

When Linguistics goes Psycho

Dr. Emanuela Todisco (etodisco@us.es)

For the University of Wuppertal

11th July 2023

Dear Class,

As you read this short abstract your brain starts converting this sequence of letters and spaces into words. The tidy parsing of bigger and smaller units - read by your inner voice - sounds familiar to your ears. Your running eyes look for a match between these words and a meaning, between these words and a structure. If everything goes well, you justify the choice of one word over another.

By going through the previous lines, we entered the fascinating world of linguistics: we went from graphemes to phonemes, from morphemes to syntactic structure, from meaning to inference. We moved within a system, which is the core of linguistics' studies.

Nevertheless, after taking part in the fascinating performance of communication, please let me take you to the behind the scenes of language. Let me take you where *linguistics goes psycho*.

We will go through the basic cognitive processes behind language acquisition, language learning and language teaching. We will have a closer look to multimodality, sign language and to the behavioural methods which aim to assess language comprehension and production in its spoken, written, and signed forms. We will see how common and peculiar errors such as negative transfer, tip of the tongue effect, or alexia end up spilling the beans about language architecture. They will help us understand the basic applications of psycholinguistics.

Looking forward to our class.

Your sincerely,

E.T.