

Call for Papers:

Experimental studies in sign language research

Sign language workshop at the Annual Meeting of the German Linguistics Society (DGfS)
Location: Frankfurt am Main, Germany

Dates: **7 March 2012** (DGfS conference: 7 – 9 March 2012)

Submission of abstracts: **28 August 2011**

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Meeting Description:

Neuro- and psycholinguistic sign language research has proven beyond doubt that the cognitive processing, acquisition and production of sign languages equals that of spoken languages. Results such as the left-hemispheric activation of the signing brain or findings from studies on temporal processing have shown that sign languages are natural languages on a par with spoken languages. There is a variety of recent experimental studies on sign languages that address specific empirical and theoretical questions concerning the acquisition, production and processing of signed information from phonology up to complex sentences and semantics. On the one hand, these studies investigate more specific aspects of the complex language systems of sign languages and a) confirm that the cognitive foundations of language is independent of modality, but b) also show that there are certain modality specific aspects that need to be addressed in more detail. On the other hand, many studies also investigate different groups of signers (early signers, late signers, codas, L2 learners). The issues of deafness, language acquisition, and bilingualism have an important impact on psycho- and neurolinguistics and place interesting challenges on methodological approaches.

Experimental settings using methods such as EEG, fMRI, and eye tracking among others provide tools to systematically test specific linguistic phenomena and theories. The methodological challenges imposed on such experimental studies in the visual-manual modality are of particular interest and may also lead to new developments and interesting consequences for experimental spoken language research. The aim of this workshop is to bring together experts and younger researchers working in the field of experimental sign language linguistics. Some of the most challenging issues arising in this newly established field will be discussed. We thereby intend to crosslink different experimental results and contribute to more standardized methodological approaches in sign language research.

Topics to be addressed at the workshop include, but are not limited to

- Neuro- and psycholinguistic research on acquisition, production and processing of sign languages on different linguistic levels
- Experimental research with a typological and cross-modal perspective
- Methodological issues in experimental work on sign languages

Abstracts should be not more than 250 words, and contain a max. number of 5 references. Please send your abstract (a word document incl. affiliation and an anonymous pdf file) to annika.herrmann@phil.uni-goettingen.de

Important Dates:

Submission of abstracts: 28 August 2011

Notification of acceptance: 20 September 2011

Workshop: 7 March 2012

Organizers:

Barbara Hänel-Faulhaber, University of Hamburg

Annika Herrmann, University of Göttingen