

# Curriculum Vitae

**Zed Sevcikova Sehyr, PhD**

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## Research summary

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I earned my doctorate in Cognitive, Perceptual and Brain Sciences in 2013 from University College London (UCL), United Kingdom. My doctoral research examined effects of sign language experience and deafness on perception of handshapes in British Sign Language. Currently, I hold a full-time research position as a Research Scientist in the Laboratory for Language and Cognitive Neuroscience (LLCN) at San Diego State University, where I examine how augmented sensory experiences, for example, due to congenital deafness, impact aspects of visual perception, cognition and language processing (spoken, signed or written). Moreover, a proportion of my research is dedicated to examining questions related to modality-general (e.g. frequency or semantic relation) vs. modality-specific (e.g. iconicity) properties of language using sign languages as a window into the human mind. I am one of the collaborators on an award-winning project, ASL-LEX (asl-lex.org), which promises to construct a large-scale lexical database for American Sign Language and offer an invaluable resource for educators, students, and scientists interested in exploring questions concerning lexicons, language acquisition, machine learning or computer vision. My research combines psycholinguistic, electrophysiological and motion-tracking methodologies to advance our understanding of the brain's plasticity following unique perceptual or developmental challenges.

## Current position

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July 2015-present: Research Scientist, Laboratory for Language and Cognitive Neuroscience, San Diego State University, San Diego, California, USA

## Academic employment history

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- 2013-15 Postdoctoral Research Scholar, Laboratory for Language and Cognitive Neuroscience, San Diego State University, California, USA
- 2011-13 Lecturer in English Language & Communication, Kingston University, Surrey, UK
- 2010-11 Research Assistant, Deafness Cognition & Language Research Centre, University College London, UK
- 2010-11 Teaching Assistant, Research Methods in Psychology, Introduction to Psychological Experiments; Birkbeck College, University of London, UK
- 2009-10 Teaching Assistant, Sign Language Linguistics; Psychology and Language Science, University College London, UK
- 2009 Visiting Lecturer in Sign Language and Linguistics; University of Roehampton, UK
- 2009 Visiting Lecturer, English for Speakers of Other Languages; West London College, UK
- 2009 Assistant Editor, Deaf Worlds, Academic Journal of Deaf Studies, Forest Books, UK

## Academic degrees

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- 2013 PhD in Cognitive, Perceptual & Brain Sciences, Psychology and Language Sciences, Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre, University College London, UK
- 2007 Master's Degree in Applied Linguistics (distinction), Birkbeck College; London, UK
- 2005 Bachelor's Degree (1<sup>st</sup> Class Honors) in English Language & Linguistics; Kingston University, UK

## Grants and awards

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- 2018 Society for the Neurobiology of Language Travel Award (National Institutes of Health, NIH) to present at the SNL 10th Annual Meeting in Quebec City, Canada (USD500)
- 2017 The NSF & Popular Science, The 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Vizzies Award for ASL-LEX: A Visualization of American Sign Language, Interactive category.
- 2016 Early Career Researcher Award. Awarded by the Sign Language Linguistics Society (SLLS) at the 12<sup>th</sup> Conference on Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research (TISLR), Melbourne.
- 2010 Best Student Paper Award, 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Awarded by the International Society for Gesture Studies (ISGS) at the Gesture – Evolution, Brain & Linguistic Structures conference, European University of Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder), Germany, Jul 25-30, 2010.
- 2010 UCL Graduate School conference grant (GBP235)
- 2010 Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Conference Travel Grant (GBP170)
- 2008 UCL Graduate School major research skills training fund (GBP450)
- 2007 Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) Doctoral Studentship Award (GBP14,050), Award no. 2006/136414, Supervisor Dr. K. Cormier
- 2005 English Language Prize for Outstanding Academic Achievement. Kingston University

