

## DEAF CLASS PROFILE

Public schools at Bogotá currently are not delivering English instruction to Deaf Students had released Deaf learners from English instruction under the assumption that Spanish is the Second Language for the Deaf Students (Ramírez & Parra, 2004). The MEN directed: "The school ( ... ) determines whether foreign language instruction (English , French, German ... ) is mandatory or optional for Deaf students" (MEN, 2006 translation is mine). When Deaf learners begin their tertiary education they say they would like learn English because they "consider English quite important to feel as equal members of a hearing society that uses English as a tool to grasp the world" (Ávila, 2011).

**Age:** Since 17/18 years old and up after they finished their secondary education level.

**Level:** At least in Public Schools from Bogotá, Deaf Learners are not receiving English Instruction under the a some cases the academic and behavioral expectations of the teachers toward deaf students are lower in comparison to the hearing students" (Tellez Murcia & Quintero Idarraga, 2013?). 3) "the interpreter affects the English learning process of the deaf students because deaf students receive interpreter's help in the class, students tend to use their mother tongue; in this case, Colombian Sign Language to communicate and there is few space for English interaction" .ssuming that bilingualism for Deaf Students means Colombian Sign Language (LSC) as their First Language for regular communication, and Written Spanish as their Second Language. They never had received formal English instruction, so their Level is A0 (A Zero).

**Learning Styles:** Auditory and Speaking channel of communication are closed, so the only two learning styles open for the Deaf are the visual learning style (Ávila, 2011; Palma & Steyer, 2013) and the kinesthetic learning style. Also Deaf Learners prefer to work in small groups collaboratively (Ávila, 2011), where they could work according to the Task Based Learning Method.

**Motivation:** Deaf learners have manifested their motivations for learning English, because they consider English is the "international language for communication, business and information access", and also an useful tool that "gives them a competitive

edge and equal educational and social opportunities” (Ávila, 2011).

Some factors that could hinder Deaf language learning process are:

- ◆ They do not have phonetic input, to relate sounds and words patterns, they need memorize how to write each word without auditory input.
- ◆ “In some cases the academic and behavioral expectations of the teachers toward deaf students are lower in comparison to the hearing students” (Tellez Murcia & Quintero Idarraga, 2013?).
- ◆ “The interpreter affects the English learning process of the deaf students because deaf students receive interpreter’s help in the class, students tend to use their mother tongue; in this case, Colombian Sign Language to communicate and there is few space for English interaction” (Tellez Murcia & Quintero Idarraga 2013?).
- ◆ In grammar Translation Method the use of Spanish language is not useful, Deaf people varies greatly on their English command, some of them are functional illiterates because they understand a lot of words but are incapables to grasp the meaning of simple documents, so many of them are incapable to translate form Spanish into English, and if they get the sense of the English message, they are incapable to write the message in an acceptable Spanish sentence (Ramirez & Parra 2004).

## Referencias:

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## LINGUISTIC ABILITIES AND NEEDS

An English Deaf Learners has as their strength the capacity of concentration, no sounds or spoken conversation interfere their activities. Also, they are capable to work collaboratively, indeed "Collaborative work is preferred by deaf students who use only sign language to express their ideas and comments in a class that demand of them a similar rhythm and level of participation. When they work together they provide immediate feedback and make peer- and self-corrections which contribute to the reflection and learning of the group" (Ávila, 2011). Motivation is a strength for Deaf Learners because they are aware that there is no exist a different world for them, so if they learn a foreign language, different from Spanish, they would get the opportunity to know the surrounding world and to participate both Hearing and Deaf cultures (Domagała-Zysk, 2010).

Listening skills and Speaking skills are difficult or impossible for completely or profound Deaf persons. Partially Deaf persons (hearing impaired) could develop some speaking and hearing skills but they need special training using special methods to compensate their hearing loss and they may not use a Sign Language as their first language. Here I focus on Deaf persons who uses Colombian Sign Language as their primary means of communication.

Palma and Steyer (2013), quoting Strong, 1988; and Bochner, 1982; Quigley and Paul, 1984 cited by Strong, 1988, report that English reading comprehension for Deaf learners are considerably lower. Writing is shorter and full of misuse of function words. Grammar is also a difficult issue for Deaf English learners because "articles, prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, verbal auxiliaries, and inflexional and derivational suffixes are among the most persistent and pervasive sources of errors observed in their written English" (Palma & Steyer 2013).

Language instruction for Deaf learners require to be adapted to visual learning style. So grammar explanation, vocabulary learning, and other activities must be accompanied with images in a sequential manner and by topical lessons (greetings, occupations, leisure time, etc.).

Technology can be helpful for Deaf learners in order to internalize the 'use of function words such as articles, pronouns, conjunctions and prepositions" (Palma & Steyer, 2013). English instruction is prefer only in Deaf groups not within mixed groups of hearing and deaf participant because their gap of language needs.

Deaf learners also needs to use English language in real context, so if they communicate through Whatsapp, SMS, E-mail, Facebook, Tweeter or any other electronic media where they may write in order to interact in English Language. They can practice their new Skills on writing and reading not only with their classmates but with native hearing speakers and or institutions requesting any information by e-mail and then reading the answer received.

### **References for part two:**

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