

SBC AGM 2025 Research Update

1. University of Birmingham – Dr. Emmanouela Terlektsi, PhD, FHEA

1.1. *Commissioned Research work*

1.1.1 *British Academy small grant – Evidencing good practice in supporting deaf children with autism (2 years project)*

We are in the second year of the British Academy project exploring good practices in supporting deaf children with autism. There is paucity of evidence on how the inclusion of children with a dual diagnosis of deafness and autism is facilitated and supported in mainstream settings and the proposed study aims to bridge this gap. The first phase of the study employing a survey with educational professionals and parents is mostly completed and we are currently in the second phase of the study. At the present, our postdoctoral researcher is visiting the nominated by the stakeholders settings around the country with the aim to collect 6 illuminative case studies. The study will not only identify excellent practice in supporting inclusion of children with deafness and autism but will also empower stakeholders to have a voice in research.

1.1.2 *NDCS - Evaluating peripatetic Teachers of the Deaf (ToD) impact on deaf children's outcomes: a participatory research approach using a mixed methods design.*

We are in the final stage of the project and currently finalising the report to feature on the NDCS website. A webinar organised by BATOD to disseminate the results of the study and discuss the next steps will take place in September (TBC).

1.1.3 *Foundations for Literacy- Pilot study*

We are also continuing a small pilot study funded by the Leverhulme to explore the feasibility of the Foundations for Literacy intervention to adapt to the UK educational settings. <https://clad.education.gsu.edu/foundations-literacy-home/> Foundations for Literacy is an evidenced based intervention designed specifically for pre-school aged children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

2.2 *Research work*

2.2.1 *Exploration of the use of AI to support deaf children in early years*

In collaboration with colleagues from the Australian Catholic University and the philosophy department of the University of Birmingham we are currently exploring the use of AI as a tool to support deaf children in early years. The study uses a scenario case study approach.

2.2.2 *Use of AI tool to support experience of mindfulness by deaf adults*

In collaboration with the Goulandris museum in Athens and an art educator we are exploring the potentials of AI application to support d/Deaf adults using sign and spoken language to experience mindfulness in the museum.

For further information on any of these projects please email Emmanouela directly: m.e.terlektsi@bham.ac.uk

2 University of Edinburgh – Rachel O'Neill, Dr. Audrey Cameron and Gabrielle Hodge

2.1 *University of Edinburgh publications and activities*

Below are the publications and activities that we have been involved with since June 2024 that we think may be of interest to the Sign Bilingual Consortium (SBC) members. If you click through on the doi numbers you will be able to see the abstracts and, in some cases, the complete texts. We can provide copies of articles if you email us.

Because of the recent heightened awareness of BSL as a language in school curricula across the UK, we have also been involved along with other SBC members in talking to politicians, civil servants and BSL panels about our research and teaching.

2.1.1 Hodge, G., Manrique, E., Winter, B. & K. Cormier. (2025). Manual wh-signs and English wh-mouthings differentiate BSL content and polar questions. *Linguistics*. DOI: 10.1515/ling-2023-0238

This publication may be interesting for deaf and hearing people on BSL courses and Deaf BSL tutors. The BSL corpus informed this work. It found that English mouthing is an important part of question signalling in BSL, alongside manual BSL signs and other non-manual movements. Sociolinguistic factors (apart from region) do not appear to strongly influence how Deaf BSL signers structure polar (yes/no) questions and content (what, when, where, how, why) questions.

2.1.2 Puupponen, A., Hodge, G., Anible, B., Salonen, J., Wainio, T., Keränen, J., Hernández, D. & T. Jantunen. (2024). Opening up Corpus FinSL: Enriching corpus analysis with linguistic ethnography in a study of constructed action. *Linguistics*. DOI: 10.1515/ling-2023-0196

This publication highlights the benefits of multimethod approaches to understanding sign languages, and by extension, learning sign languages. Deaf BSL teachers may be particularly interested in how to combine both BSL corpus methods with linguistic ethnographic methods, especially in the classroom.

