

SignWriting® Year-End Report 2009

...Important Events Around The World...



1

New Jersey School for the Deaf

<http://www.SignWriting.org/forums/teachers>

The New Jersey School for the Deaf (the Marie Katzenbach School for the Deaf), joined the SignWriting Literacy Project in 2009 at the request of Deaf teacher Camille Lollo. We donated boxes of SignWriting books to Camille's 5th grade Deaf students. Dr. Cecilia Flood, who wrote her dissertation on teaching SignWriting to Deaf students in Albuquerque, New Mexico, traveled to meet with Camille in NJ.



Cherie
Wren
teaches
workshop

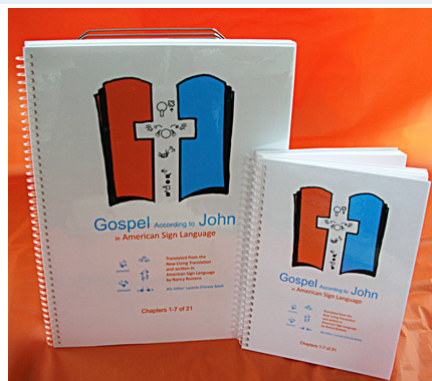
2

Cat in the Hat Presentation in Alabama

<http://www.signwriting.org/library/children/CatHat.html>

<http://www.signwriting.org/usa/alabama/>

On March 27-28, 2009, the **Cat in the Hat** in written ASL was presented at the "Celebrate Deaf Literacy & Legacy Conference" in Alabama, by ASL interpreter, teacher and writer, Cherie Wren. The presentation and workshop was hosted by the International Institute of Deaf Services.



The Gospel According to John Chapters 1-7

3

Gospel John ASL Books at the Vatican!

http://www.signwriting.org/library/bible/Gospel_John.html

The complete 21 chapters of the **Gospel According to John** were translated from the New Living Translation (NLT) and written in American Sign Language by ASL interpreter and instructor Nancy Romero, a pioneer in writing Bible translations in SignWriting. The book was edited by Deaf ASL signer Lucinda O'Grady Batch. All 21 chapters were posted on the web in 2009, plus the first 7 chapters were published in book form, printed, and donated to: 1) Shores Deaf Church in Michigan 2) Dr. Marie Alexander, director Linguistics Dept, University of Malta 3) and a box of books was shipped as a donation to the Vatican, to be distributed to the XXIV International Conference "Effata! The Deaf Person in the Life of the Church", which took place at the Vatican November 18-21, 2009.



the Maltese team at the Vatican ;-)

Maria Azzopardi Galea from Malta, who is writing her dissertation at the Univ of Malta on the writing of Maltese Sign Language in SignWriting and who has written portions of the Bible in Maltese Sign Language, traveled with a team of fellow Maltese signers to the Vatican conference, and distributed the **Gospel According to John** books to attendees at the conference. Many thanks to the Maltese team for their kindness!

SignWriting® Year-End Report 2009

...Important Events Around The World...

4

PersonalPuddle Software

http://www.suttonshop.com/ecommerce/pages/products_sw_detail.jsp?id=60.0

In 2009, Steve Slevinski improved the PersonalPuddle. Now users can work without an internet connection, then connect to the internet to upload new files to SignPuddle Online, download other files, and then disconnect from the internet and continue to work without an internet connection. This is a powerful new feature that has been very helpful to PersonalPuddle users.



5

SignWriting in Malawi

<http://www.SignWriting.org/malawi>

Malawian Deaf children at the Embangweni School for the Deaf are using SignWriting and the PocketPuddle, thanks to the efforts of Americans Jim and Carol Nussbaumer, who donated the PocketPuddle to the school in September, 2009. The Nussbaumers also brought with them a box of SignWriting books which was our donation to the school. Carol reported in an email that "It took about 10 seconds for the Deaf children to figure out the SignWriting system!" ...and..."Standard 8 (our oldest group) took around 5 minutes to figure out how to write a sign with SignPuddle and had a blast developing the writing of 10 Chitumbuka signs."

