

# Annie Holtz

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## Research Interests

Language evolution, phonology, syntax, language acquisition, cultural evolution & typology

## Current Role

### The University of Edinburgh

[Edinburgh, Scotland](#)

POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

Mar. 2024 - current

- Pls: Prof. Mitsuhiro Ota & Prof. Kenny Smith
- ESRC Project: Language learning, communication and the emergence of phonotactic constraints.

## Education

### The University of Edinburgh

[Edinburgh, Scotland](#)

PHD IN LINGUISTICS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Sep. 2019 - Mar. 2024

- Supervisors: Prof. Jennifer Culbertson and Prof. Simon Kirby
- Thesis: *Cognitive biases in competition: Innovation and the evolution of language structure*

### The University of Edinburgh

[Edinburgh, Scotland](#)

MA(HONS) ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

Sep. 2015 - Jul. 2019

- Awarded a First Class degree with Honours
- Dissertation: An experimental investigation of harmony and isomorphism in the noun phrase

## Research Experience

### The Centre for Language Evolution

[Edinburgh, Scotland](#)

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Apr. 2019 - May 2019

- PI: Prof. Jennifer Culbertson
- Project name: Connecting cognitive biases and typological universals in syntax

### Edinburgh Laboratory for Language Development

[Edinburgh, Scotland](#)

RESEARCH ASSISTANT (VOLUNTEER POSITION)

Jan. 2017 - Apr. 2019

- Pls: Prof. Mitsuhiro Ota & Dr. Barbora Skarabela

## Honors & Awards

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| 2024 | <b>Nominated</b> Students' Association Teaching Award – Student Tutor of the Year  | <a href="#">Edinburgh University</a> |
| 2022 | <b>Nominated</b> Students' Association Teaching Award – Student Tutor of the Year  | <a href="#">Edinburgh University</a> |
| 2019 | <b>Awarded</b> Department of Linguistics and English Language full PhD Scholarship | <a href="#">Edinburgh University</a> |

## Publications and manuscripts

- **Holtz, A.**, Kirby, S. and Culbertson, J. (under review). [Does degree of innovation modulates the influence of cognitive biases on language structure?](#)
- **Holtz, A.**, Culbertson, J. and Kirby, S. (under review). [Category-specific and system-wide preferences in competition: Evidence from noun phrase harmony.](#)
- **Holtz, A.**, Kirby, S., and Culbertson, J. (under review). [With or without a system: How category-specific and system-wide cognitive biases shape word order.](#)
- **Holtz, A.** and Papineau, B. (2023). [Examining the female-talker default in experimental language acquisition research.](#) *Journal of Infant and Child Development*.
- **Holtz, A.**, Kirby, S., and Culbertson, J. (2022). [The influence of category-specific and system-wide preferences on cross-linguistic word order patterns.](#) In *Proceedings of the 44th annual meeting of the cognitive science society*. Toronto, Cognitive Science Society.

- **Holtz, A.** (2021). [Ambiguity and variable phonological rules: The challenge of TD Deletion in US English](#). In Holtz, Annie, Iva Kovač, Rasmus Puggaard-Rode, and Joanna Wall, eds. *ConSOLE XXIX: Proceedings of the 29th conference of the student organization of linguistics in Europe* (26-28 January 2021, Leiden University). Leiden: Leiden University Centre for Linguistics.
- Martin, A., **Holtz, A.**, Abels, K., Adger, D., and Culbertson, J. (2020). [Experiment evidence for the influence of structure and meaning on linear order in the noun phrase](#). *Glossa*, 5(1):1–21.

## Conference Contributions

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- Zhou, R., Ding, W., **Holtz, A.**, Kirby, S., & Culbertson, J. (2024). The Conceptual Origins of Adjective Ordering Preferences: Evidence from Silent Gesture. *AMLaP*, Edinburgh, UK.
- **Holtz, A.** (2024). Using the Scale of Innovation to Study the Evolution of Language. *EvoLang*, Madison, WI.
- **Holtz, A.**, Kirby, S., & Culbertson, J. (2022). The effect of improvisation and learning on word order preferences. *Joint Conference on Language Evolution 2022*, Kanazawa.
- **Holtz, A.**, Kirby, S., & Culbertson, J. (2022). The influence of category-specific and system-wide preferences on cross-linguistic word order patterns. *CogSci 2022*, Toronto (online).
- **Holtz, A.**, Kirby, S., & Culbertson, J. (2022). Cognitive biases differ in improvisation and learning of noun phrase word order. [Workshop presentation]. *CCILE 2022*, Istanbul (online).
- **Holtz, A.**, Culbertson, J. and Kirby, S. (2022) Postnominal adjectives and prenominal genitives as reflections of cognitive preferences. *ConSOLE XXX*, Nantes University (online).
- **Holtz, A.**, Culbertson, J., Kirby, S. and Martin, A. (2021) An experimental investigation of item-specific word order preferences. *LELPGC21*, Edinburgh (online).
- **Holtz, A.** (2021). Ambiguity and variable phonological rules: The challenge of TD Deletion in US English. *ConSOLE XXIX*, Leiden University (online).
- Ota, M., **Holtz, A.** and Skarabela, B. (2019) Syllable repetition is privileged over consonant repetition in infant word segmentation. *BUCLD 44*, Boston, MA.
- **Holtz, A.** (2019). Challenging Functional Explanations of Variable TD Deletion in American English. *The 69th Language Lunch at Edinburgh*, Edinburgh, UK.
- **Holtz, A.** (2019). Cognitive biases and how they shape typology. *The 2019 conference of Undergraduate Linguistics Association of Britain*, Queen Mary University of London, London, UK.
- **Holtz, A.** (2018). Mutual exclusivity and synonymy avoidance: Two sides of the same coin. *The 2018 conference of Undergraduate Linguistics Association of Britain*, Edinburgh, UK.
- Ota, M., Barrera Navarro, M., Go, L., Heimann, J., **Holtz, A.**, Little, S., O'Connor, R. and Skarabela, B. (2018). Do British mothers use less exaggerated infant-directed speech than American mothers?, *Child Language Symposium*, Reading, UK.

