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Deaf Culture in the academic space





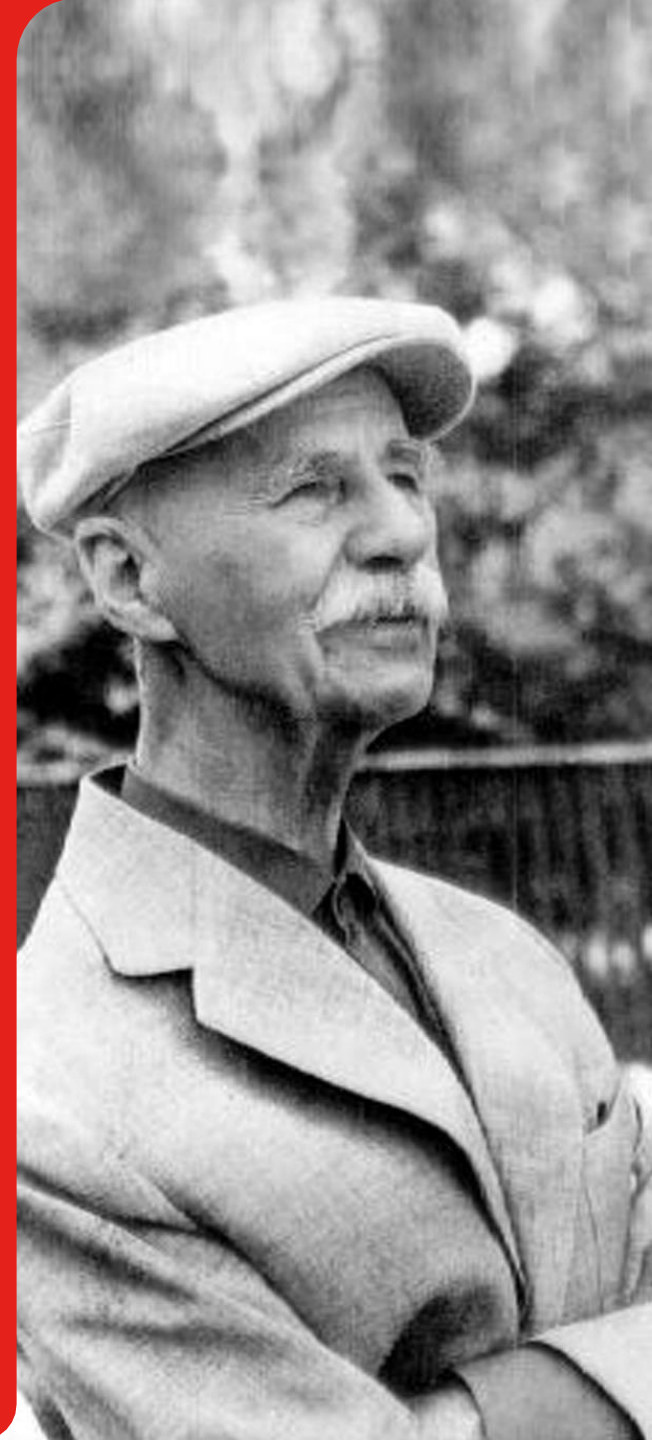
A short guide. Part 1

In understanding disability , the most important thing there is awareness

- what is disability,
- how people with disabilities function (barriers to functioning),
- what is their social world like,
- what you need to know to treat them with respect as able-bodied members of society (because that is their constitutional and civil right).

The most important thing in freedom is its awareness

prof. Tadeusz Kotarbiński





Stereotypes of thinking about d/Deaf people

- Deaf people are deaf-mute
- Deaf people understand written Polish
- All Deaf people with devices such as implants and hearing aids understand the Polish language.
- Sign language is universal, everyone in the world understands it
- Deaf people are mentally handicapped
- Deaf people are visually and tactilely hypersensitive
- All Deaf people can lip-read.

FACTS



Language (1)

Language is a system that determines our knowledge of ourselves, the world and understanding of our social role.

It also builds social identity and a sense of belonging to group, society, cultural circle.

"Language bath" - the cradle/environment in which we grow up, socialize, build cultural codes, we learn concepts and abstractions, context.



*"There is nothing better than language,
Which is the link of social life ,
The key to knowledge, the organ of truth and
reason"*

EZOP

Language (2)

Our "language baths" are different because we use

With a different language, with different symbolism, we communicate differently .

So the most significant barrier in the case of people the deaf is communicating with society, which makes it difficult/impossible to develop culturally, intellectually and ideologically as we know them.



