

# ÁGNES MELINDA KOVÁCS

Associate Research Fellow  
Principal Investigator REPCOLLAB  
European Research Council Grant

Cognitive Development Centre  
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## Research interest

Cognitive development, social cognition, theory of mind, mental representations, bilingualism

## Education

- 2008 – PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience, SISSA, Trieste, Italy  
Advisor Prof. Jacques Mehler
- 2002 – M. Sc. in Psychology, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca, Romania
- 2000 – B.A. in Psychology, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca, Romania

## Research experience

- 2010 – 2012 Postdoc, Cognitive Development Centre, Central European University, Budapest
- 2008 – 2010 Postdoc, Institute for Psychology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest
- 2002 – 2008 Research for PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience, SISSA, Trieste, Italy
- 2000 – 2002 Research for M. Sc. in Psychology, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca, Romania
- 1998 – 2000 Research for B.A. in Psychology, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca, Romania
- 2001 - Socrates/Erasmus Research Exchange, University of Sunderland, Department of Psychology, UK

## Fellowships, grants

- 2012 – 2017 ERC Staring Grant, Principal Investigator in the project: *Representational preconditions for understanding other minds* (REPCOLLAB), European Science Foundation
- 2007 – 2010 Marie Curie Research Fellow, DISCOS Research Training Network
- 2006 - 2007 CEI fellowship, Cognitive Neuroscience Sector, SISSA, Trieste, Italy
- 2002 - 2006 PhD scholarship, Cognitive Neuroscience Sector, SISSA, Trieste, Italy
- 2001 - Socrates/Erasmus Scholarship, University of Sunderland, Department of Psychology, UK
- 2001 - 2002 Research grant from the Sapientia Foundation, Romania
- 2000 - 2001 Undergraduate research grant from the Hungarian Ministry of Education and the University of Szeged, Hungary
- 1999 – Undergraduate research grant, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary

## Publications

- Kovács, Á. M. & Endress, A.D. (2014). Hierarchical processing in 7-month-olds. *Infancy*, 19, 409-425, DOI: 10.1111/infa.12052
- Kovács, Á. M. (2014). Extracting regularities from noise: Do infants encode patterns based on same and different relations? *Language Learning*, 64, 65-85, DOI: 10.1111/lang.12056
- Kovács, Á. M. Tauzin, T., Téglás E., G. Gergely and G. Csibra (2014). Pointing as Epistemic Request: 12-month-olds Point to Receive New Information. *Infancy*, Early view DOI: 10.1111/infa.12060
- Kovács, Á. M. (in press). Belief files in theory of mind reasoning. Review of Philosophy and Psychology, Special Issue on Mental Files
- Kovács, Á. M. (under review). Decomposing Theory of Mind: belief files and further functional sub-components. *Cognition*
- Kovács, Á. M., Kuehn, S., Gergely G., Csibra, G. Brass M. (in press). Are all beliefs equal? Implicit belief attributions recruiting core brain regions of Theory of Mind. *Plos One*
- Kovács, Á. M. (in press). Cognitive effects of bilingualism in infancy. In E. Nicoladis & S. Montanari (eds.) *Lifespan Perspectives on Bilingualism*, De Gruyter.
- Kovács, Á. M. (under revision). Debiasing strategies bridge the gap between monolingual and bilingual Theory of Mind performance. *Cognition*
- Kovács, Á. M. (2012). Early bilingualism and theory of mind: Bilinguals' advantage in dealing with conflicting mental representations. In: M. Siegal, & L. Surian (eds.): *Access to language and cognitive development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kovács, Á.M., Téglás, E. & Endress, A.D. (2010). The social sense: susceptibility to others' beliefs in human infants and adults. *Science*, 330, 1830-1834. DOI: 10.1126/science.1190792
- Téglás, E. & Kovács, Á. M. (2010). Explaining early social interactions. In: T. Fuchs, H. C. Sattel & P. Henningsen (eds.): *The embodied self. Dimensions, coherence and disorders*. Stuttgart: Schattauer.
- Kovács, Á. M. & Mehler, J (2009). Flexible learning of multiple speech structures in bilingual infants. *Science*, 325. 611 - 612 (DOI: 10.1126/science.1173947)
- Kovács, Á. M. & Mehler, J. (2009). Cognitive gains in 7-month-old bilingual infants. *PNAS*, 106, 6556-6560.
- Kovács, Á. M. (2009). Early bilingualism enhances mechanisms of false-belief reasoning. *Developmental Science*, 12, 48-54.
- Kovács, Á. M. (2007). Beyond Language: Childhood Bilingualism enhances high-level cognitive functions. In: I. Kecskés & L. Albertazzi (eds.): *Cognitive aspects of Bilingualism*. The Netherlands: Springer Science.

