

# Morris Alper, Ph.D.

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I research creative multimodal machine learning inspired by linguistics — how structures encoded by language provide a tool for interpreting and controlling modalities such as vision and audio, ML as a creativity aid, and innovative methods for low-resource languages.

## Education

- 2023 – 2025     **Ph.D., Tel Aviv University** Electrical Engineering (Machine Learning)  
Advisors: *Dr. Hadar Averbuch-Elor, Dr. Raja Giryes*  
Dissertation: *Multimodal Learning for High-Level Semantic Understanding: From Interpretability to Real-World Applications*
- 2019 – 2023     **M.Sc. (cum laude), Tel Aviv University** Computer Science  
Advisor: *Dr. Hadar Averbuch-Elor*  
Thesis: *Learning Human-Human Interactions in Images with Weak Textual Supervision*  
GPA: 98 / 100
- 2012 – 2016     **B.Sc., Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)** Linguistics and Mathematics (dual major).  
GPA: 4.9 / 5

## Employment History

- 2025 – ongoing     **Research Analyst (Postdoctoral)**, Carnegie Mellon University.  
Advisor: *Dr. Lori Levin*  
Developing machine learning methods for endangered language documentation.
- 2024     **Research Scientist Intern**, Meta.  
Developing 3D generative models using weakly-structured image collections.
- 2019 – 2023     **Data Science Lead and Lecturer**, Israel Tech Challenge.  
Designed syllabus, wrote, and delivered lectures on data science to industry professionals.
- 2019 – 2021     **NLP Data Scientist**, Pipl, Inc.  
Designed information extraction algorithms for unstructured textual web data.
- 2018 – 2019     **NLP Data Scientist**, Reverso-Softissimo.  
Designed NLP algorithms to automatically correct and enrich linguistic data.
- 2017 – 2018     **Software Developer**, K Dictionaries.  
Managed API for lexicographic data, and developed algorithms for data enrichment
- 2015 – 2016     **Software and Algorithm Developer**, Voiceitt.  
Prototyped speech recognition algorithms and integrated them into the company's API.
- 2016     **Algorithm Development Intern**, SECOM.  
Developed algorithms for improved facial recognition.
- 2012-2015     **Undergraduate Research in Cognitive Linguistics**, TedLab, MIT.  
Analyzed psycholinguistic survey data to study cognition and language.

## Research Publications

\* indicates equal contribution.

### Peer-Reviewed Conference Papers

1. **Morris Alper**, David Novotny, Filippos Kokkinos, Hadar Averbuch-Elor, Tom Monnier. WildCAT3D: Appearance-Aware Multi-View Diffusion in the Wild. *NeurIPS*, 2025.

2. Rachel Mikulinsky\*, **Morris Alper**\*, Shai Gordin, Enrique Jiménez, Yoram Cohen, Hadar Averbuch-Elor. ProtoSnap: Prototype Alignment For Cuneiform Signs. *ICLR*, 2025.
3. Keren Ganon\*, **Morris Alper**\*, Rachel Mikulinsky<sup>1</sup>, Hadar Averbuch-Elor. WAFFLE: Multimodal Floorplan Understanding in the Wild. *WACV*, 2025. (Oral)
4. **Morris Alper** and Hadar Averbuch-Elor. Emergent Visual-Semantic Hierarchies in Image-Text Representations. *Proceedings of the European Conference on Computer Vision (ECCV)*, 2024. (Oral)
5. Moran Yanuka, **Morris Alper**, Hadar Averbuch-Elor, Raja Giryes. ICC : Quantifying Image Caption Concreteness for Multimodal Dataset Curation. *ACL (Findings)*, 2024.
6. Chen Dudai\*, **Morris Alper**\*, Hana Bezalel, Rana Hanocka, Itai Lang, and Hadar Averbuch-Elor. HaLo-NeRF: Learning Geometry-Guided Semantics for Exploring Unconstrained Photo Collections. *Proceedings of the Eurographics Conference (EG)*, 2024.
7. **Morris Alper** and Hadar Averbuch-Elor. Kiki or Bouba? Sound Symbolism in Vision-and-Language Models. *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS)*, 2023. (Spotlight)
8. **Morris Alper** and Hadar Averbuch-Elor. Learning Human-Human Interactions in Images from Weak Textual Supervision. *Proceedings of the IEEE/CVF International Conference on Computer Vision (ICCV)*, 2023.
9. **Morris Alper**\*, Michael Fiman\*, and Hadar Averbuch-Elor. Is BERT Blind? Exploring the Effect of Vision-and-Language Pretraining on Visual Language Understanding. *Proceedings of the IEEE/CVF Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition (CVPR)*, 2023.

## Workshop and Non-Peer-Reviewed Papers


1. **Morris Alper**, Samopriya Basu, Nathan Bennett, Ryan Kessler, S Verlaine Ravana, Wendy F. K'ah Skáahluwaa Todd. Towards Low-Resource Text-to-Speech Generation for Indigenous Pacific Northwest Languages: The Case of Haida Xaad Kíl. *International Conference on Salish and Neighboring Languages (ICSNL)*, 2025.
2. Shai Gordin, **Morris Alper**, Avital Romach, Luis Saenz Santos, Naama Yochai, Roey Lalazar. CuReD: Deep Learning Optical Character Recognition for Cuneiform Text Editions and Legacy Materials. *Proceedings of the 1st Workshop on Machine Learning for Ancient Languages (ML4AL)*, 2024.
3. **Morris Alper**. Auto-generating Bilingual Dictionaries: Results of the TIAD-2017 Shared Task Baseline Algorithm. *LDK Workshops*, 2017.

## Preprints and Under Review

1. **Morris Alper**\*, Moran Yanuka\*, Raja Giryes, Gašper Beguš. ConlangCrafter: Constructing Languages with a Multi-Hop LLM Pipeline. 2025.
2. Yakov Kolani, Maxim Melichov, Cobi Calev, **Morris Alper**. Phonikud: Hebrew Grapheme-to-Phoneme Conversion for Real-Time Text-to-Speech. 2025.
3. Shahaf Pruss\*, **Morris Alper**\*, Hadar Averbuch-Elor. Dynamic Scene Understanding from Vision-Language Representations. 2025.


## Miscellaneous Experience

### Presentations and Interviews

2024  IMVC 2024 presentation on “Kiki or Bouba?” NeurIPS 2023 paper

## Miscellaneous Experience (continued)

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 Radio interview for Kan Tarbut program on VLM sound symbolism research (46:30-60:00, Hebrew language)

## Awards and Achievements

- 2011     **International Linguistics Olympiad**, first place internationally (both individual and team rounds), best solution (problem 2), Zhurinsky Memorial Prize.
- 2009     **International Linguistics Olympiad**, honorable mention (individual round), first place in team round.
- 2008     **International Linguistics Olympiad**, tied for 6th place individual round (silver medal).

## Academic Teaching Experience

- Fall 2025     **Human Language for Artificial Intelligence**, teaching assistant, Carnegie Mellon University.
- Fall 2023     **Digital Signal Processing**, teaching assistant, Tel Aviv University.

## Peer Review Service

- 2025     SIGGRAPH, NeurIPS (Top Reviewer), ICLR, ACL ARR
- 2024     COLM, NeurIPS, ACML, ICLR

## Languages

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**English** (native), **Hebrew** (professional), **French** (upper intermediate)

## References

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Available upon request