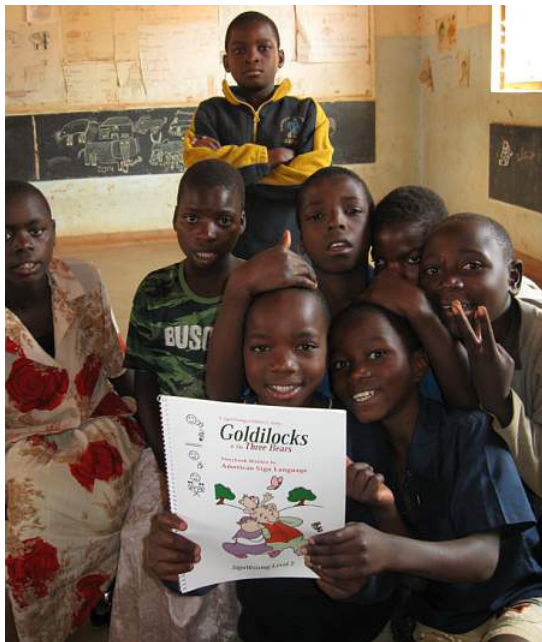


Photo Left: Deaf children show SignWriting books used in their classroom. Photo Below: PocketPuddle software is installed and tested on school's computer.



6

SignWriting in Portugal

<http://www.SignWriting.org/portugal>

See full 2009 report next page 3-12...

7

SignWriting in Germany & Ethiopia

<http://www.SignWriting.org/ethiopia>

<http://www.SignWriting.org/germany>

See full 2009 report pages 13-23...

