

# Marieke Woensdregt

Centre for Language Studies, Radboud University  
Room 4.29, Erasmus Building  
Erasmusplein 1, 6525 HT Nijmegen, The Netherlands  
☎ +31-24-3616107  
✉ [M.Woensdregt@let.ru.nl](mailto:M.Woensdregt@let.ru.nl)  
📁 [marieke-woensdregt.github.io](https://marieke-woensdregt.github.io)

---

## Positions held

2019–present **Postdoctoral researcher**, *Radboud University Nijmegen*.  
On NWO Vidi project *Elementary particles of conversation*  
PI: Dr. Mark Dingemans

---

## Education

- 2015–2019 **PhD in Linguistics**, *University of Edinburgh*.  
Thesis: *Co-evolution of language and mindreading: A computational exploration*  
Supervisors: Prof. Simon Kirby, Prof. Kenny Smith & Dr. Chris Cummins
- 2012–2014 **MSc in Brain & Cognitive Sciences**, *University of Amsterdam*, Cum Laude.
- Literature thesis: *On the Role of Intentionality in Explaining the Information Sharing Gap Between Nonhuman and Human Great Apes*  
Supervisor: Prof. Bridget Waller
  - 8-month research project: *Modelling the Role of Theory of Mind in Language Acquisition*  
Supervisor: Prof. Simon Kirby
  - 4-month research project: *Stats & Nets versus Rules & Symbols: Re-opening the Debate on Learning Mechanisms for Artificial Grammar Learning*  
Supervisor: Dr. Jelle Zuidema
- 2009–2012 **BSc in Psychobiology**, *University of Amsterdam*.  
Thesis: *The relationship between phonology and morphosyntax in sentence processing: An ERP study into Dutch past tense allomorphs*  
Supervisor: Prof. Judith Rispens
- 2009–2012 **BA in Dutch Language & Culture**, *University of Amsterdam*.  
Thesis: *On the Semantic Motivation and Disappearance of Embedded V2 in Dutch Dialects*  
Supervisor: Prof. Hedde Zeijlstra

---

## Additional training

July 2018 Part-time research assistantship for experiment comparing cultural transmission of visual patterns between baboons and children in a non-copying task. Principal investigators: Dr. Carmen Saldana, Prof. Kenny Smith, Prof. Simon Kirby and Dr. Nicolas Claidière, University of Edinburgh and Aix-Marseille University. I assisted Dr. Carmen Saldana in collecting data from children at Edinburgh Zoo. Participants were children aged 5-8 who were visiting the zoo, and were asked to complete the experiment on an iPad. 56 hours total.

Feb.–July 2015 Part-time research assistantship for pilot experiment comparing perspective-taking abilities of mono- and bilingual adults. Principal investigators: Dr. Chris Cummins and Prof. Antonella Sorace, University of Edinburgh. I was responsible for the experimental design and implementation, scheduling and running participants, and preparing data for analysis. 60 hours total.

---

## Publications

- **Woensdregt, M.**, Smith, K., Cummins, C. & Kirby, S. (in prep). Pragmatic communication as a cultural trap: The interaction between pragmatic ability and linguistic ambiguity
- Blokpoel, M., Dingemanse, M., **Woensdregt, M.**, Kachergis, G., Bögels, S., Toni, I., & van Rooij, I. (under review). Pragmatic communicators can overcome asymmetry by exploiting ambiguity. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/q56xs>
- Rispens, J., & **Woensdregt, M.** (under review). Electrophysiological responses to processing morphophonological and morphosyntactic characteristics of the past tense.
- **Woensdregt, M.**, Cummins, C., & Smith, K. (accepted). A computational model of the cultural co-evolution of language and mindreading. *Synthese*.
- **Woensdregt, M.**, & Smith, K. (2017). Pragmatics and Language Evolution. In Aronoff, M. (Ed), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Linguistics*. doi: 10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.013.321
- **Woensdregt, M.**, Kirby, S., Cummins, C., & Smith, K. (2016). Modelling the co-development of word learning and perspective-taking. In *Proceedings of the 38th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

---

## Presentations

### Invited talks

- **Woensdregt, M.**, Kirby, S., Cummins, C., & Smith, K. (2018). *A model of cultural co-evolution of language and perspective-taking*. “Workshop on Language Evolution, Semantics and Pragmatics”, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam.
- **Woensdregt, M.**, Smith, K., Cummins, C., & Kirby, S. (2017). *A model of cultural co-evolution of language and perspective-taking*. Workshop “Minds, Mechanisms and Interaction in the Evolution of Language”, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen.

## Oral presentations

- Dingemanse, M., & **Woensdregt, M.** (2020). *The cultural evolution of collateral signals*. Workshop: Re-drawing the boundaries of language, Evolang XIII, Brussels. (Conference cancelled due to COVID-19 outbreak.)
- **Woensdregt, M.**, Smith, K., Cummins, C., & Kirby, S. (2019). *A computational model of co-evolution of language and mindreading*. Culture Conference, Stirling.
- **Woensdregt, M.**, Smith, K., Cummins, C., & Kirby, S. (2018). *A model of cultural co-evolution of language and perspective-taking*. EvoLang XII, Toruń.
- **Woensdregt, M.**, Smith, K., Cummins, C., & Kirby, S. (2016). *The Cultural Co-evolution Of Language And Mindreading*. EvoLang XI, New Orleans.
- **Woensdregt, M.**, Kirby, S., & Smith, K. (2015). *Modelling the interaction between language acquisition and the development of theory of mind*. Workshop "Perspectives on the ontogeny of mutual understanding", Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen.
- **Woensdregt, M.**, Kirby, S., & Smith, K. (2015). *Modelling the Role of Theory of Mind in Language Evolution*. Protolang 4, Rome.
- **Woensdregt, M.** & Zuidema, W.H. (2014). *Neural Networks, Algebraic Rules & Human Uniqueness*. EvoLang X, Vienna.
- Rispens, J. & **Woensdregt, M.** (2013). *Processing past tense allomorphs: an ERP investigation*. 11th International Symposium of Psycholinguistics, Tenerife (presented by J. Rispens).

