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REPORT ON DEAF CULTURE

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Deaf Culture

Deaf people as a linguistic minority have a common experience of life, and this manifests itself in Deaf culture. This includes beliefs, attitudes, history, norms, values, literary traditions, and art shared by Deaf people.

Deaf culture is at the heart of Deaf communities everywhere in the world. Each Deaf community is a cultural group which shares a sign language and a common heritage. Members of Deaf communities all around the world therefore identify themselves as members of a cultural and linguistic group. Identification with the Deaf community is a personal choice and is usually made independent of the individual's hearing status, and the community is not automatically composed of all people who are Deaf or hard of hearing. The Deaf community may also include family members of Deaf people, sign language interpreters and people who work or socialize with Deaf people who identify with Deaf culture. A person is a member of the Deaf community if he or she self-identifies as a member of the Deaf community, and if other members accept that person as a member. Very often this acceptance is strongly linked to competence in a signed language.

Deaf people have their own local, national and international organizations around the world, which might be social, athletic, scholarly, religious, and/or literary. Deaf people regularly meet each other in Deaf clubs, events, sporting matches and conventions. They share information, concerns and reciprocal support.

Article 30, paragraph 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognizes Deaf culture in the following statement: "Persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and Deaf culture".

Culture may be defined as patterns, traits, products, attitudes, and intellectual / artistic activity associated with a population.

Based on this definition, the Deaf Community has its own unique Deaf Culture. Deaf people produce plays, books, artwork, magazines, and movies targeted at Deaf and Hard of Hearing audiences. In addition, the Deaf Community engages in social and political activities exclusive to the Deaf Community.

Differences of Hearing Culture and Deaf Culture

First, there are differences in the way language is used in different cultures because culture affects communication behaviors. You cannot have one without the other. Hearing cultures use language to communicate one with another by using the spoken word alternating with listening. Deaf cultures communicate in the way of sign language. The way I speak, my communication skills, my values, morals, behaviors and attitudes came from the culture in which I live. People that are deaf have learned to communicate in sign language and their communication skills, values, morals, behaviors and attitudes came from the culture they live in.

Additionally, the differences of communication of hearing cultures and deaf cultures are to be respected which will help in social interactions to avoid negative assertions; such as biased opinions, criticisms, and judgments. In hearing and speaking cultures nonverbal communication such as body

movement and facial expressions are subconscious. In deaf cultures their communication skills depends greatly on moving their bodies, hands, arms, heads, and outwardly show expressions on their faces which are both conscious decisions and efforts in order to communicate. In ÖGS in some cases a facial expression even has grammatical meaning. In hearing cultures one of the basic principles of communication is to avoid degrading, negative, hurtful, and disrespectful comments to others. It is important to know the culture of the persons we come in contact and interact with, as well as appreciating their language. To label or call people names such as saying that they are stupid, for example, or use snide remarks for the way one may look, dress, act, or behave is not an ethical means of communicating effectively.

Finally, another concept of the use of language in the deaf culture is to "Protect freedom of expression, diversity of perspective, and tolerance for dissent". If someone refers to a deaf person as 'having a handicap' because they are deaf and do not speak is considered degrading and a negative, criticizing statement about who they are. People who are deaf have their own set of values, morals, and beliefs just as people who can hear and speak have within their culture. Deaf cultures should not be discriminated against just as it is immoral and unlawful to discriminate a person's culture of religion, race, creed, color, or gender. Discrimination goes against the law, principles of ethical conduct, the value of equality, and can destroy relationships, as well as a person's self-worth.

Deaf Culture and Sign Language

Culture and language intertwine, with language reflecting characteristics of culture. Learning about the culture of Deaf people is also learning about their language. Deaf people use Sign Language (SL) to communicate with each other and with hearing people who know the language. Although SL is a visual/gestural language, in some cases, for example in ÖGS, there are signs which are accompanied by a sound. SL is a complete, grammatically complex language. SL is not a universal language, however. There are signed languages in all countries (e.g., Austrian Sign Language, British Sign Language, Portuguese Sign Language, Turkish Sign Language, etc.).

Language and culture are interrelated. Sign language is central to any Deaf person, child or adult for their intellectual, social, linguistic and emotional growth but to truly internalize the language, they must have the culture that is embedded in the language. Every linguistic and cultural group has its own way of seeing and expressing how they see and interpret the world and interact in it.

Language and culture go hand-in-hand (no pun intended!) Without language, it's impossible to learn the culture. Without culture, language has nothing to refer to.

Can we communicate effectively with one another without the use of speaking or hearing the spoken words of another person or gain knowledge about a different language without understanding their culture? People who are deaf have a different way of communicating and have their own language that differs from hearing cultures. While there are ways of communicating in both hearing cultures and in deaf cultures, there are differences in the way language is used where the concepts studied in class to evaluate those differences are beneficial to learning why respect and ethical communication is important, and to gain an appreciation for those differences.

Components of Deaf Culture

Culture consists of language, values, traditions, norms and identity (Padden, 1980). Deaf culture meets all five sociological criteria for defining a culture.

