

CURRICULUM VITAE

Dr. Arash Aryani

The Center for Cognitive Neuroscience Berlin (CCNB)
Biological Psychology and Cognitive Neuroscience
Freie Universität Berlin, Germany
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CURRENT APPOINTMENT

2022- now **Research Group Leader and Lecturer**
Funded by the German Research Council (DFG, Project Number: 464844750)
Project: "Resolving the Neural Basis of Affective Sound–Meaning Associations"
The Center for Cognitive Neuroscience Berlin (CCNB)
Department of Neurocognitive and General Psychology,
Freie Universität Berlin

PREVIOUS APPOINTMENTS

2021-2022 **Postdoctoral Research Fellow**
Funded by DAAD's PRIME Program
Language and Cognition Lab (Prof. G. Vigliocco)
Department of Experimental Psychology
University College London (UCL)

2019-2021 **Postdoctoral Researcher and Lecturer**
The Dahlem Institute for Neuroimaging of Emotion (D.I.N.E)
Biological Psychology and Cognitive Neuroscience (Prof. H. Heekeren)
Freie Universität Berlin

2012-2019 **Research Associate and Lecturer**
Brain and Language Lab (Prof. A.M. Jacobs)
Experimental and Neurocognitive Psychology
Freie Universität Berlin

2010-2012 **Research Scientist**
Excellence Cluster "Languages of Emotion"
Projects: Sound Symbolism in Affective Domain, Bilingualism and Emotion
Freie Universität Berlin

RESEARCH VISITS

2015-2016 **Visiting Graduate Student**
Cognitive Neuroscience of Language Lab (Prof. Morten Christiansen)
Department of Psychology
Cornell University, USA

RESEARCH & ENGINEERING POSITIONS

2008-2010 **Research Consultant / Senior System Engineer**
Real-Time Simulation and Real-Time Modelling
Volkswagen AG (R&D), Wolfsburg, Germany

2004-2008 **Research Engineer**
Information and Communication Systems
T-Systems International GmbH, Wolfsburg, Germany

1999-2002 **Electrical Engineer, Project Leader**
Human-Machine-Interfaces, Embedded Systems
Sazeh Pouyesh (R&D), Tehran, Iran

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Psychology / Cognitive Neuroscience
Graduated “Summa Cum Laude” (with highest distinction)
Supervisors: Prof. A. Jacobs, Prof. H. Heekeren
Department of General and Neurocognitive Psychology
Freie Universität Berlin, Germany, 2018

M.Sc. Electrical Engineering
Supervisors: Prof. B. Wagner, Prof. K. Jobmann
Institute for Robotics and Real-Time Systems
University of Hanover, Germany, 2006

B.Sc. Electrical Engineering
Supervisor: Prof. Chitizadeh
University of Ferdowsi Mashhad, Iran, 2000

PUBLICATIONS

Book Chapter

Aryani, A. (2026) Iconicity in the mind: Unraveling the cognitive and neural pathways linking sound and meaning. *Oxford Handbook of Iconicity in Language*. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.

