

Dr. Sarah Ebling

Personal Information

Date/place of birth April 23, 1984; Baden, Switzerland
Nationality Swiss
Civil status Married, 1 child

Education

10/2016-11/2018 **University of Zurich**
CAS Higher Education (*CAS Hochschuldidaktik*); replaces “Teaching Skills”

01/2012-10/2014 **University of Zurich**
Teaching Skills (university didactics program)

11/2011-02/2016 **University of Zurich**
PhD in Computational Linguistics (Prof. Dr. Martin Volk) (*summa cum laude*)
Thesis: *Automatic Translation from German to Synthesized Swiss German Sign Language*

09/2008-07/2009 **University of Heidelberg, Germany**
Two-semester Erasmus exchange

10/2004-10/2011 **University of Zurich**
Licentiate (Master’s degree) in German Linguistics and Literature, Computational Linguistics, English Linguistics
Thesis: *Generalized Templates in Example-Based Machine Translation*

08/2001-06/2002 **Tamalpais High School, Mill Valley, CA, USA**

08/2000-06/2004 **Kantonsschule Baden** (higher education entrance qualification)

Employment

03/2022-present **Institute of Translation and Interpreting, School of Applied Linguistics, Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW)**
Professor of Accessibility Studies (50%)

08/2019-present **Department of Computational Linguistics, University of Zurich**
Senior researcher and lecturer (50%)

02/2020-07/2020 **Department of Computational Linguistics, University of Zurich**
Acting professorship (Prof. Dr. Martin Volk)

01/2019-09/2019 **Digital Society Initiative (DSI), University of Zurich**
Research fellow

01/2019-07/2019 **Institute for Language and Communication Special Needs, University of Teacher Education in Special Needs (HfH)**
Senior researcher and lecturer

03/2016-07/2019 **Department of Computational Linguistics, University of Zurich**
Lecturer

03/2016-12/2018 **Institute for Language and Communication Special Needs, University of Teacher Education in Special Needs (HfH)**
Post-doctoral researcher, Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) Sinergia project “Scalable Multimodal Sign Language Technology for Sign Language Learning and Assessment”

- 03/2015-08/2015 **Rochester Institute of Technology, USA**, Center for Accessibility and Inclusion Research (CAIR), Golisano College of Computer and Information Sciences (Prof. Dr. Matt Huenerfauth)
Visiting researcher
- 02/2015 **DePaul University Chicago, USA**, Human-Computer Interaction and Computer Graphics Division, School of Computing (Prof. Dr. Rosalee Wolfe)
Visiting researcher
- 10/2013-10/2014 **University of Teacher Education in Special Needs (HfH)**
Research assistant, SNSF project “Gaze and Productive Signing in a Corpus of Interactions of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Signers of Swiss German Sign Language (DSGS)”
- 11/2011-02/2016 **Department of Computational Linguistics, University of Zurich**
Research assistant
- 04/2011-12/2011 **Dublin City University, Ireland**, School of Computing (Prof. Dr. Andy Way)
Visiting researcher
- 01/2011-10/2011 **Department of Computational Linguistics, University of Zurich**
Student research assistant
- 01/2010-02/2010 **Heidelberg Institute for Theoretical Studies (HITS) (formerly EML Research)**
Student research assistant (Prof. Dr. Michael Strube)
- 08/2008-12/2010 **Heidelberg Center for American Studies, Heidelberg/Zurich**
Student research assistant (Prof. Dr. Noah Bubenhofer, Prof. Dr. Joachim Scharloth)

Institutional responsibilities

- 08/2022-present **Ethics committee, Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW)**
Committee representative of the School of Applied Linguistics
- 10/2020-August 2023 **ACL/ISCA SIG Speech and Language Processing for Assistive Technologies (SLPAT)**
President
- 08/2020-present **Academic Disability Commission, University of Zurich**
Commission member
- 09/2019-present **COST Action 18231 (Multi3Generation: Multi-task, Multilingual, Multi-modal Language Generation)**
Management committee (MC) member

Approved research projects

- 03/2022-02/2026 PI Innosuisse Flagship project “Inclusive Information and Communication Technologies” (IICT) (my UZH budget: CHF 2 mio.; my ZHAW budget: CHF 400,388; my overall budget: CHF 12.3 mio.)
- 01/2021-12/2023 UZH PI H2020 ICT-57 project “Intelligent Automatic Sign Language Translation” (EASIER) (my budget: EUR 532,500; leading WPs “Translation” and “Affect-informed language technology”)
- 01/2021-12/2024 UZH PI SNSF Sinergia project “Scalable Multimodal Sign Language Technology for Sign Language Learning and Assessment, Phase II” (SMILE-II) (my budget: CHF 338,760)
- 06/2020-05/2022 Academic partner Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) General Programme project “*capito automatisiert*: Automatic text simplification for German” (my budget: EUR 70,360 for the first of two project years)