Language refers to the native visual cultural language of Deaf people, with its own syntax (grammar or form), semantics (vocabulary or content) and pragmatics (social rules of use). It is highly valued by the Deaf community because it's visually accessible.

Sign Language (SL) is:

- ❖ The preferred language of the Deaf community;
- ❖ A visual gestural language;
- ❖ A language with its own syntax and grammatical structure.

Sign language (SL) is not:

- ❖ Signs in Spoken or Written Language word order;
- ❖ An auditory or written language;
- ❖ A universal language.

Historically, SL has been passed from one generation to the next in schools. Even when SL was not allowed in the classroom, Deaf staff and peers discreetly used their cherished language to communicate. SL has also been preserved through deaf families and social gatherings.

Identity is one of the key components of the whole person. Accepting that one is Deaf and is proud of his/her culture and heritage and a contributing member of that society is key to being a member of the cultural group.

In hearing culture, the terms used to describe deaf people have to do with their hearing loss. The term "hard of hearing" is better than "deaf." Hard of Hearing people are generally regarded as being easier to communicate with and fit in better with hearing people. Deaf people, on the other hand, are seen as being difficult to communicate with and that they may not even speak. The term "hearing-impaired" is also used to be "politically correct" to identify them both.

In Deaf culture, though, the terms are quite the opposite. There is one label for people who are part of Deaf culture... Deaf.

This label has nothing to do with hearing loss. Regardless of how much better your hearing is than the next guy, you're still all "deaf." Using the term "hard of hearing" can be seen very negatively...like you're saying you're better than everyone else (because that's the one-up in hearing culture).

You will also see both the terms "deaf" and "Deaf" used. They are referred to as "little d" and "big D." "Little d" deaf refers to people who have lost their hearing. "Big D" Deaf refers to people who are involved in Deaf culture and share the values, behaviors, and language of that culture. Just because you are deaf, doesn't mean you are Deaf. And in some cases, just because you are Deaf doesn't mean you are deaf (as is the case for some hearing children of Deaf parents--CODAs).

The term "hearing-impaired" is seen *even more* negatively because that says there is something wrong with being Deaf (which is the complete opposite of what Deaf people believe!) Most hearing people believe that deafness is a handicap. Deaf people can do everything except hear. *Everything!* Deafness is not a handicap. The only real handicap of deafness is when deaf children are deprived of true communication--SL.

Values in the Deaf community include the importance of clear communication for all both in terms of expression and comprehension. Deaf residential schools and Deaf clubs are important because of the natural social interaction they offer. Preserving Sign Language (SL) literature, heritage, Deaf literature and art are other examples of what we value.

The following are highly valued and vital aspects of everyday living by the Deaf community. Notice the value comparisons between people who are Deaf and people who can hear.

People who are Deaf value:

- ❖ Sign language
- ❖ Eyes (rely on vision)
- ❖ Hands/signs
- ❖ Videophone (VP); Relay Service; TTY
- ❖ Visual/vibrating alerting systems
- ❖ Video mail
- ❖ Interpreters
- ❖ Captioning

People who can hear value:

- Spoken language
- Ears (rely on sound)
- Mouth/Speech
- Telephone
- Sound alerting system
- Voice mail
- Speakers
- Dialogue

Traditions include the stories kept alive through Deaf generations, Deaf experiences and expected participation in Deaf cultural events.

The traditions of the Deaf community are a reflection of their cultural values. It is understandable that many of their traditions are based on the face-to-face gathering of people who are Deaf, because communication—the lifeblood of any culture—only happens visually in this community.

The traditions materialize in the strong family-like ties and lifelong camaraderie that develops between individuals. Some examples include their strong devotion to community Deaf club/events, Deaf alumni events, senior citizen gatherings, religious activities, conferences, and sporting events at the local, regional and national level. These provide a social gathering opportunity, a mechanism for participation in the political and economic decision-making trends affecting Deaf citizens and a means for grooming new leaders to carry on Deaf community traditions. Events are frequently filled with entertainment such as Deaf folklore, arts, history, SL poetry, songs and joke-telling.

Norms refer to rules of behaviour in the deaf community. All cultures have their own set of behaviours that are deemed acceptable. For Deaf people, it includes getting someone's attention appropriately, using direct eye contact and correct use of shoulder tapping.

Making eye contact:

- ❖ Essential for effective communication;
- ❖ Important because people who are Deaf read the nuances of facial expressions and body language for additional information.

Attention getting:

- ❖ Hand waving is most common;
- ❖ Tapping the shoulder or arm is acceptable.

Flickering lights on and off is also common;

- ❖ Tapping on a table or stomping foot on a floor is done occasionally;
- ❖ Using a third person to relay attention is sometimes used in a crowded room.

Meeting others within the Deaf community:

- ❖ Greetings often include hugs instead of handshakes;
- ❖ Conversations tend to include elaboration about lives and daily occurrences;
- ❖ Conversations tend to be open and direct;
- ❖ There is an interest in other people's connection with the Deaf community.

Speech:

Not speaking is highly valued in this culture. Speech is commonly forced on deaf children and represents confinement and deprivation to the Deaf adult. When speech education is forced, deaf children are deprived of one of their core needs...language. The only language that is truly possible and effective is SL.

