Yasamin Motamedi

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Centre for Language Evolution, School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences,

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EMPLOYMENT	**Centre for Language Evolution, University of Edinburgh UK** Postdoctoral research for ESRC-funded project, "From natural to conventional word order: iconicity, simplicity and the mechanisms of linguistic evolution" *Main duties:* • Day-to-day project management, including direct management of research assistant • Development and running of online experiments, and data analysis of results; reporting findings to academic audiences • Developing and implementing knowledge exchange and outreach activities	**Oct 2020 – present**
	Experimental Psychology, University College London, UK Research Associate for ESRC-funded project, "The role of iconicity in word learning". *Main duties:* • Day-to-day project management of 3-strand project • Development and running of experimental and observational research studies, and data analysis of results • Reporting findings to academic and non-academic audiences	**June 2017- Sept 2020**
	Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, the Netherlands Visiting postdoctoral scholar *Main duties:* • Develop independent research project assessing methodological approaches to measuring iconicity • Collaborate with departmental colleagues to organize international workshop	**Jan 2017 – June 2017**
	Linguistics and English Language, University of Edinburgh, UK Research Assistant for project on linguistic regularization and frequency effects led by Prof Kenny Smith *Main duties:* • Conducting research study with adult participants • Managing participant payments	**Nov 2014 – March 2015**
EDUCATION	**University of Edinburgh, UK** PhD Linguistics and English Language • *Artificial Sign Language Learning: a method for evolutionary linguistics.* • Supervised by Prof Simon Kirby, Prof Kenny Smith and Dr. Marieke Schouwstra • Developed novel method for studying sign language evolution	**Oct 2013 – Jan 2017**

University of Edinburgh, UK MSc with Distinction, Evolution of Language and Cognition		**Sept 2012 –** **Sept 2013**
University of Edinburgh, UK MA with Honours (First Class) French and English Language, with ERASMUS exchange at the Université Paris Diderot		**Sept 2008 –** **June 2012**

TEACHING

University College London, UK — **June 2017 – Oct 2020**
- **Project supervisor**
  - 5 postgraduate (MRes, MSc and MSci) dissertation projects in Psychology and Language Sciences
  - 3 BSc research projects in Psychology and Language Sciences
  - 2 MArch theory projects in Design for Performance and Interaction; student won international essay competition for her final project
- **Lecturer**
  - Embodied Cognition section for MSc Cognitive and Decision Science module
  - Language in Context section for MSc Psychological Science module
  - Multimodal language for Language and Cognition module for BSc in Psychology and Language Sciences
- **Seminar leader** for BSc/MSci course in Academic Skills

Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, the Netherlands — **Sept 2017**
- **Summer school instructor** at 2 day practical summer school for postgraduate students. Lead instructor for sessions on designing experimental trial structure and linear mixed effects models using Python and R.

The University of Edinburgh, UK — **Sept 2014 – Jan 2017**
- **Lecturer** for Sign Language Acquisition section for Honours module in Sign Language Linguistics.
- **Teaching assistant**
  - pre-honours courses: *Cross-linguistic Variation*, *Linguistic theory and the structure of English*, *Linguistics and English Language 1*
  - Honours/MSc course, *Origins and Evolution of Language*

PUBLICATIONS

Murgiano, M., Motamedi, Y. & Vigliocco, G. (in press). Language is less arbitrary than one thinks: Iconicity and Indexicality in real-world language learning and processing. *Journal of Cognition.*

Motamedi, Y., Schouwstra, M., Smith, K., Culbertson, J., and Kirby, S. (2019). Evolving artificial sign languages in the lab: from improvised gesture to systematic sign. *Cognition.* 192, 103694.

Motamedi, Y., Little, H., Nielsen, A. and Sulik, J. (2019). The iconicity toolbox: empirical approaches to measuring iconicity. *Language and Cognition.* 11(2), pp. 188-207.

Vigliocco, G., Motamedi, Y., Murgiano, M., Wonnacott, E., Marshall, C. R., Milan Maillo, I., & Perniss, P. (2019). Onomatopoeias, gestures, actions and words in the input to children: How do caregivers use multimodal cues in their communication to children? In

A. Goel, C. Seifert and C. Freksa (eds.) *Proceedings of the 41st Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*. Cognitive Science Society, Austin, TX, pp. 1171-1177.

Motamedi, Y., Schouwstra, M., Culbertson, J., Smith, K., and Kirby, S. (2017). The cultural evolution of complex linguistic constructions in artificial sign languages. In G. Gunzelmann et al. (eds.) *Proceedings of the 39th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*. Austin, TX: Cognitive Science Society, pp. 2760 – 2765.

