

Marieke Woensdregt

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR · DONDERS CENTRE FOR COGNITION / COGNITIVE SCIENCE AND AI DEPARTMENT

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Education

University of Edinburgh

Edinburgh, United Kingdom

PHD LINGUISTICS

2015-2019

- Thesis title: *Co-evolution of language and mindreading: A computational exploration*
- Supervisors: Prof. Simon Kirby, Prof. Kenny Smith, Dr. Chris Cummins

University of Amsterdam

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

MSc BRAIN & COGNITIVE SCIENCES

2012-2014

- Thesis title: *Modelling the Role of Theory of Mind in Language Acquisition*
- Supervisor: Prof. Simon Kirby

University of Amsterdam

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

BSc PSYCHOBIOLOGY

2009-2012

- Thesis title: *The relationship between phonology and morphosyntax in sentence processing: An ERP study into Dutch past tense allomorphs*
- Supervisor: Prof. Judith Rispens

University of Amsterdam

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

BA DUTCH LANGUAGE & CULTURE

2009-2012

- Thesis title: *On the Semantic Motivation and Disappearance of Embedded V2 in Dutch Dialects*
- Supervisor: Prof. Hedde Zeijlstra

Professional Experience

2023-
present

Assistant Professor in Cognitive Science and AI, Department of Cognitive Science and AI, Radboud University

2022-2023

Postdoctoral researcher (part-time), Language and Computation in Neural Systems, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics

2022-2023

Lecturer (part-time), Artificial Intelligence Department; Radboud University

2021-2022

Postdoctoral researcher, Department of Philosophy, Classics, History of Art and Ideas, University of Oslo

2019-2021

Postdoctoral researcher, Centre for Language Studies, Radboud University

Publications

* shared first authorship

PUBLISHED

Chen, Y., Bosse, T., & **Woensdregt, M.** (2024). Social norms as an interactive process: An agent-based cognitive modelling study. *Proceedings of the 46th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

Micklos, A. & **Woensdregt, M.*** (2023). Cognitive and Interactive Mechanisms for Mutual Understanding in Conversation. In Nussbaum, J. (Ed), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.134>

Heesen, R., Fröhlich, M., Sievers, C., **Woensdregt, M.**, & Dingemanse, M. (2022). Coordinating social action: A primer for the cross-species investigation of communicative repair. *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. B*. <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2021.0110>

Woensdregt, M., Jara-Ettinger, J., & Rubio-Fernandez, P., (2022). Language universals rely on social cognition: Computational models of the use of *this* and *that* to redirect the receiver's attention. In *Proceedings of the 44th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/91x62554>

Dingemanse, M., Liesenfeld, A., **Woensdregt, M.** (2022). Convergent cultural evolution of continuers (*mmhm*). In Ravigani et al. (eds), *The Evolution of Language: Proceedings of the Joint Conference on Language Evolution (JCoLE)*, Kanazawa, Japan, pp. 160-167. href[https://doi: 10.31234/osf.io/65c79](https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/65c79)[https://doi: 10.31234/osf.io/65c79](https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/65c79)

Woensdregt, M., Spike, M., de Haan, R., Wareham, T., van Rooij, I., & Blokpoel, M. (2021). Why is scaling up models of language evolution hard? In *Proceedings of the 43th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*. 10.31234/osf.io/d2h5c

Woensdregt, M., Cummins, C. & Smith, K. (2020). A computational model of the cultural co-evolution of language and mindreading. *Synthese*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-020-02798-7>

van Arkel, J., **Woensdregt, M.**, Dingemanse, M., & Blokpoel, M. (2020). A simple repair mechanism can alleviate computational demands of pragmatic reasoning: Simulations and complexity analysis. In *Proceedings of the 24th Conference on Computational Natural Language Learning*. pages 177–194. doi:10.18653/v1/2020.conll-1.14.

Woensdregt, M., & Smith, K. (2017). Pragmatics and Language Evolution. In Aronoff, M. (Ed), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199384655.013.321>

Woensdregt, M., Kirby, S., Cummins, C., & Smith, K. (2016). Modelling the co-development of word learning and perspective-taking. In *Proceedings of the 38th Annual Conference of the Cognitive Science Society*.