When a hearing friend of a Deaf person turns and continues conversation as usual with another hearing friend, the Deaf person is left out. This is incredibly rude when the person could have signed or kept the Deaf friend included on what was being said (interpreting).

Socializing:

Socializing is a very important value of Deaf culture. Because there are so few Deaf people in an area, social lives are invaluable. In a society where the Deaf are commonly misunderstood, the support of others is more than necessary. Deaf dating sites have become very popular for this reason.

Back before text messaging and modern technology, Deaf people would only communicate with each other in person or in letters. They would take advantage of the little time they had to mingle with another Deaf person...

Nothing much has changed since then!

Deaf people will stay at a gathering very late to get in as much time as possible with their friends. When a hearing gathering generally ends around 10 at night, a Deaf gathering can end at 3 in the morning!

There are many Deaf events available to everyone (deaf and hearing!) who wants to socialize with the Deaf. The Deaf Olympics (Deaflympics) have also been competing since 1924.

Literature:

Deaf cultural values are not openly written or explained. Deaf children learn how to fit in with Deaf culture from positive and negative feedback about behaviors and from the stories and literature that are passed down through the generations.

There is a wealth of Deaf art, poetry, stories, theatre, media, games, deaf jokes, and books that teach the culture (most of which are not written down!) These avenues always demonstrate and support the way Deaf people live their lives: being Deaf and proud!

Deaf people are not only part of a like-minded group. They are part of a culture that has a set of learned behaviors that you need to know to be able to "fit in."

Eyes:

In hearing culture, it is rude to stare. However, in Deaf culture, staring is necessary. If you break eye contact while a person is signing to you, you are incredibly rude! That's like plugging your ears when someone is speaking to you!

Facial Expression:

In hearing culture, facial expression is very limited. If you move your face or body a lot while you are talking, you can be seen as "weird" (and nobody wants to be weird!)

However, in Deaf culture, facial expression and body movement is required for SL. It's part of SL grammar! It's OK to be "weird" in Deaf culture...it's normal! And absolutely necessary!

Introductions:

In hearing culture, you normally introduce yourself by your first name only.

Deaf people, however, introduce themselves by their full names, and sometimes even what city they're from or what school they went to. By city, I mean the city you grew up in, not what city you are currently residing in. And by school I usually mean a residential school you attended. The Deaf community is very small, and Deaf people like to find those specific commonalities with each other.

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3. <http://wfdeaf.org/our-work/focus-areas/deaf-culture>
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5. <http://www.deafculturecentre.ca/Public/Index.aspx>
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7. <https://www.deafhear.ie/DeafHear/whatIsDeafCulture.html>

DEAF CULTURE IN AUSTRIA



Basic information

National sign language: Austrian Sign Language, (in German: “Österreichische Gebärdensprache”).

Abbreviation of Sign Language: ÖGS

How many people use ÖGS? around 10.000 people; ÖGS is not only used by the deaf but also by severe hearing-impaired and hearing people. This is the so called sign language community.

Do exist descriptions of ÖGS? Linguistic and social-linguistic studies; the online lexicon *LedaSila* (<http://ledasila.aau.at/>); there are also studies about language acquisition (with and without cochlear implant by deaf children) and the importance of sign language for the general development of deaf children

Is the ÖGS legally recognised? Yes. (by Article 8 of the Bundesverfassungsgesetz, in 2005)

Are there schools for the deaf in the country? There are only 6 schools for the deaf in Austria. Most deaf children attend inclusion classes at mainstream schools, with nearly no sign language support and with spoken/written German as language of instruction.

Bilingual education for the deaf available? No.

Are there deaf associations? Many.

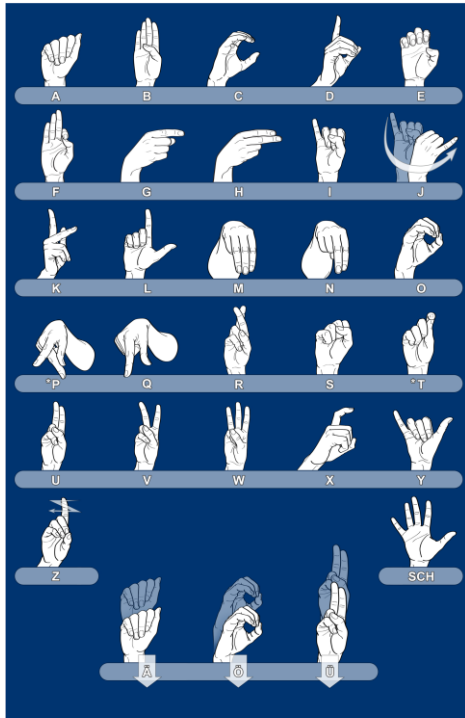
Are there certified sign language interpreters? Yes. Since 2002 it is possible to study “Sign language interpreter” in Graz (10 semester); there is also a special training in Linz (6 semester).