### In Hungarian:

- Kovács, Á. M. (2014). Korai kétnyelvűség és szocio-kognitív fejlődés. In: Cs. Pléh, A. Lukács (eds): *Pszicholingvisztika*. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Kovács, Á. M. (2013). Korai kétnyelvűség és tudatelmélet: A kétnyelvűség előnyei a versengő mentális reprezentációk kezelésében. In: Cs. Pléh (ed): *Általános Nyelvészeti Tanulmányok XXV*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó. 215-245.
- Téglás, E. & Kovács, Á. M. (2011). A mentalizáció eredete [On the origins of mentalization]. *Korunk*, 9, 107-116
- Bakk-Miklósi, K. & Kovács, Á. M. (2007). A nyelveken túl: a kétnyelvűség korai kognitív és

- nyelvi előnyei [Beyond language: the cognitive and linguistic advantages of early bilingualism]. In A. Benő, E. Fazakas, N.S. Szilágyi (eds): *Nyelvek és nyelvváltozatok. Köszöntő kötet Péntek János tiszteletére*, Kolozsvár: Anyanyelvápolók Erdélyi Szövetsége, 33-55.
- Kovács, Á. M. & Téglás, E. (2005). Az aszimmetria logikája: a központi feldolgozó és a nyelvváltás kapcsolata kétnyelvűeknél [The logic of asymmetry: the relation between executive functions and language-switching in bilinguals]. In: J. Gervain, K. Kovács, Á. Lukács & M. Racsmány (eds.): *Az ezerarcú elme: Tanulmányok Pléh Csaba 60. születésnapjára* [A multifaceted mind. Festschrift to Csaba Pléh]. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 222-235.
- Polonyi, T., & Kovács, Á. M. (2005). Többnyelvű elmék [Multilingual minds]. In: J. Gervain, K. Kovács, Á. Lukács & M. Racsmány (eds.): *Az ezerarcú elme: Tanulmányok Pléh Csaba 60. születésnapjára* [A multifaceted mind. Festschrift to Csaba Pléh]. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Kovács, Á. M. (2003). Az agyi képalkotási technikák hozama a fejlődés és a fejlődési zavarok tanulmányozásában [Using brain-imaging techniques to study development and developmental disorders]. *Erdélyi Pszichológiai Szemle*, 2, 197-210.
- Kovács, Á. M. (2001). Érzékeny időszakok a nyelvtanulásban. [Sensitive periods in language learning]. *Erdélyi Pszichológiai Szemle*. 3, 69-97.
- Roth, M., Foldes, E. & Kovács, Á. M. (2001). *Fejlődés pszichológia Egyetemi jegyzet* (Developmental Psychology Syllabus). Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj: IDD Center Edition.
- Kovács, Á. M. (2000). Aszimmetria a nyelvi rendszereken belül [Asymmetry between language systems]. *Lélekjelenlét*, 2, 7-23.
- Kovács, Á. M., & Cseke, É. (2000). Mentális képek vizsgálata tehetséges személyeknél [Studying mental imagery in gifted persons]. *Lélekjelenlét*, 1. 17-35.
- Kovács, Á. M. & Téglás, E. (1999). Amikor a kognitív rendszerek elbeszélnek a mentális reprezentációkat: a kétnyelvűség pszichológiai vizsgálata. [What cognitive systems can tell about mental representations: a psychological study of bilingualism] *Erdélyi Múzeum*, 3-4, 221-236.
- Kovács, Á. M. & Téglás, E. (1998). A mentális reprezentációk kettős kódolási elméletének vizsgálata többnyelvűeknél [Studying the dual-coding theory of mental representations in multilinguals]. *Parallaxis*. 2, 42-56.

## Invited talks at conferences and summer schools

- 2014 July - Invited talk at the International Language Production Workshop, Geneva
- 2014 May - Invited talk at the XXIIIrd Annual Meeting of the Hungarian Psychological Association, 17 May 2014, Marosvásárhely, Romania
- 2014 March - Invited talk at the Workshop on Cutting Edge Research on Human Development, Leipzig
- 2014 March - Invited lecture on "New methods in the study of early language development" at the Psycholinguistics Workshop, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest
- 2013 September - Invited talk at the Social Cognition Workshop, Paris
- 2013 June - Invited talk at the 3rd European Social Neuroscience workshop, title of the talk: Developmental social neuroscience: What can we learn from studying infants?, Ghent, Belgium
- 2013 April 12- Invited talk at the Pszinapszis conference, title of the talk: Learning two languages in the crib: Cognitive enhancements in bilingual infants, Budapest
- 2013 March 22 - Invited talk at the D SZIT Muhely szimpozium: Új módszerek a korai kognitív mechanizmusok neuropszichológiai vizsgálatára az első életévben, Budapest