01/2020-07/2021	Co-PI Swiss Innovation Agency (Innosuisse) project “Intelligent Customer Feedback Management: Text analysis of online customer reviews and automatised response generation” (38943.1 IP-ICT) (my budget: CHF 190,426)
01/2020-12/2020	PI UZH Competitive Teaching Fund 2019 project “Towards a Dialogue-based Intelligent Tutoring System for Medical Education” (with A. Hehl) (CHF 38,250)
02/2015-08/2015	PI SNSF Doc.Mobility project “Machine Translation and Animation Assessment for Swiss German Sign Language” (USD 28,892)

Student supervision

Ongoing	<p>Alessia Battisti: “Analyzing L2 Learning of Swiss German Sign Language”, University of Zurich (PhD thesis, with M. Volk)</p> <p>Marek Kostrzewa: “Monolingual Sentence Alignment for Application in Automatic Text Simplification”, University of Zurich (PhD thesis, with M. Volk)</p> <p>Zifan Jiang: “Multilingual Sign Language Translation”, University of Zurich (PhD thesis, with R. Sennrich)</p>
2022	<p>Sofia Carpentieri: “Computer-Assisted Diagnostics of Developmental Language Disorder in German-Speaking Children”, University of Zurich (Bachelor’s thesis)</p> <p>Leo Rutschmann: “Automatic Augmentation of Easy Language Texts with Images”, University of Zurich (Master’s thesis)</p> <p>Yasmina Daniioth and Jacoba Denker: “Die Wahrnehmung der Leichten Sprache in den Online-Medien. Eine qualitative Analyse anhand von schriftlichen Kommentaren zu Online-Zeitungsartikeln über Leichte Sprache im deutschsprachigen Raum”, Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) (Bachelor’s thesis, with L. Carrer)</p> <p>Leander Grünenwald and Mattia Turra: “Gestreckter Lesestoff. Eine Analyse über die Einhaltung der Richtlinien der Einfachen Sprache bei informativen Texten über Opioidsubstitutionstherapie in der Deutschschweiz im Zeitraum von 2014–2022”, Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) (Bachelor’s thesis, with L. Carrer)</p> <p>Ramona Meier, Joana Oehen, and Nina Tschanz: “Wenn Äpfel nicht mehr regnen, sondern fallen. Eine Arbeit über die Umsetzung von Metaphern in Leichte-Sprache-Märchen”, Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) (Bachelor’s thesis, with L. Carrer)</p> <p>Christian Hauser: “Lexical Simplification with BERT for Substitute Generation and Substitute Ranking”, FH JOANNEUM (Master’s thesis, with K. Lichtenegger)</p>
2021	Sandrine Tornay: “Explainable Phonology-based Approach for Sign Language Recognition and Assessment”, Idiap Research Institute, Martigny (external reviewer PhD)
2020	<p>Dominik Pfütze: “Neural Language Level Classification for German Texts”, University of Potsdam (Master’s thesis, with M. Stede)</p> <p>Zora Schneider: “Automatisierte Textvereinfachung mit Post-Editing in der Praxis: Ein Vergleich von humanem und maschinell generiertem intralingualen Texttransfer in Deutsch”, Zurich University of Applied Sciences (Master’s thesis, with M. Kappus)</p> <p>Julia Dobczynska: “Semi-automatizing Quality Assessment in Online Response Generation”, University of Tübingen (Master’s thesis, with K. Eberle)</p> <p>Anna Pustova: “Building a Persona-Informed Neural Response Generation System”, University of Zurich (Master’s thesis)</p>

Alla Stöckli: "Knowledge-grounded neural answer generation", University of Zurich (Master's thesis)

Janine Aeberhard: "Experiments with Simplified German Corpora: Creating a Basic Vocabulary and Investigating Gender-Neutral Language", University of Zurich (Master's thesis)

2018 Alessia Battisti: "Automatic Cluster Analysis of Texts in Simplified German", University of Zurich (Master's thesis)

Souad Ahmad Baowidan: "A general collision avoidance algorithm for real-time fingerspelling", DePaul University, Chicago, USA (external reviewer PhD)

Lisa Arter: "Eine Untersuchung der Verwendungsfrequenz von Gebärdensprachevarianten bei L1- und L2-Benutzern im Rahmen des SMILE-Projektes", HfH (Bachelor's thesis)

Laura Rittiner: "Phonologische Produktionsfehler bei L2-Lernern der Deutschschweizer Gebärdensprache: Eine Analyse und Kategorisierung von phonologischen Produktionsfehlern im Rahmen des SMILE-Projektes", HfH (Bachelor's thesis)