SignWriting Workshops in Lisbon, Portugal

Taught by Adam Frost, September 8th-12th, 2009

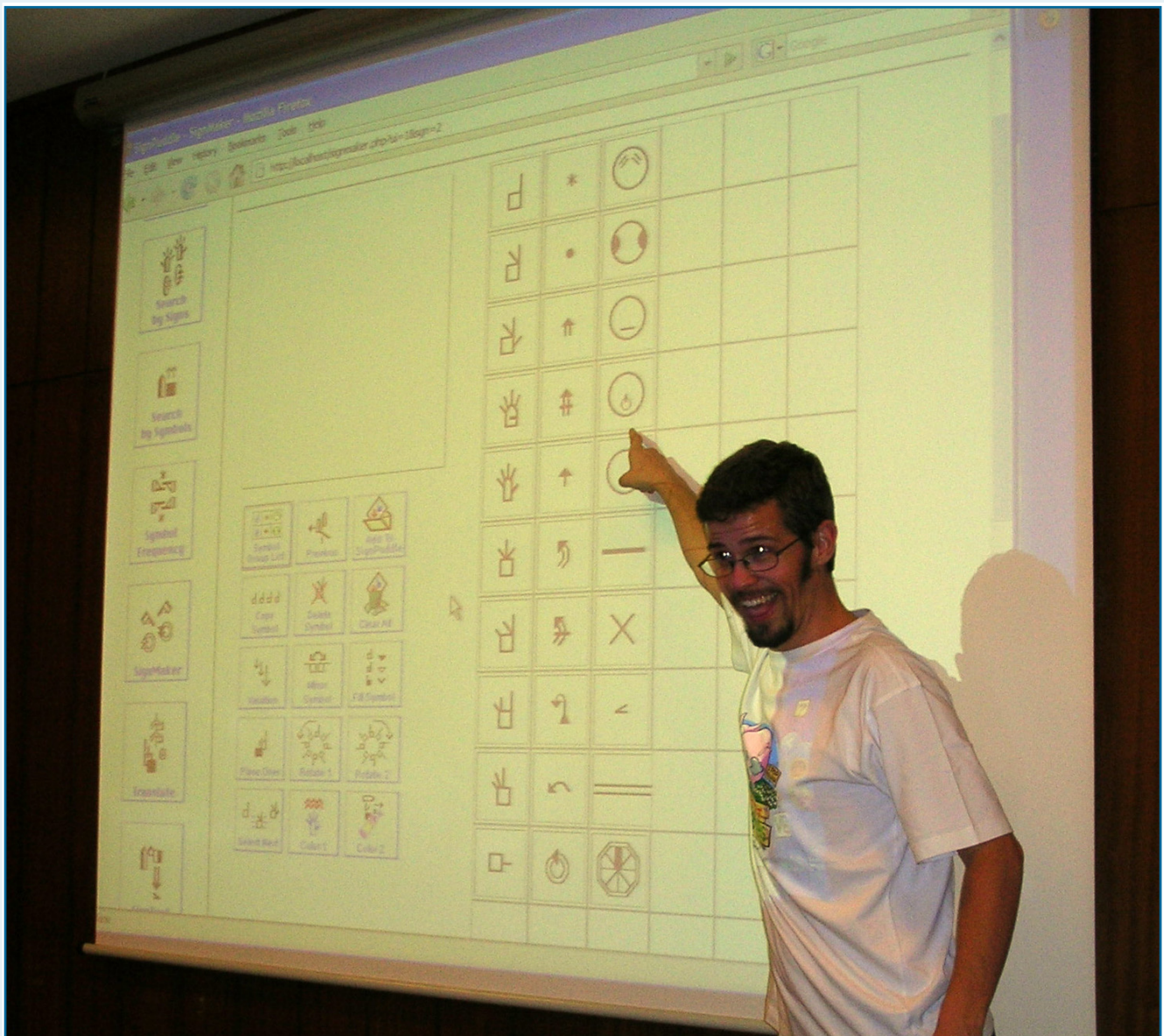


Above, Adam Frost in 2006.
Below, Adam teaches SignPuddle Software, Lisbon, September, 2009.

Teacher's Report

by Adam Frost, September 15, 2009

I am excited to tell you about what happened in Portugal last week! I arrived in Lisbon on Sept 7th, and was greeted by friends at the airport. We all had a relaxing time on the beach while we waited for others to arrive for a lunch, which became a dinner. The people at the dinner were the invited presenters of papers at an upcoming conference, which was connected with the workshop that I would teach on Sept 9th and 10th.



SignWriting Workshops in Lisbon, Portugal

Taught by Adam Frost, September 8th-12th, 2009

Teacher's Report continued...

There were people from Brazil, Washington D.C. and Israel. So there were several languages at dinner: English, Portuguese, American Sign Language (ASL), Brazilian Sign Language (LIBRAS), Língua Gestual Portuguesa (Portuguese Sign Language, LGP), Israeli Sign Language (ISL), and Al-Sayyid Bedouins Sign Language (ABSL), a sign language from a newly found nomad tribe in the Middle East with a high population of deaf people. At dinner, I was the only Deaf person. It was a nice relaxing dinner after a day of traveling to Lisbon.



Far left: Dr. Ronice Muller de Quadros, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil, presented a paper on "Letras-LIBRAS, an E-Learning Graduate University Project". **Second left:** Dr. Deborah Chen Pichler, Gallaudet University in Washington D.C., presented a paper "Sign Language as Second Language Acquisition". **Center:** Adam Frost, Deaf Action Committee for SignWriting (DAC), California, presented two SignWriting Workshops. **Right:** Dr. Diane Lillo Martin, University of Connecticut, presented a paper with Ronice on "Constructed Action: Acquisition in ASL and LSB".

SignWriting Workshops in Lisbon, Portugal

Taught by Adam Frost, September 8th-12th, 2009



Above: Adam Frost with Professor Ana Mineiro.

Teacher's Report continued...

The first night, I stayed overnight at Professor Ana Mineiro's beautiful home with her daughter and son. Dr. Mineiro is a researcher at the Instituto de Ciências da Saúde da Universidade Católica Portuguesa, and it is because of Ana and others, that my entire trip to Lisbon was arranged through the University. She and her children are not deaf, but they are learning Língua Gestual Portuguesa (LGP). They tried their best to communicate with me and they did very well!

Photo Right: Dr. Wendy Sandler, standing left, from Haifa University in Israel, presented a paper on "The Emergence of Phonology in a New Sign Language: Al-Sayyid Bedouin Sign Language."

Photo Right: Dr. Sandra Patrícia de Faria do Nascimento, standing right, from Universidade de Brasília UNB, Brazil, presented a paper entitled: "Lips, Milk, Chocolate, Orange, etc.: A Study of Colors' Names in Brazilian Sign Language."



Photo Left: Adam stands with an interpreter, left, and a student, right, from one of his two SignWriting workshops, presented at the Instituto de Ciências da Saúde da Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Sept 9 and 10th.

