

Ben Morris

Postdoctoral Associate | Department of Psychology | Yale University

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Present Appointment

Postdoctoral Associate in Psychology

Yale University, Computational Social Cognition Lab (*PI*: Julian Jara-Ettinger)

Education

PhD **University of Chicago**, Psychology 2024
Advisor: Alex Shaw

MA **University of Chicago**, Psychology 2021
Advisors: Alex Shaw & Daniel Yurovsky

MPhil **University of Cambridge**, King's College, Developmental Psychology 2016
Graduated with Academic Distinction
Advisor: Claire Hughes

BA **Reed College**, Psychology 2015
Graduated Phi Beta Kappa
Advisor: Jennifer Henderlong Corpus

Honors &

Awards

National Science Foundation SBE Postdoctoral Fellowship (NSF SPRF)	2025-27
Provost Dissertation Fellowship Award	2023-24
Ruth Sosis Memorial Fellowship for Service	2023
Dewey Lectureship Teaching Award	2023
Norman H. Anderson Grant	2019, 2021, 2023
Academic Distinction, University of Cambridge	2016
Sperling Studentship, University of Cambridge	2015-16
Phi Beta Kappa, Reed College	2015
Opportunity Grant, Reed College	2015
Initiative Grant in Undergraduate Research, Reed College	2015
Commendation for Excellence for Academic Performance, Reed College	2011-15
CSLI Summer Fellowship, Stanford University	2014
ONPRC Summer Fellowship, Oregon Health and Science University	2013

Publications

In prep *Hok, H., ***Morris, B.**, & Shaw, A. (in prep). Children believe fair rules can be unfair when they are used inconsistently. *Psychological Science*.

Morris, B., & Shaw, A. (2024). "Oh! Um. . . Sure": Children and adults use other's linguistic surprisal to reason about expectations and learn stereotypes. In *Proceedings of the 46th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

Submitted or Under Review *Bergey, C., ***Morris, B.**, & Yurovsky, D. (invited revision). Language Selectively encodes typical features of the world. *Nature Communications*.

Morris, B., Shaw, A., & Liberman, Z. (invited revision). Admitting wrong or staying strong? Children's reasoning about the role of knowledge in

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disagreement. *Cognition*.

Morris, B., & Yurovsky, D. (invited revision). A communicative framework for early word learning. *Psychological Review*.

Published **Morris, B., Yurovsky, D., & Shaw, A.** (in press). “Um...” Thinking out loud: Children infer social meaning from speech disfluencies.

*Suwal, U., ***Morris, B.**, Lin, Q., Rubio-Fernandez, R., & Jara-Ettinger, J. (2025). Speakers strategically adjust their descriptions based on perceived memorability. In *Proceedings of the 47th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

Morris, B., & Shaw, A. (2024). “Oh! Um. . . Sure”: Children and adults use other’s linguistic surprisal to reason about expectations and learn stereotypes. In *Proceedings of the 46th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

*Leung, A.C., ***Morris, B.**, & Yurovsky, D. (2021). Children know what words other children know. In *Proceedings of the 43rd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

*Bergey, C.A., ***Morris, B.**, & Yurovsky, D. (2020). Children hear more about what is atypical than what is typical. In *Proceedings of the 42nd Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

ManyBabies Consortium (2020). Quantifying sources of variability in infancy research using the infant-directed speech preference. *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science*.

Morris, B. & Yurovsky, D. (2019). Pressure to communicate across knowledge asymmetries leads to pedagogically supportive language input. In *Proceedings of the 41st Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

Invited

Presentations

Developmental Speaker Series, New York University	2025
Social Learning Lab, Stanford University	2023
Language And Cognition Lab, Stanford University	2023
Department of Comparative Cultural Psychology, Max Planck Institute	2023
Computational Social Cognition Lab, Yale University	2022
Developmental Brown Bag, University of Wisconsin, Madison	2021
Markman Lab, Stanford University	2021

Teaching

Infant Communication (UChicago, Instructor of Record)	2024
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Teaching Assistant

