

(Re)Think Portuguese Sign Language in specific learning contexts

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Abstract

The progressive placement of deaf children in less restrictive schools, the appearance of Reference Schools for Bilingual Education of Deaf Students (EREBAS) and the practice of bilingual education is also a challenge for teachers of Physical Education (PE). Obviously, knowledge of pedagogy and the ability to teach effectively to improve students' achievements are essential attributes of any teacher. But what happens when teacher and student speak different languages? How is information conveyed? And the corrections? Often, in the case of deafness, a shortage of adequate resources or the lack of Portuguese Sign Language (LGP) sport-specific terminology by both the teacher and the interpreter can be deterrent of an education that includes the three domains considered in the program: the area of physical fitness, knowledge and physical activities.

My career as a PE teacher, which started a few years ago in a Special Education Centre for deaf students, allowed me to see that in terms motor skills they had good performances in most of the activities. The resources used were varied such as demonstrations of the exercises, the use of images and drafts

written on the board, as well as the creation of ungrammatical "signs" that intended to represent the simplest exercises or to serve as support to simple oral instructions. From the contact I have been establishing with some PE teachers at EREBAS, I realize that the difficulties experienced now remain the same from ten years ago: there are successful investments in physical activities; however the access to knowledge in the deaf students' natural language (LGP) is still denied.

The participation of deaf people in sports go back to the nineteenth century in various sports including the organization of the 1st world games, dating back to 1924. Since then many countries including Portugal have multiplied the number of Sports Associations that organize and encourage participation in recreational events in national and international competitions, embracing a considerable variety of sports. In this context, a wide variety of sports vocabulary associated with these linguistic microcontexts has been emerging and it is urgent to locate, identify and collect / record them, which will contribute to the development of a bilingual work tool.

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