UNCRPD Status:

Convention: Signature 30 March 2007 - Ratification 26 September 2008

Optional Protocol: Signature 30 March 2007 - Ratification 26 September 2008

DAS ÖSTERREICHISCHE FINGERALPHABET
AUS SICHT DES BETRACHTERS



* Varianten dieser Zeichen sind auf www.fingeralphabet.org dokumentiert
Version 02 © 2012, Lizenz: www.fingeralphabet.org Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

Austrian Sign Language (ÖGS)

The national sign language is called in German «Österreichische Gebärdensprache». The number of its users is around 10.000.

There are linguistic studies of ÖGS.

ÖGS was officially recognized by Article 8 of the Bundesverfassungsgesetz, in 2005.

(See: <http://www.oeglb.at/gebaerdensprache/>)

(<http://www.fingeralphabet.org/alphabets/austria-v-01>)

Austrian National Federation of the Deaf

Österreichischer Gehörlosenbund (ÖGLB)

Vienna / AUSTRIA

Web: <http://www.oeglb.at/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OEGLB>

E-mail: info@oeglb.at

- ❖ The Austrian Federation of the Deaf was founded in 1913, in Vienna.
- ❖ The Association supports and helps deaf people, children and adults.
- ❖ The Association is fighting for the right of a bilingual education for children with sign language as their first or preferred language
- ❖ The Association is involved in increasing awareness for deafness and sign language in Austria. The president of the Association is a member of the Austrian parliament.
- ❖ The Association organises language courses, seminars, conferences and festivals and other activities concerning Deaf awareness and active participation in social life.

- ❖ There are many deaf clubs associated with the Federation throughout the country.



Deaf Education in Austria

4 + 4 + 1 = 9 years compulsory;

Vocational education starts after compulsory school;

No bilingual education, little support in ÖGS;

No subject "ÖGS" in the curricula;

Publicly financed; free of charge in State and special schools.

There are a couple of media products made by and for the deaf community:

News papers: e.g. *Gebärdensache* - a newspaper which appears 4 times a year

Books: e.g. *Schreien nützt nichts* – this is the biography written by the president of the Austrian Deaf Association, Mag.a Helene Jarmer

Online news in sign language: *Gebärdenwelt* (<http://www.gebaerdenwelt.tv/>)

Deaf Arts

Deaf art can show communication, culture, experiences and feelings.

In Austria there are two films in ÖGS: *Blutiges Geld* and *Busenfreundin*

There is also a theater *Arbos* (<http://www.arbos.at/>) which produces - among others - visual productions.

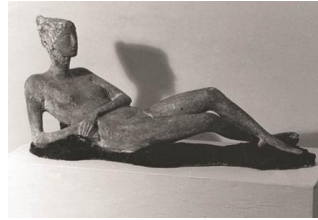


Video in Österreichischer Gebärdensprache
Videoclip in Austrian Sign Language

Deaf artists

Well known are the artists

Hans Dimmel



Othmar Jarmer



Deaf sports

Deaf people in Austria have a very strong interest in different kinds of sports. This is one way of communicating and socialising with other deaf people from all over Austria. The Austrian Deaf Sports Association (Österreichischer Gehörlosensportverband – ÖGSV, <http://www.oegsv.at>) is the head association and organises national and international sport events. There are lots of different local deaf sport clubs.



DEAF CULTURE IN PORTUGAL



Basic Information

National Sign Language: Língua Gestual Portuguesa (officially recognized as the language for the education of the deaf in the year of 1997)

Abbreviation of Língua Gestual Portuguesa: LGP



How many people use LGP?: about 40,000 of people. The sign language is used by deaf people but also by hearing people (interpreters of LGP, deaf teachers and relatives of deaf people). There are also regionalisms in LGP in Porto, Coimbra, Madeira and the Azores

Research in the area of LGP. There are several investigations in the area of the LGP and education of the deaf. In the years 80 and 90 in the University of Lisbon with the publication of the work "grammar of LGP";. Also in this decade was published the "Gestuário" (the LGP dictionary of reference in Portugal) by the National Institute of Rehabilitation in partnership with the Portuguese Association of the deaf. From 2005 were created the Graduate in LGP and translation and

interpretation of LGP on the Escola Superior de Educação de Coimbra, Escola Superior de Educação de Setúbal, Escola Superior de Educação do Porto e Universidade Católica Portuguesa. At the level of research, master's degrees and Phd's there are two main poles, one in Lisbon at the Portuguese Catholic University and another at the port in the Faculty of psychology and educational sciences of the University of Porto.

Is the LGP legally recognised? Yes, in the Portuguese Constitutional Law (1/97 h)).

Schools for the deaf: There are 17 reference schools for bilingual education of deaf students (EREBAS) that cover the entire national territory due to the publication of the Decree-Law 3/2008 that regulated for the first time the bilingual education of the deaf in Portugal. There is the Instituto Jacob Rodrigues Pereira, the oldest school for the deaf in Portugal founded in 1823 by the Swedish professor Per Aron Borg and is still the reference Institute in Portugal for the education of the deaf.

Bilingual education for the deaf available? 32 schools

Deaf Associations: 20 (11 Deaf associations affiliated to the Portuguese Federation of Associations of the Deaf) that represents Portugal in EUD and in WFD.