Cheryl Schlumpf: "Unterschiede von Produktionsfehlern in Bezug auf die manuellen Komponenten bei L2-Benutzern des SMILE-Projekts", HfH (Bachelor's thesis)

2016 Julia Suter: "Rule-based Text Simplification for German", University of Zurich (Bachelor's thesis)

Teaching

- 02/2023-06/2023 **Zurich University of Applied Sciences:** "Accessible Communication I" (with L. Carrer, P. Jud, M. Kappus, A. Lintner) (lecture, Master's; German)
- 02/2023-06/2023 **Zurich University of Applied Sciences:** "Communication Studies Seminar 4" (with L. Carrer, A. Lintner) (project course, Bachelor's; German)
- 02/2023-06/2023 **University of Zurich:** "Language Technology for Accessibility" (lecture, Bachelor's and Master's; English)
- 09/2022-01/2023 **Zurich University of Applied Sciences:** "Accessible Communication II" (with L. Carrer, P. Jud, M. Kappus, A. Lintner) (lecture, Master's; German)
- 09/2022-01/2023 **Zurich University of Applied Sciences:** "Foundations of Multimodality" (with L. Carrer, P. Jud, M. Kappus, A. Lintner) (lecture, Bachelor's; German)
- 02/2022-06/2022 **Zurich University of Applied Sciences:** "Accessible Communication I" (with L. Carrer, P. Jud, M. Kappus, A. Lintner) (lecture, Master's; German)
- 02/2022-06/2022 **Zurich University of Applied Sciences:** "Communication Studies Seminar 4" (with L. Carrer, A. Lintner) (project course, Bachelor's; German)
- 02/2022-06/2022 **University of Zurich:** "Language Technology for Accessibility" (lecture, Bachelor's and Master's; English)
- 09/2021-01/2022 **University of Zurich:** "Language Technology for Special Education" (seminar, Master's; English)
- 02/2021-06/2021 **University of Zurich:** "Language Technology for Accessibility" (lecture, Bachelor's and Master's; English)
- 02/2021 **Zurich University of Applied Sciences/University of Zurich:** "Translation Technology and AI for Accessibility: Simplified Language and Sign Language" CAS "Translation Technology and AI" (with S. Hansen-Schirra; German)

- 09/2020- **University of Zurich:** “AI and Machine Learning”, module of the online Digital Skills curriculum (*Studium Digitale*; German)
- University of Zurich:** “Dialog systems” (lecture, Master’s; English)
- 02/2020-06/2020 **University of Zurich:** “Language Technology in the Context of Artificial Intelligence” (seminar, Master’s; English)
- University of Zurich:** “Colloquium Computational Linguistics” (PhD; English)
- University of Zurich:** “Language Technology for Accessibility” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; English)
- 09/2019-01/2020 **University of Zurich:** “Automatic Text Simplification” (with M. Volk) (seminar, Bachelor’s; German)
- 05/2019 **University of Zurich:** “e-Accessibility@UZH”
Half-day course for faculty and staff, Central IT Services (with H. Zimmermann and D. Corciulo; German)
- 09/2018-01/2019 **University of Zurich:** “Language Technology for Accessibility” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; German)
- 01/2018 **University of Teacher Education in Special Needs (HfH) Zurich:** “e-Accessibility”
One-day course for faculty and staff (with H. Zimmermann and K. Tissi; German)
- 09/2017-01/2018 **University of Teacher Education in Special Needs (HfH):** “Quantitative Sign Language Research” (seminar, Bachelor’s; German)
- 09/2017 **University of Zurich:** “Accessibility@UZH”
Half-day course for faculty and staff, Central IT Services (with H. Zimmermann; German)
- 10/2016 **University of Zurich:** “Accessibility@UZH”
Half-day course for faculty and staff, Central IT Services (with H. Zimmermann; German)
- 09/2016-01/2017 **University of Zurich:** “Language Technology for Accessibility” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; German)
- 02/2016-06/2016 **University of Zurich:** “Introduction to Corpus Linguistics” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; German)
- 09/2015-01/2016 **University of Zurich:** “Language Technology for Accessibility” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; German)
- 09/2014-01/2015 **University of Zurich:** “Language Technology for Accessibility” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; German)
- 02/2014-06/2014 **University of Zurich:** “Introduction to Corpus Linguistics” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; German)
- 09/2013-01/2014 **University of Zurich:** “Language Technology for Accessibility” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; German)
- 02/2013-06/2013 **University of Zurich:** “Introduction to Corpus Linguistics” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; German)
- 09/2012-01/2013 **University of Zurich:** “Language Technology for Accessibility” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; German)
- 02/2012-06/2012 **University of Zurich:** “Introduction to Corpus Linguistics” (lecture, Bachelor’s and Master’s; German)