SignWriting Workshops in Lisbon, Portugal

Taught by Adam Frost, September 8th-12th, 2009

Teacher's Report continued...

The next day, Sept 8th, we attended the conference on **Sign Languages Around the World** at the Universidade Catolica Portuguesa, Instituto de Ceincias da Saude. This is the University that paid for my trip to Lisbon to teach SignWriting. All of the presenters I had met the first night, presented at this conference, plus others also gave different presentations related to Sign Language Linguistics. It was nice to see that there was a large group of Deaf people in the audience.



Below: Participants in one of my SignWriting Workshops.



SignWriting Workshops in Lisbon, Portugal

Taught by Adam Frost, September 8th-12th, 2009



There are large apartment complexes outside of Lisbon.

Teacher's Report continued...

It seems that the academic language in Portugal is English. Interpreters interpreted from English to Portuguese Sign Language (LGP). Then another interpreter, Amilcar, who is Deaf and was sitting next to me, mirrored the LGP to Claudia, also Deaf, who then interpreted LGP into American Sign Language (ASL) for me. Claudia was born in the US and went to a school for the deaf in the US until she was 11, after which her family moved back to Portugal. She mixed ASL, international signs and LGP together. That was the whole day with lunch being provided in a really nice faculty area for those that were presenting/interpreting.



Above left: Claudia Dias, Deaf, interpreted from Portuguese Sign Language (Língua Gestual Portuguesa - LGP) to American Sign Language (ASL), during the presentations and workshops. **Right:** Isabel Rodrigues, Deaf, is a teacher at the Jacob Rodrigues Pereira School for the Deaf in Lisbon (Instituto Jacob Rodrigues Pereira, Lisbon).

SignWriting Workshops in Lisbon, Portugal

Taught by Adam Frost, September 8th-12th, 2009

Teacher's Report continued...

I then met with Amilcar and Isabel, his Deaf sister, who I would be staying with the rest of the week. The three of us first went to Ana's home for dinner. There we talked some more and communication between myself and Ana went well since Amilcar and Isabel both know some ASL. Then the three of us went to Isabel's home where I met her husband, Jorge Rodrigues, also Deaf, and their 10 month old son. They gave me their son's future room (when he would be old enough to sleep in a separate room). Jorge joked that I was there just to break in the room for the baby!!



Portuguese doors have many bolts!



While staying with Jorge and Isabel, I really enjoyed sitting with Jorge in his living room, with our computers on, adding LGP signs into SignPuddle Online, in our newly established Portuguese Sign Language Dictionary. It was so great to see his eagerness as well as the light turn on when he understood something. And our LGP dictionary is growing. Visit online: <http://www.signbank.org/signpuddle/index3.html#sgn-PT>.

SignWriting Workshops in Lisbon, Portugal

Taught by Adam Frost, September 8th-12th, 2009

Teacher's Report continued...

On Wednesday I taught my first SignWriting workshop. I was surprised that there was such a big group, most of whom were Deaf. It was an adventure getting the room set up to make it so that everyone could see each other as well as a good placement for the three interpreters. I was also surprised that this was only the first half of two groups. I thought that I would be giving a four part workshop to one group. It turned out that it would be a two day workshop to two different groups, 4 hours in the morning and 4 hours in the afternoon. The first day I gave a very brief history of SignWriting, and then asked them for signs from their sign language, LGP, that they wish to learn to write. Then I explained the symbols that were used to write each sign they chose. I also was able to learn LGP that way. The two groups were amazed that I could write various signs without even really knowing what they meant. They also asked questions about different symbols here and there, or why something was this way and not that -- the normal questions that people ask when they are learning!