Human Language and Interaction (UChicago, Marisa Casillas)	2023
Introduction to Developmental Psychology (UChicago, Kate O’Doherty)	2022
Development of Social Cognition (UChicago, Katherine Kinzler)	2022
Introduction to Developmental Psychology (UChicago, Kate O’Doherty)	2022
Development of Social Cognition (UChicago, Katherine Kinzler)	2021
Developmental Psychology (Reed College, Jennifer Henderlong Corpus)	2015
Research Design and Data Analysis (Reed College, Kathryn Oleson)	2015
Research Design and Data Analysis (Reed College, Kathryn Oleson)	2014

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<i>Guest Lecturer</i>	Human Language and Interaction The Psychology of Communication (Summer course for highschoolers)	2023 2022, 2023
<i>Pedagogical Development</i>	Inclusive Teaching in Psychology (Workshop, Yale) Equitable Teaching in the Social Sciences and Humanities (10 wk course, Yale) CCTE 50000: Course Design and College Teaching (Semester Course, UChicago) Individual Teaching Observation and Consultation (UChicago) Teaching in the Age of AI (Workshop, UChicago) Inclusive Teaching: Belonging, Structure, and Active Learning (UChicago) Gamification for Higher Education (Workshop, UChicago) Fundamentals of Teaching (4 wk course, UChicago)	
Service	Diversity & Inclusion Committee , <i>University of Chicago</i> Travel & Research Committee , <i>University of Chicago</i> Student Peer Mentor , <i>University of Chicago</i> President - Psychology Grad Student Organization , <i>UChicago</i> Graduate Cross-Talks Co-Organizer , <i>University of Chicago</i> ReproducibiliTea Co-Founder and Organizer , <i>University of Chicago</i> Graduate Society Social Secretary , <i>University of Cambridge</i> Teaching Consultant , <i>Reed College, Genetics and Genomics (Sarah Schaack)</i> Head Student Teacher , <i>Portland Public Schools</i> Teaching Consultant , <i>Reed College, Ethnomusicology (Morgan Luker)</i> Student Teacher , <i>Helen Gordon Child Development Center</i> Student Judicial Board Member , <i>Reed College</i> Peer Tutor , <i>Reed College, various courses</i>	2021- 2024 2018-2024 2019-2024 2021-2022 2021- 2022 2020- 2022 2015-2016 2015 2011-2015 2014 2013-2014 2013-2015 2012-2015
Mentorship	Kate Choi, Summer Research Assistant (Yale University) Sophie Lau, Undergraduate Honors Thesis (Yale University) Sooyoun Zong, Masters Thesis Student (University of Chicago) Emma Tung, Undergraduate Research Assistant (University of Chicago) Yibo Pan, Undergraduate Research Assistant (University of Chicago) Cassie Wilson, Undergraduate Research Assistant (University of Chicago) Madison Collins, Summer Research Assistant (University of Chicago) Abbie Klein, Undergraduate Honors Thesis (University of Chicago) Madeline Meyers, Undergraduate Research Assistant (University of Chicago) Emmi Russo, Undergraduate Honors Thesis (University of Chicago)	Summer 2025 2024-2025 2023-2024 2023-2024 2020-2023 2020-2022 Summer 2020 2019-2020 2017-18 2016-17
Conference Presentations	Morris, B. & Shaw, A. (2025, April). Oh! Um. . . Sure”: Children and adults use other’s linguistic surprisal to reason about expectations and learn stereotypes. Talk to presented at the Society for Research on Child Development, Minneapolis, MN. Morris, B. & Shaw, A. (2024, July). Oh! Um. . . Sure”: Children and adults use other’s linguistic surprisal to reason about expectations and learn	

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stereotypes. Talk presented at the Cognitive Science Society Annual Meeting, Rotterdam, NL.

*Leung, A.C., ***Morris, B.**, & Yurovsky, D. (2022, January). Children know what words other children know. Talk presented at the Budapest Conference on Cognitive Development, Online.