## Synergistic activities and professional experience

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- 2018 Scientist at the annual EcoLogik Women in STEM Fair, Cabrillo National Monument, San Diego, California, USA. <http://cabrilloeducation.com/ecologik/>
- 2015-pres. Peer reviewing for six high ranking academic journals (e.g., Neuropsychologia, JDSDE, Applied Psycholinguistics, Language and Cognition); conference abstract reviewing for Linguistic Society of America (LSA)
- 2012-pres. PhD Tutors, consultancy and academic support (online / face-to-face), UK
- 2012 Linguistic consulting for Prometheus (Twentieth Century Fox)  
<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm5082572/>
- 2010 Language Expert, linguistic consultancy, Silver River Productions, London, UK
- 2009 Assistant Editor, Deaf Worlds: Academic Journal of Deaf Studies, Forest Books, UK
- 2007 Subtitling Production Assistant, Access Services, Red Bee Media (BBC Broadcast), London, UK

## Certifications

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- 2014 American Sign Language Level Two, Interpret San Diego, San Diego, USA  
2008 Signature British Sign Language Level Two, London, UK  
2001 Cambridge Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA), London, UK

## Publications

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- Sehyr Sevcikova Z., Giezen, M. R., & Emmorey, K. (2018). Comparing semantic fluency in American Sign Language and English. *Journal of Deaf Studies & Deaf Education* 23 (4). [doi.org/10.1093/deafed/eny013](https://doi.org/10.1093/deafed/eny013)
- Sehyr Sevcikova Z. and Emmorey, K. (2018) Referential strategies in American Sign Language and English: The role of modality in establishing reference for difficult-to-name shapes. *Applied Psycholinguistics*. [doi:10.1017/S0142716418000061](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0142716418000061)
- Sehyr Sevcikova Z., Petrich, J., & Emmorey, K. (2016) Fingerspelled and printed words are recoded into a speech-based code for short-term memory. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 22(1), 72-87. [doi.org/10.1093/deafed/enw068](https://doi.org/10.1093/deafed/enw068)
- Sehyr Sevcikova Z. & Cormier, K. (2015) Perceptual categorization of handling handshapes in British Sign Language. *Language and Cognition*, 8(4). 501-532. [doi:10.1017/langcog.2015.4](https://doi.org/10.1017/langcog.2015.4)
- Sevcikova, Z. (2013) Categorical versus gradient properties of handling handshapes in British Sign Language (BSL). *Doctoral dissertation*, University College London.

## Publications in preparation

- Sehyr Sevcikova, Z. & Emmorey, K. (under review). Measuring iconicity in sign language: Effects of linguistic knowledge and transparency on perceived iconicity. Manuscript invited for submission to *Language and Cognition* special issue on Experimental approaches to iconicity in language.
- Sehyr Sevcikova, Z., Holcomb, P., Emmorey, K., Behrmann, M., & Plaut, D. (in prep). Experience driven effects on the N170 response to familiar objects stimuli.
- Sehyr Sevcikova, Z., Midgley, K.J., Holcomb, P.J., & Emmorey, K. (in prep). Priming effects between fingerspelled fonts and printed letters.

## Co-authored publications

- Schaller, F., Lee, B., Sehyr Sevcikova, Z., O'Grady Farnady, C., & Emmorey, K. (submitted). Cross-linguistic metaphor priming in ASL-English bilinguals: Effects of the Double Mapping Constraint. Special Issue of *Sign Language & Linguistics*.

