

# Differentiated teaching strategy for teaching Portuguese writing to deaf students

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## Abstract

In deaf studies, biligualism is a relatively recent field and it is part of the area of studies on education in bilingual, minority contexts, a subarea of Applied Linguistics that focuses upon bilingualism as an alternative to bi/multilingual minorities (Maher, 1997; 2006) or minoritized contexts (Cavalcanti, 1999; 2006). Studies on education in such contexts also focus on myths and preconceptions in the field of bilingual education, the models and programs, the linguistic minority contexts in Brazil, issues of linguistic policies, invisibility and elitism. This article intends to discuss teaching the Portuguese language writing to deaf students as a Second Language or Foreign Language. We aim to show the complexity of such a task as well as to point out some aspects related to the Politics of Languages, as Guimarães (2002) has described. Finally, we intend to present a proposal anchored on experiences from the Portuguese reading/writing workshop for deaf students undertaken during the Ciência & Arte nas Férias program, which was proposed by Unicamp's Research Dean's office. This program is a six week summer program open to deaf high school students enrolled in the regular public school system in Campinas and surrounding towns. The weekly workshops aimed to integrate academic content from various subject matters. So, to teach Portuguese, knowledge from other domains such as geography, biology and history was

accessed, because we understood that integrating different fields of knowledge would allow us to look for themes and current subject matter in order to avoid language teaching to take place artificially and out of context. The workshops were recorded and some episodes were transcribed and analyzed. We were able to observe, based on recorded data, that one relevant strategy was thinking about Portuguese lessons for deaf students based on second language teaching, using strategies that are different from those used when teaching Portuguese as a mother tongue. One teaching strategy to be considered, therefore, which is pertinent to the bilingual context of the deaf student is regulated by the contrast between these two languages. Because sign language is a visual spatial language, it functions differently from written Portuguese that is taught to hearing students. When planning to teach of deaf students, this must be taken into account.

## References

1. Cavalcanti, M. 1999. *Estudos sobre educação bilíngüe e escolarização em contextos de minorias lingüísticas no Brasil*. DELTA, 15 Especial: 385-417.
2. Guimarães, E. R. J. 2002. *Semântica do acontecimento: um estudo enunciativo da designação*. Campinas: Pontes.

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