

Holly A. Zaharchuk

PHD CANDIDATE (SHE/HER/HERS)

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Research interests

My research interests lie at the intersection of cognitive psychology and sociolinguistics. I investigate and challenge the boundaries between dialects and languages with EEG, behavioral methods, and field work. My particular areas of study include syntactic variation, code-switching, and network models of language.

Education

The Pennsylvania State University

PH.D., PSYCHOLOGY AND LANGUAGE SCIENCE, SPECIALIZATION IN COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE NEUROSCIENCE

- Advisor: Dr. Janet G. van Hell

University Park, Pennsylvania

2018 - present

The Pennsylvania State University

M.S., PSYCHOLOGY

- Advisor: Dr. Janet G. van Hell
- Master's thesis: *We "might could" revisit syntactic processing: Studying dialectal variation with event-related potentials*

University Park, Pennsylvania

2018 - 2020

The University of Chicago

B.A., PSYCHOLOGY, MINOR IN LINGUISTICS

- Advisor: Dr. Daniel Casasanto
- Honors thesis: *Does linguistic experience change mental representations of pitch?*

Chicago, Illinois

2011 - 2015

Honors and awards

NSF-funded Partnerships for International Research and Education (PIRE) Fellowship

EIGHT-WEEK FELLOWSHIP TO CONDUCT FIELD RESEARCH IN COLOMBIA IN SUMMER 2020

The Pennsylvania State University

Postponed due to COVID-19

Bruce V. Moore Graduate Fellowship in Psychology

TRAVEL AWARD FOR POSTER PRESENTATION AT PSYCHONOMIC SOCIETY 60TH ANNUAL MEETING

The Pennsylvania State University

Nov 2019

University Graduate Fellowship

FIVE-YEAR FELLOWSHIP FOR RESEARCH DOCTORAL STUDENTS

The Pennsylvania State University

Aug 2018 - present

University Scholar Award

FOUR-YEAR MERIT SCHOLARSHIP

The University of Chicago

Sep 2011 - Jun 2015

Publications

Zaharchuk, H. A., & Karuza, E. A. (in press). Multilayer networks: An untapped tool for understanding bilingual neurocognition. *Brain and Language*.

Zaharchuk, H. A., Shevlin, A., & Van Hell, J. G. (2021). Are our brains more prescriptive than our mouths? Experience with dialectal variation in syntax differentially impacts ERPs and behavior. *Brain and Language*, 218, 104949. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bandl.2021.104949>

Lucero, C., **Zaharchuk, H.**, & Casasanto, D. (2014). Beat gestures facilitate speech production. In P. Bello, M. Guarini, M. McShane, & B. Scassellati (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 36th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*. Red Hook, NY: Curran Associates.

Presentations

Zaharchuk, H. A., Shevlin, A., & Van Hell, J. G. (2020, May). *We "might could" revisit syntactic processing: Studying dialectal variation with event-related potentials*. Poster session presented at the 27th Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Neuroscience Society, Boston, Massachusetts.

Zaharchuk, H. A., Shevlin, A., & Van Hell, J. G. (2019, November). *Auditory comprehension of double versus single modal constructions in Mainstream American English listeners*. Poster session presented at the 60th Annual Meeting of the Psychonomic Society, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

Zaharchuk, H. A. (2015, June). *Does linguistic experience change mental representations of pitch?* Poster session presented at the University of Chicago Undergraduate Research Symposium, Chicago, Illinois.

