



signlanguage@school



Teaching material and concepts for bilingual classes

The importance of sign language

Deaf communities are regarded as linguistic minorities, regardless of technical innovations (e.g. implanted hearing aids) or a person's individual ability to learn a spoken language. Sign language has always been and will remain the primary language and mother tongue of deaf people.

The linguistic development of deaf pupils by using sign language is fundamentally important for developing and manifesting their personality and future perspectives. Europe-wide studies show that in most EU countries, bilingual teaching is rather the exception than the norm – although teaching in sign, spoken and written language is of great advantage for both deaf and hearing pupils.

The bilingual and bicultural approach of our project towards sign language is a significant contribution to the history of deaf education. It is the next step after "SignLibrary", also an EU funded project, that aimed at providing world literature in various national sign languages. The books can be accessed online and can be downloaded for free (www.signlibrary.eu).

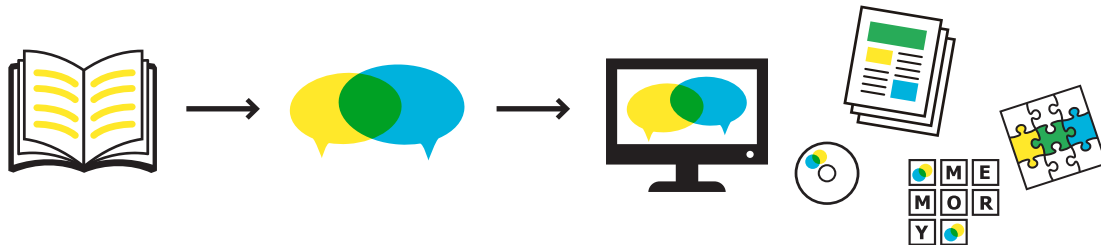
SignLanguage@school – the project

SignLanguage@school is heading for one major goal: **developing teaching material for bilingual primary classes**. Experts working in the field are part of the development process, such as university or school teachers from the participating countries (Austria, Germany and Bulgaria). They know what teaching material and bilingual concepts are needed and can therefore help to close the gaps. The national team in each partner country consists of the following institutions:

- ▶ a training institution for the deaf and hard of hearing
- ▶ a university of education (department of special needs education)
- ▶ a primary school



Together with the pupils, the teachers from each partner country choose books that are then translated into the national sign language. The training institutions are involved in the production and the material is published online and on DVD. The final product, the **SignLanguage@schoolKit**, contains the signed version of each book, teaching concepts for bilingual classes, which are developed together with the participating universities, and teaching material like memory cards and puzzles.



So the SignLanguage@schoolKit marks the end of the developing process. Apart from written text and signed books, recommendations and concepts supporting bilingual teaching are included.

Sign language – an everyday need

Teachers of bilingual classes can easily make use of the SignLanguage@schoolKit by downloading it from **www.signlanguage-school.eu**.

Visit our website or our facebook page and follow our work-in-progress. You will get an idea about the importance of bilingual teaching and appropriate teaching material for deaf pupils.



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SignLanguage@school partners

- ▶ University College of Teacher Education, Lower Austria: www.ph-noe.ac.at
- ▶ Centre for visually impaired pupils, Bilingual project class:
www.schulen.wien.at/schulen/915023/start.htm
- ▶ University of Cologne: www.hf.uni-koeln.de/30040
- ▶ Johann-Joseph-Gronewald School: www.gronewaldschule.de
- ▶ Gebärdensfabrik: www.gebaerdenfabrik.de
- ▶ Assist Net: www.assist-net.eu
- ▶ Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski: www.uni-sofia.bg
- ▶ Secondary Special School with kindergarten for hearing impaired children "Prof. D. Denev": www.deafschooll.hit.bg



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