <i>Open Mind</i> .
2025	John R. Starr & Marten van Schijndel. “Losing phonotactic distinctions in context.” <i>Cognitive Science</i> . [https://doi.org/10.1111/cogs.70059] John R. Starr , Ashlyn Winship, & Marten van Schijndel. “Generating representations in space with GRIS.” <i>Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (CogSci2025)</i> . [link]
2024	Jacob Matthews, John R. Starr , & Marten van Schijndel. “Semantics or spelling? Probing contextual word embeddings with orthographic noise.” In <i>Findings of the Association for Computational Linguistics 2024</i> . [link]
2023	John R. Starr & Marten van Schijndel. “Discourse context modulates phonotactic processing.” In <i>Supplemental Proceedings of the 2023 Annual Meeting on Phonology</i> .
revise & resubmit	John R. Starr , Helena Aparicio, & Marten van Schijndel. “Rational use of phonological cues during processing: evidence from rhyme.” <i>Glossa Psycholinguistics</i> .

EDITED VOLUMES

2022	John R. Starr , Juhyae Kim, & Burak Öney (eds.). <i>Proceedings of the 32nd Semantics and Linguistic Theory Conference (SALT32)</i> . El Colegio de Mexico (COLMEX) & the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM).
2021	Nicole Dreier, Chloe Kwon, Thomas Darnell, & John R. Starr (eds.). <i>Proceedings of the 31st Semantics and Linguistic Theory Conference (SALT31)</i> . Brown University.

INVITED TALKS

- 2024 | “Trending toward a contextual psycholinguistics.” *Breiss Lab*. University of Southern California. [Virtual]
- | “Bust or robust? Unpacking Representational Sensitivity of Modern Vector Representations” *Columbia University NLP Group*.
- | “What can natural language processing tell us about human language processing?” *University of Pittsburgh Python for Linguists (PyLing)*. [Virtual]
- 2022 | “A first look at mind rhymes.” *The Berkeley Phonetics, Phonology, and Psycholinguistics Forum (PHORUM)*. [Virtual]

PRESENTATIONS (PEER-REVIEWED ABSTRACT)

- 2025 | **John R. Starr**, Ashlyn Winship, & Marten van Schijndel. “Generating representations in space with GRIS.” *The 47th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society (CogSci2025)*.
- | **John R. Starr** & Marten van Schijndel. “Focus reveals how people (variably) update event representations to novel material.” *The 4th Workshop on Processing and Evaluating Event Representations (PEER)*.
- | Ashlyn Winship, Zander Lynch, **John R. Starr**, Yifan Wu, Lucas Li, & Marten van Schijndel. “Experimentally extracting implicit instruments.” *The 4th Workshop on Processing and Evaluating Event Representations (PEER)*.
- | **John R. Starr** & Marten van Schijndel. “Focus reveals how people (variably) update event representations to novel material.” *The 38th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing (HSP)*.
- | Ashlyn Winship, Zander Lynch, **John R. Starr**, Yifan Wu, Lucas Li, & Marten van Schijndel. “Experimentally extracting implicit instruments.” *The 38th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing (HSP)*.
- 2024 | **John R. Starr** & Marten van Schijndel. “Contexts let you flop and flip binomials” *The 30th Architectures and Mechanisms for Language Processing (AMLaP) Conference*.
- | Jacob Matthews, **John R. Starr**, & Marten van Schijndel. “Semantics or spelling? Probing contextual word embeddings with orthographic noise.” *The 62nd Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL)*.

- 2023 | **John R. Starr** & Marten van Schijndel. “Discourse context modulates phonotactic processing.” The *2023 Annual Meeting on Phonology*.
- | **John R. Starr**, Helena Aparicio, & Marten van Schijndel. “The relationship between phonological viability and syntactic complexity.” The *30th Manchester Phonology Meeting (30mfm)*.
- | **John R. Starr**, Helena Aparicio, & Marten van Schijndel. “Salient phonological information modulates the effect of semantic priming in prediction.” The *36th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing (HSP)*.
- | **John R. Starr**, Helena Aparicio, Marten van Schijndel, & Draga Zec. “Phonological structure influences incremental syntactic processing.” The *36th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing (HSP)*.
- 2022 | **John R. Starr**, Helena Aparicio, & Marten van Schijndel. “Semantics reels us in: A first look at mind rhymes.” The *35th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing (HSP)*.

OTHER PRESENTATIONS (NON-PEER REVIEWED ABSTRACT)

- 2024 | **John R. Starr**. “Situating phonological phenomena within events.” The *3rd Workshop on Processing and Evaluating Event Representations (PEER)*.
- 2022 | **John R. Starr**, Helena Aparicio, & Marten van Schijndel. “Subversive verses alter alternatives: Mind rhyme and its implications on covert processing.” The *1st Workshop on Processing and Evaluating Event Representations (PEER)*.

TEACHING

Instructor of Record:

2025, 2023	Fall	LING1101: <i>How We're Laughter Crafters</i>	Cornell University
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Teaching Assistant:

(* = Head GTA for UTAs)

2025	Fall	LING1170 CS1710: <i>Introduction to Cognitive Science</i>	Cornell University
2024	Spring	LING4424/6624 CS4744: <i>Computational Linguistics I</i>	Cornell University
2023	Spring	LING4424/6624 CS4744: <i>Computational Linguistics I</i>	Cornell University
2022	Fall	*CS5740/4740: <i>Natural Language Processing</i>	Cornell University
	Spring	LING1170 CS1710: <i>Introduction to Cognitive Science</i>	Cornell University

2021	Fall	LING3303: <i>Introduction to Syntax and Semantics</i>	Cornell University
2020	Spring	LING2340/1340: <i>Data Science for Linguists</i>	University of Pittsburgh
2019	Spring	LING1000: <i>Introduction to Linguistics</i>	University of Pittsburgh

AWARDS

2026	Provost Diversity Scholarship	\$17,190
2025	Stephen Russell Family Teaching Award	\$2,500
2024, 2021	Cornell Cognitive Science Graduate Research Award	\$1,000
2023	Cornell Graduate School Graduate Travel Award	\$750
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2020, 2025	Sage Fellowship	\$73,000
2020-2025	Beinecke Scholarship	\$34,000

SERVICE

2023-2025	Student Representative	LSA Executive Committee
2023-Present	Writing Coach	Cornell Office of Academic Diversity Initiatives (OADI)
2023-2024	President	Cornell Linguistics Circle
2022-2023	Graduate Student Representative	Faculty search committee in Phonology
2021-2022	Social Chair	Cornell Linguistics Circle
2020-2022	Organizer	Cornell University Department of Linguistics Open House

REVIEWING

Journals:	Journal of Memory and Language (JML)
Conferences:	Penn Linguistics Conference, Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Workshop on Processing and Evaluating Event Representations (PEER)

EMPLOYMENT

2018-2020	Linguistic Data Intern	<i>Voci Technologies</i>
2019	LORELEI Assistant	<i>Carnegie Mellon University</i>

LANGUAGES

Native: English

Advanced: Persian

Programming: Python [pandas, NumPy, transformers, PyTorch]; R; Git

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Psycholinguistics, computational linguistics, phonology, language modeling, information theory, natural language processing, priming, dynamical modeling, poetics, humor

References available upon request