2.1.3 O'Brien, D., Hodge, G., Gulamani, S., Rowley, K., Adam, R., Emery, S., & J. Walker. (2023). Deaf academics' perception of 'trust' in relationships with signed language interpreters. *Translation & Interpreting*, 15(2): 25-42. DOI: 10.12807/ti.115202.2023.a02

This paper co-authored by early and mid-career Deaf researchers, including Gabrielle Hodge, explores ideas and practices around “trust” used by BSL interpreters. It is also very relevant to Deaf professionals and BSL interpreters in other parts of the education system, although the results are auto ethnographic and not strictly generalisable beyond HE professional contexts. They do very strongly argue against interpreters relying on “trust” as a measure of interpreting competency. Instead, Deaf academics have developed a range of other, more accurate measures of competencies which should be prioritised ahead of vague notions of “trust”.

2.1.4 Hodge, G., Murray, L., Thornton, D. & J. Blyth. (2024). [Understanding Auslan signers through the 2022 Deaf Census. Deaf Australia.](#)

This report is about Australia but usefully shows how we can develop and interpret census data about signing deaf communities. The questions in the 2022 Deaf Census were created by Deaf advocates and community leaders according to information they wanted to know, which is a point of difference to typical Government census data. For example, the 2022 Deaf Census included questions about identity, language use, religion, education, employment, healthcare, and access. The report summarises both quantitative and qualitative data collected from ~1200 Auslan signers across Australia in 2022, including 850 Deaf, Deafblind, Deaf disabled and Hard of hearing people.

2.1.5 Hodge, G. (2024). [Understanding the access and inclusion experiences of deaf, deafblind and hard of hearing people who use Auslan: a review of the Australian research literature. Deaf Australia.](#)

This is a useful review of published literature relevant about Auslan and Auslan users relating to education, healthcare, employment and language policy, helpful to us in the UK too. It is worthwhile to periodically review and reflect on the body of research that has

been done, to identify and disseminate knowledge production, and areas where there needs to be more attention going forward.

2.1.6 Cameron, A. (2025) 'From Scientific Concepts to Signs: Leveraging STEM Glossaries in Deaf Education'. In Nordheimer, S., and Rathmann, C. (eds), *Handbook of STEMSLi in Sign Languages*. Online Publication due June 2025.

This chapter explains how we can use Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) sign glossaries to support teaching and learning. It is written in English and has videos in International Sign. The chapter is also translated into French, German, Italian, Greek, Spanish and Portuguese (both written and in sign languages). Audrey argues that STEM sign glossaries can serve as crucial educational tools to bridge the gap between scientific concepts and accessible visual communication for deaf learners. She makes the case that systematically developed sign vocabularies for STEM can significantly enhance both teaching effectiveness and learning outcomes in deaf education.

2.1.7 Cameron, A. (2024) 'How we developed sign language for ten of the trickiest climate change terms'. *The Conversation*. 11.11.24. <https://theconversation.com/how-we-developed-sign-language-for-ten-of-the-trickiest-climate-change-terms-242254>

This is the first article in BSL to be published in *The Conversation*, a virtual magazine with the latest academic research and news. Ten BSL signs for complex climate change terms are explained. The work comes from the recent BSL glossary project on environmental science funded by the Royal Society. The aim of this glossary is to include deaf people in climate change conversations. This article was nominated for the Sir Paul Curran Award in May 2025.

2.1.8 Cameron, A. (2024) 'From Jellyfish to Basking Shark, we're developing 100 new signs to deepen deaf people's connection with the ocean'. *The Conversation*. 9.08.24. <https://theconversation.com/from-jellyfish-to-basking-shark-were-developing-100-new-signs-to-deepen-deaf-peoples-connection-with-the-ocean-234417>

Another article published in *The Conversation* links to the current work on signs for marine species. 29.8.24 <https://impact.ed.ac.uk/research/climate-environmental-crisis/signs-help-deaf-people-engage-with-ocean-conservation/>

2.1.9 Words in Hand – history of BSL research at Moray House

This Heritage Lottery project about the history of the Moray House research into BSL has taken place over 2024-25 led by Audrey Cameron. The Scottish Sensory Centre wanted to publicise an important early research project which took place at Moray House College over the period 1975 – 1985. This website has resources which may be useful for schools all over the UK including examples of early BSL teaching material, Scottish BSL, and information about events held over the year. [Scottish Sensory Centre: Edinburgh BSL Research Project](#) The website is called *Words In Hand* after the book produced by this early BSL project which focused on the handshapes and features of BSL signs.

