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Prof. Jennifer Culbertson & Dr. Shira Tal  
University of Edinburgh  
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**Referees (see CV for more)**

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Dear Prof. Culbertson and Dr. Tal,

I am writing this cover letter as a part of my ecstatic response to hearing about the open position as your Human Testing Technician. Besides being a current student in the MSc Evolution of Language and Cognition programme, I have had an expressed interest to assist in Prof. Culbertson's work since a Zoom call in 2021, kindly initiated by Jenny herself. Since then, I have also become familiar with Dr. Tal's work which I am currently looking to extend to my own dissertation.

Personally, my interest in the experimental application of syntactic theory goes back to writing my BA thesis, specifically on the theoretical approaches to *ellipsis* and their merit (see attachment). NTNU, where I studied at the time, is quite heavily dominated by mainstream generative grammarians. The increasingly complex underlying structures caused me to initiate a number of debates on introspective methodologies and unfalsifiable assumptions. Consequently, I took on many extra courses and read extensively into the work on Jackendoff's Parallel Architecture, Goldberg and Croft's varieties of construction grammar, as well as basic population genetics, cultural evolution, and multilevel selection theory. Today, this manifests in me being a regular attendant of the CLE, CLRG, MGRG, EdinMorph, Caroline Heycock's syntactic variation RG, and Dan Lassiter's Bayesian Cognitive Modelling RG.

Previously, I have had four separate Research Assistant positions looking at a variety of linguistic phenomena across a wide range of populations, from different kinds of multilinguals to people of all ages, including as young as one month. Most of these projects required challenging recruitment methods, complex planning, flexible liaising, as well as quick learning of technical instruments, procedures, and programs. That I performed well in all these positions while also studying more than full-time (exactly 150% to be clear) should indicate both my capacity and dedication. This last year, I have also become familiarised with several programming languages in the context of courses aimed specifically at the development and evaluation of experiments and models in fields surrounding evolutionary linguistics.

These now deeply rooted interests and experiences have made anything but a future in research almost unimaginable, and because of this, I have become wholeheartedly driven to help contribute to evolutionary linguistics and related fields, in any way I can. Thank you for your consideration. I will gladly answer any questions that remain unanswered from my application, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Sigurd Farstad Iversen