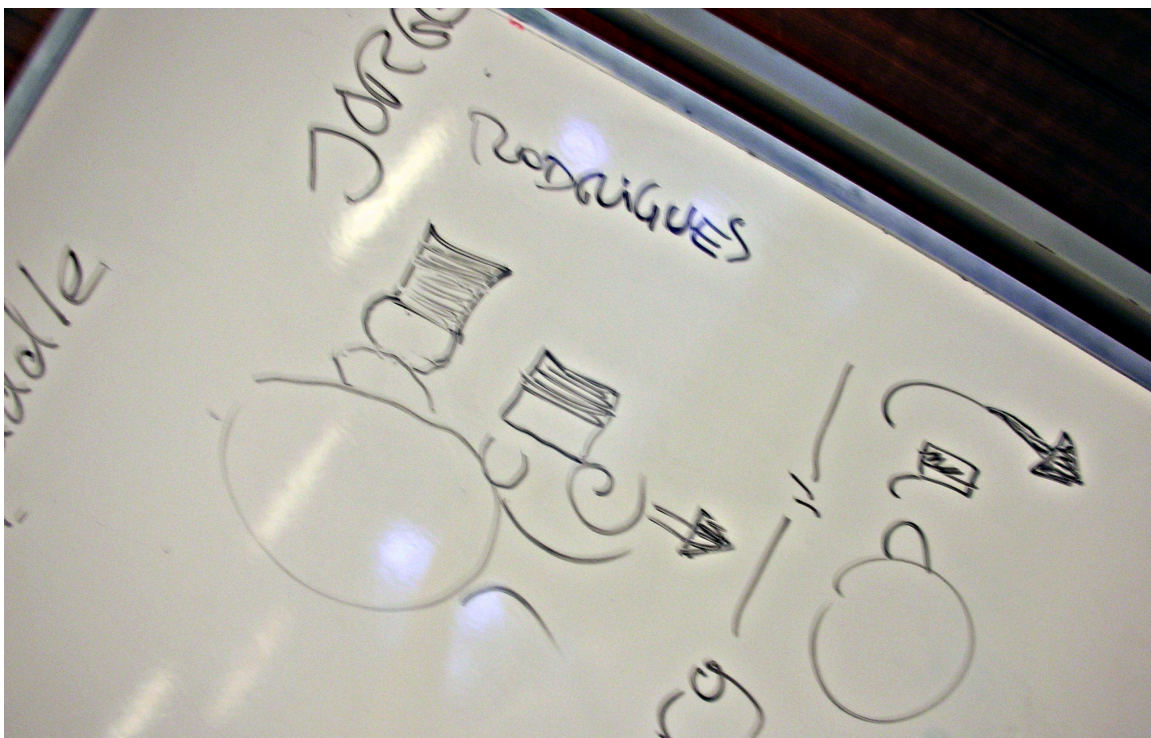
SignWriting Workshops in Lisbon, Portugal

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Teacher's Report continued...

In the Thursday workshop, I chose signs from SignPuddle Online, from the American Sign Language (ASL) puddle, that I knew were signs that were also used in LGP. I asked them to read them. Many of them tried to tell me the signs from reading the English, but I knew that the signs meant something different in LGP. After they finally understood that I wanted them to read the signs themselves, they realized that the meanings were not the same. This led to interesting comparisons of the two sign languages.

Once they started reading the signs fairly well, I moved on to sentences, which were ASL sentences. That was a little difficult since they didn't have the language knowledge to backup their reading, but they were able to get very close. Then of course they wanted to know the translations. Then I showed them where to go online to use SignPuddle as well as lessons on the SignWriting website and how to join the SignWriting List. I even showed them my blog in SignWriting. They were amazed at all the information online. The last group was a little quiet, so I asked them to come up and write first "D" and then the sign for "Portugal" without my help. They collaborated as a group to get it written correctly. There were several suggestions that were made which helped them realize that they had choices in different ways to write the same sign, which meant the same thing.



Jorge's handwriting of his sign name.

SignWriting Workshops in Lisbon, Portugal

Taught by Adam Frost, September 8th-12th, 2009



Teacher's Report continued...

Then Friday was a "free" day from workshops and presentations, so I went with my new Deaf friends to the school for the deaf, a second opportunity Center for Deaf/Blind/and Deaf-Blind people to find jobs, and then to the Deaf Association where I met several more Deaf people. It was very interesting to see that they were very similar to the Deaf groups that I know here in California. I almost forgot that I was in a different country!

Photo left: The Deaf Association entrance.

Photo below: Isabel and Adam stand in front of the Jacob Rodrigues Pereira School for the Deaf, Lisbon.



