



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Project Title: Signs Beyond Borders: Meaning-making across Sign and Spoken Languages

You will work with Dr Elisabetta Adami, University Academic Fellow in Multimodality, Dr James Simpson, Senior Lecturer in Language Education, and Professor Ruth Swanwick, Professor in Deaf Education, to support, develop and collaborate on their research project Signs Beyond Borders: Meaning-making across Sign and Spoken Languages.

This project examines the daily life interactions between deaf and hearing people to identify ways in which people with different visual/gestural and auditory/oral experience of language communicate and understand each other. Focusing on this unique interactional phenomenon the project asks:

- How do deaf and hearing interactants manage to communicate when they do not share the same (sign- and/or spoken) language?
- What resources do they draw upon and what communicative strategies do they use?
- What can we learn from their practices about not only deaf/hearing interaction, but also all human communication in contexts where people do not share the same language?
- How can the understanding of these practices be used to empower (1) deaf/hearing participants in their daily life encounters, and (2) people who live, work and communicate in multilingual/multicultural contexts?

We will be looking at how deaf/hearing interactants use nonverbal resources and communicative strategies to co-construct situated understanding beyond cultural and linguistic barriers, to fulfil their communicative needs in specific situations of daily life, in shops/streets, in families, at school, and in interpreter-mediated events.

The project will build a transdisciplinary approach by integrating multimodality, sign and spoken language interaction, and translanguaging/multilingualism. To focus on

these perspectives and develop this approach in action, the project will involve a series of seminars for close scrutiny of video-recorded data of sign/spoken language interactions among deaf/hearing children and adults who do not share the same linguistic resources.

Within the project, the LHRI Sadler Seminar Series will provide an interdisciplinary forum for the analysis and discussion of video-recorded deaf/hearing interactions in different settings that will be collected by the research team and the Research Assistant and contributed by the lead participants. Theoretical/methodological integration will be pursued to:

- document ways in which individuals draw on their semiotic resources (such as image, text, gesture, sign, gaze, facial expression, speech, posture, objects and the material environment) for meaning-making
- develop ways of capturing, transcribing/annotating, describing and analysing sign/spoken language interaction that adequately represent how meaning is made multimodally (that is, through the use of all resources, rather than only language).
- establish an accepted terminology for describing multimodality in sign/spoken language communication