

Austin German

Department of Linguistics, 1115 E 58th St, Chicago, IL 60637

Email: austingerman@uchicago.edu

Website: <https://austin-german.github.io/>

Research Interests

homesign & emerging sign languages, sign language typology, multimodality

Academic Appointments

2024-present NSF Postdoctoral Research Fellow. Department of Linguistics, University of Chicago. Faculty sponsor: Diane Brentari.

Education

- 2024 PhD in Linguistics. The University of Texas at Austin. Thesis: *The emergence of linguistic structure in Zinacantec Family Homesign*. Supervised by Richard Meier and David Quinto-Pozos.
- 2021 MA in Linguistics. The University of Texas at Austin. Thesis: *The emergence of combinatorial structure in Zinacantec Family Homesign*. Supervised by Jenny Singleton and David Quinto-Pozos.
- 2018 BA in Linguistics (with Distinction) & BS in Cognitive Science. University of California, San Diego. Thesis: *Constructing space in Zinacantec Family Homesign*. Supervised by Gabriela Caballero and John B. Haviland.

Journal Publications

- 2024 **Austin German**. Metalinguistic discourse in an emerging sign language. *Languages* 9(7):240. <https://doi.org/10.3390/languages9070240> [Part of special issue “Coexpressivity, Gesture, and Language Emergence: Modality, Composition, and Creation”]
- 2023 **Austin German**. Abrupt grammatical change in an emergent sign language: the expression of motion in Zinacantec Family Homesign. *Diachronica*. <https://doi.org/10.1075/dia.22039.ger> [Part of thematic issue “The historical linguistics of signed languages”]
- 2023 Laura Horton, Lynn Hou, **Austin German**, & Jenny Singleton. Sign language socialization and participant frameworks in three indigenous Mesoamerican communities: A qualitative comparative study. *Research on Children and Social Interaction*. <https://doi.org/10.1558/rcsi.24314>
- 2022 Cornelia Loos, **Austin German**, Richard P. Meier. Simultaneous structures in sign languages: acquisition and emergence. *Frontiers in Psychology* 13:992589. doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.992589.

- 2021 Gabriela Caballero & **Austin German**. Grammatical tone patterns in Choguita Rarámuri (Tarahumara). *International Journal of American Linguistics* 87:2, pp. 149-178. doi.org/10.1086/712980.

Book chapters

- accepted **Austin German**. Serial verb constructions in Zinacantec Family Homesign.

Conference Presentations

Paper Presentations

- 2024 **Austin German**. Birth order effects on argument structure devices in Zinacantec Family Homesign. Paper to be presented at SIGN10. University of the West Indies, St Augustine Campus, Trinidad & Tobago. December 9-12. [Abstract in international sign: <https://youtu.be/bPMtBx2BS7s?si=jW8XA3hioUR49bo->].
- 2023 **Austin German**. Convencionalización léxica en una lengua de señas emergente de Zinacantán. Tenth Conference on Indigenous Languages of Latin America (CILLA-X). The University of Texas at Austin. November 9-11.
- 2022 **Austin German**. Evidence of an emergent classifier system in Zinacantec Family Homesign. Cognitive and Cultural Influences on Language Emergence. May 25-27. Virtual workshop. doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.35673.39523.
- 2022 **Austin German**. The emergence of combinatorial structure in Zinacantec Family Homesign. Paper presentation at the 96th Annual Meeting of the Linguistics Society of America. January 6-9. Washington, D.C. doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.24768.20485
- 2021 **Austin German**. The emergence of segmentation in Zinacantec Family Homesign. Paper presentation at the 20th meeting of the Texas Linguistics Society. March 5-6. The University of Texas at Austin.
- 2019 **Austin German**. Grammatical development in a Mayan sign language. Paper presentation at the Ninth Conference on Indigenous Languages of Latin America (CILLA-IX). The University of Texas at Austin. October 10-12.
- 2019 Gabriela Caballero & **Austin German**. Grammatical tone patterns in Choguita Rarámuri (Tarahumara). Paper presentation at the Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the Americas (SSILA). January 6-12. New York, NY.