Peer-Reviewed Articles

- Schauenburg, G., **Aryani, A.**, Hsu, C. T., Schröder, T., Conrad, M., von Scheve, C., & Jacobs, A. M. (2024). Conflict Detection in Language Processing: Using Affect Control Theory to Predict Neural Correlates of Affective Incongruity in Social Interactions. *KZfSS Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, 76(3), 603-625.
- Aryani, A.** (2023) Resolving the neural basis of affective sound-meaning associations. *Advances in Cognitive Sciences* 25, 27-27.
- Ullrich, S., **Aryani, A.**, Kraxenberger, M., Jacobs, A. M., & Conrad, M. (2021). 4. Poetry study—On the relation between the general affective meaning and the basic sublexical, lexical, and inter-lexical features of poetic texts—A case study using 57 Poems of HM Enzensberger. *Sound Matters*, 141.
- Aryani, A.**, Isbilen, E., Christiansen, M.H. (2020). Affective Arousal Links Sound to Meaning, *Psychological Science*, DOI: 10.1177/0956797620927967
- Aryani, A.**, Hsu, C.T., Jacobs, A. (2019). Affective Iconic Words Benefit from Additional Sound-Meaning Integration in the Left Amygdala, *Human Brain Mapping*, DOI:10.1002/hbm.24772
- Aryani, A.**, (2019). On the crucial Role of Arousal and Saliency in Affective Iconicity, *Scientific Study of Literature*, 9(2), 240-249.
- Schauenburg, G., Conrad, M.,..., **Aryani, A.**, & Schröder, T. (2019). Making sense of social interaction: Emotional coherence drives semantic integration as assessed by event-related potentials. *Neuropsychologia*, 125, 1-13.
- Aryani, A.**, Conrad, M., Schmidtke, D., & Jacobs, A. (2018). Why 'piss' is ruder than 'pee'? The role of sound in affective meaning making. *PloS one*, 13(6), e0198430.
- Aryani, A.**, Hsu, C. T., & Jacobs, A. M. (2018). The Sound of Words Evokes Affective Brain Responses. *Brain sciences*, 8(6), 94.
- Aryani, A.**, & Jacobs, A. M. (2018). Affective Congruence between Sound and Meaning of Words Facilitates Semantic Decision. *Behavioral sciences*, 8(6).
- Aryani, A.** (2018). *Affective Iconicity in Language and Poetry-A Neurocognitive Approach* (Doctoral dissertation, Freie Universität Berlin).
- Ullrich, S., **Aryani, A.**, Kraxenberger, M., Jacobs, A. M., & Conrad, M. (2017). On the relation between the general affective meaning and the basic sublexical, lexical, and inter-lexical features of poetic texts, *Frontiers in psychology*, 7, 2073.
- Ullrich, S., Kotz, SA, Schmidtke, DS, **Aryani, A.**, Conrad, M (2016). Phonological Iconicity electrifies: An ERP study on affective sound-to-meaning correspondences in German, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7, 1200.
- Jacobs, A.M., Lüdtke, J., **Aryani, A.**, Meyer-Sickendiek, B., & Conrad, M. (2016). Mood-empathic and/or aesthetic responses in poetry reception: A model-guided, multilevel, multimethod approach. *Scientific Study of Literature*, 6(1), 87-130.

- Aryani, A.**, Kraxenberger, M., Ullrich, S., Jacobs, A.M., Conrad, M. (2016). Measuring basic affective tone of poems via phonological saliency and iconicity, *Psychology of Aesthetics Creativity and the Arts*, 10(2), 191.
- Oganian, Y., Conrad, M., **Aryani, A.**, Heekeren, H. R., & Spalek, K. (2016). Interplay of bigram frequency and orthographic neighborhood statistics in language membership decision. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 19(3), 578-596.
- Oganian, Y., Conrad, M., **Aryani, A.**, Spalek, K., & Heekeren, H. R. (2015). Activation patterns throughout the word processing network of L1-dominant bilinguals reflect language similarity and language decisions. *Journal of cognitive neuroscience*, 27(11), 2197-2214.
- Schmidtke, DS, **Aryani, A.** (2015). Bridges from affect to language Comment on “The quartet theory of human emotions: An integrative and neurofunctional model” by S. Koelsch et al. *Physics of life reviews*, 13, 83-84.
- Aryani, A.**, Conrad, M., Jacobs, A.M. (2013). Extracting salient sublexical units from written texts: Emophon, a corpus-based approach to phonological iconicity. *Frontiers in psychology*, 4, 654.

Under Review

- Aryani, A.**, Mosanna, A., Bahrami, S., Luedtcke, J. (under review). Cross-Linguistic Evidence for the Role of Emotion in Sound-Shape Mappings
- Aryani, A.**, (under review) Coherence without Consequence: The Epistemic Grounding Framework and the Limits of Artificial Understanding.
- Aryani, A.**, Lehmann, J., Stodulka, T. (under review). Provoking Arousal through Emotion Description: A Quantitative Narrative Analysis.

