

Yasamin Motamedi

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Division of Psychology and Language Sciences, UCL
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EMPLOYMENT

June 2017 – Present, Experimental Psychology, University College London

Research Associate

Researcher for the ESRC-funded project, *The role of iconicity in word learning*.

Jan. 2017 – June 2017, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, the Netherlands

Postdoctoral scholar, Language and Cognition

For the project proposal *Modality specific effects in artificial language-learning experiments: measuring iconicity in silent gesture studies*.

2014-2015, University of Edinburgh, UK

Research Assistant

Stimulus collection and experimental implementation for a project on linguistic regularization and frequency effects run by Dr. Kenny Smith

EDUCATION

2013-2017, The University of Edinburgh, UK

PhD Linguistics and English Language

Artificial Sign Language Learning: a method for evolutionary linguistics.

Supervised by Professor Simon Kirby, Dr. Kenny Smith and Dr. Marieke Schouwstra

2012-2013, The University of Edinburgh, UK

MSc with Distinction, Evolution of Language and Cognition

2008-2012, The University of Edinburgh, UK

MA with Honours (First Class) French and English Language, with ERASMUS exchange at the Université Paris Diderot

TEACHING

2017-present, University College London, UK

Project supervisor

Project supervision for master's students' final projects, undergraduate students' third year final projects, and short-term undergraduate projects.

2017, University College London, UK

Lecturer

Embodied Cognition lecture for the MSc Cognitive and Decision Science core module Principles of Cognition.

2014-2017, The University of Edinburgh, UK

Teaching assistant

Cross-linguistic Variation: Theories and Limitations

Linguistic theory and the structure of English

Origins and Evolution of Language (Hons)

Linguistics and English Language 1

2015, The University of Edinburgh, UK

Lecturer

Sign Language Acquisition lecture for Honours module in Sign Language Linguistics.

PUBLICATIONS

Motamedi, Y., Schouwstra, M., Culbertson, J., Smith, K., and Kirby, S. (Submitted). Evolving artificial sign languages in the lab: from improvised gesture to systematic sign. *Cognition*. Pre-print at <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/be7qy>.

Motamedi, Y., Little, H., Nielsen, A. and Sulik, J. (Submitted). Empirical approaches to measuring iconicity. *Language and Cognition*.

Motamedi, Y., Schouwstra, M., Culbertson, J., Smith, K., and Kirby, S. (2017). The cultural evolution of complex linguistic constructions in artificial sign languages. In (Eds.) *Proceedings of the 39th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*. Austin, TX: Cognitive Science Society.

Motamedi, Y., Schouwstra, M. and Kirby, S. (2017). An evolutionary approach to sign language emergence: from *state* to *process*. [Peer commentary on "Gesture, sign and language: the coming of age of sign language and gesture studies"]. *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*.

Motamedi Y., Schouwstra M., Smith K. and Kirby S. (2016). Linguistic Structure Emerges In The Cultural Evolution Of Artificial Sign Languages. In S.G. Roberts et al. (eds.) *The Evolution of Language: Proceedings of the 11th International Conference*.

**CONFERENCE
PRESENTATIONS**

Motamedi, Y., Perniss, P. and Vigliocco, G (2018, June). The role of iconicity in word learning: insights from child-directed language. *Paper presented at the Child Language Symposium*. Reading, UK.

Motamedi, Y., Schouwstra M., Culbertson, J., Smith K. and Kirby, S. (2017, Sept.) Culturally evolving complex constructions in artificial sign languages. *Paper presented at Architectures and Mechanisms for Language Processing (AMLaP)*. Lancaster, UK.

Motamedi Y., Schouwstra M., Culbertson, J., Smith K. and Kirby, S. (2017, July). The cultural evolution of complex linguistic constructions in artificial sign languages. *Poster presented at the Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, London, UK.

Motamedi, Y. (2017, April). Building language with the body: iconicity in an evolving system. *Paper presented at the 11th International Symposium on Iconicity in Language and Literature*, Brighton, UK.

Motamedi Y., Schouwstra M., Smith K. and Kirby S. (2016, March). Linguistic Structure Emerges In The Cultural Evolution of Artificial Sign Languages. *Paper presented at the 11th International Conference on the Evolution of Language (Evolang 11)*, New Orleans, USA.

Motamedi, Y., Smith, K., Schouwstra, M. and Kirby, S. (2015, September). The emergence of structure in artificial gestural communication systems. *Paper presented at Architectures and Mechanisms for Language Processing (AMLaP)*, Valetta, Malta.

Motamedi, Y., Smith, K., Schouwstra, M. and Kirby, S. (2015, July). The emergence of structure in artificial gestural communication systems. *Paper presented at the International Cognitive Linguistics Conference (ICLC)*, Newcastle, UK.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

2016, Elsevier Prize for best paper presentation

Linguistics and English Language Postgraduate Conference, University of Edinburgh

2015, Grindley grant

Experimental Psychology Society

2013-2016, Carnegie-Caledonian PhD Scholarship

Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland

INVITED TALKS

The body as linguistic articulator. The Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London. October 2017.

The emergence of systematic structure in gestural communication systems. University of Chicago, Goldin-Meadow Lab. February 2015.

The emergence of systematicity in gestural communication systems. University of California, San Diego, Padden Lab. February 2015.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND QUALIFICATIONS

Associate fellow, Higher Education Academy

Reviewer for Interaction Studies and Cognitive Science

Workshop and summer school organizer for the event *Minds, mechanisms and Interaction in the Evolution of Language*, held at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, September 2017.

Organiser, postgraduate presentation skills workshop. The University of Edinburgh, September 2016.

Committee chair for the Linguistics and English Language Postgraduate Conference 2015, The University of Edinburgh.

OUTREACH

2016 (February), Innovative Learning Week

Culture communication and context: an interactive workshop, the University of Edinburgh.

2015 (June), Exhibit at the Science Museum, London

In One Ear and Out the Other, for the Royal Society's Next Big Thing Museum Lates event.

PRESS COVERAGE

From pantomime to sign language: how sign language evolves featured in *Science magazine*. DOI: 10.1126/science.aaf4103

<http://tinyurl.com/h8l2roq>

Also featured on the *Science magazine* podcast [April 14 2016].

<http://tinyurl.com/gqx5cek>

SKILLS

Languages: French (proficient user), British Sign Language (level 1)

Computer Programming: Python (including Psychopy), LaTeX, R, JavaScript, HTML

Data analysis: Experimental design and statistical analysis, including mixed effects models, gesture coding and video analysis using ELAN.