



ENHANCING COMMUNICATION: RESEARCH TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND DEVELOPMENT OF ICT RESOURCES AND TOOLS



FUNDACIÓ
PARC TAULÍ



Course – Concept
"Gebärden als Kommunikationshilfe"
(Signs as a Communication Aid)

**Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union**



The course has already been applied for in the course program at the Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt; the permission for teaching should be granted by the university during the next few weeks. A seminar room has already been reserved for the presence phases.

The course has been designed with two presence phases:

- 1st presence phase: October 2017 (5th, 12th, 19th; 12.00-15.30)
- 2nd presence phase (including final exam): November 2017 (16th, 23rd, 30th; 12.00-15.30) and December 2017 (7th; 12.00-15.30)

ECTS: 3 ECTS

The course will use the university's Moodle-platform. It will be open to all interested parties. Students that are inscribed at the Alpen-Adria-University will get 3 ECTS for the successful completion of the course. External participants will get a certificate of attendance.

The performance of the participants will be evaluated through the successful completion of smaller tasks during the course (working with online materials) and multiple choice tests dealing with course subjects.

The course will be advertised on the internal system of the university (ZEUS) and the homepages of the Center for Sign Language and Deaf Communication and the EC+ project. It may also be possible to publish a short article on EC+, the intellectual outputs and the course in an Austrian newspaper ("Kleine Zeitung Kärnten"), which has a cooperation on science topics with the Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt.

Contents of the course

Please note: As the course is being developed at the moment, it may be subject to slight changes.

The target group are people interested in signs as a means of communication, without any prior experience of sign languages.

Language of instruction: German (parts of the online materials will be in English)

There will be two forums: one for the communication with the teacher and one for the communication among the students

Presence Phase 1: October 2017 (5th, 12th, 19th; 12.00-15.30, Room I.0.44)

- Presentation of the project EC+ (including information on the Conference in Málaga, December 12-13th, 2017)
- Tutorial on how to work with the portal/App

Module 1: Hearing Impairments

- How does hearing work?
- Causes of hearing-impairments
- Different kinds of hearing impairments
- Hearing aids and Cochlear implants
- How to communicate with hearing impaired people
- How to work with sign language interpreters
- Communication with deafblind people

Online task: Read the texts on the various syndromes

Answer the following question: Which syndromes can cause a hearing impairment?

Module 2: Sign Languages

Part 1: Different sign languages and sign language dialects

- Similarities between sign languages: Historical relationships
- Similarities between sign languages: Iconicity
 - Transparency of signs
- International Sign

Online tasks:

- Look up a sign in the LedaSila database (<http://ledasila.aau.at>) and compare the variants of the sign (different Austrian sign dialects)
- Look up a sign in the SpreadTheSign database (www.spreadthesign.com) and compare the signs from different countries – which are iconic?
- Look at the signs in the EC+ portal/App:
 - Identify three iconic signs; try to explain the iconicity (look them up in the Austrian-Hungarian database MÖGS ("Vergleichendes österreichisch-ungarisches Gebärdenlexikon": <http://tothantal.hu/elearning/omaa/index.htm>)
 - Try the signs out at home and see if you have any questions in connections to the signs in the list
 - Prepare a short feedback to the list: Are there any improvements you would suggest? Do you have any suggestions for signs to be added to the list?

Presentation/discussion of the results

Mid-term evaluation of the course (obligatory at Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt)

Presence Phase 2: November 2017 (16th, 23rd, 30th; 12.00-15.30, Room I.0.44)

Practice session: Practicing the signs from the portal/App in a hands-on session (a deaf sign language teacher will be present to check on the correct way of signing)

Module 2: Sign Languages

Part 2: Sign language vs. "pictures in the air"

- Sign Language History: Stokoe and sign languages as languages
- The building blocks of signs
 - Handshape
 - Orientation
 - Movement
 - Location
 - Non-manual elements
- The three-dimensionality of sign languages
- Forms of signing that are closer to spoken language: Contact signing
 - "Lautsprachbegleitendes Gebärden/LBG"
 - "Lautsprachunterstützende Gebärden/LUG"
- Sign language notations, Sign Writing

Online task: Pick out one of the signs from the portal/App and analyse its building blocks

Presentation/discussion of the results

Module 3: Signs as a Communication Aid

- Signs for hearing people in an environment where spoken language is impossible
 - Monasterial Signs
 - Signs of the Brokers
 - Signs of Police/SWAT
 - Signs of Divers
- Signs for hearing people in a contact situation
 - Signs of the North American Plains Indians

Online task: Write a short paragraph: In your opinion, what is the difference to sign language?

Presentation/discussion of the results

Module 4: Signs as Alternative Communication

- Assisted communication
 - Assisted communication technology
- Signs as alternative communication for hearing people who are unable to use spoken language

Online task: Read the texts on the various syndromes

Answer the following question: For which syndromes do you think the use of signs as alternative communication would be possible?

Presentation/discussion of the results

FINAL EXAM (Multiple Choice; December 7th, 2017; Room i-0.44); if requested, an online exam is also possible

- Final evaluation of the course (obligatory at Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt)
- Feedback questionnaire