## Editorials

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- **Holtz, Annie**, Iva Kovač, and Rasmus Puggaard-Rode eds. 2022. [ConSOLE XXIX: Proceedings of the 30th conference of the student organization of linguistics in Europe](#) (25-27 January 2022, Nantes University). Leiden: Leiden University Centre for Linguistics.
- **Holtz, Annie**, Iva Kovač, Rasmus Puggaard-Rode, and Joanna Wall, eds. 2021. [ConSOLE XXIX: Proceedings of the 29th conference of the student organization of linguistics in Europe](#) (26-28 January 2021, Leiden University). Leiden: Leiden University Centre for Linguistics.

## Events

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- October 2022, Introduction to artificial language learning experiments (invited workshop at the University of Konstanz, co-organised with Marc Meisezahl and Shira Tal).

## Professional Activities & Services

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- Board member for The Student Organization of Linguistics in Europe (2021-2023)
- Editor for *The ConSOLE Proceedings* (2021-2023)
- Member of The Cognitive Science Society
- Member of The Linguistics Society of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Conference chair for the Linguistics and English Language Postgraduate Conference (2020)
- Committee member for the Edinburgh Symposium for Historical Phonology (2019)
- Vice-president and social secretary for the Edinburgh Linguistics Society (2019-2020)
- Programme representative for MA in Linguistics and English Language at Edinburgh (2016-2019)
- Ad hoc reviewer for *The Journal of the Undergraduate Linguistics Association of Britain*, *The ConSOLE Proceedings* and *Cognitive Science*

- Ad hoc conference reviewer for *ULAB Conference*, *ConSOLE*, *CogSci* and *EvoLang*

## Outreach

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### Language Evolves!

DEMONSTRATOR

*Edinburgh*  
Autumn 2019, 2021

- Travelling to schools or hosting online sessions introducing the concept of language evolution in primary schools.

### UK Linguistics Olympiad

DEMONSTRATOR

*Edinburgh*  
Autumn 2019

- Hosting practice sessions in schools that are preparing for the Linguistics Olympiad.

## Supervision

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PhD	<b>Radina Dobрева</b> 2024-current
Masters	<b>Ruizhe Zhou</b> 2021-2022
Masters	<b>Wei Ding</b> 2021-2022

*Edinburgh University*  
*Edinburgh University*  
*Edinburgh University*

## Teaching

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### First Language Acquisition

TUTOR/MARKER

*Edinburgh University*  
Autumn 2023

- Specialised course on language acquisition, including acquisition of phonetics, phonology, morphology and syntax.
- Honours-level course.

### Simulating Language

TUTOR/MARKER

*Edinburgh University*  
Spring 2021 & 2022

- Course teaching students to run models of language evolution using Bayesian and iterated learning methods.
- Honours-level course.

### Linguistics and English Language 1A

TUTOR/MARKER

*Edinburgh University*  
Autumn 2021

- Introductory course in linguistics covering communication, syntax, phonology, phonetics, morphology, semantics and discourse analysis.
- Pre-honours level course.

### LEL2D: Cross-linguistic Variation: Limits and Theories

MARKER AND SUBSTITUTE TUTOR

*Edinburgh University*  
Spring 2020

- Course on typological variation, focusing on morphosyntax and phonology.
- Pre-honours level course.

### Skills Centre

TUTOR

*Edinburgh University*  
Mar 2020-current

- JsPsych tutor doing one-on-one appointments with students to work on their code.
- Academic writing tutor doing one-on-one appointments with students to work on their essay writing.

### Online Experiments

TUTOR

*Edinburgh University*  
Jan. 2020

- Short course in using JsPsych to programme online experiments.

## Skills

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<b>Languages</b>	Swedish (native), English (fluent), Italian (basic), Spanish (basic)
<b>Programming</b>	JavaScript, Python, R
<b>Tools and Packages</b>	jsPsych, PsychoPy, LaTeX, Praat