Posters

- 2022 **Austin German**. Evidence of an emergent classifier system in Zinacantec Family Homesign. 14th conference on Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research (TISLR14). National Museum of Ethnology (MINPAKU). Osaka, Japan. September 27-29. [doi.org.10.13140/RG.2.2.13434.36804](https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.13434.36804)

- 2022 **Austin German.** The roots of spatial grammar in Zinacantec Family Homesign. 14th conference on Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research (TISLR14). National Museum of Ethnology (MINPAKU). Osaka, Japan. September 27-29. doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.16789.81123
- 2021 Lynn Y.S. Hou, Laura Horton, **Austin German**, & Jenny Singleton. (2021). Sign Language Socialization in Three Indigenous Mesoamerican Communities: A Qualitative Comparative Study. 46th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development. Virtual Conference. November 4-7.
- 2019 **Austin German.** Emerging functions of manual holds in Zinacantec Family Homesign. 13th conference on Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research (TISLR13). Universität Hamburg. Hamburg, Germany. September 26-28.
- 2018 **Austin German.** Eye gaze and simultaneous constructions in Zinacantec Family Homesign. 8th annual meeting of the International Society for Gesture Studies (ISGS8). Cape Town, South Africa. July 4-8.

Other projects

- 2020 David Quinto-Pozos, Jenny Singleton, Richard Meier, Donna Altuna, Susie Tiggs, Caitie Coons, **Austin German**, Eric Hale, & Adam Sales. *86th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature; Senate Bill 54: Evaluating the performance of RDSPD students*. Report to the Texas Education Agency. University of Texas at Austin. Austin, Texas.
- 2020 David Quinto-Pozos, Jenny Singleton, Richard Meier, Donna Altuna, Susie Tiggs, Caitie Coons, **Austin German**, Eric Hale, & Adam Sales. *86th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature; Senate Bill 54: Evaluating the performance of RDSPD students*. Report to the Legislative Budget Board. University of Texas at Austin. Austin, Texas.
- 2017 Gabriela Caballero, Lucien Carroll, Patrick Mullen, Sean Stein, **Austin German**, Klaus Kim & Andres Aguilar (compilation, analysis). Choguira Rarámuri annotated corpus and lexical database. [Web interface designed by Russell Horton, and further developed by Lucien Carroll]. <http://field.ucsd.edu/raramuri/> (documentation available at <https://github.com/ucsd-field-lab/kwaras>).

Grants

- 2024- National Science Foundation Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences Postdoctoral Research Fellowship (NSF-SPRF). *The emergence of phonological structure in a family homesign system* (BCS 2404654). PI: **Austin German**; Co-PI: Diane Brentari. \$170,000
- 2022- National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant (NSF-DDRIG). *The emergence of linguistic structure in a family homesign language* (BCS 2141436). PI: Richard P. Meier; Co-PIs: **Austin German**, David Quinto-Pozos. \$15,741.

Fellowships

2023	Graduate Continuing Fellowship, UT Austin.
2022	College of Liberal Arts Provost's Competitive Continuing Fellowship
2020	Carl J and Tamari M. Tricoli Fellowship
2020	Joel Sherzer Award, Center for Indigenous Languages of Latin America, UT Austin
2018	Graduate recruitment fellowship, UT Austin.

Awards

2024	College of Liberal Arts Dean's Distinguished PhD Graduate Award
------	---

Research Experience

2020-2021	Graduate research assistant. Child Language Lab, Department of Linguistics, The University of Texas at Austin. P.I.: Jenny Singleton.
2020	Graduate research assistant. Department of Linguistics, The University of Texas at Austin. <i>Examining methods and standards for evaluating certain Texas regional day school program for the deaf (RDSPD) students</i> . P.I.: David Quinto-Pozos.
2017-2018	Undergraduate research assistant. Department of Linguistics, University of California, San Diego. <i>A Reference Grammar of Choguila Raramuri (Tarahumara) [ISO 639-3: tar]</i> . P.I.: Gabriela Caballero Hernández.
2016-2017	Undergraduate research assistant. Center for Research in Language, University of California, San Diego. <i>Zinacantec Family Home Sign: Structure and Socialization in the First and Second Generations of a Spontaneous Emerging Sign Language</i> . P.I.: John B. Haviland.

