



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Sign Languages in Deaf Communities: Language in its Social Context - 41065

Last update 06-05-2024

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Linguistics

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Diane Brentari

Coordinator Email: dbrentari@uchicago.edu

Coordinator Office Hours: M 1:30-2:30

Teaching Staff:

Prof Diane Brentari

Course/Module description:

The focus of this course is the linguistic, cultural, and societal context of the deaf communities around the world. Both historical and contemporary aspects of Deaf identity will be discussed, with an emphasis on the central role that sign languages plays in the lives of Deaf individuals. Deaf communities, like most cultural groups, have unique cultural icons and centers of reference. This course will examine several Deaf communities, which typically exist as diasporas within markedly different mainstream cultures that surround them. The course will also touch upon the visual arts and literary traditions of some Deaf communities.

Course/Module aims:

- 1) To understand what it means to be part of a Deaf community from a linguistic perspective
- 2) To understand how Deaf identity varies around the world and the role that sign languages play
- 3) To understand the relationships that exist between Deaf communities and the mainstream hearing, speaking communities that surround them.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

Students should be able to see how Deaf communities contribute to a diverse society, and how different Deaf communities accomplish this through their specific cultures, histories, languages and literatures

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lecture and Discussion

Course/Module Content:

Week 1: De-constructing (D/d)eafness

Week 2: Language Variation: Sources, Change, Contemporary Grammars

Week 3: Language Structure: Sources

Week 4: *Children as Cultural Investment 1*

Week 5: *Week 8: The international perspective*

Week 6: *Week 9: Deaf in literature and the visual arts*

Required Reading:

Week 1:

1) Lane, Harlan. 2008. *Do Deaf people have a disability?* In H-Dirksen Bauman (ed.) *Open your eyes*, 277-292. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

2) Friedner, Michele. 2017. *Doing deaf studies in the global south*. In Annalies Kunsters, M. Maartje de Meulder, and Dai O'Brien (eds.) *Innovations in Deaf Studies*, 129-149. OUP

Week 2:

Supalla, Ted, & Patricia Clarke. 2015. *Sign Language Archeology (Ch. 3, Conception of the Language Plan)*. Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.

Week 3:

Lane, Harlan, Hoffmeister, Robert, and Bahan, Benjamin. 1996. *Journey Into Deaf-World*. (chapter 4).

Week 4:

Goldin-Meadow, Susan, and Diane Brentari 2017. Goldin-Meadow, S., and D. Brentari. [Target article] *Gesture, sign and language: The coming of age of sign language and gesture studies*. *Brain and Behavioral Sciences* 39.

Week 5:

Chen-Pichler, Deborah. 2012. *Acquisition*. In Roland Pfau, Markus Steinbach, & Benci Woll, eds., *Handbook of Sign Language Linguistics*, 647-686. Berlin: Mouton.

Week 6:

Bahan, B. *Introduction: What is literature?* In H. Dirksen-Baumean, ed., *Signing the Body Poetic*. Berkeley/Los Angeles/University of California Press

Additional Reading Material:

1) Brentari, D. 2019. *Sign Language Phonology*. Key Topics in Phonology Series. Cambridge University Press.

3) Castellanos, Irina, David Pisoni, William Kronenberger & Jessica Beer. 2016. *Neurocognitive Function in Deaf children with cochlear implants: Early development*

and long-term outcomes. In Mark Marschark and Patrica Spencer, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Deaf Studies in Language*, 264-275. OUP.

2) Friedner, Michele, Rema Nagarajan, Anjali Murthy, and Raphael Frankfurter. 2019. *Embracing Multiple Normals — A 12 Year Old Boy in India with a Cochlear Implant*. *The New England Journal of Medicine*. DOI: 10.1056/NEJMp1907970

4) Lane, H., Hoffmeister, R., and Benjamin, B 1996. *Journey Into Deaf-World*.

1) Meir, I. and Sandler, W. 2008. *Language in Space: a Window onto Israeli Sign Language*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Grading Scheme:

Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 30 %

Active Participation / Team Assignment 30 %

Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 30 %

Attendance / Participation in Field Excursion 10 %

Additional information:

All required materials and readings will be available on the Moodle site.