

MERT KOBAS

EDUCATION

New York University, New York, United States Ph.D. in Cognition & Perception GPA: 3.88/4.00	09.2021 – 05.2026
Koç University, İstanbul, Turkey M.A in Developmental Psychology GPA: 3.89/4.00	09.2018 – 08.2021
Boğaziçi University, İstanbul, Turkey B.A in Guidance and Psychological Counseling under Educational Sciences Graduated with honors GPA: 3.43/4.00	09.2012 – 07.2018
Radboud University, Nijmegen, The Netherlands Student in Psychology Department, Erasmus Plus Program	08.2016 – 01.2017

PUBLICATIONS

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- Kobaş, M.,** Demir-Lira, Ö., Akman, İ., & Göksun, T. (2025). Spatial Language Development in Preterm and Full-Term Infants: The Role of Object Exploration and Parents' Spatial Input. *Journal of Child Experimental Psychology*, 256, 106264.
- Schoenegger, P., Salvi, F., Liu, J., Nan, X., Debnath, R., Fasolo, B., Leivada, E., Recchia, G., Günther, F., Zarifhonarvar, A., Kwon, J., Islam, Z. U., Dehnert, M., Lee, D. Y. H., Reinecke, M. G., Kamper, D. G., **Kobaş, M.,** Sandford, A., Kgomo, J., ... Karger, E. (2025). Large Language Models Are More Persuasive Than Incentivized Human Persuaders. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2505.09662>
- Kobaş, M.,** Kızıldere, E., Doğan, I., Aktan-Erciyes, A., Demir-Lira, Ö., Akman, İ., & Göksun, T. (2023). Motor skills, language development, and visual processing in preterm and full-term infants. *Current Psychology*, 1-13.
- Turan, E., **Kobaş, M.,** & Göksun, T. (2021). Spatial Language and Mental Transformation in Preschoolers: Does Relational Reasoning Matter? *Cognitive Development*, 57, 100980.
- Kobaş, M.** Aktan-Erciyes, A., & Göksun, T. (2021). Fine Motor Abilities and Parental Input of Spatial Features Predict Object Word Comprehension of Turkish-Learning Children. *Infant and Child Development*, 30(4), e2243.
- Doğan, I., **Kobaş, M.,** Kızıldere, E., Aktan-Erciyes, A., Demir-Lira, E., Akman, İ., & Göksun, T. (in press). Parental multimodal input on language development in preterm and full-term infants. *Language Learning and Development*.
- Horne, Z., **Kobas, M.,** & Cimpian, A. (under review). Historical and Empirical Evidence for an Inference Bias in Scientific Explanation.
- Kobas, M.,** & Cimpian, A. (in preparation). Reconciling two competing views on the process of generating explanations: Rational inference vs. intuitive biases.

Ateş, T., Ateşoğlu, Ş., Yiğit, Ç., Kesen, İ., **Kobaş, M.**, Erdem, E., Erdem, A., Göksun, T., & Yüret, D. (2022). CRAFT: A Benchmark for Causal Reasoning About Forces and interactions. 60th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics.

Ateş, T., Ateşoğlu, Ş., Yiğit, Ç., Kesen, İ., **Kobaş, M.**, Erdem, E., Erdem, A., Göksun, T., & Yüret, D. (2020). CRAFT: A Benchmark for Causal Reasoning About Forces and interactions. NeurIPS Shared Visual Representations in Human & Machine Intelligence Workshop.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Kobaş, M., & Cimpian, A. (2025, May). Reconciling two competing views on the process of generating explanations: Rational inference vs. intuitive biases. Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) 2025 Biennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN.

Kobaş, M., Horne, Z., & Cimpian, A. (2023, July). The Inherence Bias in Scientific Explanations. Poster presented at 1st Minds, Brains, and Machine Summer Poster Conference, New York, NY.

Kobaş, M., Tworek, C. M., & Cimpian, A. (2023, July). Expertise mitigates the inherence bias in everyday explanations. Poster presented at 45th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, CogSci 2023, Sydney, Australia.

