

Sign Linguistics courses

3L Summer School in Leiden

5 - 9 July 2010



The International Summer School on Language Documentation and Description will be held in July 2010 in Leiden, the Netherlands (30 minutes from Amsterdam). Following up on the success of last year's summer school in London, the summerschool continues and expands its focus on sign language and offers more sign-related courses and events.

During the first week of the summer school (5-9 July), **two courses will focus on sign linguistics** and sign language documentation. The languages of instruction will be **English and International Signs (IS)**; interpretation will be provided into IS, **Dutch Sign Language (NGT)**, and English. During lunch breaks, there will be a taster course on American Sign Language open to all participants of the summer school.

Wednesday evening, participants will be treated to a poetry evening organised by Wim Emmerik, the well-known Deaf poet. The event will be open to the public as well, and followed by a sign café.

The National Science Foundation of the USA will provide a number of scholarships for American Deaf students to participate in the summer school.

Course descriptions

Introduction to (Documentary) Sign Linguistics

(taught by Erin Wilkinson and Angela Nonaka)

Most of the world's sign languages are endangered but only a few of them have been documented or studied to any significant extent. Linguists working on spoken languages sometimes encounter a sign language in a fieldwork setting but are uncertain about how to study language expressed in the manual-visual channel. This course offers an introduction into the linguistics of sign languages. Topics that will be discussed include the sociolinguistic setting of sign languages, the use of iconicity, space and simultaneity, as well as issues in sign language endangerment and documentation. The course aims at students with no prior knowledge of sign linguistics.

Sign Language Documentation – Advanced Level

(taught by Angela Nonaka, Erin Wilkinson, and Victoria Nyst)

This course offers a combination of tutorials and hands-on training on fieldwork-based documentation of (endangered) sign languages. The focal points of this course are sign language

typology, anthropological sign linguistics, and technical issues involved in collecting sign language data in the field. Students are asked to bring samples of their own data (with or without transcriptions) for hands-on exercises as well as to discuss dilemmas and obstacles encountered in data collection, transcription and analysis. The course is designed for students with a background in sign linguistics.

Teachers

Angela M. Nonaka (University of Texas at Austin). She has lived and worked extensively in Asia studying sign languages in East and Southeast Asia. Her current research focuses on examination of Ban Khor Sign Language, an endangered sign language isolate in Thailand. Reflective of her training in and commitment to holistic four-fields anthropology, her scholarship emphasizes use-based analyses of language in situ, invoking theories and methods associated with various research approaches in contemporary linguistic anthropology. Her recent publications on language endangerment include: “Sign Languages—The Forgotten Endangered Languages: Lessons on the Importance of Remembering” and “Estimating Size, Scope, and Membership of the Speech/Sign Communities of Undocumented Indigenous/Village Sign Languages: The Ban Khor Case Study.”

Erin Wilkinson (University of Manitoba) is Assistant Professor of Linguistics and the first Deaf professor of linguistics in Canada. Her research interests are in cognitive-functional linguistics, corpora linguistics, typology, and documentation of signed languages. Her most recent work examined kinship terminologies of forty signed languages, contributing to a better understanding of typological variation in visual-gestural languages.

Victoria Nyst (Leiden University) is a post-doctoral fellow in the Leiden University Centre for Linguistics. Her main research interests are in sign language endangerment, documentation and description and community based field linguistics, with research in Adamorobe Sign Language (Ghana) and other signed languages used in West Africa.

For more information and to register for the 3L Summer School, please visit

<http://www.hrelp.org/events/3L/leiden2010/index.html>

With questions regarding the sign language linguistics courses and interpretation, email shane.gilchrist@gmail.com or annasafar@gmail.com