Motamedi, Y., Schouwstra., M and Kirby, S. (2017). An evolutionary approach to sign language emergence: from *state* to *process.* [Commentary on "Gesture, sign and language: the coming of age of sign language and gesture studies"]. *Behavioural and Brain Sciences*. 40, e65.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS	Motamedi, Y., Murgiano, M., Wonnacott, E., Marshall, C., Perniss, P., Goldin-Meadow, S. & Vigliocco, G. (2020, Nov). Onomatopoeia in child-directed language and children's word learning. *Paper accepted at Boston University conference on Child Language Development (BUCLD).* Virtual conference.

Motamedi, Y., Murgiano, M., Wonnacott, E., Marshall, C., Perniss, P., Goldin-Meadow, S. & Vigliocco, G. (2020, July). Onomatopoeia in child-directed language and children's word learning. *Paper presented at the UK Cognitive Linguistics conference.* Virtual conference.

Motamedi, Y., Montemurro, K., Abner, N., Flaherty, M., Kirby, S. and Goldin-Meadow, S. (2020, April). The Seeds of the Noun-Verb Distinction in the Manual Modality: The Role of Improvisation and Interaction. *Paper accepted at the 13th International Conference on the Evolution of Language (Evolang 13)*. Brussels, Belgium. (Conference cancelled due to COVID-19).

Motamedi, Y., Wonnacott, E., Marshall, C., Perniss, P. and Vigliocco, G. (2019, May). The role of lexical iconicity in situated and displaced word learning. *Poster presented at the 12th International Symposium on Iconicity in Language and Literature.* Lund, Sweden.

Murgiano, M., Motamedi, Y., Goldin-Meadow, S., Marshall, C., Perniss, P., Wonnacott, E. and Vigliocco, G. (2019, May). Iconicity and indexicality in child-directed language: insights from naturalistic and semi-naturalistic data. *Paper presented at the 12th International Symposium on Iconicity in Language and Literature.* Lund, Sweden.

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. **Finalist for Hurford Prize for best paper presentation.**

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	**Grindley travel grant** Experimental Psychology Society; conference travel grant	**Sept 2015**
	Postgraduate research grants School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language sciences; small research grants awarded through a department-internal application process	**2013 – 2016**
	Carnegie-Caledonian PhD Scholarship Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland; 3-year funding for doctoral studies	**2013 – 2016**
INVITED TALKS	Modality effects in language evolution and language learning, Language and Learning group seminar, University of Warwick, January 2020.	
	Iconicity and argument structure in the cultural evolution of artificial sign languages. Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre, University College London, July 2019.	
	The body as linguistic articulator. The Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London, October 2017.	
	The emergence of systematicity in gestural communication systems. University of California, San Diego, Padden Lab, February 2015.	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND QUALIFICATIONS	**Associate fellow,** Higher Eduation Academy	
	Statistical consultant, First Language (journal)	
	Reviewer for Interaction Studies, Cognitive Science, Language and Cognition, Language Learning and Development, and Philosophical transactions of the Royal Society B	
	Member of the Cognitive Science Society	
	Workshop/symposium organizer:	
	•*Redrawing the boundaries of language,* Evolang XIII conference	**April 2020 (cancelled)**
	•*Multimodality in language learning and processing*, ESCoP conference	**Sept 2019**
	•Workshop and summer school *Minds, Mechanisms and Interaction in the Evolution of Language,* Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen.	**Sept 2017**
	•Committee chair for the Linguistics and English Language Postgraduate Conference, University of Edinburgh	**Nov 2014 – June 2015**

OUTREACH AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE	**Communicating while wearing a face covering** Poster aimed at childcare practitioners and teachers, giving advice on best practice for clear communication while wearing a face covering during the COVID-19 pandemic. Available at https://tinyurl.com/yycn5vww	**July 2020**
	Learning from the voice and the hands Online talk with Q&A, aimed at parents and childcare practitioners. Recording at https://youtu.be/CWECk0JCOgc	**July 2020**
	It's All Academic Festival, University College London, UK Public exhibit with activities and information for adults and children about multimodality in language learning and use.	**Oct 2019**
	UCL Festival of Culture *Learning from the voice and from the hands,* public talk given as part of UCL's Festival of Culture.	**June 2019**
	I'm A Scientist Get Me Out of Here! Online expert for Q&A sessions with schoolchildren, affiliated with the Royal Institution's Christmas Lectures.	**Jan 2018**
	Exhibit at the Science Museum, London *In One Ear and Out the Other*, for the Royal Society's Next Big Thing Museum Lates event.	**June 2015**
PRESS COVERAGE	**From pantomime to sign language: how sign language evolves** featured in *Science magazine* (http://tinyurl.com/h8l2roq) and on the *Science magazine* podcast (April 14 2016: http://tinyurl.com/gqx5cek)	

SKILLS

Languages
- French (advanced), British Sign Language Level 2

Programming and Data analysis
- experimental design and statistical analysis using Python, R and SPSS
- mixed effects models and Bayesian analysis
- annotation and multimedia analysis (including gesture coding) using ELAN
- audio analysis using Praat

Audiovisual manipulation
- video and audio recording for data collection
- video and audio editing, video captioning