Supervision Experience

2024	Alredo Tuz Baas. <i>Preferencias en el uso de marcos de referencia espaciales entre los usuarios sordos y bilingües de la Lengua de Señas Maya Yucateca</i> . [Preferences in the use of spatial frames of references between deaf and bilingual users of Yucatec Maya Sign Language]. BA Thesis. Universidad de Oriente, Valladolid, Mexico. Supervisor: Olivier Le Guen. Readers: Austin German
2022-2023	Undergraduate research assistant (for credit, ASL 357: <i>Undergraduate Research</i>). Trained in sign language transcription using ELAN, with a focus on segmentation of utterances into clauses and coding word order.
2022-2023	Undergraduate research assistant (paid). Trained in sign language transcription using ELAN, with a focus on annotating classifier handshapes.
2021	Uicab, Ana Rocío. (2021). <i>Estudio comparativo del léxico de la Lengua de señas Maya Yucateca en tres comunidades de la Península de Yucatán: Chemax, Chicán y Trascorral</i> . [Comparative study of the lexicon of Yucatec Maya Sign Language in three communities of the Yucatán Peninsula: Chemax, Chicán, and Trascorral]. BA Thesis. Universidad de Oriente, Valladolid, Mexico. Supervisor: Olivier Le Guen. Readers: Austin German & Josefina Safar.

Teaching Experience

- 2024 Teaching Assistant. American Sign Language Program. UT Austin.
- 2022 Instructor of record. Introduction to the study of language. UT Austin.
- 2021 Teaching Assistant. American Sign Language Program. UT Austin.
- 2020 Teaching Assistant. Dying languages: what world linguistic diversity means for us. Instructor: Anthony Woodbury. UT Austin.
- 2019 Teaching Assistant. Introduction to the study of language. Instructor: David Quinto-Pozos. UT Austin.
- 2017 Teaching Assistant. English conversation and fluency. UCSD Extension English Language Institute.

Fieldwork experience

- 2023 Zinacantán, Chiapas, Mexico. 6 weeks.
- 2022 Zinacantán, Chiapas, Mexico. 6 weeks.
- 2019 Zinacantán, Chiapas, Mexico. 6 weeks.
- 2017 Zinacantán, Chiapas, Mexico. 1 week.

Service

- 2022-2024 College of Liberal Arts Graduate Student Advisory Council, UT Austin
- 2022-2023 Search committee for Assistant Professor in sign language linguistics. Department of Linguistics, UT Austin.
- 2020-2021 Co-organizer, Friends of Uto-Aztecan Conference.
- 2020-2021 Alternate Graduate Student Assembly Representative for the Department of Linguistics, UT Austin.
- 2019-2020 Primary Graduate Student Assembly Representative for the Department of Linguistics, UT Austin.
- 2018-2019 Alternate Graduate Student Assembly Representative for the Department of Linguistics, UT Austin.
- 2018-2019 Co-organizer. Symposium About Language and Society, Austin (SALSA) XXVII. UT Austin.

Professional Memberships

- Linguistic Society of America (LSA).
- Sign Language & Linguistics Society (SLLS).
- Society for the Study of Indigenous Languages of the Americas (SSILA).

Technical Skills

Extensive experience with ELAN.

Elementary knowledge of R/RStudio.

Languages

English (native), American Sign Language (proficient), Spanish (proficient), Zinacantec Family
Homesign (conversational), Tsotsil (elementary), Mexican Sign Language (elementary), Tagalog
(heritage).