IN REVISION

Woensdregt, M., Fusaroli, R., Rich, P., Modrák, M., Kolokolova, A., Wright, C., and Warlaumont, A.S. (in revision). Lessons for theory from scientific domains where evidence is sparse or indirect. *Computational Brain & Behavior*

Adolfi, F. G., van de Braak, L., & **Woensdregt, M.** (in revision). From empirical problem-solving to theoretical problem-finding perspectives on the cognitive sciences. *Computational Brain & Behavior* <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/jthxf>

Woensdregt, M., Blokpoel, M., van Rooij, I., & Martin, A.E. (in revision). Challenges for a Computational Explanation of Flexible Linguistic Inference. *Proceedings of International Conference on Cognitive Modeling (ICCM)*

Grants & Awards

2024–2027	Veni grant , Dutch Research Council (NWO)	€280,000
2021	Seed Funding , Interacting Minds Centre, Aarhus University	DKK 32,680
2017	PPLS-Gray postgraduate publication prize for Woensdregt, M., & Smith, K. (2017) , University of Edinburgh	£250
2016	Second place in Three Minute Thesis competition for PhD students , School for Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, University of Edinburgh	
2015–2018	Principal’s Career Development PhD Scholarship , University of Edinburgh	£42,000
2013–2014	Erasmus Grant for Internship Abroad , University of Amsterdam	€1,320

Presentations

INVITED TALKS

Autumn 2023. *Social Cognition & Social Interaction in Language Use*. Invited talk: Computational Cognition (ComCo) Conference, Osnabrück, Germany.

Autumn 2021–2023. *Taalevolutie & Sociale Cognitie [Language Evolution & Social Cognition]*. Guest Lecture, Leading Questions in Cognition, Language & Communication, University of Amsterdam.

Spring 2023. *Social interaction and social cognition in communication*. Invited talk: CONGO CONGRES “Talk bio to me”, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Autumn 2021. *Incorporating interaction in models of language use*. Invited talk: Submitted Symposium “The role of social-cognition in pragmatics and (early) language”, at the 28th Conference of the European Society for Philosophy and Psychology, Leipzig, Germany.

Autumn 2021. *Pragmatiek en de oorsprong en evolutie van taal [Pragmatics and the origins and evolution of language]*. Guest Lecture, Pragmatiek [Pragmatics], Radboud University.

Summer 2021. *Cultural co-evolution of language and mindreading: A computational model*. Invited talk: Workshop “Meaning in Context: Pragmatic Communication in Humans and Machines” at the 38th Annual Conference on Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS), Virtual.

Summer 2020. *Using computational modelling to investigate how language adapts to interaction*. Invited talk: Virtual IMPRS Conference: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Language Sciences, Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

Spring 2018. *A model of cultural co-evolution of language and perspective-taking*. Invited talk: Workshop “Language Evolution, Semantics and Pragmatics”, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Summer 2017. *A model of cultural co-evolution of language and perspective-taking*. Invited talk: Workshop “Minds, Mechanisms and Interaction in the Evolution of Language”, Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

CONTRIBUTED PRESENTATIONS

**presenting author; *mentored master student*

Chen, Y.^{**}, Bosse, T., & **Woensdregt, M.**. 2024. Social norms as an interactive process: an agent-based cognitive modelling study. Oral presentation: Culture Conference, Zurich, Switzerland.

Dingemanse, M., Liesenfeld, A., & **Woensdregt, M.*** 2022. Convergent cultural evolution of continuers (*mmhm*) Oral presentation: Joint Conference on Language Evolution (JCoLE), Kanazawa, Japan.

Heesen, R., Fröhlich, M., Sievers, C., **Woensdregt, M.*** & Dingemanse, M. 2022. Coordinating social action: a primer for the cross-species investigation of communicative repair. Oral presentation: Workshop “The place of Pragmatics in the evolution of language: first, last or in parallel?” at Joint Conference on Language Evolution (JCoLE), Kanazawa, Japan.

Woensdregt, M.*, Jara-Ettinger, J., & Rubio-Fernandez, P. 2022. Language universals rely on social cognition: Computational models of the use of ‘*this*’ and ‘*that*’ to redirect the receiver’s attention. Oral presentation: CogSci Conference, Toronto, Canada.

Woensdregt, M.*, Jara-Ettinger, J., & Rubio-Fernandez, P. 2022. Computational models of demonstrative systems: From typology to Theory of Mind. Oral presentation: The 35th Annual Conference on Human Sentence Processing, UC Santa Cruz, United States.

Woensdregt, M.*, Spike, M., de Haan, R., Wareham, T., van Rooij, I., & Blokpoel, M. 2021. Why is scaling up models of language evolution hard? Oral presentation: CogSci Conference, Vienna, Austria.

van Arkel, J.^{**}, **Woensdregt, M.**, Dingemanse, M., & Blokpoel, M. 2020. A simple repair mechanism can alleviate computational demands of pragmatic reasoning: Simulations and complexity analysis. Oral presentation: 24th Conference on Computational Natural Language Learning (CoNLL), Virtual.

