

Emergence and function of Deaf Studies in the Netherlands

Lectoraat Dovenstudies / Professorship Deaf Studies

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Very short history of NGT/Deafness awareness in the Netherlands



Early 1980's

- Woord en Gebaar, national deaf journal is started
- Sign lexicon taught to parents and professionals (van den Bogaerde 1991)
- Start of research on Dutch Sign Language (NGT), initiated by Dutch Deaf Council, NDSDK and University of Amsterdam (KOMVA)

1988; overview Crasborn 1999; Nijen Twilhaar 1999)

Short history



Mid 1980's

- Awareness in Deaf community about own language and emancipation possibilities (van den Bogaerde & Schermer in press)
- Vi-Taal established in The Hague
- Dutch Deaf Council lobbies for recognition of NGT
- First Interpreter training program (middle level vocational training)

Short history



■ 1990's

- Deaf culture florishes Poems (Emmerik 1995) Theatre (Handtheater)
- Training of native signers to teach NGT by Dutch Sign Center – first CD's on NGT
- Bilingual education programs established in most schools for the deaf - development of materials
- First deaf children receive a cochlear implant
- Commission Recognition of NGT is established, report follows in 1997 (Méér dan een gebaar)
- Higher educational level training established for teachers and interpreters of NGT in Utrecht 1998

Short history



2000 – present

- Deaf babies receive CI before/around first birthday
- Technical innovations, social changes in education, care and society (Thoutenhooft, this conference)
- 2005 Master Program Deaf Studies
- 2006 Associate Degree Speech-to-text interpreting
- 2007 Professorship Deaf Studies
- Many publications, a/o. on Deaf identity Blume (2006) Tijsseling (2006) Isarin (2006)

Emergence of Deaf Studies



Interpreter training

- Initially: many native signers, who knew Deaf culture and the language
- Later: students needed to learn NGT as a foreign language, needed to learn about Deaf culture

Deaf Awareness

- In Deaf community more and more awareness, many activities about empowerment, diversity, Deaf power
- Political necessity: to claim rights as linguistic minority (UNESCO 1994; UN 2006)

Function of Deaf Studies



- Due to emancipation process there is need for information on Deaf culture
 - Is there a Deaf Culture in the Netherlands?
 - If so what is it? How can we define it?
 - What are priorities in research?
 - How best disseminate results in Deaf community?
 - Lobby for rights of Deaf people (Unesco 1994; UN Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006)

First activities



Meeting with the Deaf community

- Ontmoetingsdag in June 2008
- Inventory of research topics -> identity

-> participation

Setting up the research group, website (trilingual), networking, fundraising

Collaborative approach with fellow research groups, Deaf community and professionals in the field, and students/teachers of HU

First research



Deaf culture

- Gardy van Gils
 Collaboration between Deaf and hearing people

 linguistic and social implications
- Rob de LangeStrengthening the position of the Deaf

NGT materials

- Jan Nijen Twilhaar lexicons on NGT/DC
- Beppie van den Bogaerde Sign linguistics

First research



- Wellbeing of hard-of-hearing children in mainstream education
 - Annemiek Voor in 't Holt

Future research



SIA RAAK PUBLIC project

 On the communication between deaf clients and hearing professionals in (mental) health care

Collaboration between de Gelderhorst, de Riethorst, Gelderse Vallei Hospital and LDS

Elderly Deaf

- Gelderhorst and LDS day care centers, why?
- WSW Equal opportunity in work
 - Dovenschap and LDS

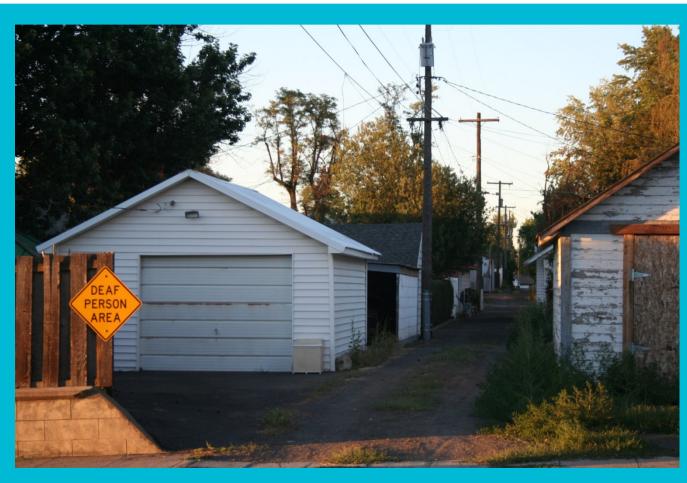
Future research



- European Common Framework of Reference for Languages
 - Modern languages taught in Faculty of Education, HU, including NGT
 - Collaboration between professorship, university, HU teachers/students and the field

Deaf Community





Picture © Rob de Lange

References



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