



# Links between data collection and deaf education: some perspectives regarding a corpus in French Sign Language (LSF)



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Deaf interviewers for Creagest: Schools for deaf children with which we have privileged links:

### The educational link:

Our corpora of child LSF will be used in the construction of educational programs for the teaching of LSF in schools (in light of the right to LSF education (granted in law, 2005, 2006, **Official programs in 2008, 2009**) and the absence of a practical knowledge on what LSF signing children know and at what ages).



Our corpus can be used to determine **the stages of children's linguistic development** in LSF (such as the use of motion verbs *monter* 'climb' and *descendre* 'come down'). This affects the construction of curricula, and the decision of what structures should be taught at what ages, in French and in LSF.

Items from Hickmann et al. (2008) :

Video examples from Sallandre et al. (2010) :



Video item: "The boy is skating"



Personal transfers (1) "skate"(2) "slip"



Situation transfer "skate"

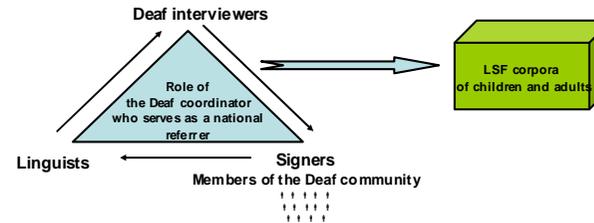
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Marie-Thérèse L'Huillier serves as a national referrer for the construction of corpora of deaf adults and children in six cities in France. She is a member of the research team, working as an interviewer and collector of metadata, as well as serving as a liaison between researchers and interviewers. She is also a specialist in Deaf education since 25 years.



### Our successes and difficulties:

Training of interviewers (lasting several days); filming of the pilot corpus; feedback between interviewers and the research team. But also to maintain the corpora, digitise them, and create a platform for their storage and online diffusion.

### Our corpora can provide us with information on :

1. **how and at what age**, the child can express path and manner of motion through these verbs, particularly the use of personal transfers (*role shifts*), situational transfers (cf. *classifier structures*) or lexical signs.
2. The deaf adult corpus which serves as a control, are also useful as **authentic documentation** that constitute part of the preservation of the national heritage, allowing children (and adults) to become aware of regional variations in LSF and of the wealth of the language.  
 Example: "Corpus de la parole" on the web <http://corpusdelaparole.h2o3.fr/>

These corpora can also be used by LSF teachers:

- as **authentic teaching aids** for Deaf students and interpreters (ex: *Licence Professionnelle Degree*)
  - to learn about **regional variations** and **neologisms**
  - to teach the LSF grammar (e.g., lexical signs, personal transfers, classifier structures, pointing)
  - to determine which structures children are not familiar with, so these can be avoided or at least not intensively used :
- It is necessary to present the child with unfamiliar signs in order to enable the acquisition of new linguistic knowledge (cf. *Zone of Proximal Development*, Vygotsky)



Licence Pro Deaf students in 2006 during a training session on grammar of LSF.



Licence Pro Deaf student in 2009 during an exam on variation of signs in LSF.