INVITED TALKS & WORKSHOPS (SELECTED)

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| 04/2024 | Workshop: “Measuring the Affective Sound in Words”
Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences , Leipzig, Germany |
| 02/2022 | Invited Talk: “Emotional Mediation in Sound-Meaning Correspondences”
University College London , Department of Psychology, London, UK |
| 04/2021 | Workshop on “Empirical Approaches to Iconicity”
Lundt University , Department of Linguistics, Lund, Sweden |
| 07/2019 | Invited Talk: “Affective Iconicity in Language and Poetry”
Max Planck Institute for Empirical Aesthetics , Department of Neuroscience, Frankfurt, Germany |
| 06/2019 | Invited Talk: “A Neurocognitive Approach to Affective Iconicity”
University College London , Department of Psychology, Language and |

	Cognition Lab, London, UK	
03/2018	Invited Talk: “Current approaches in the neuroscience of Language” University of Potsdam , Potsdam, Germany	
08/2016	Guest Lecture: “Iconicity and Saliency in Language” University of Vienna , Association of Empirical Aesthetics, Austria	
02/2016	Invited Talk: “Measuring the basic affective tone in poetic texts” Stanford University , Stanford Literary Lab, CA, USA	
11/2015	Guest Lecture: “Affective Sound-to-Meaning Correspondences” Cornell University , Affect and Cognition Lab, Department of Psychology, USA	
01/2015	Workshop: “Emotional Sound in Language and Poetry” Max Planck Institute for Empirical Aesthetics , Department of Language and Literature, Frankfurt, Germany	

AWARDS, GRANTS & SCHOLARSHIPS

2022	DFG Individual Research Grant (Project Number: 464844750) Principal Investigator Position with Dedicated Research Budget	€ 395,100
2021	DAAD PRIME Postdoctoral Fellowship Highly Competitive International Mobility Program (UCL, London)	€ 145,300
2015	Cornell Direct Exchange Research Fellow Prestigious Fellowship for a research stay at Cornell University, USA	\$78,000
2014	DAAD Research Scholarship for a 6-month U.S. research stay (declined)	\$ 12,500
2012	PhD scholarship (DFG-funded), Graduate School “Languages of Emotion” Freie Universität Berlin	€ 54,000

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Courses (2018-2024)

Designed and taught multiple graduate Seminars and advanced courses, including:

Psychological and Neural Theories of Emotion

Neuroscience of Language

Decision Neuroscience (fundamentals & advanced)

Empirical–Experimental Practical Seminars on topics such as: Iconicity in Language, Language and Emotion, Neurocognitive Poetics, Crossmodal Correspondences

Responsibilities included syllabus design, lecturing, supervising empirical projects, grading, and mentoring graduate research.

Undergraduate Courses (2015-2023)

Designed and taught courses in core areas of neurocognitive and experimental psychology, including:

Experimental Psychology

Embodied Language

Psychology of Emotion

Psycholinguistics

Duties involved lecturing, designing assessments, facilitating lab-based methodological training, grading, and supervising term projects.

ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC TRAINING (SELECTED)

2023-2025 Professional Training in Systemic & Psychosocial Therapy

Training with supervised case practice and certification in systemic counselling.

ISI Institute, Berlin, Germany

2021 TRAIN-UP Mentoring Workshop

Advanced mentoring and career-development workshop for senior postdocs and junior faculty.

UCL, London

2016–2019 Certificate in Academic Teaching “Support für die Lehre”

Three-year certified program in university teaching, course design, and evidence-based instruction.

Dahlem Center for Academic Teaching, Berlin

2012–2013 Methodology and Research Methods for Junior Scientists

Training in research design, methodological rigor, and quantitative/qualitative scientific approaches.

Humboldt University Berlin

2013 Good Scientific Practice

Workshop on research integrity, ethics, and responsible scientific conduct.

Medical School - Charité - University Medicine Berlin

2012 Introduction to Teaching Methods

Foundational training in pedagogy and instructional techniques.