- Weisberg, J. Casey, S., Sehyr Sevcikova Z., & Emmorey, K. (under review) Second language acquisition of American Sign Language influences co-speech gesture production. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*.
- Emmorey, K., Midgley, K., Cohen, K., Sehyr Sevcikova Z. & Holcomb, P. (2017) The N170 ERP component differs in laterality, distribution, and association with continuous reading measures for deaf and hearing readers. *Neuropsychologia*, 106, 298–309.
- Meade, G., Midgley, K., Sehyr Sevcikova Z., Holcomb, P., & Emmorey, K. (2017) Implicit co-activation of American Sign Language in deaf readers: An ERP study. *Brain and Language* 170, 50-61.
- Keane, J., Sehyr Sevcikova Z., Emmorey, K., and Brentari, D. (2017) A Theory-Driven Model of Handshape Similarity. *Phonology*, 34: Thematic issue: Computational phonology.
- Caselli, N., Sehyr, Sevcikova Z., Cohen-Goldberg, A., & Emmorey, K. (2016). ASL-LEX: A lexical database of American Sign Language. *Behavior Research Methods*.  
[link.springer.com/article/10.3758/s13428-016-0742-0](http://link.springer.com/article/10.3758/s13428-016-0742-0) Visit: [ASL-LEX.org](http://ASL-LEX.org)
- Cormier, K., Smith, S., & Sehyr Sevcikova Z. (2015). Rethinking Constructed Action, *Sign Language & Linguistics*, 18:2, pp. 167-204. DOI: [10.1075/sll.18.2.01cor](https://doi.org/10.1075/sll.18.2.01cor)
- Cormier, K., S. Smith & Sevcikova, Z. (2013) Predicate structures, gesture and simultaneity in the representation of action in British Sign Language: Evidence from deaf children and adults. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*, 18 (3), 370-390.
- Cormier, K., Quinto-Pozos, D., Sevcikova, Z., & Schembri, A. (2012). Lexicalisation and de-lexicalisation processes in sign languages: Comparing depicting constructions and viewpoint gestures. *Language and Communication*, 32 (4), pp. 329–348

### Conference Presentations

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- Sehyr Sevcikova, Z., Renna, J., Osmond, S., Midgley, K.J., Holcomb, P.J., & Emmorey, K. (2018). *Priming effects between fingerspelled fonts and printed letters*. Poster presented at The Tenth Annual Meeting of the Society for the Neurobiology of Language, Québec City, Canada, Aug 16–18, 2018. **\*awarded NIH / SNL Travel Award**
- Sehyr Sevcikova Z., Fisher, D., & Emmorey, K. (2017) *The influence of sign language experience on iconicity judgments*. Psychonomic Society's 58th Annual Meeting, Vancouver, BC.
- Cormier, K. and Sehyr Sevcikova Z. (2017) *Viewpoint constructions in British Sign Language, co-speech gesture and silent gesture*. Paper presented at the 91st Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, January 5-8, Austin, TX
- Sehyr Sevcikova Z., Emmorey, K., Midgley, K., & Holcomb, P. (2016) *Hemispheric lateralization of early ERP components in deaf and hearing readers with low and high vocabulary size*. Poster presented at the 8th Annual Meeting for the Neurobiology of Language, London, England, UK, Aug 17-20.
- Sehyr Sevcikova Z., Emmorey, K., Midgley, K., & Holcomb, P. (2016) *Lateralization of the N170 for word and face processing in deaf signers*. Poster presented at the Cognitive Neuroscience Society Annual Meeting, New York, April 2-5.

- Sehyr Sevcikova Z. and Emmorey, K. (2016) *Representation of print and fingerspelling in short-term memory*. Paper presented at The 12<sup>th</sup> Conference on Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research (TISLR), Melbourne, Jan 4-7.
- Sehyr Sevcikova Z., Caselli, N., Cohen-Goldberg, A., & Emmorey, K. (2016). *ASL-LEX: A lexical database of American Sign Language*. Poster presented at The 12<sup>th</sup> Conference on Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research (TISLR), Melbourne, Jan 4-7 **\*awarded Early Career Award by the Sign Language Linguistics Society\***
- Sehyr Sevcikova Z. and Emmorey, K. (2014) *Representation of print and fingerspelling in short-term memory*. Poster presented at Psychonomic Society's 55th Annual Meeting, Long Beach, California, USA, Nov 20-23.
- Sehyr Sevcikova Z. & Emmorey, K. (2014) *The role of co-speech gesture in description of non-nameable shapes*. Paper presented at The 6th Conference of the International Society for Gesture Studies, University of California, San Diego, July 8-11.
- Sevcikova, Z. (2013) *Are handling constructions in BSL conventional? Evidence from encoding of graspable object sizes in handling constructions*. Paper presented at the Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research (TISLR11), London, July 11.
- Sevcikova, Z. (2012) *Structural complexities of handling handshapes in BSL: experimental evidence from deaf signers and hearing gesturers*. 34th DGfS Meeting, Language as a Complex System; Experimental Studies in Sign Language workshop, Frankfurt, Mar 7.  
**\*awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> place in Best Student Paper Competition by the International Society for Gesture Studies\***
- Sevcikova, Z. (2010) *Categorical perception & production of handling handshapes in BSL*. Paper presented at 4th UK Cognitive Linguistics Conference, U. of Hertfordshire.
- Sevcikova, Z. (2010) *Categorical vs. Gradient Properties of Handling Signs in BSL*. Poster presented at TISLR conference, Purdue University, West Lafayette, USA.