Are there certified sign language interpreters? Yes, Degree in Interpretation and Translation of LGP in the Universities and specific formations LGP for example Ministry of Justice and Radio and TVs Portugal

UNCRPD Status: Portugal signed both instruments on 30 March 2007, approved them for ratification by the Assembly of resolutions Nos. 56 and 57/2009/2009, respectively, of 30 July and ratified them by decrees of the President of the Republic n° 71/2009 and 72/2009, respectively, of the same date.

Federação Portuguesa das Associações de Surdos (FPAS)

<http://www.fpasurdos.pt>



Deaf Art

We have several deaf art festivals mainly in the week that commemorates the recognition of LGP on Law, in November and in the week that celebrates the day of the education of the deaf in April. Activities are at the level of painting, sculpture, printmaking, drawing, drama and poetry covering almost always issues related to deaf community.



Deaf Artists

We have several famous deaf artists, highlighting two artists at the international level as Marta Morgado and António Cabral.

Deaf Sports

The first deaf associations in Portugal had on the basis of the creation of the sports associations for the deaf. Nowadays the sports for the deaf is concentrated in the Portuguese League of sports for the deaf and that represents Portugal in various competitions like deaflympics games. Several are the procedures practised with great emphasis to swimming where we obtained several gold medals in deaflympics.



DEAF CULTURE IN TURKEY



Basic information

National sign language: Turkish Sign Language, (in Turkish: “Türk İşaret Dili”).

Abbreviation of Sign Language: TID

How many people use TID? Information not available.
(According to the UN count, 3 million hearing-impaired live in Turkey)

Do exist descriptions of TID? Some linguistic studies, as well as several dictionaries.

Is the TID legally recognised? Yes. (by Article 15 of the Disability Act, in 2005)

Are there schools for the deaf in the country? Totally 60 schools for the deaf. First school: 1891.

Bilingual education for the deaf available? No.

Are there deaf associations? Many.

Are there certified sign language interpreters? Yes. The Ministry for Family and Social Affairs (*Aile ve Sosyal Politikalar Bakanlığı*) began in 2012 [a program for the certification of TID interpreters](#).

UNCRPD Status:

Convention: Signature 30 March 2007 - Ratification 28 October 2009

Optional Protocol: Signature 28 October 2009 - Ratification N/A



Turkish Sign Language (TID)

The national sign language is called in Turkish «Türk İşaret Dili». The number of its users is not known. According to the UN count, the deaf population in Turkey is around 3 million.

There are many linguistic studies of the TID. Currently, a TID-research program is running at Koç Üniversitesi, in Istanbul.

The TID officially recognized by Article 15 of the Disability Act, in 2005.

(See: <http://turkisaretdili.ku.edu.tr/en/tid.aspx>)

Turkish National Federation of the Deaf

Türkiye İşitme Engelliler Milli Federasyonu (Tiemf)

Istanbul / TURKEY

Web: <http://www.tiemf.org.tr/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IsitmeEngellilerFederasyonulef?fref=ts>

E-mail: info@tiemf.org.tr

- ❖ The Turkish Federation of the Deaf was founded in 1964, in Istanbul.
- ❖ The Association supports and helps deaf persons, children and adults.
- ❖ The Association organises language courses, seminars, conferences and festivals and other activities concerning Deaf awareness and active participation in social life.
- ❖ There are many deaf clubs associated with the Federation throughout the country.



Deaf Education in Turkey

4 + 4 + 4 = 12 years compulsory;

Vocational education starts from high schools;

Both day and boarding school;

Co-educational;

Total method (speech, SL or signs, lip reading, gestures and mimes altogether);

Publicly financed; free of charge in State and special schools;

The hearing-impaired students receive schooling, lunches and transportation to and from school.

Being deaf is not a barrier to folk dance in Turkey!



Exhibition of handicrafts by the Deaf

Deaf Arts

Deaf art can show communication, culture, experiences and feelings.

Deaf performers have found success in many different types of performing art.

Deaf theater, with plays performed completely in sign language, have delighted both hearing and deaf audiences in Turkey.

<http://www.isitmeengellilertiyatrosu.org/>



Deaf sports

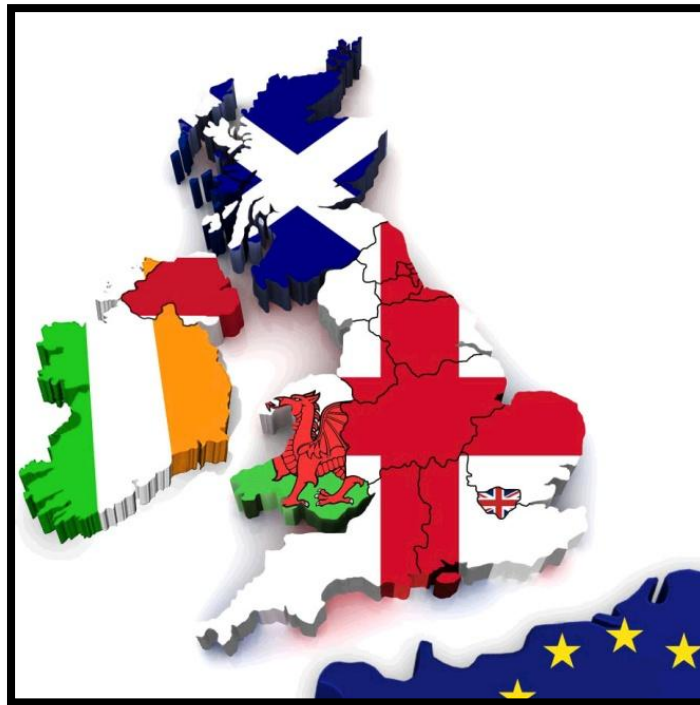
Deaf people in Turkey are interested in many different kinds of sports and enjoy playing them.

