

## **Biographical Sketch of Ted Supalla**

Ted Supalla is a Deaf scholar who has been doing basic research for almost thirty years, first as a research assistant teaching sign language to chimpanzees at Reno, Nevada, and then as a graduate student working with Dr. Ursula Bellugi at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California on the structure of American Sign Language. In 1982 he received his Ph.D in experimental psychology from the University of California, San Diego. After graduate school, he became a full-time researcher at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, studying the structure and acquisition of ASL in collaboration with Dr. Elissa Newport with whom he continues to work with today in Rochester, New York. Currently Dr. Supalla is on sabbatical leave from the University of Rochester where he has the position of Associate Professor of Brain and Cognitive Sciences and of Linguistics. He directs the undergraduate American Sign Language Program and the Sign Language Research Center at the University.

Supalla's scholarship and research continues in five main areas: First, he is interested in the comparison between spoken language and signed language structure, to determine whether and in what ways the input-output modalities of language influence the nature of structural properties. Second, he is interested in universals of language, particularly with regard to cross-linguistic comparisons among sign languages of the world. Third, he is interested in the continuum from nonlinguistic gesture to gestural language, comparing gestures used by hearing people, "home sign" systems devised within individual families with deaf members, and full sign languages such as ASL, to determine where and how linguistic properties appear in the evolution from nonlinguistic to linguistic use of the same modalities. Fourth, he is interested in grammaticalization of gestural features during early stages in the evolution of signed languages. Fifth, he is interested in the online processing of ASL, including studies of sentence comprehension and memory as well as fMRI studies asking what parts of the brain are activated during visual-gestural language processing.

PI Supalla has published a number of articles and chapters on the linguistic structure of American Sign Language and has begun a line of work comparing the structure of various sign languages of the world and comparing early and modern ASL. He has co-produced a documentary film *Profile of Charles Krauel: A Deaf Filmmaker* and has co-authored a book in press entitled *Sign Language Archeology: Understanding History and Evolution of American Sign Language*. He has been involved in producing prototype multimedia materials incorporating such linguistic data and utilizing the Internet technology to test their potentials. Dr. Supalla has spoken about his research at various conferences pertaining to Sign Language Research and Teaching, ASL Literature and Deaf History.

### **a. Professional Preparation**

Portland State University	Psychology	
California State University at Northridge	Psychology	B.A., 1973

University of Nevada, Reno  
University of California, San Diego

Psychology  
Psychology M.A., 1975, Ph.D., 1982

### **b. Appointments**

- 2009- Visiting Professor, Department of American Sign Language and Deaf Studies, Gallaudet University
- 1995- Associate Professor, Department of Brain & Cognitive Sciences and of Linguistics, University of Rochester
- 1988 Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics, University of Rochester
- 1987 Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology and of Linguistics, University of Illinois
- 1984 Visiting Lecturer, Department of Linguistics, Stanford University
- 1982 Visiting Fellow, Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Fellowship, Program in Cognitive Science, University of Pennsylvania
- 1980 Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Linguistics, Gallaudet University
- 1979 Research Associate, Department of Psychology, University of Illinois

### **c. Publications**

#### *(i) Five most significant publications*

- Osugi, Y., & Supalla, T., 1998. Structural analysis of gender handshapes in Nihon Shuwa. Sign Language Communication Studies, 27 (Tokyo: Japan Institute for Sign Language Studies)
- Boutla, M., Supalla, T., Newport, E.L., & Bavelier, D., 2004. Short-term memory span: Insights from sign language. Nature neuroscience, 7, 997-1002
- Bavelier, D., Newport, E.L., Hall, M., Supalla, T., & Boutla, M., 2006. Persistent differences in short-term memory span between sign and speech: Implications for cross-linguistic comparisons. Psychological Science, 17, 1090-1092
- Hauser, P.C., Paludenviciene, R., Supalla, T., & Bavelier, D., 2008. ASL-Sentence Reproduction Test: Development and Implications. In R. M. de Quadros (ed.), Sign Languages: Spinning and unraveling the past, present and future. Proceedings of the The Ninth International Conference on Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research. Florianopolis, Brazil, December 2006. Petropolis, Brazil: Editora Arara Azul
- Koo, D. & Supalla, T., in press. Nativization of bi-modal co-articulation in Cued Speech: Phonological Representations and Processes in Deaf Cuers, In C. LaSasso & J. Kelly (eds.), Cued Speech and Cued Language Development of Deaf Students. Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press