*"There is nothing better than language,
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EZOP

The deaf have their own language, it is Polish Sign Language (PJM) – it is natural language system exactly the same as Polish. But it is not identical with it.

Polish is a foreign language for them, just like for hearing people. language e.g. English.

PJM is a living, natural language, developing like any other language used by societies within their culture.

It has its own grammar focused on the image and its symbolism.

All linguistic phenomena occur in it, new terms appear others disappear, slangs and jokes function.

Deaf people all over the world have their own sign languages – so they are foreign languages.



**Language
(3)**

PJM – is a language that shapes Deaf people, different concepts of abstraction and context build a different perception of the world and its mutual relations. Sign Language therefore creates a separate Culture, i.e. a system of customs and specific features.

But the world of deaf people is very diverse, related to the nature of their hearing loss, when they lost it and how they learned to function in the world.

Not every hearing impaired person uses sign language.

There are people who use Polish sign language (PJM) and those who use only Polish (SJM). Mastering PJM by people for whom it is not their first (native) language is a learning process of a foreign language.



Language
(4)

Some definitions





- "Deaf Culture" – a term associated with a specific social group or social movement.
- Deaf (always written with a capital letter) – this is how deaf people describe themselves, and it is related not to a hearing loss but to belonging to the Deaf Culture (such as, for example, Kashubians or Silesians).
- The concept of "Deaf" defines belonging to a specific Deaf culture, a world of mutual understanding of the world, abstraction, context, one's own sense of space and the performance of social roles.
- "I am deaf" means perceiving yourself as a person who has lost hearing.
- "I am Deaf" – signifies belonging to the Deaf Culture.
- deaf – a person who is characterized by profound hearing loss (over 90 dB) – cannot naturally master or use spoken language.
- "Hard of hearing" – a person whose hearing loss (up to 80 – 90 dB) makes it difficult to acquire spoken language naturally (even with the help of hearing aids).

Definitions (1)

Polish Sign Language PJM – is the natural visual-spatial language of the Deaf community.

It is a developed language, passed down from generation to generation. It functions based on the visual modality, not the auditory modality. It has its own grammatical structure, syntax, phonology....

PJM is a thinking tool, a form of creating the surrounding world, a means of communication with others Deaf.

ATTENTION:

- Not all deaf or hearing impaired people use sign language. This results from the educational path chosen by parents for their deaf children.
- "Sign Language" is a language used by Deaf people all over the world, of course distinguishing languages other than Polish, e.g. American Sign Language, Ukrainian or German.
- "Sign Language System" (SJM) is not a natural language and differs from PJM. It is an artificial language, introduced in the 1960s, whose purpose is to facilitate communication between deaf and hearing people. The creators of this language adopted some characters from PJM and adapted them to the grammar of the Polish language, creating new characters. It is easier for hearing people to learn. The transfer is made roller-skating and auditory.

Definitions (2)



**Deaf World –
communication basics**



These are two different spaces of functioning. Mutual understanding will allow for a better relationship between these spaces on various levels of contact: social, institutional, cultural.



What hearing people should know when interacting with d/Deaf people:

- Do not turn around during a conversation (even if there is an interpreter) - deaf people need to see your face, your mouth, in their world this is also an important way of conveying emotions and showing respect.
- Don't shout - a deaf or hard of hearing person won't hear you anyway and he won't understand what you're saying, besides, his facial expressions while shouting may suggest anger or rage,
- Don't whisper - people with hearing impairments don't hear whispers at all, they don't see your face when you whisper into someone's ear, they can't focus on what you want to convey to them,
- Don't talk too close - keep a distance that will be comfortable for a deaf person approx. 1m - this will allow you to be seen better
- Don't gesticulate too much - it distracts the deaf person too much,
- Do not correct the pronunciation of a person with hearing impairment,
- Never call a deaf person back by patting them on the back,



What hearing people should know when interacting with d/Deaf people:

- To summon directly, use your arms, lightly touch the shoulder of your interlocutor.
- Do not touch a deaf person's chest – intimate area.
- When you see Deaf people in the street, on the bus, or in the corridor, do not look at them as if you were eavesdropping on their conversation.
- Excessive head nodding can be interpreted as a sign of disrespect and is distracting.
- Be patient in your communications – remember that even a translator will not deliver the message if it is too abstract or difficult to understand.



ATTENTION!

