

The department "Deaf Studies and Sign Language Interpreting" at the Institute for Rehabilitation Sciences cordially invites you to a guest lecture:

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Coimbra's College of Education (ESEC)



„Gesture and language: Non-Manuals in Portuguese Sign Language“

Wednesday, 18. May, 2022, 16:00 - 18:00

Emil Fischer-Hörsaal, Hessische Straße 2, 10115 Berlin

Languages: DGS and Englisch (partially International Sign)

William Stokoe (1960) suggested that signed languages had minimal units that contrast among them and combined allow infinite signed words. He considered three querems: Handshape; Movement; Location. Later, Battison (1978) added two more units: hand orientation and non-manual expression. Some linguists question if those two last querems referred before are independent units or, on the contrary, are features of handshape (Sandler and Lillo Martin, 2006), gesture or gesture becoming language. When we speak about sign languages the focus is on the hand, but non-manuals seem more than just echoing movement or emphasizing meanings. Portuguese Sign Language (PSL) has a very rich and complex system of non-manual units that have grammar meaning; others that we are calling in our research, hybrid, since they come from the cultural world surrounding the community but have grammar meaning inside the language, and others thar are clearly cultural and influenced by the occidental culture.

What we intend to present here is a brief description of Portuguese Sign Language followed by some examples of those non manuals mentioned above, mainly those who have grammar meaning, hybrid or not. PSL is not, traditionally, a language that has a lot of mouthing as a sign component, but, instead, it has many non-manuals that have several meanings depending on their distribution. Our current research aims to categorize those meanings and, later, see if they are common to other sign languages.