

Our first paper in 2017 is „[Iconicity and the Emergence of Combinatorial Structure in Language](#)” by Verhoef, Kirby and de Boer (2016), published in Cognitive Science. They present experimental results regarding a transmission chain experiment in which participants had to make use of a slide whistle:



...to learn and reproduce sounds representing novel objects. Their focus is on the emergence of combinatorial structure in this whistling “language” and the interaction thereof with the possibility to create rather iconic form-meaning pairings, which was manipulated experimentally. The results suggest that 1) learnability of the systems improves over generations, 2) increasing structure emerges over generations, and 3) there is a short-time influence of the possibility to use iconic signals that delays the structuring processes.

Feel free to comment on the paper below!