Memberships

- 05/2018-present **Digital Society Initiative (DSI), University of Zurich**
Member
- 05/2014-present **Zurich Center for Linguistics (LiZZ), University of Zurich**
Member

Scientific advisory

- 2018-2022 **Project “ExTOL: End to End Translation of British Sign Language”, Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) UK**
Scientific advisory board (Consortium: University of Surrey, University of Oxford, University College London)
- 2018-present **Swiss Federation of the Deaf**
Scientific advisory board
- 2017-present **Project “DGS Corpus”, long-term project of the Academy of Sciences in Hamburg (University of Hamburg, Germany)**
Scientific advisory board

Scientific reviewing

- 2023 Eighth International Workshop on Sign Language Translation and Avatar Technology (SLTAT)
2nd International Workshop on Automatic Translation for Signed and Spoken Languages (AT4SSL)
Second Workshop on Text Simplification, Accessibility and Readability (TSAR)
- 2022 Language Resources and Evaluation Conference (LREC)
Language Resources and Evaluation Conference (LREC) Sign Language Translation and Avatar Technology (SLTAT) Workshop
North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics – Human Language Technologies (NAACL-HLT)
Workshop on Speech and Language Processing for Assistive Technologies (SLPAT)
Joint International Conference on Digital Inclusion, Assistive Technology & Accessibility (ICCHP-AAATE)
Volume “Easy Language and Accessible Communication”, Frank & Timme
- 2021 ACM CHI Virtual Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)
International Easy Language Day Conference (IELD) (JGU Mainz, Germany)
ACL-IJCNLP SRW 2021 (Student mentorship)
Conference on easy-to-read language research (KLAARA)
Conference on Natural Language Processing (KONVENS)
- 2020 Language Resources and Evaluation Conference (LREC)
Language Resources and Evaluation Conference (LREC) Sign Language Workshop
European Association for Machine Translation (EAMT) Conference
Conference on easy-to-read language research (KLAARA)
SwissText + KONVENS
Dutch Research Council: Vici scheme
Machine Translation (MT) journal
- 2019 International Workshop on Sign Language Translation and Avatar Technology (SLTAT)
MT Summit
Speech and Language Processing for Assistive Technologies Conference (SLPAT)
ACM Transactions on Asian and Low-Resource Language Information Processing (TALLIP) journal
Universal Access in the Information Society (UAIS) journal
- 2018 2nd Swiss Conference on Barrier-Free Communication

Language Resources and Evaluation Conference (LREC) Sign Language Workshop
Machine Translation (MT) journal

2017 Human-Computer Interaction International (HCII) Conference

2016 Language Resources and Evaluation Conference (LREC) Sign Language Workshop

Organization of conferences

07/2022 “Language Accessibility for the Deaf and Hard-Of-Hearing”, Special Thematic Session (STS) @ ICCHP-AATE 2022 (with M. Debevc, R. Wolfe)

05/2022 “9th Workshop on Speech and Language Processing for Assistive Technologies” (SLPAT 2022) @ ACL 2022 (with E. Prud’hommeaux, P. Vaidyanathan)

06/2020 “5th Swiss Text Analytics Conference & 16th Conference on Natural Language Processing” (SwissText + KONVENS 2020) (with M. Hürlimann, M. Cieliebak, M. Volk)

02/2016 “e-Accessibility meets Technology”, ETH Zurich (with T. Haug, B. Heinsler, A. Bolting)

09/2013 “From Hand to Mouth: A dialogue between spoken and signed language research”, University of Zurich (with P. Boyes Braem, A. Bünzli, M. Dittmar, T. Haug, A. Kolmer, S. Stoll)

Prizes, awards, fellowships

2023 Offer professorship *ad personam* “Language, Technology and Accessibility” (50%), University of Zurich

2022 List position 1 W3 professorship “Technology for Inclusion: Intelligent Systems”, Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, TU Dortmund

2021 List position 1 career track for Assistant and Associate Professorship in Language Technology, Department of Translation Studies, University of Innsbruck

List position 1 Assistant Professorship in Computational Linguistics (with option of progression to Associate Professorship), Center for Language and Cognition, University of Groningen

2018 9-month fellowship Digital Society Initiative (DSI), University of Zurich

Innovation in Assessment Prize, British Council (with T. Haug, P. Boyes Braem, K. Tissi, S. Sidler-Miserez)

2015 SNSF Doc.Mobility fellowship

Career breaks

01/2017-05/2017 Maternity leave