- 2013 May 24 – Invited talk at the Transylvanian Psychology Conference, Kolozsvár
- 2012 May – Invited talk at the Conference on Social Cognition, Köln
- 2012 March – Invited talk at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Latin American Summer School on Education and Neuroscience, Calafate, Argentina
- 2011 September – keynote lecture at Naturalistic approaches to culture, ESF workshop, Balatonvilágos, Hungary
- 2011 January – invited talk, Social Cognition Workshop, Kyoto University, Japan
- 2011 January – talk in the invited Symposium on Early Social Cognition, BCCCD Conference, Budapest
- 2010 October – keynote lecture given at the Conference on *Neurobilingualism*, title of the talk: “Acquiring two languages simultaneously: cognitive enhancements in bilingual infants”, Donostia, Spain
- 2010 February – invited talk given at the Conference on *Entertaining Interactive minds*, at Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics and Donders Institute for Neuroimaging, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
- 2009 October – invited talk given at the Conference on *Access to Language and Cognitive Development in Young Children*, title of the talk “Early bilingualism and theory of mind”, Trieste, Italy
- 2009 October – invited talk given *Conference of the Cognitive Development Society*, invited symposium, title of talk: „Two languages in the crib: cognitive enhancements in bilingual infants” San Antonio, USA

## Invited talks at research institutes

- 2013 March 18 – invited talk at the Philosophy Department Università di Milano, Milano
- 2011 February – invited talk, Psychology Department, Stanford University, USA
- 2011 February – invited seminar, Developmental Psychology Department, Stanford University, USA
- 2011 January – invited talk, Tokyo University, Japan
- 2011 March – invited talk, Bolyai Kollegium, Budapest, Hungary
- 2010 September – Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Department of Developmental and Comparative Psychology, Leipzig, Germany
- 2010 February – Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, The Netherlands
- 2009 October – Eötvös Loránd University, Department of Ethology, Budapest, Hungary
- 2009 May – Eötvös Loránd University, Cognitive Science Department, Budapest, Hungary
- 2008 June – Budapest University for Technology, Cognitive Science Department, Hungary
- 2008 April – Stanford University, Center for Infant Studies, USA

## Service to the academic community

**Reviewer for:** Applied Psycholinguistics, Bilingualism, Language and Cognition, British Journal of Developmental Psychology, Child Development, Cognition, Developmental Science, Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory & Cognition, Perspectives in Psychological Science, Psychological Science, Infancy, PNAS.

**Member of the Editorial Board** at Magyar Pszichológiai Szemle (Hungarian Psychological Review)

## Teaching experience

- 2013-2014 Fall – PhD course on Infant cognition (together with György Gergely and Gergely Csibra)
- 2012-2013 Fall – PhD course on Infant cognition (together with György Gergely and Gergely Csibra)
- 2012 Fall – MA course on Advanced Issues in Development, Budapest University for Technology, Hungary (together with Ilona Kovács)
- 2010 Spring – MA course on Cognitive Development, University of Szeged, Hungary
- 2010 Spring – MA course on Psycholinguistics, Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary
- 2010 Fall – MA course on Advanced Issues in Development, Budapest University for Technology, Hungary (together with Ilona Kovács)
- 2009 Spring – MA course on Cognitive Development, University of Szeged, Hungary
- 2009 Fall – MA course in Advanced Issues in Development, Budapest University for Technology, Hungary (together with Ilona Kovács)
- 2000 – 2002 – Undergraduate seminars in Developmental Psychology and Early Childhood Intervention, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca, Romania
- 2000 – 2001 – Undergraduate seminars in Introduction to Psychology, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj Napoca, Romania

## Research supervision

Dóra Kampis (3<sup>rd</sup> year PhD student, primary PhD advisor, CEU, Cognitive Science Department)

Ágota Major (2<sup>nd</sup> year PhD student, primary PhD advisor, CEU, Cognitive Science Department)

Martin Freundlieb (2<sup>nd</sup> year PhD student, co-advisor, CEU, Cognitive Science Department)

Eszter Szabó (1<sup>st</sup> year PhD student, primary PhD advisor, CEU, Cognitive Science Department)

## Languages

Hungarian: native

Romanian: near-native

English: near-native

Italian: near-native

German: basics