Woensdregt, M.*, Smith, K., Cummins, C., & Kirby, S. 2019. A computational model of co-evolution of language and mindreading. Oral presentation: Culture Conference, Stirling, United Kingdom.

Woensdregt, M.*, Smith, K., Cummins, C., & Kirby, S. 2018. A model of cultural co-evolution of language and perspective-taking. Oral presentation: EvoLang XII, Toruń, Poland.

Woensdregt, M.*, Smith, K., Cummins, C., & Kirby, S. 2017. The cultural co-evolution of language and perspective-taking: Convergent transformation away from selection target can nevertheless strengthen selection effect. Poster: Inaugural Conference of Cultural Evolution Society, Jena, Germany.

Woensdregt, M.*, Kirby, S., Cummins, C., & Smith, K. 2017. A model of cultural co-evolution of language and mindreading. Poster: CogSci Conference, London, United Kingdom.

Woensdregt, M.*, Smith, K., Cummins, C., & Kirby, S. 2016. The Cultural Co-evolution Of Language And Mindreading. Oral presentation: EvoLang XI, New Orleans, United States.

Woensdregt, M., Kirby, S., Cummins, C., & Smith, K.* 2016. Modelling the co-development of word learning and perspective-taking. Poster: CogSci Conference, Philadelphia, United States.

Woensdregt, M.*, Kirby, S., & Smith, K. 2015. Modelling the Role of Theory of Mind in Language Evolution. Oral presentation: Protolang 4, Rome, Italy.

Woensdregt, M.* & Zuidema, W.H. 2014. Neural Networks, Algebraic Rules & Human Uniqueness. Oral presentation: EvoLang X, Vienna, Austria.

Rispens, J.* & **Woensdregt, M.** 2013. Processing past tense allomorphs: an ERP investigation. Oral presentation: 11th International Symposium of Psycholinguistics, Tenerife, Spain.

Teaching

Autumn 2022	Agent-based Cognitive Modelling (MSc) , Course Organiser	<i>Radboud University</i>
Spring 2021-2024	Cognition & Complexity (MSc) , Guest Lecturer	<i>Radboud University</i>
Autumn 2020	Language Processing in Python (BA) , Lecturer	<i>Radboud University</i>
2018	Simulating Language (MSc) , Guest Lecturer	<i>University of Edinburgh</i>
2015-2019	Simulating Language (MSc) , Teaching Assistant	<i>University of Edinburgh</i>
2018	Linguistics and English Language 1B (BA) , Teaching Assistant	<i>University of Edinburgh</i>
2017	Introduction to Cognitive Science (BSc) , Teaching Assistant	<i>University of Edinburgh</i>
2016-2017	Linguistics and English Language 1 (BA) , Teaching Assistant	<i>University of Edinburgh</i>
2016	Child Bilingualism: Language and Cognition (MSc) , Teaching Assistant	<i>University of Edinburgh</i>
2015	Linguistic Theory and the Structure of English (BA) , Teaching Assistant	<i>University of Edinburgh</i>
2015	Cross-linguistic Variation: Limits and Theories (BA) , Teaching Assistant	<i>University of Edinburgh</i>

Supervision

2022-2023	Yue Chen (MSc) , Daily Supervisor, Radboud University
2020-2021	Jacqueline van Arkel (MSc) , External Supervisor, University of Groningen
2019	Anna Kapron-King (MSc) , Daily Supervisor, University of Edinburgh
2016	Yiyun Zhao (MSc) , Daily Supervisor, University of Edinburgh

Outreach & Professional Development

SERVICE AND OUTREACH

2022-2023	Research Staff Committee , Member; later Chair	<i>Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguis- tics</i>
2020	Kletskoppen Child Language Festival: Interactive demo on conversational repair (“How ‘huh?’ helps”) for children , Lead organiser	<i>Nijmegen</i>
2019	Workshop on Language Evolution for primary schools , Volunteer	<i>Edinburgh</i>
2018	Interactive exhibit for children on memory games used to study non-human primates’ behaviour , Research Assistant	<i>Edinburgh Zoo</i>
2016	Linguistics and English Language Postgraduate Conference , Co-organiser	<i>University of Edinburgh</i>
2012-2016	Journal of the Amsterdam Network of Psycholinguists (het WAP) , Science correspondent on ‘Neurolinguistics & Aphasia’	<i>The Netherlands</i>

PEER REVIEW

Adaptive Behavior

Cognition
Cognitive Science
Frontiers in Psychology
Journal of Language Evolution
Language Dynamics and Change
Mind & Language
Nature Human Behaviour
PLOS One
Psychological Review
Rescience C