EMMI RUSSO

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

I study how individuals use video games and playful technology to support their relationships and well-being. I am particularly interested in how video games can be leveraged in the family and provide opportunities for self-directed, developmentally-supportive play for preschool-aged children. Specifically, I hope my research reduces the proliferation of manipulative designs in video games and promotes designs which encourage agency, play, and well-being.

EDUCATION

University of Washington, Seattle, WA — September 2024 - June 2030

Doctor of Philosophy - Information Science

Advisor: Alexis Hiniker

The University of Chicago, Chicago, IL — September 2014 - June 2018

Bachelor of Science - Computer Science
Bachelor of Arts with Honors - Psychology

Honors Thesis: Parents' Response Times Provide Implicit Negative Evidence for Grammar Learning
Readers: Daniel Yurovsky (advisor, primary investigator), Susan Goldin-Meadow

GPA: 3.5
Psychology GPA: 3.7

Relevant coursework: Psychological Statistics, Psychological Research Methods, Intro to Developmental Psychology, Infancy, Child Development in the Classroom, Intro to Language Development, Conceptual Development, Language for Thought and Action, Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology, Sensation and Perception, Usable Security and Privacy, Computers for Learning, Computational Linguistics

AWARDS

Provost Fellow, University of Washington — 2024
Merit scholarship awarded upon admission by the University of Washington Information Science department.

Brightspot Award, Smartsheet — 2023
Nominated by colleagues for exemplifying Smartsheet's 'Earn trust' core competency. Recognized for producing high-quality software as well as excellent communication and teamwork.

General Honors, The University of Chicago — 2018
Recognition for achieving a GPA above 3.25 at the time of graduation.

Outstanding Poster, Midwest Cognitive Science Conference — 2018
Awarded by conference organizers for presentation of *Parents' response times provide implicit negative evidence for grammar learning*.

Dean's List, The University of Chicago — 2015, 2016, 2018

Awarded to the 20% of students with the highest grade point averages for that year.

Grace Hopper Celebration Attendance Grant, Google 2015, 2016

Full financial support awarded to promising young women pursuing computer science to attend the Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing, a computer science research and career conference.

Dean's Scholar, The University of Chicago

2014

$5,000 earmarked for summer internship or research awarded as a merit scholarship upon admission.

POSTER PRESENTATIONS

Russo, E. & Yurovsky, D. (2018, May). *Parents' response times provide implicit negative evidence for grammar learning.* Midwestern Cognitive Science Conference. Bloomington, IN.

Russo, E. & Yurovsky, D. (2018, April). *Parents' response times provide implicit negative evidence for grammar learning.* Chicago Area Undergraduate Research Symposium. Chicago, IL.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Communication and Learning Lab (CaLLab), The University of Chicago

Primary Investigator: Daniel Yurovsky

Undergraduate Honors Thesis Researcher December 2016 - June 2018

+ Authored *Parents' Response Times Provide Implicit Negative Evidence for Grammar Learning* which was approved by Daniel Yurovsky and Susan Goldin-Meadow to earn an honors distinction in the Psychology department
+ Performed computational analyses on 3 large natural language corpora using Python and R to demonstrate the existence of a novel form of negative evidence that children may use to learn English grammar
+ Designed and implemented an online self-paced reading experiment which demonstrated a processing delay when adult readers are presented with over-regularized child utterances
+ Participated in lab meetings, discussing research and providing feedback to fellow lab members

Infant Learning and Development Laboratory, The University of Chicago

Primary Investigator: Amanda Woodward

Undergraduate Research Assistant October 2015 - October 2016

+ Coded qualitative behavioral and EEG data to support Courtney Filippi's research on infants' sensorimotor cortex activity and its correlation with their ability to shape their hands to manipulate objects
+ Participated in lab meetings, discussing relevant research and lab members' work
+ Recruited, scheduled, and escorted families to participate in research

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

INFO 356: Moral Reasoning and Interaction Design, University of Washington

Teaching Assistant January 2025 - March 2025

+ Graded reading checks, studio activities, student presentations, and final projects
+ Guided students on implementation of their final projects and presentations
+ Redesigned student assignment to develop a quarter-long diary of manipulative designs and developed detailed grading rubric

INFO 300: Research Methods, University of Washington

Teaching Assistant September 2024 - December 2024

+ Graded in-class assignments, reading responses, lab activities, and final research proposal
+ Led weekly lab sessions, guiding students through review and mentoring them in crafting research questions and proposals
+ Delivered guest lecture *Design-Based Research Methods*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Brandfolder by Smartsheet, Denver, CO