2.1.10 O'Neill, R., McEwan, E. R., & Wilks, R. (2025). Guiding principles and codes of practice: Do teachers of deaf children and young people need them? *Deafness & Education International*, (2). Advance online publication. doi: 10.1080/14643154.2025.2468990h

This publication came from a 2024 research project about professionalism. The reason it came up as an area of research was partly because of Rob and Rachel's research into the impact of the BSL Act (Scotland) 2015 in deaf education in Scotland. We noticed from the 2022 research [here](#) that the influence of the health service and its values on the ToD profession was quite crucial to how professionals worked and saw themselves. We gained a small grant from NDCS. This is an interview study which also includes an historical overview of the UK TOD profession.

2.1.11 Wilks, R., & O'Neill, R. (2024). Adopting British Sign Language in deaf education: Lessons from Welsh and Gaelic. *Languages, Society & Policy*. <https://www.lspjournal.com/post/adopting-british-sign-language-in-deaf-education-lessons-from-welsh-and-gaelic>

This is a policy article for a special issue on languages in the UK which sums up the research Rob and Rachel carried out between 2021 and 2022. Recommendations include the need for governments to focus on promoting BSL, improving language pedagogies, and ensuring sufficient resources and qualified teachers fluent in BSL. [A poster presented at the March 2025 Bilingualism Matters](#) conference at the University of Edinburgh also sums up this research.

2.1.12 Young, A., Dodds, C., Gemmell, K., Lister, E., O'Neill, R., Chilton, H., & Russell, J. (2024). What did the Covid-19 pandemic reveal to deaf young people about their lives as young adults? *Disability and Society*, 1-22. Advance online publication. doi:10.1080/09687599.2024.2391771

This article comes from the READY study, led by the University of Manchester. Rachel was involved in the READY project at the point when COVID struck and the team realised the group of young deaf people who were participants through an initial survey and interviews could be approached again to find out what the impact of the pandemic had been on their lives. The findings showed that the mental health challenges of the Covid pandemic were not new to many participants but rather more of similar experiences of limited contact with hearing people. The participants showed resilience, digital skills and creativity through the pandemic, often having to argue for better digital access to educational resources.

2.2 *BSL Glossary project*

The British Sign Language Glossaries of curriculum terms has continued to grow over the 2024-25 academic year. In May 2024 a collaboration with the Royal Society led to the launch of 200 signs about energy, resources, pollution and the environmental impacts on people. <https://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/BSL/environmenthome.html>

A cross-country collaboration with deaf scientists, linguist and teachers from Malta, Spain, Italy and Croatia has led to the MUFFIN project, The Marine, Underwater and Fish For Inclusion group, funded by Erasmus+. This will lead to dissemination events for deaf communities across these countries in 2026. Keep in touch with Audrey to find out more.

Two further environmental projects are in progress at present: a collaboration with the Sensory Trust, Trees for Cities and the National Wildlife Centre will produce BSL resources about collective climate repair. And a project with the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh will develop signs for greenhouse plants.

2.3 *Child Audiology in Scotland*

Rachel's blog, [Child Audiology in Scotland](#), continues to monitor the experiences of deaf children and young people and their families following the long-term failures the in NHS Lothian audiology service, discovered in 2021. The consequences for local authorities are discussed as hundreds of deaf children were referred late to services for deaf children. The impact of the NHS Lothian failings has led to investigations into audiology services throughout the UK, detailed on the blog. However, there has been less focus on the implications for the many deaf children and young people affected. Recent reports on the blog have included the work of Tania Allan, a University of Edinburgh student and deaf BSL signer who produced [a summary of her 2024 MSc dissertation](#). She interviewed families of late diagnosed deaf children and found that services around the children were variable following the late diagnoses. There have been two [Additional Support for Learning tribunal decisions](#) so far relating to late diagnosed deaf children, both in favour of legal rights to BSL in the education system. You can find the links on the blog and sign up here to receive notifications of new posts: [Child Audiology in Scotland](#)

