

## **Sound symbolism: Where and when do we find it in language?**

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Some speech sounds relate better to meanings than others, such as the vowels in "little" and "large" giving the impression of different magnitudes. Such sound symbolism has been characterised as prevalent in languages, useful for language learning, and providing insight into the origins of human communication itself. In this talk I provide a critical perspective on sound symbolism, analysing how widespread sound symbolism actually is in language, whether it relates to certain meanings more than others, whether it is carried in certain sound properties more than others, and appraising the role of diachronic change in expression of sound symbolism.