### Invited Lectures & Plenaries

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- Sehyr, Sevcikova Z. (2016) *Hemispheric lateralization of early ERP components in deaf and hearing individuals*. Department of Linguistics Seminar Series, UBC, Vancouver, Canada, 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2016 <http://linguistics.ubc.ca/events/event/zed-sehyrs-research-seminar/>
- Sehyr, Sevcikova Z. (2016) *Is the lateralization of early visual encoding of words and faces affected by sign language expertise and deafness?* VL2 Student Network webinar, 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 2016.
- Sevcikova, Sehyr, Z. (2012) *Report on DCAL research activities and postgraduate study at UCL*. Department of Deaf Studies, Faculty of Philosophy, Charles University Prague, 13<sup>th</sup> Apr 2012. <http://ujkn.ff.cuni.cz/?q=en/node/652>
- Sevcikova, Z. (2010) *Categorical perception and production of handling handshapes in BSL: evidence from BSL signing and hearing gesture*. Plenary lecture presented at "Gesture – Evolution, Brain and Linguistic Structures" international conference, ISGS, European University of Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder), Germany, Jul 2010

- Sevcikova, Z. (2011) *Handshapes in BSL and gesture*. Language and Cognition Speaker Series, University of Birmingham, UK, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2011.
- Sevcikova, Z. (2009) *Introduction to Sign Language Acquisition*, Kingston University, Kingston-upon-Thames, UK, 8<sup>th</sup> Dec 2009.
- Sevcikova, Z. (2009) *Introduction to Deaf Community, Sign Language and Communication*. Kingston University, Kingston-upon-Thames, UK, 25<sup>th</sup> Nov 2009.
- Sevcikova, Z. (2009) Subtitling: theory and practice. Professional Skills for Linguists module. Kingston University, Kingston-upon-Thames, UK, 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar 2009

### **Research supervision**

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- 2013–present Supervising undergraduate and graduate students in the lab completing research practicum, SDSU. Most recent project supervision: Edinger, R., Emmorey, K., Sehyr Sevcikova, Z. “Picture-naming project in ASL using the Microsoft Kinect
- 2013 BA Dissertation in English Language and Communication entitled “Non-verbal communication and gesture in intercultural relationships”
- 2012 MA Dissertations in Education, entitled “Using role play to teach speaking in English Foreign Language (EFL) class”
- 2008 MA Dissertation in Applied Linguistics entitled “Evading difficult questions in news interviews”

### **Conference organization**

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- 2011 CISLDC Postgraduate Conference on Current Issues in Sign Linguistics, Deafness and Cognition (CISLDC 2011); Organizing Committee, Scientific Committee. Awarded the LAGB Cross-institutional Conference Sponsorship £600

### **Professional societies membership**

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- AAAS Member since 2016
- ISGS: International Society for Gesture Studies Member since 2012
- LAGB: Linguistic Association of Great Britain Member since 2011
- LSA Linguistic Society of America Member since 2016
- Psychonomic Society Member since 2014
- SLLS: Sign Language Linguistics Society Member since 2010

### **Technological skills**

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- Adobe: Photoshop, Illustrator
- Mac: FinalCutPro, iMovie
- Microsoft: Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Outlook, Kinect Motion.

Statistical Software: SPSS, R Studio, Matlab

Experiment Design / Data Collection: EEGLAB/NeuroScan, PsyScope, Open Sesame, Survey  
Monkey, Amazon MTurk

Database management: FileMakerAdvanced, EndNote

3D Animation: Poser™

Social Networking: Wordpress, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Hootsuite, Google+, Instagram

Languages: American Sign Language, British Sign Language, English, Czech

## **REFERENCES**

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References available upon request.