In fact, some deaf athletes can become professionals if that is their goal.

Deaf people have different skills too.

<http://www.sessizler.org.tr/?lang=en>

DEAF CULTURE IN THE UK, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND



Basic information

National Sign Language: British Sign language

Abbreviation of Sign Language: BSL

How many Deaf or Hard of Hearing people: 11 million

Do exist descriptions of BSL?

Is the BSL legally recognised? Yes, BSL recognised by the British Government as a language in its own right in 2003. Deaf people are still campaigning for legal status. This Year Scotland has been recognised BSL and become legal status.

Are there schools for the Deaf in the country? There were originally 75 schools and now down to 21 schools across the UK and Scotland.

Bilingual education for the Deaf available? Yes

Are there Deaf associations? British Deaf Association, Royal for Deaf People and Action on Hearing Loss.

Are there registered sign language interpreters? Yes, there are around 800 registered interpreters for 25,000 BSL users with ALSI and NCPRD.

Deaf Culture

British Sign Language is a big minority for Deaf people to use this method to communicate in schools, colleges, universities and workforce. Sign language has its own grammar, structure, hand shape and regional variations, with different vocabulary depending on where you live. The use of gestures gives context, facial expressions show the tone and the hands can be used to indicate the 'volume' of what someone is saying.

There are different regional sign variations across the UK and Scotland, compare to the dialects covering the North West for example: Soscie (Liverpool accent), North East – Geordie (Newcastle accent), South East – Cockney (London accent).

Action on Hearing Loss



- There are more than 11 million people in the UK with some form of hearing loss, or one in six of the population.
- By 2035, it is estimated that there will be 15.6 million people with hearing loss in the UK.
- More than 900,000 people in the UK are severely or profoundly deaf.
- There are more than 45,000 deaf children in the UK, plus many more who experience temporary hearing loss.
- More than 70% of over 70 years-old and 40% of over 50 years-old have some kind of hearing loss.
- 24,000 people across the UK use sign language as their main language - although this is likely to be an underestimate.
- There are approximately 250,000 people in the UK with both hearing loss and sight loss. Of these 220,000 are aged 70 or over.
- Around 6.7 million people could benefit from hearing aids.
- On average it takes ten years for people to address their hearing loss.
- Around one in every 10 UK adults has tinnitus. This increases to 25-30% of over 70

History of British Sign Language

400 years of Deaf education in the UK, from early sign-language schools onwards. Starting with Thomas Braidwood's methods, which were part of what is described as the golden age for sign language education from 1792 to the 1860s, in Europe about teaching methods led to the 1880 Milan conference, where a policy of oralism was adopted. Technology came in, and sign language was banned from the classroom, Deaf children continued to sign in the playground. In the early 1900s, things began to change a bit. Sign language was re-introduced into Deaf education to "support" speech, as an oral method was realised as a form of failure. Deaf education once again had been improved a bit. The rights movement and Deaf activists rose in the 1980s for the human rights and language rights. Today Deaf sign-language users enjoy lives with full accessibility to education.

There were 75 Deaf schools across England, Scotland and Wales up to year 2000. By 2000 each school was shut over the years, up to last Year in December the latest and the oldest Deaf school called Royal School for Deaf Children, Margate in Kent closed down after 224 years. Now we have 21 Deaf Schools left in England, Scotland and Wales. According to the NDCS, almost 78% of deaf children are in mainstream schools with specialist provision.

The Youth club is organised every Thursday evening to encourage the Deaf students to get involved and socialise with different activities or make friends and also for hearing students who want to learn and make new Deaf friends.



Deaf players at college, play in the senior league fixtures. The team represents the College in the National Deaf Cup competition. A number of players have gone onto represent their college at an international level in the Great Britain and England Deaf Football Teams.



This is a Deaf student who plays cricket for Doncaster Deaf Trust



Students are involved one evening per week in the Drama club. They learn to express their feelings through music. Students are learning to perform this has improved confidence, abilities to respond to each other, and developed their movement and co-ordination skills. Students develop to interact on a social level and have fun while making short films. Students attend weekly rehearsals to develop their performance in preparation for their stage debut on prize day at the end of summer.



In the 'Shadow Sign' workshop in Doncaster for local Deaf people used aspects of BSL to tell their own visual stories to make use of space involving movement of hands, body, face and head. The children and young people made shadow puppets and scenery. Some Deaf students created animations, moving coloured drawings on the overhead projector in time with their acting.



