

# UĞURCAN VURGUN

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Psycholinguistics, Language and Event Cognition; Autism; Biomedical Informatics

## EDUCATION

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**University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia** *2019 - 2024*

Ph.D. in Linguistics (Language Processing and Event Cognition)

Department of Linguistics

Thesis Title: From Words to Worlds: Lexical Aspect, Coercion and the Malleability of Event Representations

Thesis Supervisor: Anna Papafragou

Interdisciplinary graduate certificate in Language and Communication Sciences (LCS)

**University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia** *2023 - 2025*

Master of Science (MS) in Biomedical Informatics

Institute for Biomedical Informatics

**Boğaziçi University, Istanbul** *2015 - 2019*

Master of Arts (MA) in Linguistics

Department of Linguistics

Thesis Title: The Syntax of Focus Particles in Turkish

Thesis Supervisors: Mine Nakipoğlu, A. Sumru Özsoy

**Koç University, Istanbul** *2002 - 2007*

Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Business Administration

College of Administrative Sciences and Economics

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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**University of Pennsylvania College of Liberal and Professional Studies**

LING 0001 Introduction to Linguistics

*Summer 2023 & Summer 2024*

Instructor for the course

**University of Pennsylvania**

LING 0001 Introduction to Linguistics

*Fall 2022*

Teaching Assistant for two sections

Professor: Mark Liberman

LING 001 Introduction to Linguistics

*Fall 2021*

Teaching Assistant for two sections

Professor: Gareth Roberts

LING 001 Introduction to Linguistics

*Spring 2021*

Teaching Assistant for two sections

Professor: Martin Salzmann

**The Wharton School**

MGMT 8920 Advanced Study Program - Collaborative Innovation Program

*Spring 2024*

Teaching Assistant for four project teams (MBA/WEMBA students)  
Professor: Xu (Henry) Han

MGMT 8920 Advanced Study Program - Collaborative Innovation Program  
Teaching Assistant for four project teams (MBA/WEMBA students)  
Professor: Scott Snyder

*Fall 2023*

**Boğaziçi University, Istanbul**  
LING 101 Introduction to Linguistics  
Teaching Assistant  
Professor: Mine Nakipoğlu

*Fall 2018*

## PUBLICATIONS

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**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2024). Aspectual processing shifts visual event apprehension. *Cognitive Science*, 48(6), e13476.

Li, C., Mowery, D. L., Ma, X., Yang, R., **Vurgun, U.**, Hwang, S., Donnelly, H. K., Bandhey, H., Akhtar, Z., Senathirajah, Y., Sadhu, E. M., Getzen, E., Freda, P. J., Long, Q., Becich, M. J. (in review). Realizing the Potential of Social Determinants Data: A Scoping Review of Approaches for Screening, Linkage, Extraction, Analysis, and Interventions. *Journal of Clinical and Translational Science*.

**Vurgun, U.** (2019). The syntax of focus particles in Turkish. Unpublished master's thesis, Boğaziçi University. Advisors: Dr. H. Mine Nakipoğlu & Dr. A. Sumru Özsoy.

**Vurgun, U.** (2018). Book review - Contemporary Morphological Theories: A User's Guide. Thomas W. Stewart, 2015. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 192 pages. ISBN 978 07 486 9268 2. *Journal of Linguistic Research*, 29(2), 129-137.

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2024). Detecting event construal shifts in aspectual coercion. Proceedings from the 46th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society.

**Vurgun, U.**, Heesu, Y., Landau, B., & Trueswell, J. (2024). Real-time processing of symmetrical predicates: Semantic categorization over time. Proceedings from the 46th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society.

**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2023). Cognitive signatures of aspectual coercion. Proceedings from the 45th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society.

**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2022). Linguistic aspect constrains event apprehension. Proceedings from the 44th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society.

## SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

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**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (forthcoming). Detecting event construal shifts in aspectual coercion. Oral presentation at the 46th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

**Vurgun, U.**, Heesu, Y., Landau, B., & Trueswell, J. (forthcoming). Real-time processing of symmetrical predicates: Semantic categorization over time. Poster presentation at the 46th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2024). Aspectual Coercion: A New Method to Probe Aspectual Commitments. Oral presentation at the Experiments in Linguistic Meaning (ELM) Conference, University of Pennsylvania.

**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2024). Aspectual Coercion: A New Method to Probe Aspectual Commitments. Poster presentation at the 37th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

**Vurgun, U.**, Yun, H., Landau, B., & Trueswell, J. (2024). Symmetrical or not?: A new method to probe real-time semantic categorization. Poster presentation at the 37th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2024). Cognitive signatures of aspectual coercion. Poster presentation at the 10th Mid-Atlantic Colloquium of Studies in Meaning (MACSIM), University of Maryland, College Park.