*Leung, A.C., ***Morris, B.**, & Yurovsky, D. (2021, July). Children know what words other children know. Talk presented at the Cognitive Science Society Annual Meeting, Online.

Morris, B. & Shaw, A. (2021, June). “Umm”: When children do and do not use speech disfluencies to infer knowledge. Talk presented at the Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Online.

*Bergey, C.A., ***Morris, B.**, & Yurovsky, D. (2021, April). Children hear more about what is atypical than what is typical. Talk presented at the Society for Research on Child Development Biannual Meeting, Online.

Morris, B., Yurovsky, D. & Shaw, A. (2021, April). Children use speech disfluencies to make social inferences. Talk presented at the Society for Research on Child Development Biannual Meeting, Online.

*Bergey, C.A., ***Morris, B.**, & Yurovsky, D. (2020, July). Children hear more about what is atypical than what is typical. Talk presented at the Cognitive Science Society Meeting, Online.

Morris, B., Appleby, E., Shadrach, L., Troxell-Whitman, Z., & Corpus, J.H. (2015, February). Gender dynamics in parent-to-child and child-to-parent attention-seeking behaviors. Talk presented at the annual meeting of the Oregon Academy of Science, Psychology section, Portland, OR.

Poster

Presentations

Morris, B., & Shaw, A. (2024, March). "Umbrellas keep you dry": Children use listener design to infer others' knowledge. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society, Pasadena, CA.

Morris, B., & Shaw, A. (2023, March). "Umbrellas keep you dry": Children use listener design to infer others' knowledge. Poster presented at the Society for Research on Child Development, Salt Lake City, UT.

Morris, B., Yurovsky, D., & Shaw, A. (2022, April). The many meanings of "um": Children interpret disfluencies differently across contexts. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society Meeting, Madison, WI.

Morris, B. & Shaw, A. (2020, January). “Umm”: When children do and do not use speech disfluencies to infer knowledge. Poster presented at the Budapest CEU Conference on Cognitive Development (BCCCD), Budapest, Hungary.

Morris, B., Bergey, C.A., & Yurovsky, D. (2019, October). Child language input does not reflect world frequency: Typical and atypical feature description across development. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society Meeting, Louisville, KY.

Morris, B. & Yurovsky, D. (2019, July). Pressure to communicate across knowledge asymmetries leads to pedagogically supportive language input.

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Poster presented at the 41st Cognitive Science Society Meeting, Montreal, Canada.

Morris, B. & Yurovsky, D. (2018, July). Planning and communicative pressure leads to language input that supports learning. Poster presented at the 40th Cognitive Science Society Conference, Madison, WI.

Morris, B. & Yurovsky, D. (2018, May). Modeling the effect of communicative pressure on language input. Poster presented at the Midwest Cognitive Science Cognitive Science Conference, Bloomington, IN.

Morris, B. & Yurovsky, D. (2017, October). Communicative pressure can lead to language input that supports learning. Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society Biennial Conference, Portland, OR.

Morris, B. & Corpus, J.H. (2016, April). Preschool children's learning and motivation in game-based learning contexts. Poster presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.

*Both authors contributed equally.

Prior Research Experience

Communication and Learning Lab , PI: Daniel Yurovsky <i>University of Chicago</i> , Lab Manager	2016-2018
Centre for Family Research , PI: Claire Hughes <i>University of Cambridge</i> , Master's Student and Research Assistant	2015-2016
Children's Motivation Project , PI: Jennifer Henderlong Corpus <i>Reed College</i> , Undergraduate Thesis Student and Research Assistant	2013-2015
Language and Cognition Lab , PI: Michael C. Frank <i>Stanford University</i> , CSLI Summer Intern (advised by Molly Lewis)	Summer 2014
Oregon National Primate Research Center , PI: Christa Helms <i>Oregon Health and Science University</i> , Summer Intern	Summer 2013
Adolescent Health Research Program , PI: Kristen Anderson <i>Reed College</i> , Research Assistant	2012-2013