The performers had to make all the scenery and the action using their hands and bodies. The 'Shadow Sign' exhibition was created by artists within the local Deaf community. The following groups took part, Doncaster School for the Deaf, Communication Specialist College, Doncaster and Doncaster Deaf Leisure Club.

Students were involved in a visit to London for the Q&A talk with a programme called 'BSL Zone'. They came to talk with the people who work for BSL Zone team about ideas and comments about what they think about BSL Zone and deaf issues.



A Right Not a Fight

Staff and students from Communication Specialist College protested outside Westminster in London to show their support for the right for all young people with special educational needs to make their own choices in life.



Deaf Awareness

'Deaf Awareness Week' takes place in May every year to promote deaf issues and raise the awareness to all organisations, businesses, centres and theatres to improve communication and social inclusion of deaf people. 'Deaf Awareness week' is promoted in different places across the UK during social events, information days in schools and colleges, exhibitions and talks.

Staff and students from college were out promoting Deaf Awareness week In Doncaster. They were in the Frenchgate Centre and Lakeside Village and gave out information regarding Spread the Sign website and BSL/Deaf Awareness courses.

Frenchgate shopping centre



Lakeside Shopping centre



Members of staff from Frenchgate with staff from the Communication Specialist College Doncaster

Frenchgate Centre Manager Laurie Barton Wright said: “We approached the Communication Specialist College Doncaster to facilitate our deafness awareness training as we wanted to ensure that we could communicate fully and provide outstanding customer service to our deaf and hard of hearing customers

The Sign Language tutor taught members of staff at Frenchgate Centre in Doncaster about Deaf Awareness training for 10 weeks to benefit the staff to learn some basic sign language to communicate with local Deaf people in their community who ask for help or advice.

Organisations

Political conferences started to use interpreters and they started to appear on TV. This brought BSL to the public’s attention.

British Deaf Association



In 1974, British Deaf Association (BDA) began to campaign for equal rights, and in the late 1970’s the term BSL was introduced.

Sign languages are fully functional and expressive languages; at the same time they differ profoundly from spoken languages. BSL is a visual-gestural language with a distinctive grammar using hand shapes, facial expressions, gestures and body language to convey meaning.

he earliest recorded instance of gestural communication among Deaf people occurs in the Talmud. In his book, "Britain’s Deaf Heritage", Peter Jackson speculates that the presence of sign languages among Australian aborigines, Kalahari Bush People and North American Plains Indians suggests that the use of sign language goes back to prehistoric times.

BSL has been in use for hundreds of years. The first printed account in the UK of its usage was recorded in John Bulwer’s “Chirologia – The National Language of the Hand” in 1644. Before that, in 1595 Richard Carew first recorded an observation of Sign Language in use between two Deaf people, Edward Bone and John Kempe, in his Survey of Cornwall. Earlier still, in the Parish book of St Martins’, Leicester, an account can be found of a wedding conducted partly in Sign Language on 5

February 1576. References to Sign Language are also found in the Bible and in Greek and Roman writings.

In April 1999 the campaign for BSL recognition started, 4,000 people marched from Temple Place to Trafalgar Square in London, handing in a petition containing 32,000 names to 10 Downing Street. There have been even larger yearly protests since 1999. British Sign Language was recognised as a language in its own right by the British Government on 18th March 2003.



The BDA continues to campaign for the legal status for British Sign Language as a Minority Language in the UK.

What does this mean?

Legal status means that British Sign Language will be protected and promoted in the same way as Welsh and Gaelic. This means that information and services will have to be produced in BSL giving equal access to sign language users where there was once a barrier. It also means that in any legal or medical situation BSL must be the prime language for Deaf people this makes it clearer as services has a wide remit

Deaf Broadcasting Council



The Deaf Broadcasting Council was formed to campaign for more sign language and subtitling on TV, and for specific programmes for Deaf people. In 1981, a programme called 'See Hear' launched by the BBC. The first subtitles appeared in 1981 and there are now around 90% of subtitles on all channels on TV today. The appearance of more programmes that used sign language interpreters and had subtitles raised general public awareness of BSL and the Deaf community. There are more programmes by Deaf actors for the Deaf viewers to enjoy are called 'BSL Zone' covering Health, history, politics, education and general issues and Magic Hands and CBBC Signed stories for children. The UK also have Deaf TV screen interpreters at bottom of the screen for soaps, documentary, talk shows and children's programmes. The BBC news has a hearing sign interpreter on the left of screen to deliver sign language to Deaf viewers at 1.00pm daily from Monday to Friday.

Federation of Deaf People



FDP is a British Deaf rights organisation formed by Doug Alker. This group was in large part responsible for pressuring the UK government to finally recognise British Sign Language.

Royal Association for Deaf People

This organisation is committed to supporting Deaf culture, history and language. They consult with Deaf people to make sure they fully understand their needs.



The organisation provides a wide range of services which Deaf people want and need. All of the services at RAD are delivered in BSL and also work with mainstream services to help Deaf people to ensure the services are accessible to Deaf people.

Disability Rights UK

DR UK is led by people with diverse experiences of disability and health conditions from different communities. DRUK work with allies committed to equal participation for all.