2.4 *Papers at ICED, Rome congress July 2025*

Rachel has a paper about the publication number 11 above, professionalism and how ToDs see themselves. PhD student Eileen Burns has a paper about her research, likely to be completed in 2025 about the operation of the exam system in Scotland where deaf candidates can watch BSL questions and respond in BSL. PhD student Hatice Yazar has a paper about her research with UK families with late diagnosed deaf children where the family don't speak English in the home, that is they are navigating the health and education systems without necessarily knowing English. We expect papers to come from these students' works over the next year. If anyone in the Sign Bilingual Consortium is attending the ICED conference, it would be good to meet up.

Further information about our work can be found through our personal pages:

[Gabrielle Hodge | The University of Edinburgh](#)

[Dr Audrey Cameron \(OBE, PhD, PGDE, CChem, HonFRSC\) | The University of Edinburgh](#)

[Rachel O'Neill | The University of Edinburgh](#)

3 Heriot-Watt University – Dr. Annelies Kusters

3.1 *SIGNS@HWU*

3.1.3 Our current team members are:

<https://signs.hw.ac.uk/people/?role=&status=1.%20Active>

3.2 *Current research projects:*

1. "Exploring interpreting services from a systemic lens" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/exploring-interpreting-services-from-a-systemic-lens/>
2. "Cross-signing in Japan and the UK" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/cross/>
3. "Using BSL translated children's stories to introduce hearing parents with deaf children to Deaf culture and BSL" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/childrenliterature/>
4. "Fostering deaf youth's identities through participatory research methods" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/identity/>
5. "Deaf lesbian spaces and networks in London" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/queerdeafhomes/>
6. The lived experiences of Deaf Indian women who migrated to London <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/indialondon/>
7. "International Sign conference interpreting and gender: An intersectional exploration of interpreters' and deaf professionals' experiences" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/gender-interpreting/>
8. "Evaluating and improving the quality of experience for sign language accessible TV sport" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/tvsport/>
9. "Equality, diversity and Inclusion caucus" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/edi-caucus-edical/>
10. Preferences of Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, and Hearing University Students and Staff Members for AI-Mediated Communication Technology" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/aimc/>
11. "Political activism within deaf organisations and deaf communities". <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/polac/>
12. "Deaf feminist activism on social media" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/femact/>
13. "Sign LOUD: Perspectives on domestic abuse and communication issues and the impact on deaf families" <https://signs.hw.ac.uk/projects/co-victims/>

3.3 *See here for all completed dissertations in 2025:*

<https://signs.hw.ac.uk/completed-phds/>

3.4 *Forthcoming books in 2025:*

- Deaf Mobility Studies - By [Annelies Kusters](#), [Erin Moriarty](#), [Amandine le Maire](#), [Sanchayeeta Iyer](#), and [Steven Emery](#)

: <https://gupress.gallaudet.edu/Books/D/Deaf-Mobility-Studies>

- 4 International perspectives on sign language translator and interpreter education – Second Edition – By Jemina Napier, Stacey Webb, and Robert Adam (editors) (Gallaudet University Press) <https://gupress.gallaudet.edu/Books/I/International-Perspectives-on-Sign-Language-Translator-and-Interpreter-Education>

4. Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre (DCAL) at University College London (UCL) – Dr. Fiona Kyle, Dr Katie Mason, Dr. Kate Rowley & Prof. Mairéad MacSweeney

Research conducted in the Literacy And Deafness Development Research Lab (LADDER Lab) - Dr. Fiona Kyle

4.1 *The Preschool Language and Literacy Longitudinal study (2019-2026) - Dr. Fiona Kyle, Prof. Ros Herman (City University of London) and Dr. Katie Mason*

We have been continuing with our large-scale longitudinal study into preschool language and literacy skills in deaf children using spoken language. This three-year multi-wave study has been running since 2019 with 122 preschool deaf and 114 preschool hearing children. Children are seen every 12 months from preschool (3-4 years old) through to the end of year 2 (6-7 year olds). Children complete a large battery of language, literacy and cognitive tasks. All of our deaf children use spoken language and almost half have some exposure to BSL, and many come from multilingual families. A small number are bilingual-bimodals (BSL and spoken English).