**Vurgun, U.**, Cho, S., Fusaroli, R., Ip, M. H. K., Pelella, M. R., Knox, A., et al. (2024). Detecting Autism through Automated Speech Analysis: The Role of Model Complexity and Dataset Balance. Poster presentation at the International Society for Autism Research Annual Meeting, Melbourne, Australia.

**Vurgun, U.**, Cho, S., Fusaroli, R., Ip, M. H. K., Pelella, M. R., Knox, A., Schillinger, S., Hauptmann, A., Covello, M., Madya, M., Lyons, M., Lee, A., Fulop, L., Adeniyi, H., Russell, A., Hicks, G., Anello, O., Walker, K., Fiumara, J., Tunç, B., Sariyanidi, E., Liberman, M., Schultz, R. T., & Parish-Morris, J. (2024). Detecting Autism through Automated Speech Analysis: The Role of Model Complexity and Dataset Balance. Poster presentation at the International Society for Autism Research Annual Meeting, Melbourne, Australia.

Kaviyarasu, A., **Vurgun, U.**, Hwang, S., Acevedo, A., Mowery, D. L., Abella, B. S., & Mitchell, O. J. L. (2024). Leveraging large language models to optimize clinical text analysis for in-hospital cardiac arrest identification. Poster presentation at the Department of Medicine Research Day, University of Pennsylvania.

Cho, S., **Vurgun, U.**, Fusaroli, R., Ip, M. H. K., Pelella, M. R., Knox, A., Hauptmann, A., Covello, M., Madya, M., Lyons, M., Lee, A., Fulop, L., Schillinger, S., Russell, A., Hicks, G., Walker, K., Fiumara, J., Chatham, C., Liberman, M., Schultz, R. T., & Parish-Morris, J. (2024). Stable Acoustic Differences between Autistic and Neurotypical Children: A Longitudinal Telephony Study. Oral presentation at the International Society for Autism Research Annual Meeting, Melbourne, Australia.

Cho, S., **Vurgun, U.**, Fusaroli, R., Ip, M. H. K., Pelella, M. R., Knox, A., Hauptmann, A., Covello, M., Madya, M., Lyons, M., Lee, A., Fulop, L., Russell, A., Hicks, G., Fiumara, J., Pandey, J., Tunç, B., Sariyanidi, E., Liberman, M., Schultz, R. T., & Parish-Morris, J. (2024). Automatically-derived Lexical Features Distinguish Autistic Teens from Neurotypical Peers and Teens with Other Psychiatric Conditions in a Natural Conversation Task. Oral presentation at the International Society for Autism Research Annual Meeting, Melbourne, Australia.

Ip, Martin H. K., Putnam, O., Cho, S., **Vurgun, U.**, Lyons, M., Knox, A., Hauptmann, A., Covello, M., Madya, M., Adeniyi, H., Hicks, G., Anello, O., Walker, K., Fiumara, J., Cieri, C., Fusaroli, R., Chatham, C., Liberman, M., Schultz, R. T., Parish-Morris, J. (2024). Prosodic similarities and variation in autistic and neurotypical children: A telephone-based study of verbal counting. Oral presentation at the International Society for Autism Research Annual Meeting, Melbourne, Australia.

**Vurgun, U.**, Cho, S., Fusaroli, R., Ip, M. H. K., Pelella, M. R., Knox, A., Hauptmann, A., Covello, M., Madya, M., Lyons, M., Lee, A., Schillinger, S., Fulop, L., Adeniyi, H., Russell, A., Fiumara, J., Hicks, G., Anello, O., Walker, K., Tunç, B., Sariyanidi, E., Liberman, M., Schultz, R. T., & Parish-Morris, J. (2024). Automatic classification of autism using automatic speech recognition and large language models (LLMs). Poster presentation at Meeting on Language and Autism, Durham, NC.

Cho, S., **Vurgun, U.**, Fusaroli, R., Ip, M. H. K., Pelella, M. R., Knox, A., Hauptmann, A., Covello, M., Madya, M., Lyons, M., Lee, A., Schillinger, S., Fulop, L., Russell, A., Hicks, G., Fiumara, J., Pandey, J., Tunç, B., Sariyanidi, V., Liberman, M., Schultz, R. T., & Parish-Morris, J. (2024). Autistic teens' word

choice differs from neurotypical peers and teens with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in a natural conversation task. Poster presentation at Meeting on Language and Autism, Durham, NC.

Ip, M. H. K., Putnam, O. C., Cho, S., **Vurgun, U.**, Lyons, M., Knox, A., Hauptmann, A., Covello, M., Fulop, L., Russell, A., Walker, K., Miller, J., Fiumara, J., Fusaroli, R., Chatham, C., Cieri, C., Lee, A., Liberman, M., Schultz, R. T., & Parish-Morris, J. (2024). Does speech prosody differ in a socially unengaging task? Preliminary findings from autistic and non-autistic children’s verbal counting. Poster presentation at Meeting on Language in Autism, Durham, NC.