Kobaş, M., Aktan-Erciyes, A., & Göksun, T. (2021, July). Fine Motor Abilities and Parental Input of Object Dimensions Predict Receptive Language. Poster presented at the 15th International Association for the Study of Child Language, Philadelphia, PA.

Kobaş, M., Kızıldere, E., Aktan-Erciyes, A., Doğan, I., & Göksun, T. (2021, July). Fine Motor Abilities, Visual Perception, and Language Development in Preterm and Term Infants. Poster presented at the 15th International Association for the Study of Child Language, Philadelphia, PA.

Kızıldere, E., **Kobaş, M.**, Doğan, I., Aktan-Erciyes, A., Demir-Lira, E., & Göksun, T. (2021, July). Event Representation, Parental Spatial Input, and Relational Language Comprehension in Full-Term and Preterm Infants. Paper Presented in Demir-Lira (chair), Beyond Quantity-Quality: Specifying Aspects of High-Quality Parental Language Input that Predict Optimal Child Outcomes. International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Philadelphia, PA

Doğan, I., **Kobaş, M.**, Kızıldere, E., Aktan-Erciyes, A., Demir-Lira, E., & Göksun, T. (2021, July). Parental Verbal Input in Different Gestational Weeks and Atypical Development. Poster Presented at the International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Philadelphia, PA.

Turan, E., **Kobaş, M.**, Aktan-Erciyes, A., & Göksun, T. (2021, July). Turkish children's learning of postpositions: The role of spatial representations. Poster Presented at the International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Philadelphia, PA.

Kobaş, M. & Göksun, T. (2021, June). Early Walking Leads to Changes in Parents' Spatial Input. Poster presented at the Development in Motion Conference (Virtual Conference).

Kızıldere, E., **Kobaş, M.**, Doğan, I., Aktan-Erciyes, A., Demir-Lira, E., Akman, İ. & Göksun, T. (2021, April). Parents' spatial language scaffolds pre-and full-term infants' mental rotation skills. Poster presented at Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) Biennial Meeting (Virtual Symposium).

Doğan, I., **Kobaş, M.**, Kızıldere, E., Aktan-Erciyes, A., Demir-Lira, E., Akman, İ. & Göksun, T. (2021, April). Parents' gestural but not verbal input associates with word comprehension in pre-and full-term infants. Poster presented at Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) Biennial Meeting (Virtual Symposium).

Kobaş, M., Aktan-Erciyes, A. & Göksun, T. (2021, January). Fine Motor Abilities, Visual Perception and Executive Functions in Preterm and Full-Term Infants. Poster presented at the 11th Budapest CEU Conference on Cognitive Development, Budapest, Hungary.

Kobaş, M., Kızıldere, E., Aktan-Erciyes, A., Doğan, I., & Göksun, T. (2020, January). Gross Motor Abilities, Visual Perception, and Language Development in Preterm and Term Infants. Poster Presented at the 10th Budapest CEU Conference on Cognitive Development, Budapest, Hungary.

Turan, E., **Kobaş, M.,** Altunay, H., Esmer, Ş., Erkekli, E., & Göksun, T. (2020, January). The Effects of Relational Language on Children's Spatial Cognition. Poster Presented at the 10th Budapest CEU Conference on Cognitive Development, Budapest, Hungary.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

New York University, Cognitive Development Laboratory, New York

Present

Prof. Andrei Cimpian

- Survey design, participant recruitment, data analysis, data visualization, and conceptualization of a study investigating scientific explanations
- Experimental task design, data analysis, participant recruitment, data visualization, and conceptualization of a study investigating the theories about how people generate explanations
- Survey data analysis, and conceptualization of a study investigating the relation between expertise and cognitive biases

Koç University Language and Cognition Laboratory, İstanbul

10.2018 – 08.2021

Prof. Tilbe Göksun

- Data analysis and project management from preschoolers for the study investigating the relationship between spatial abilities and relational language.
- Experimental task design, survey design, data analysis, participant recruitment, coding and collection for the study investigating longitudinal relationship between event representation, language development & motor abilities
- Experimental task design, survey design, and conceptual support for a machine learning project related to intuitive physics

Educational Sciences at Boğaziçi University, İstanbul

02.2017 – 06.2017

Asst. Prof. Nihal Yeniad

- Contributed to literature search & project organization on attention, well-being and parent-child interaction.