This is a multi-wave study with four waves of deaf and hearing children taking part in the study. Two waves of children have already completed through the study, and another wave will finish this year. We will be continuing to see participating children until 2026. Our main aim is to investigate the role of preschool language and emerging literacy skills in later reading ability for deaf children. In particular, we are interested in whether we can identify deaf children who are at risk for literacy difficulties from their preschool language and phonological skills.

In February, as part of this project, we organised a free, one-day, research conference on Language and Literacy in Deaf Children in collaboration with Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children. We had a great turn-out with approximately 130 people – mainly teachers of the deaf and speech and language therapists working with deaf children. There were six research presentations followed by a practitioner-led panel discussion on the implications of our research for practitioners. We are currently planning another event that will be even more focused on the implications of our research for practice.

If you were unable to attend the conference and you would like a copy of the presentations, please contact us. You can find out more about the study and follow progress updates on the project page on our Ladder Lab website - <https://ladder-lab.com/predicting-preschool-language-and-literacy/>

For further information on this project or the conference, please email Fiona f.kyle@ucl.ac.uk or Katie directly: Kathryn.mason.12@ucl.ac.uk

4.2 *Understanding Reading Success Study (2024-2027) - Dr Fiona Kyle, Dr Kate Rowley, Prof Ros Herman, Dr. Katie Mason, Amy Hedgus & Prof Nikki Botting*

Last year we started a new large-scale longitudinal study investigating reading comprehension in Key Stage 2. We want to understand which combination of language and cognitive skills help deaf children to succeed with reading in Key Stage 2. We managed to recruit 133 deaf children and 217 hearing children aged between 8-9 years old (350 children in total). This will allow us to explore how reading and language skills develop in middle childhood for both deaf and hearing children. We will be following participating children from age 8-9 years through to when they are 10-11 years old. It is an

inclusive sample with children from a range of multilingual language backgrounds, and with varying cognitive abilities.

All 350 children completed a large range of baseline tasks measuring reading, executive function skills and language ability (English and BSL). Children are from around England. The team are busy scoring and analysing the baseline data and currently following up with the children again for their 2025 data.

Excitingly some of these children also took part in the preschool study and so we have data on them from preschool and we will see them through to the end of primary school. Watch this space for our preliminary results!

You can find out more about the study on the project website - <https://ladder-lab.com/understanding-reading-success/> **For further information on this project, please email Fiona f.kyle@ucl.ac.uk or Katie directly: Kathryn.mason.12@ucl.ac.uk**

4.3 Supporting Cultural and Linguistic Diversity in Deafness (CALDID) – 2024-2025 *Lauren Newman, Dr. Fiona Kyle and Prof. Ros Herman*

The first stage of this project involves exploring Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) outcomes from Deaf children and young people (DC&YP) living in a diverse borough in East London. We have been conducting a retrospective cohort study using NHS health records from 103 DC&YP aged 0-16 years. We have been looking at data on demographics, language use and parent engagement, alongside SLT assessment scores and Therapy Outcome Measures (TOMs) ratings.

This stage of the project aims to highlight the diversity of DC&YP living in the East London borough and to begin to explore factors that might predict SLT outcomes for DC&YP from diverse backgrounds.

For more information, please contact lauren.newman.13@ucl.ac.uk or visit our YouTube channel @LaurenNewmanCALDID"

For further information on this project, please contact lauren.newman.13@ucl.ac.uk or visit our YouTube channel @LaurenNewmanCALDID"

4.4 Visual communication and reading development in deaf children Study - Prof. Máiréad MacSweeney, Lizzie Taunton, Dr. Elizabeth Buchanan-Worster (University of Cambridge), Dr Fiona Kyle, Dr Kate Rowley and Prof. Arne Lervag

Reading is a fundamental skill in literate societies. Most reading research has focused on mappings between *auditory* knowledge of spoken language and written words. However, **visual language inputs are increasingly being recognised as important to reading development in deaf and also hearing children.** Learning to read is challenging for some children. Improving our understanding of the factors that support early reading development will help improve current literacy interventions.

