



# CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF INDIAN LANGUAGES

## 53<sup>rd</sup> Foundation Day Lecture Series

### Lecture 16

Thursday, September 23, 2021 at 3:30 pm IST

Research, Practice and Innovation in Deaf Multiliteracies



Ulrike Zeshan



Deepu Manavalamamuni



Nirav Pal

#### Peer-to-Peer Deaf Multiliteracies research group

The Peer-to-Peer Deaf Multiliteracies research group (P2PDM) is led by Prof Ulrike Zeshan OBE MAE, University of Central Lancashire, UK. She is Co-Director of the International Institute for Sign Languages and Deaf Studies and has researched linguistic and educational aspects of Indian Sign Language for over 20 years. Deepu Manavalamamuni and Nirav Pal have been working as research assistants for P2PDM, both in the field and on data analysis. Their work is published in the forthcoming two-volume *READ WRITE EASY: Research, practice and innovation in deaf multiliteracies* (edited by Jenny Webster and Ulrike Zeshan, Lancaster UK: Ishara Press)

Our research over the past six years has focused on the development of multilingual and multimodal skills with deaf learners. Work on multiliteracies is concerned with flexible communicative repertoires that include sign language, fingerspelling, reading and writing, drawing, acting, and digital literacy, among others. We present several examples of educational experiments with deaf learners.

In work with deaf primary school children, we have investigated the impact of visual learning materials on learners' participation, as well as tracking progress in the children's multiliteracies skills over time with a combination of assessment methods. With adult deaf learners, the research group has invented and pilot tested a new way of teaching English grammar through games.

In all learner groups we worked with, there are common features that constitute the ecosystem of learning. First and foremost, this means the use of Indian Sign Language as the medium of communication. Deaf peer tutors and learning facilitators support the learner-centred language and literacy activities, and all learning is theme-based and linked to authentic life-relevant contexts. An important conclusion from this research is the need for deaf sign language users to become professionals in deaf education. This lecture is presented bilingually in Indian Sign Language and English.

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