Koç University Independent Evaluation Laboratory, İstanbul

06.2017 – 08.2017

Asst. Prof. Yasemin Kisbu Sakarya

- Chosen under the Koç University Summer Research Program, helped data collection from adults on the brief psychosocial intervention and assisted report for intervention evaluation.

Meta-Analysis Study, Educational Sciences at Boğaziçi University, İstanbul

05.2016 – 08.2016

Asst. Prof. Nihal Yeniad (collaboration with Dr. Michael Sulik from NYU)

- Contributed to literature search on executive functions, depression and well-being.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- **Instructor, Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences**
(PSYCH-UA.10)

Fall 2025

- **Teaching Assistant, Masters Statistics**
(PSYCH-GA.2016, Prof. Elizabeth A. Bauer)

Spring 2025

- **Teaching Assistant, Masters Statistics** (PSYCH-GA.2016, Dr. Aspen Yoo) Fall 2024
- **Teaching Assistant, Masters Statistics** (PSYCH-GA.2016, Prof. Elizabeth A. Bauer) Spring 2024
- **Teaching Assistant, Research Methods in Psychology** (Psyc 301; Prof. Tilbe Göksun) Spring 2020
- **Teaching Assistant, Lifespan Development** (Psyc 206; Prof. Tilbe Göksun) Fall 2019
- **Teaching Assistant, Cognitive Development** (Psyc 445; Prof. Tilbe Göksun) Spring 2019
- **Teaching Assistant, Issues in Psychology** (Psyc 210; Prof. Fuat Balci) Fall 2018

AWARDS

MacCracken Fellowship
 Academic Excellence Award, Koç University
 Fee Waiver, 11th Budapest CEU Conference on Cognitive Development
 Fee Waiver, 10th Budapest CEU Conference on Cognitive Development

REVIEWING

NeurIPS Shared Visual Representations in Human & Machine Intelligence (SVRHM)
 Infant and Child Development
 Budapest Central European University Conference on Cognitive Development

UNDERGRADUTE MENTORING

Madelyn Zamelis (2025 - present)
Daniel Lin (2025 - present)
Stephanie Yandun* (2024 – present)
Ariella Pevzner (2024 – present)
Maya Rabago (2023 – present)
Emma Baxendale (2023-2024)
Olivia Duan** (2023 – present, NYU Dean's Undergraduate Research Fund recipient,
Coons/Leibowitz Award for Honors Research recipient)
Vidisha Goyal *** (2021 – 2022)
Taygun Yorulmaz (2020-2021)
Elif Erkekli (2019-2021, Koç University Summer Research Program)
Mahmut Kurupınar (2019-2020, Koç University Summer Research Program)
Gülfem Sarı (2019-2020, Koç University Summer Research Program)

* Student mentee presented research project at the NYU 2nd Annual DreamMakers Summit

** Student mentee presented research project at the NYU Undergraduate Research Conference,

*** Student mentee presented a research project and was awarded best poster at the NYU Undergraduate Research Conference

ACTIVITIES

Boğaziçi University Social Service Club (BUSOS)

09.2013 – 06.2018

President, Active Membership, and Board Member

- Organized seminars and workshops on civil society, social services and human rights, contacted NGOs and people educated in social sciences.
- Worked in “Windmill Project” that includes expressive art activities with disadvantaged children for social transformation

SKILLS

Languages

- Turkish (Native), English (Advanced), German (Pre-Intermediate)

Computer

- R, Python, SPSS
- Elan, Octoparse, Qualtrics
- Microsoft Office, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Premier