#### *(ii) Five other significant publications*

- Supalla, T., 2002. Making historical sign language materials accessible: A prototype database of early ASL. Sign Language and Linguistics, 4, 285-297
- Supalla, T., 2003. Revisiting visual analogy in ASL classifier predicates. In K. Emmorey (ed.), Perspectives on classifier constructions in sign language. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum
- Supalla, T., 2004. Validity of Gallaudet Lecture Films. Sign Language Studies, 4, 261-292
- Bavelier, D., Newport, E.L., Hall, M., Supalla, T., & Boutla, M., in press. Ordered short-term memory differs in signers and speakers: Implications for models of short-term memory. Cognition
- Supalla, T. and Clark, P., in press. Sign Language Archeology: Understanding History and Evolution of American Sign Language. Washington, D.C.: Gallaudet University Press

#### **d. Synergistic Activities**

Director/Co-producer of documentary film: Charles Krauel: A Profile of a Deaf Filmmaker. 30 min., VHS, Color/b&w. San Diego, CA:DawnSign Pictures, 1994

Editorial Board: Gallaudet University Press, 1996-1999; Sign Language Studies, 1991-1999

Ad hoc reviewer: National Science Foundation, Cognition, Language, Journal of Memory and Language, Language Variation and Change, American Journal of Psychology

Principal Investigator: ASL Interpreter Team for "Access to TISLR9 for Deaf and Hearing Researchers," National Institutes of Health, 2006; Japanese Language Teaching Staff Expansion Grant, The Japan Foundation, 1997-2000; Curriculum Development Grant, New York State Department of Education, 1996-1999

Faculty: International Workshops for Deaf Researchers: Sweden, 1981; Germany, 1983; Denmark, 1985; France, 1987; Finland, 2004; Summer Linguistics Institute, University of New Mexico, 1995

Fellowship for University Teachers, National Endowment for the Humanities: "Studying the historical roots of American and French Sign Languages," 2001; "Cross-linguistic comparisons of signed languages," 1991-1992

Panel committee work: Focus Group, National Institutes on Deafness and Communicative Disorders, 2002; Task Force on American Sign Language and Deaf Studies, Gallaudet University, 1991-1992; Scientific Panel on Language, National Institute on Deafness and Other Communicative Disorders, United States Department of Health and Human Services, 1990-1991; National Advisory Committee, Gallaudet Research Institute, Gallaudet University, 1989-1995; President, Scientific Commission on Sign Language, World Federation of the Deaf, 1988-1991

Consultant: American Sign Language Literacy Project, San Francisco State University; Finnish Sign Language Dictionary Project, National Association of the Deaf in Finland; United States Department of Education Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education grant, Vista College

#### **e. Collaborators & Other Affiliations**

(i) *Collaborators (within 48 months)*: Elissa L. Newport, University of Rochester; Daphne Bavelier, University of Rochester; Peter Hauser, Rochester Institute of Technology; Yutaka Osugi, Tsukuba University of Technology, Japan; Ann Senghas, Barnard University; Marie Coppola, University of Chicago; Mrim Boulta, Brown University; Daniel Koo, Gallaudet University; Raylene Paludenviciene, Gallaudet University; Matthew Hall, University of California, San Diego

(ii) *Graduate and Postdoctoral Advisors*: Ursula Bellugi, Salk Institute, La Jolla (Doctoral); Lila Gleitman, University of Pennsylvania (Post-doctoral)

(iii) *Thesis Advisor and Postgraduate-Scholar Sponsor*

Graduate Students: Yutaka Osugi, Associate Professor, Tsukuba University of Technology, Japan; Rebecca Webb, Adjunct Professor, Department of Linguistics, University of Rochester; Marie Coppola, Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Chicago; Mrim Boulta, Assistant Professor, Brown University; Daniel Koo, Assistant Professor, Gallaudet University

Postdoctoral fellows: Karen Petronio, Associate Professor, East Kentucky State University; Ann Senghas, Assistant Professor, Barnard College; Peter Hauser, Research Associate, Rochester Institute of Technology; Raylene Paludenviciene, Gallaudet University