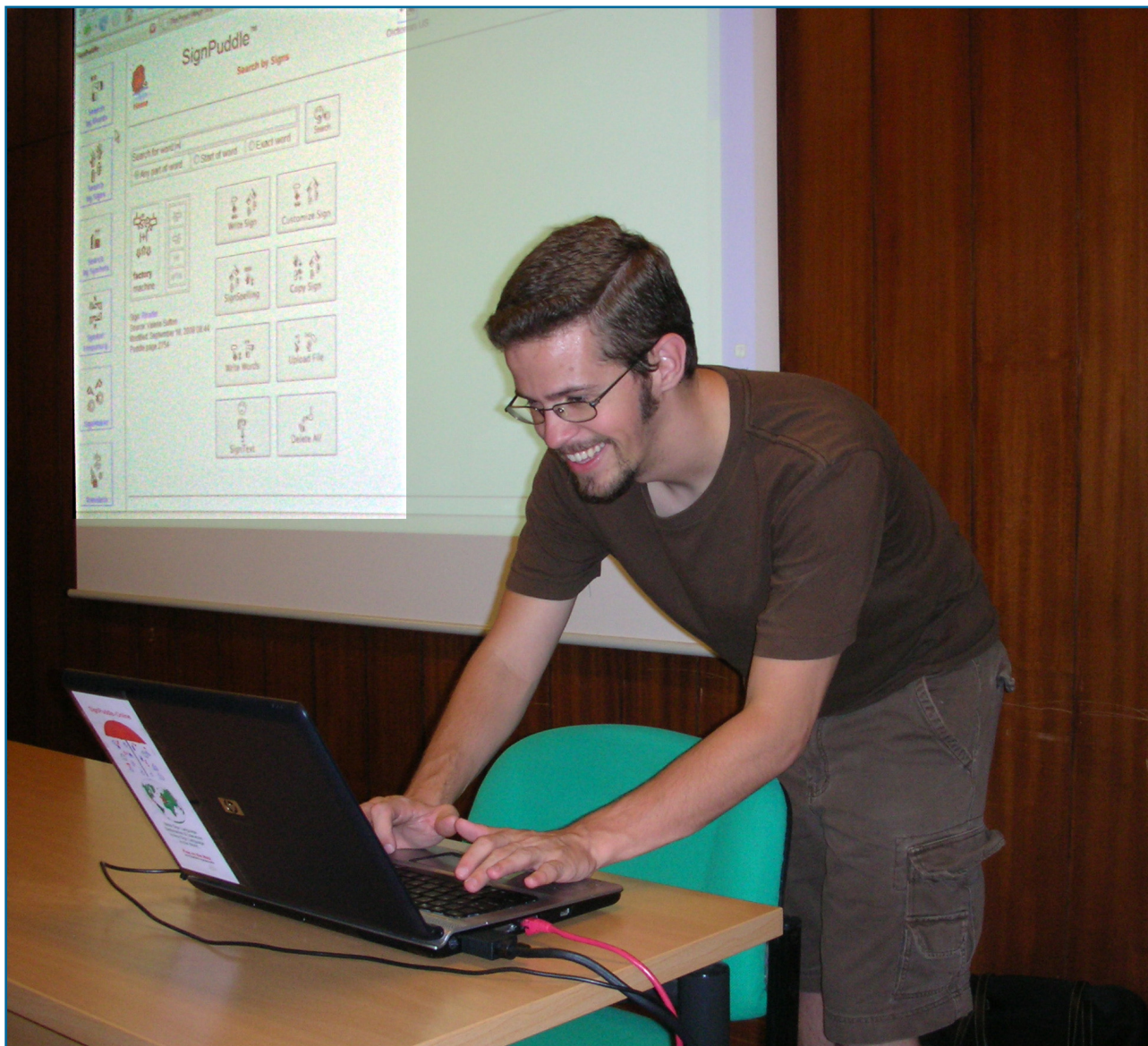
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Teacher's Report continued...

Saturday was a half day with presentations for a different conference, "The Societas Linguistica Europaea 2009 (SLE 2009) Conference", held at the Universidade de Lisboa, in a special workshop called "Listening to Silent Languages". The presentations were mostly the same as the ones that were given on Tuesday with a few new ones. Deb Chan and Diane interpreted for me from ASL to English. During my presentation on SignWriting, participants asked the typical questions: What is SignWriting for? Why use it? How can one learn SignWriting? and I answered them all. So it was a very positive experience.

