SIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION: DIDACTIC USE AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CEFR

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## Background

| Target population          | • 4-yrs bachelor program  
|                           | • Teacher and Interpreter Sign Language of the Netherlands |
| Didactic shift            | • <2010 Grammar-based    
|                           | • ≥2010 Communication-based – teaching aligned to CEFR |
| Research purpose          | • To evaluate the outcomes of this didactic shift on students’ production of SL |
Overview of didactic shift

Grammar Based

Explicit grammar from start, production is leading

Feedback focus on grammatical mistakes

Communication Based

Implicit grammar from start, comprehension is leading

Feedback focus on functionality and pragmatics
Design of study

Data from Cohort study

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort 1</th>
<th>Cohort 2</th>
<th>Cohort 3</th>
<th>Cohort 4</th>
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Method

- Recording interview (ca. 7 min.)
- All recordings are standardized to 6 min.
- Detailed annotation in Excel
- Variables of use-of-space include:
  - INDEX
  - Locative Signs
  - Classifiers
  - Verbs
  - List-Buoys
Measuring effectiveness

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Practical relevance</th>
<th>Theoretical relevance</th>
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<td>to assess the quality of our curriculum.</td>
<td>to increase our insights in L2-development of Sign Language</td>
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<td>to add to the body of literature on the didactic uses of the CEFR (e.g. Alderson, 2002; Goullier, 2007)</td>
<td>to contribute to the refinement of the CEFR descriptors (e.g. Hulstijn, 2007; Figueras, 2012)</td>
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In this study, effectiveness of didactics is measured on the use of space by L2-learners.
Results

![Graph showing raw numbers of use-of-space across different categories. The categories include Grammar-based, Pilot Comm. B., New Comm. B., and Established Comm. B. Each category has subcategories labeled C1.1 to C4.8, with bars representing different use cases and colors indicating the type of use (list-buoy, verb, classifier, locative sign, INDEX).]
Longitudinal analysis

T1 < T2 *

T1 = T2

* Significant alpha .01
Cross-sectional analysis

C1 < C2 *

C2 = C3

C3 = C4

C1 < C3 *

C1 < C4 *

* Significant alpha .008
Conclusions

• **Longitudinal analysis** = L2 learners progress in their use of space (irrespective of didactics).

• **Cross-sectional analysis** = L2 learners have better use of space in the communication based approach as compared to grammar-based approach.
THANK YOU...