## Poster presentations

- **Woensdregt, M.**, & Dingemanse, M. (2020). *Other-Initiated Repair Can Facilitate the Emergence of Compositional Language* Evolang XIII, Brussels. (Conference cancelled due to COVID-19 outbreak.)
- Kapron-King, A., Kirby, S., & **Woensdregt, M.** (2020). *Modelling Cultural Evolution of Pragmatic Communication When Language Co-Develops With Perspective-Taking*. Evolang XIII, Brussels. (Conference cancelled due to COVID-19 outbreak.)
- **Woensdregt, M.**, Smith, K., Cummins, C., & Kirby, S. (2017). *The cultural co-evolution of language and perspective-taking: Convergent transformation away from selection target can nevertheless strengthen selection effect*. Inaugural Conference of Cultural Evolution Society, Jena.

- **Woensdregt, M.**, Kirby, S., Cummins, C., & Smith, K. (2017). *A model of cultural co-evolution of language and mindreading*. 39th CogSci Conference, London.
- **Woensdregt, M.**, Kirby, S., Cummins, C., & Smith, K. (2016). *Modelling the co-development of word learning and perspective-taking*. 38th CogSci Conference, Philadelphia.
- **Woensdregt, M.** & Zuidema, W.H. (2014). *Neural Networks, Algebraic Rules & Human Uniqueness*. Nijmegen Lectures ("No miracles! A Darwinian view of the evolution of cognition, language and culture"), Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen.
- **Woensdregt, M.** & Zuidema, W.H. (2013). *Is Statistical Learning Sufficient to Learn Grammar? A New Neural Network to Solve the Marcus et al. (1999) Task*. Lorentz Center Workshop ("Modelling Meets Infant Studies in Language Acquisition: A Dialogue on Current Challenges and Future Directions"), Lorentz Center, Leiden.

## Teaching

- Accreditation Associate Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (in recognition of attainment against the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and learning support in higher education); awarded May 2018.
- Guest lecturer Simulating Language, 2018 (MSc); Two lectures on Bayesian learning and Iterated Bayesian learning (lectures were recorded).
- Computer lab demonstrator Simulating Language, 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018; 2019 (MSc).
- Tutor Linguistics and English Language 1B, 2018 (BA).
- Tutor Introduction to Cognitive Science, 2017 (BSc).
- Tutor Linguistics and English Language 1, 2016-17 (BA).
- Tutor Child Bilingualism: Language and Cognition, 2016 (MSc).
- Tutor Linguistic Theory and the Structure of English, 2015 (BA).
- Tutor Cross-linguistic Variation: Limits and Theories, 2015 (BA).

## Student supervision

- MSc Dissertation Dissertation project of Anna Kapron-King titled "*Cultural Co-Evolution of Language and Pragmatic Ability*" for MSc in Linguistics at University of Edinburgh, 2019.
- MSc Dissertation Dissertation project of Yiyun Zhao titled "*Simulating the interaction between mindreading and language in development and evolution*" for MSc in Evolution of Language and Cognition at University of Edinburgh, 2016.

## Professional service

- Member of Open Science Community Nijmegen

- Ad-hoc reviewing of journal articles for: *Cognitive Science*, *Journal of Language Evolution*, *Language Dynamics and Change*, *Nature Human Behaviour*.
- Ad-hoc reviewing for conferences: *Evolang XI*, *Evolang XII*, *Evolang XIII*.
- Co-organiser of LEL Postgraduate Conference, University of Edinburgh, 2016.
- Student Member of Education Committee for MSc Brain & Cognitive Sciences, University of Amsterdam, 2012–2013.

## Grants & Awards

- PPLS-Gray postgraduate publication prize, University of Edinburgh. Awarded for Woensdregt, M., & Smith, K. (2017). Pragmatics and Language Evolution. In Aronoff, M. (Ed), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Linguistics*. doi: 10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.013.321
- Second place in Three Minute Thesis competition for PhD students of School for Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, University of Edinburgh, 2016.
- Principal's Career Development PhD Scholarship, University of Edinburgh, 2015–2018.
- Erasmus Grant for Internship Abroad, University of Amsterdam, Sept.–Feb. 2014.

## Public outreach

- Lead organiser of interactive demo on conversational repair ("*How 'huh?' helps*") for children aged 6+ at the Kletsoppen Child Language Festival in Nijmegen, 2020.
- Volunteer for Workshop on Language Evolution for primary schools in and around Edinburgh. Helped deliver six 1-hour workshops, 2019.
- Interactive exhibit for children on memory games used to study non-human primates' behaviour. July 2018, Budongo Trail, Edinburgh Zoo.
- Science correspondent on 'Neurolinguistics & Aphasia' for the Journal of the Amsterdam Network of Psycholinguists (het WAP). Two articles per year, 2012–2016.
- Co-organiser of "*Culture, Communication and Context*" event for Innovative Learning Week "Ideas in Play", Feb. 2016, University of Edinburgh.

- Volunteer for “*Cultural Evolution in Action*” event for Innovative Learning Week “Dive in!”, Feb. 2015, University of Edinburgh.

---

## Languages & Skills

- Dutch (native), English (near-native), Frisian (advanced), German (intermediate), French (intermediate), Spanish (basic)
- Python, R, Bash,  $\LaTeX$ , HTML, CSS