We are a team of researchers at the Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre (DCAL) at University College London (UCL). We are currently conducting a study looking at how early visual language skills relate to later reading outcomes. In this study 'visual language skills' include lipreading, fingerspelling and British Sign Language (BSL). **Our research aims to identify the role of visual language inputs in reading development in deaf children.**

We are delighted to report that we have hit our recruitment target and have recruited 121 deaf children to the project! Deaf children aged 4 or 5 yrs old were recruited to the project when they started Reception. We have a wide range of children in the project – signers and non-signers; those with cochlear implants and those without.

We are visiting the children at school 6 times over 3 years from 4yrs old (Reception) to 7yrs old (Yr 2) and go through English and reading-related games with them. If the child is a BSL user, we also assess them on BSL and fingerspelling games. Our aim is to establish how these skills develop over time and how they relate to reading development.

The first group of children we recruited are being visited in summer 2025 for their final (6th) visit. The time has flown! However, we will not finish data collection with the final group of children until summer 2027. So we will have a long time to wait until we can report any results from this project.

In the meantime, you can find out more details about the project here:

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/icn/research/research-groups/visual-communication/visual-communication-reading-development-research> Just google 'Visual Communication & Reading Development'.

Funded by Wellcome. Approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee, Project ID 3612/012

5. University of Leeds – Prof. Ruth Swanwick

5.1 Project work

5.1.1 Funded: *The early care and education of young deaf children and their caregivers in Ghana. Funded by the British Academy's Early Childhood Education Programme, supported through the Global Challenges Research Fund. Award ref: ECE190031*

The funding for this project has ended but we have informally set up an international group of deaf and hearing researchers involved in early support to work with low resource contexts to develop approaches to support, and build deaf and hearing expertise and professional capacity.

5.1.2 Application Pending: Ruth Swanwick (UK-PI), Nicole Marx (DE-PI), Kate Rowley (Co-I), Wolfgang Mann (Co-I) (submitted Jan 2025) *AHRC/DFG Reframing Multilingual Research Methodologies and Support Contexts* £420K (UK) E500 (DE)

We are awaiting the outcome of this bilateral (UK- Germany) application to AHRC and DFG. If funded the project will investigate the language learning of deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) children growing up in multilingual migrant contexts and will examine ways of capturing individual multilingual repertoires and repertoire development that are sensitive to the influences of these contexts.

5.2 Recent publications

Swanwick, R., Asomaning, D., Casellato, E., Czeke, N., & Fobi, D., (2024) Multilingual and Multimodal Methods to Examining the Situated Communication Among Deaf Children and their Caregivers. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*

Swanwick, R., Fobi, D., Offei, Y., Oppong, A., (2024) *The Early Care and Education of Deaf Children in Ghana: Developing local and global understandings of early support* New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Submitted: Trends in Hearing

Greasley, A. E., Beeston, A.V., Fulford, R. J., Crook, H., Salter, J. M. & Moore, B. C. J. *Using hearing aids for music: A UK survey of challenges and strategies*

In progress: Swanwick, R and Salter, J (2025 submission) Language awareness in deaf education, in *The Routledge Handbook of Language Awareness (second edition)*

5.3 Planned conference presentations

Three UoL presentations have been accepted for the 24th International Congress on the Education of the Deaf (ICED 2025)

- i. Swanwick - Developing family centered early intervention in low-resource contexts: A Call to action

- ii. Salter - Ethical assessment and the deaf and hard of hearing learner, implications for school programmes and school settings
- iii. Swanwick and Fobi - Supporting communication among young deaf children and their caregivers in diverse language contexts: The early care and support of deaf children in Ghana

6. University of Manchester – Prof. Alys Young, PhD, FAcSS, CQSW & Dr. Katherine Rogers, BSc(Hons), MRes, PhD, FHEA

6.1 *Social Research with Deaf people (SORD) research group – Professor Alys Young, PhD, FAcSS, CQSW, and Dr Katherine Rogers, PhD, FHEA*

6.1.1 SORD website

Our bilingual website contains a vast amount of material on over 15 years of research project work, downloadable publications and access to a range of validated assessment tools in BSL. It can be reached at: <https://sites.manchester.ac.uk/sord>. A large proportion of the work has summaries or extended documents published in BSL as well. It is intended for a professional and academic audience, but we have ensured there is material suitable for lay audiences. The remit of our research group includes projects of educational interest, but is not limited to this. The following is a summary of only those projects/publications that seem to fall within the interest of the sign bilingual consortium, that have been recently completed or are ongoing. Our work extends into health and social care, and covers interpreting/translation. The archive of previous and wider interest projects and publications can be accessed on the website.