Bildung & Begabung e.V., Berlin

STUDENT SUPERVISION

Supervisions

Supervision of academic theses and research projects (2015–2024) - employing behavioural methods, Computational Modelling, EEG, and fMRI studies:

5 PhD dissertations (co-supervision)

8 Master's theses

9 Bachelor's theses

Projects generally focused on:

Neurocognitive approaches to language and emotion, sound symbolism and iconicity, crossmodal correspondence, auditory perception, and psycholinguistic experimentation

Research Assistants

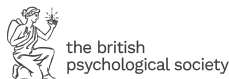
Supervised 6 research assistants (2016–2024), trained in:
neural (fMRI and EEG) and behavioural data collection
preprocessing, coding, statistical analysis (R, Python)
experimental design and lab procedures

PUBLIC RECOGNITION & SCHOLARLY FEATURES

Media Coverage



[Phonästhetik, Wann klingt eine Sprache schön?](#): Interview feature in **“Spektrum der Wissenschaft” (2024)** This widely read German science magazine published an article exploring when and why languages sound aesthetically pleasing, featuring an expert interview with me.



Affective Arousal Links Sound to Meaning (Aryani, Isbilen & Christiansen, 2020, *Psychological Science*) received wide international media attention, including features in **The British Psychological Society (2020)**: [We Find Some Word Sounds More Emotionally Arousing Than Others](#)



ScienceDaily (2020) [Study finds hidden emotions in the sound of words](#)



MedicalXPress (2020) [The Emotional Power of Words](#)



[Strong Words: Differences in word choice can reflect the urgency of our messages and increase their impact](#): Interview feature in **Psychology Today (2018)**, Report on our article “Why Piss is Ruder than Pee?”

Featured in Books

[Wütende Texte](#) (*Nervous Texts*) – Alfred Sturm (2022), DE GRUYTER

Alfred Sturm, a renowned linguist and scholar of comparative literature, draws extensively on insights from the interviews he conducted with me as part of his broader analysis of language, aesthetics, and expressive form.

[The Alphabet of Thought](#): *How Language Forms Our Thoughts and Feelings* — Stefanie Schramm & Claudia Wüstenhagen (2014), rowohlt

An dedicated section of the book is based on a series of in-depth interviews with me, drawing directly on my work on emotional phonology including the “Emophon” tool I developed.

ACADEMIC THESES AND DISSERTATION

1. Aryani, A. (2018) *Affective Iconicity in Language and Poetry – A Neurocognitive Approach*. Dissertation for Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Department of General and Neurocognitive Psychology, Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany
2. Aryani, A. (2006) *Dynamic deployment of hardware-in-the-loop (HiL) testing systems with simulated or real components*. Research thesis for M.Sc. in Electrical Engineering. Institute for Robotics and Real-Time Systems, University of Hanover, Hanover, Germany
3. Aryani, A. (2000) *Design and Implementation of a Code-Grabber for Automotive Security Systems*. Research thesis for B.Sc. in Electrical Engineering. Department of Engineering, University of Ferdowsi Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

AD-HOC REVIEWING

Editorship

Academic Editor for PLOS One (2019-2021)

Academic Editor for Frontiers in Human Neuroscience (2022-2023)

Journals Reviewing

Neurobiology of Language; Psychological Science; Cognition; Journal of Experimental Psychology: General; Journal of Language and Memory; Human Brain Mapping; Cognitive Science; Language and Cognition; Motivation and Emotion; PLOS One; Frontiers in Human Neuroscience; Psychonomic Bulletin & Review; Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology; Applied Psycholinguistics; Behavior Research Methods; Bilingualism: Language and Cognition; Brain Sciences; Journal of Nonverbal Behavior; Journal of Psycholinguistic Research; Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts; Scientific Study of Literature

SELECTED COLLABORATORS

Morten H. Christiansen — Cornell University, USA

Gabriella Vigliocco — University College London, UK

David Sidhu — University of Calgary, Canada

Maria Kraxenberger — University of Mannheim, Germany

Chun-Ting Hsu — Information R&D and Strategy Headquarters, RIKEN, Japan

Yulia Oganian — Center for Integrative Neuroscience, University of Tübingen, Germany

Erin S. Isbilen — Yale University, USA

Jana Lüdtkke — Freie Universität Berlin, Germany

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Persian: Native

English: Highly Proficient

German: Near-Native Proficiency

Turkish : Working knowledge