Action on Hearing Loss

This is the Royal National Charity help people to confronting deafness, tinnitus and hearing loss to live the life they choose. This organisation enables people to take control of their lives and remove the barriers, giving people support and care, developing technology and treatments, and campaigning for equality.



National Deaf Children Society



The National Deaf Children's Society is the leading charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people.

www.ndcs.org.uk

National Deaf Sports Organisations in the UK

UK Deaf Sport – www.ukdeafsport.org.uk



UK Deaf Sport was set up in 2003. This organisation aims to encourage Deaf/Hard of Hearing people to benefit to involve in sports.

British Deaf Sport – www.britishdeafsportsCouncil.org.uk

Northern Ireland Deaf Sport – www.nideaf.com



Wales Deaf Sport – www.walesdeafsports.co.uk

Deaf Sports personality of the Year – www.dspy.co.uk



Sign Language and interpreting courses

Signature Formerly CACDP



In the early 1980's, The BDA set up a communication project which led to the formation of CACDP (Council for the Advancement of communication for Deaf People) in 1982, and qualifications in BSL for Level 1, Level 2.

CACDP changed a name to Signature in 2009 and Signature have overcome many obstacles to become the recognised professional registration body for interpreters, lipspeakers, speech-to-text-reporters and others providing language access services, and one of the top awarding bodies in the UK. The qualifications are available now for BSL and ISL courses covering Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, Level 4 and Level 6 and Deaf awareness courses.

Institute British Sign Language



IBSL is a leading UK awarding organisation providing British Sign Language (BSL) and other qualifications linked to Deaf Studies and develop the qualifications in partnership with teachers, Deaf community organisations and government to support BSL-related education.

Signworld



SignWorld provides online BSL learning packages and teaching materials.

UK Deaf Magazines

British Deaf News



British Deaf News magazine can be subscribed from the website with the options either post to the door or delivered to your email inbox. Monthly magazines keep up to date with interviews, exclusives, campaigns, special features, events, promotions and give-aways. This helps people to access the information from the Deaf community and world-wide.

www.bda.org.uk

Limping Chicken

The world's most popular blog to upload the news weekly about Deaf news and culture. The Limping Chicken has a team of Deaf people working to put the information together.

www.limpingchicken.com

www.facebook.com/thelimpingchicken

The Limping Chicken

The Hearing Times

The Hearing Times publish daily news for Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities including news, BSL videos, community, art & culture, technology, events and jobs & training.

HearingTimes

www.hearingtimes.co.uk

www.facebook.com/hearingtimesnewspaper

SLFirst Magazine

SL First Magazine started in 2011 as a free publication to the public. SL First's mission is to bring together businesses and services to think about, and accessible to all, including the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities.

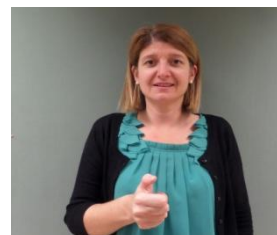
SLfirst
MAGAZINE

www.SLFirst.co.uk

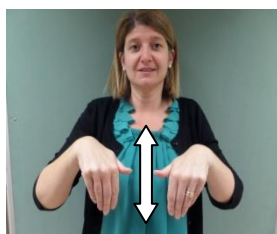
BSL variation and Change over the years

British Sign Language variation and change has shown the changes over the years in the UK for example: old and new signs for telephone and washing machine pictures shown below:

Telephone



Washing Machine



Regional Sign Variations across the UK

There are a few of regional sign variations to show the different hand shapes for a same word for 'America', 'Yellow', 'numbers 9 and 10'.



3 'America' different regional signs are already shown above but there are 9 different regional signs altogether which can find on www.bslsignbank.ucl.ac.uk



3 'Yellow' different regional signs are already shown above but there are 9 different regional signs altogether which can find on www.bslsignbank.ucl.ac.uk

South for numbers



North for numbers



There are no sign statistics for numbers yet but there are examples of 9 and 10 for North and South regional signs.

APPS for Deaf people to use

Deaf people use the APPS to communicate through text messages and video messages to make appointments or order food delivery or stay in touch with friends or colleagues.



NGT



What's App



Signvideo



Skype



Soma



Glide



Facetime

Well-known Deaf People in the UK

There are some well-known Deaf people across the UK who contribute and tirelessly work hard to raise the awareness and recognition of BSL and the Deaf Community across the UK.



Doug Alker is the former chair of the British Deaf Association and the Royal National Institute for the Deaf. His self-published 2000 book, *Really Not Interested in the Deaf?*



Tessa Padden, is a Deaf British television presenter and management training consultant. Padden formerly presented the *Deaf News* of a Deaf magazine programme for the BBC, See Hear.



Terry Riley, OBE is a chair of the British Deaf Association and also a member of the World Federation of the Deaf. He is the Chief Executive of the British Sign Language Broadcasting Trust. He was the former editor for BBC See Hear programme.



Frances Elton was retired as BSL linguist expert at UCL. Frances developed courses for Deaf professionals such as linguistics of British Sign language, sociolinguistics in BSL and advanced teaching of Sign Language and Professional Development in BSL.



Dr. Paddy Ladd is a Deaf scholar, author, activist and researcher of Deaf Culture.