6.2 The READY Project (Researching Emerging Adulthood in Deaf Youth)

As noted in previous updates, this is a prospective longitudinal research study of deaf young people aged 16 to 19 at first point of entry into the study (funded by NDCS). The study has finished. Details can be found on our study website:

The study website is: <https://sites.manchester.ac.uk/thereadystudy/>

The summary final report in BSL (with voice over and subtitles) can be found there:

<https://sites.manchester.ac.uk/thereadystudy/publications/final-report/>

The English summary report is being distributed through NDCS branding via:

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/media/9231/e0216-ready-final-report-v3-final-web.pdf>

There is one new publication in addition to the 5 previously recorded. It is:

Chilton, H., Squires, G., Espinoza, F., Dodds, C., and Young, A. (2025). Career aspirations of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Young People: Findings from the READY study. Deafness & Education International. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14643154.2025.2510719>

6.3 Effectiveness and cost effectiveness of home based early intervention in South Africa

As previously reported, funded by the MRC core research budget, this project investigates the effectiveness of the HI HOPES early intervention programme for deaf children and their families in South Africa; it validates for use with deaf children (regardless of language/modality) the SA national ELOM (Early Learning Outcome Measure) enabling benchmarking of deaf children against the SA Early Childhood Development Standards developed in partnership with UNICEF. The project began in April 2022 and ended in December 2024 as a partnership between SORD University of Manchester and the Centre for Deaf Studies, University of the Witwatersrand. The ELOM has been successfully adapted in collaboration with the originators into SASL and is being validated through its application in the field by a specially trained group of 10 ELOM Deaf assessors (mostly Deaf SASL users) who meet the requirements of the national ELOM consortium.

There are currently three papers under review concerning the outcomes of the pilot study of the Early Learning Outcome Measure in South African Sign Language and the health economics studies of the implications of early childhood deafness in South Africa and the

cost effectiveness of the HI HOPES programme. These are additions to the suite of papers previously noted in earlier updates.

6.4 Deaf child safeguarding and professional practice

Funded by the ESRC, Rosemary Oram's work concerns parenting assessments in relation to safeguarding in instances when one or more parent is a Deaf BSL (British Sign Language) user. For publications and extended profile see:

<https://research.manchester.ac.uk/en/persons/rosemary.oram-postgrad/publications/>

The four publications concerning this project and previously noted are all available.

6.5 Benefits of early access to BSL

Commissioned by the BDA, SORD in collaboration with DCAL is producing an evidence briefing on the benefits of early access to BSL in the domains of language, cognitive and socio-emotional development, literacy, and family support. This will become available in early autumn and is being showcased at the BDA annual conference to be followed by the formal scoping review paper that underpins the evidence briefing.

6.6 Community, policy and strategy work

SORD is an active partner in the BDA research forum and has acted in an expert advisory capacity over the past 12 months on a range of topics.

SORD is commissioned to undertake the evaluation of the pilot 18 – 25 service of NDCAMHS, reporting in Autumn 2026.

6.6 Awards, honours and notable presentations (since last report in 2024)

Rosemary Oram achieved her PhD in May 2025.

Celia Hulme is invited to participate in the group writing the international guidelines for audiology practice with Deaf signers who use clinical audiology services.

6.7 Other publications of interest to this group include:

Wan Brown, J., Rogers, K., Young, A.M. (2025). What is the evidence underpinning clinical assessment of mental health of deaf adults with intellectual disabilities: A scoping review. *Journal of Mental Health Research in Intellectual Disabilities*.

Rogers, K., Lovell, K., Bowers P., Armitage, C., Young, A. (2025) What are Deaf sign language users' experiences as patients in healthcare services? A scoping review. *PLOS Global Public Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0003535>

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