**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2023). Aspectual processing and event perception. Poster presentation at the 36th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing, University of Pittsburgh.

**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2023). Lexical aspect maps onto event apprehension. Poster presentation at the 9th Mid-Atlantic Colloquium of Studies in Meaning (MACSIM), University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2023). Aspectual framing of events shifts online event apprehension. Poster presentation at the 98th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, Denver, CO.

**Vurgun, U.**, Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2022). Lexical aspect maps onto event apprehension. Oral presentation at the 2nd Experiments in Linguistic Meaning Conference, University of Pennsylvania.

**Vurgun, U.** (2020). Both locative alternation variants in Turkish are change-of-state predicates with ResultPs. Oral presentation at the 4th Conference of Central Asian Language and Linguistics, Indiana University.

**Vurgun, U.** (2019). A lexical-typological approach explaining the limited existence of locative alternation in Turkish. Poster presentation at the 4th Workshop on Turkic and Languages in Contact with Turkic (Tu+4), NYU.

**REVIEWING**

Folia Linguistica

CogSci (The Annual Conference of Cognitive Science Society)

Journal of Clinical and Translational Science

**GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND AWARDS**

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| <b>Benjamin Franklin Fellowship, University of Pennsylvania</b>                                     | 2019 - 2024            |
| <b>University of Pennsylvania, Language and Communication Sciences Research Fund</b>                | 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 |
| <b>University of Pennsylvania, Integrated Language Sciences and Technology Research Fund</b>        | 2022, 2023, 2024       |
| <b>Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative (SFARI) Travel Award</b>                            | 2024                   |
| <b>The 48th Annual Boston University Conference On Language Development, Diversity Travel Award</b> | 2023                   |
| <b>University of Pennsylvania, GAPSA Research Travel Grant</b>                                      | 2022                   |
| <b>University of Pennsylvania, SAS Dean’s Travel Subvention</b>                                     | 2022                   |
| <b>Boğaziçi University, Research Travel Grant</b>   | 2019                   |

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

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|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Programming &amp; Analysis</b> | R, Python, PyTorch, TensorFlow, SQL                   |
| <b>Machine Learning</b>           | Scikit-learn, Keras, XGBoost                          |
| <b>Large Language Models</b>      | HuggingFace Transformers                              |
|                                   | - Fine-tuning: Transfer learning, Few-shot learning   |
|                                   | - Advanced techniques: Prompt engineering, PEFT, LoRA |
|                                   | - Deployment: Model compression, Quantization         |
| <b>Software &amp; Tools</b>       | Eye Tracking (Tobii), PCIBex, PsychoPy                |
| <b>Statistical Analysis</b>       | Mixed-effects modeling, Time series analysis          |
| <b>Linguistic Tools</b>           | TalkBank, NLTK, spaCy                                 |
| <b>Version Control</b>            | Git, GitHub   |
| <b>Data Visualization</b>         | ggplot2, matplotlib                                   |
| <b>Cloud Platforms</b>            | Microsoft Azure, Databricks                           |

## EMPLOYMENT

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| <b>Unilever</b>  | Turkey      |
| <i>Various Roles, Including Channel and Category Development Manager</i> | 2008 - 2018 |

- Progressed through multiple roles over a 10-year tenure, demonstrating consistent growth and adaptability in sales, marketing, and management positions.
- Developed and executed strategic promotional plans, resulting in increased sales, improved category penetration, and optimized promotional spending across multiple product lines.
- Led large cross-functional teams (200+ employees) across multiple regions, fostering a performance-driven culture and achieving significant improvements in turnover, market share, and profitability.
- Implemented data-driven strategies for product placement, pricing, and distribution, enhancing brand visibility and market presence.
- Collaborated with key stakeholders to create and execute joint business plans, aligning company objectives with customer and distributor goals.
- Demonstrated expertise in market research, business insights, and statistical modeling to inform strategic decision-making and drive business growth.

**Key Skills:** Strategic Planning, Team Leadership, Sales & Marketing Strategy, Market Analysis, Performance Optimization, Stakeholder Management, Trade Marketing, Supply Chain Management

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND ACTIVITIES

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|   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>American Psychological Association</b> | May 2024 - Present |
| <i>Member</i>                             |                    |

- Division 7: Developmental Psychology
- Division 33: Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities/Autism Spectrum Disorder

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| <b>Wharton Founders' Club</b> | Oct 2023 - Present |
| <i>Member</i>                 |                    |

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| <b>Family Resource Center, University of Pennsylvania</b> | Sep 2019 - Jun 2020 |
| <i>Student Parent Advisory Board Member</i>               |                     |