Research experience

Bilingualism and Language Development Lab

University Park, Pennsylvania

GRADUATE STUDENT

Aug 2018 - present

- Principal investigator: Dr. Janet G. van Hell
- Research areas: language processing and dialectal variation
- Responsibilities: design, implement, and run EEG and behavioral experiments with E-Prime; process and analyze experimental data with R and MATLAB; mentor undergraduate research assistants; maintain lab equipment and supplies

Experience and Cognition Lab

Chicago, Illinois

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Sep 2013 - Jun 2015

- Principal investigator: Dr. Daniel Casasanto
- Research areas: embodied cognition and linguistic relativity
- Responsibilities: train, run, and debrief participants; code and analyze experimental data with ELAN and R; create new experiments with Python

Professional experience

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Washington, District of Columbia

FINANCIAL ANALYST

Jul 2017 - Jul 2018

- Collaborated with the Consumer Education and Engagement Division to write a spotlight report on language access for limited English proficient consumers as a member of the Language Access Task Force
- Researched debt collection and debt relief, particularly in the credit card and student loan markets, for the Consumer Lending, Reporting, and Collections Markets team

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Washington, District of Columbia

DIRECTOR'S FINANCIAL ANALYST

Jul 2015 - Jul 2017

- Supported the policy and research teams in the Office of Fair Lending and Equal Opportunity
- Performed business analytics, tracking, and reporting in the Supervision, Enforcement, and Fair Lending Front Office

Research Development Support (formerly Arete)

Chicago, Illinois

PROGRAM AND OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

Feb 2013 - Jun 2015

- Partnered with The University of Chicago research administration support faculty members pursuing complex research initiatives
- Provided program analysis, strategic planning, business metrics, and event support

Teaching experience

Psychology of language

The Pennsylvania State University

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Jan 2021 - May 2021

- Instructor: Dr. Katharine Donnelly Adams
- Seminar course covering auditory speech perception, visual word recognition, language representation, sentence comprehension and production, and language acquisition across the lifespan
- Presented guest lecture on linguistic variation and the relation between production and comprehension

Basic research methods in psychology

The Pennsylvania State University

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Aug 2020 - Dec 2020

- Instructor: Dr. Nicholas Pearson
- Introduction to experimental design, analysis, and presentation
- Led weekly laboratory section to reinforce lecture concepts

What makes us human?

The Pennsylvania State University

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Jan 2020 - May 2020

- Instructor: Dr. Daniel Weiss
- Senior seminar in comparative psychology

- Instructor: Dr. Stephen Wilson
- Introduction to neuroscience theories and methods
- Presented guest lecture on auditory system and neuroanatomy of language production and comprehension

Outreach

Bilingualism and Language Development Lab

University Park, Pennsylvania

THE BRAIN BUS COORDINATOR

Aug 2018 - present

- Maintain *The Brain Bus*, BiLD's mobile neuroscience lab for field research and language science public engagement
- Participate in community outreach events, including as a volunteer judge at the Young Scholars of Western PA science fair

Center for Language Science

University Park, Pennsylvania

GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Jan 2021 - May 2021

- Created public repository for research on linguistic discrimination in collaboration with fellow graduate assistants
- Participated in ENVISION STEM career day for young women

Center for Language Science

University Park, Pennsylvania

GRADUATE ASSISTANT

Aug 2019 - Dec 2019

- Managed the Center's social media presence to engage the wider regional community in language science research
- Created and solicited content for the [Winter/Spring 2020 Bilingualism Matters newsletter](#)

Community service

Next Step Public Charter School

Washington, District of Columbia

MATHEMATICS TUTOR

Jan 2017 - Jul 2018

- Volunteered as a mathematics tutor with the bilingual GED and ESL program for immigrant and other at-risk youth
- Provided one-on-one assistance with practice problems and assignments once per week for 1-2 hours

Community Tax Aid

Washington, District of Columbia

VOLUNTEER TAX PREPARER

Jan 2016 - Apr 2018

- Volunteered as an IRS-certified advanced volunteer tax preparer with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, which offers free tax help to individuals who make \$54,000 or less, individuals with disabilities, and limited English speaking individuals who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns
- Provided tax preparation services once per week for 3-4 hours during tax season

Academic service

- Ad hoc reviewer: *Brain and Language*

Skills

Programming: R, MATLAB, Python, \LaTeX , SQL, E-Prime, Praat, ELAN

Languages: English (native proficiency), Spanish (intermediate proficiency)

Affiliations

- Center for Language Science
- Cognitive Neuroscience Society
- Psychonomic Society
- Women in Cognitive Science