- A deaf person is afraid of contact with a hearing person, even if he or she reads lips well – he or she is afraid that he or she will not be able to hear understands what is said to him.
- The hearing person fears that he or she will not be understood and will not be able to remedy poor communication.
- This is a stressful situation for both parties.
- This is where a language translator usually comes in handy sign language.



At the University of Lodz there is the possibility of using such a service. Unfortunately, for now, after prior contact with ACW, the unit that provides contact with the blinkers.

There are also plans to implement an online translator service by installing it on every computer. special widget device – works are working on it.

Academic Support Center
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Pomorska 152 91-404 Lodz
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Deepening awareness in understanding the world
g/Deaf is the basis for understanding how many barriers
prevent these people from properly and rightfully
enjoying constitutional civic goods such as education.

These people often function in Poland as foreigners or
even worse; they have to break stereotypes about
themselves and at the same time break their own.

**It is easier to overcome architectural barriers than social
barriers. We equip our facilities with loops
induction, we have the option of using an interpreter
service. It is more difficult to break mental patterns.**



- At the academic level, we can interact with d/Deaf people on many levels.
- These may be candidates for studies, students, PhD students, employees, and people contacting the University for various reasons.
- Learning basic information about the world g/Deaf will allow us to effectively and well establishing contact, showing mutual respect and breaking down mutual barriers of misunderstanding.
- We do not have to know and learn PJM – although it is a very interesting experience, not only linguistically.
- This is a good tool for exploring the world of the Deaf.
- Because language is the tool that shapes us.





Important,

that we know about our differences in perceiving the world around us,
what are the barriers to accessing education, science and information. We can
do a lot to respect our differences.

Give young people a chance to achieve their goals and fulfill their life passions

Currently in Poland, Deaf people constitute a linguistic minority.

This issue is visible not only at the European level but also in Polish legislation.

Deaf people for whom Polish is a foreign language have very difficult access to knowledge at universities.

According to the Central Statistical Office, in 2019, just over 2,000 deaf people studied at Polish universities.
and the hearing impaired. This is only 7% of all students with disabilities and **0.5% of all students in Poland!**

Free your mind to the world of the Deaf.



Deaf people do not come to college because:

- barriers and omissions in the early childhood education system,
- lack of a sense of security in an "alien" world,
- they are afraid of barriers at universities (poor understanding of the environment),
- finding the right translator/assistant – and here you need people who specialize in a given subject of the field of study
- very few translators at all,
- no possibility of using library resources in PJM,

It is all the more worthwhile to create a favorable environment for exercising the right to learn /study.

Free your mind to the world of the Deaf.



The Act on Polish Sign Language and Other Means of Communication adopted in 2011 was/is intended to safeguard the fundamental rights of Deaf people.

This act guaranteed deaf people two fundamental rights.

1. The ability to freely choose the method of communication, especially bilingual upbringing in the family and the educational process.
2. Communication with state administration bodies. These bodies were obliged to comply good practices, by providing services in sign language and other communication systems and by popularizing the learning of sign language and other ways of communication among people employed in education, higher education and other institutions conducting social policy.

Remember

A deaf person can submit an accessibility request in the form of a video recording in which the request is flashing – please contact ACW who will forward your request to a sign language interpreter.

In the plans – posting information about this possibility will also be in the form of a film recorded by a sign language interpreter



The Act has its provisions and life goes along different paths.

As a society, as an academic environment, we are responsible for being open to the new and unknown, we are responsible for creating opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills for all who desire it, because they have the right to it.

We are obliged to do so not only by the Strategy of the University of Lodz, but above all by the idea of academicity, of which we are a part.

Let's start by getting to know the world of the d/Deaf, building awareness of the otherness of this world. First in ourselves and our environment.

This is not a world of silence, it is a world as full of emotions, norms, customs and diversity as ours.

Remember

Free disability awareness training courses are underway, led by Dr. Gutowska, head of ACW and Rector's Plenipotentiary for People with Disabilities at the University of Lodz – SIGN UP

acw.uni.lodz.pl



Sources of information:

- Eunika Lach – Presentation for UE students in Poznań – Accessibility Coordinator.
- Joanna Sztobryn-Giercuskiewicz – Studying deaf and hard of hearing people.
- Report of the Expert Commission on Deaf People – Deaf People in Poland 2020.
- PZG – Let's learn to understand each other A guide for the hearing about the hearing impaired and deaf.
- M. Czajkowska-Kisil - The functioning of deaf and hard of hearing people at university.
- M. Gajda - How to communicate with a deaf person.



Thank you for your attention

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