Senior Software Engineer II May 2024 - August 2024
Senior Software Engineer I April 2021 - May 2024
Full Stack Software Developer (Software Engineer II) November 2019 - April 2021

+ Awarded Smartsheet's 2023 Q1 Brightspot award for the 'Earn trust' core competency in recognition of excellent software engineering, communication, and teamwork
+ Organized work, reviewed and contributed code to lead teams of 2-7 software engineers to build and update many features core to Brandfolder's offerings
+ Collaborated closely with Product and Customer Experience team members to resolve customer issues weekly
+ Mentored junior developers and supported coworkers in areas of passions like TypeScript, localization, testing, and accessibility best practices

Microsoft, Redmond, WA

Software Engineer I August 2018 - November 2019

+ Wrote and reviewed code to develop features for Microsoft's Azure DevOps product
+ Led feature development by identifying work to be done, collaborating with stakeholders, organizing team members, and communicating progress
+ Managed urgent customer support cases and organized team priorities and processes during on-call engineer rotations (~2 weeks every 6 weeks)

Square, San Francisco, CA

Software Engineer Intern - Developer Platform June - September 2017

+ Wrote and deployed industry-standard code working as a temporary member of a fast-paced team
+ Implemented an interactive widget as a tool for Square's developer' documentation website using Ruby on Rails, JavaScript, HTML, Sass, and Square's e-commerce Rails SDK

Google, Seattle, WA

Engineering Practicum Intern - Cloud Marketplace June - September 2016

+ Implemented a step-by-step tool that guided client partners to control the configuration options available to end customers deploying solutions offered by clients
+ Used HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and AngularJS to build the front-end structure of the configuration editor according to pre-defined designs as well as implement dynamic use of back-end data about the solution configuration

Google, Mountain View, CA

Engineering Practicum Intern - Knowledge Panel UI June - September 2015

+ Enhanced code that displays Google search result fact cards to support subscripts and superscripts across multiple platforms
+ Implemented a Java handler to identify and transform electron shell configurations and chemical formulas to render the appropriate subscript/superscript information

SERVICE

PhD Committee Representative, Doctoral Student Association May 2025 - May 2026

One of two representatives from the University of Washington's Information School Doctoral Student Association (DSA). Attend meetings with the University of Washington's Information School PhD Committee to represent doctoral students' perspectives and report back to UW iSchool doctoral students.

Election Committee Member, UAW 4121 April 2025 - June 2025

Served as member of 7-member Election Committee to organize triennial local union elections including communication of election timelines and procedures to 8,000+ members, logistical support, and ensuring adherence to election bylaws.

Statement of Purpose Review, University of Washington November 2024

Doctoral Student Association student volunteer reviewing prospective Information Science PhD students' application materials to provide feedback to expand access to academic mentorship.

Giving Committee Member, Brandfolder by Smartsheet October 2020 - August 2024

Employee volunteer committee responsible for determining appropriate usage of Brandfolder's donor-advised fund. Included meeting with fund managers to determine long-term philanthropy strategy as well as allocating funds in response to acute fundraising needs - for example, donating on behalf of Brandfolder to nonprofits supporting communities in the wake of natural disasters or mass shootings.

Welcome Committee Member, Brandfolder November 2019 - January 2023

Employee volunteer committee responsible for pairing new employees with mentors. My involvement with this group was to push for this group to also advocate for practices relating to inclusion and belonging. As such, we also worked with HR to post celebratory and informative messages on occasions such as Pride, Juneteenth, and International Women's Day as well enabling Slack options to allow employees to more easily share their pronouns.

Performing Member, CHEER Seattle August 2018 - April 2019

Performing cheerleader on an all-adult volunteer nonprofit cheerleading organization which raises money and awareness each year for a different beneficiary supporting the LGBTQ+ and other marginalized communities.

Performance members attended 6 hours of practice weekly and regularly fundraised through paid performances or as performers at community events and parades.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Programming Languages + Frameworks

Proficient in: TypeScript/JavaScript, React, HTML + SCSS, Ruby on Rails, SQL
Exposure to: jQuery, AngularJS, C, Python, Java, R, SML, XML

Platforms + Tools

Proficient in: Git, Unix (Bash scripting), Yarn/NPM, Google Cloud Build, PostgreSQL, Brandfolder, Smartsheet
Exposure to: Docker, Datadog, Mode, BigQuery, Firestore, Amazon Mechanical Turk, RStudio, PowerBI, Google Cloud Run, Google AppEngine, Firebase