I traveled home to California on Sunday morning, already missing all the new friends I had made in Portugal! I would love to go back to Lisbon again for a longer time to see everyone again. I would also love to have some time to see the beautiful country of Portugal. I will never forget this wonderful experience...Thank you to everyone, for your kindness and hospitality! Adam Frost, September 15, 2009, frost@signwriting.org



SignWriting in Germany & Ethiopia

Report & Photos by Stefan Woehrmann, September 27, 2009



Above: Stefan Woehrmann explains SignWriting on German TV on the Sehen Statt hoeren program, 2005.

2009 Report

by Stefan Woehrmann, September 27, 2009

Eyasu Tamene from Ethiopia and I have been working together on a document showing the hand-shapes of the Ethiopian Manual Alphabet (EMA), for several years now, but our work has always been through the internet. Even though we have exchanged photos, we had never met in person. So when I learned that Eyasu was attending a conference in Cologne, Germany, I invited Eyasu to take a train from Cologne to Osnabruck, so we could meet. I met Eyasu at the train station (see photo below). We liked each other from the first moment!!



SignWriting in Germany & Ethiopia

Report & Photos by Stefan Woehrmann, September 27, 2009

2009 Report continued...

Eyasu Tamene is one of the coordinators of the new Bachelor's program in Ethiopian Sign Language and Deaf Culture, in the Department of Linguistics at Addis Ababa University. SignWriting is included in the student's studies there. Some of the students are in touch with the SignWriting List and some write SignWriting by hand already!

There is an Ethiopian Sign Language SignPuddle online, where students and teachers can add their signs and documents written in SignWriting:

Ethiopian SignPuddle Online

<http://www.signbank.org/signpuddle/index2.html#sgn-ET>



**New BA Program in
Ethiopian Sign Language
and Deaf Culture
Department of Linguistics
Addis Ababa University
<http://www.aau.edu.et>**



Above: Eyasu Tamene, from Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, writes Ethiopian letters on the blackboard in Germany.

SignWriting in Germany & Ethiopia

Report & Photos by Stefan Woehrmann, September 27, 2009



2009 Report continued...

We went to the school where I teach...the Osnabrück School for the Deaf. Eyasu took part in some lessons in my classroom and showed some Ethiopian signs to my deaf students - a wonderful opportunity to broaden their insight about deafness and Sign Languages in the world!

Eyasu and I are working on developing a document on the Ethiopian Manual Alphabet (EMA). I am working on the large task of creating a TrueType Font (TT) of all drawn handshapes so that the students in Ethiopia will be able to understand easily the SignWriting symbols for these handshapes.



Above: Eyasu Tamene demonstrates the Ethiopian Manual Alphabet (EMA) for deaf students in Germany. Ethiopian fingerspelling includes some unusual and new handshapes for western signers.

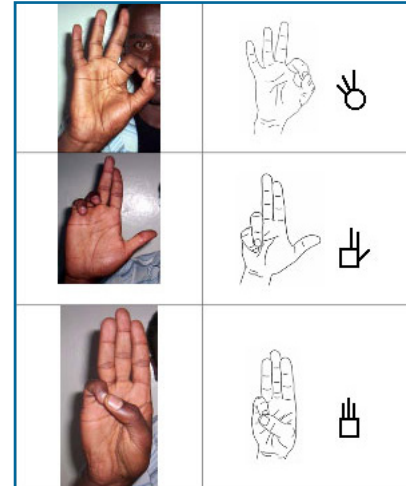
SignWriting in Germany & Ethiopia

Report & Photos by Stefan Woehrmann, September 27, 2009

2009 Report continued...

Eyasu is learning SignWriting and SignPuddle. I tried to show some basics on how to use SignPuddle software, for example, how to access and use the dictionary. We wrote a short phrase in Ethiopian Sign Language and copied and pasted signs and went through the "translation" option. I showed him how to use the SignMail function and how to look for signs by symbols.

Eyasu had to leave the same day he arrived, in the late afternoon, so we did not have much time, but the good thing is that we met in person. Thanks for the visit, Eyasu. I hope to visit Ethiopia someday!



SignWriting in Ethiopia
<http://www.signwriting.org/ethiopia>

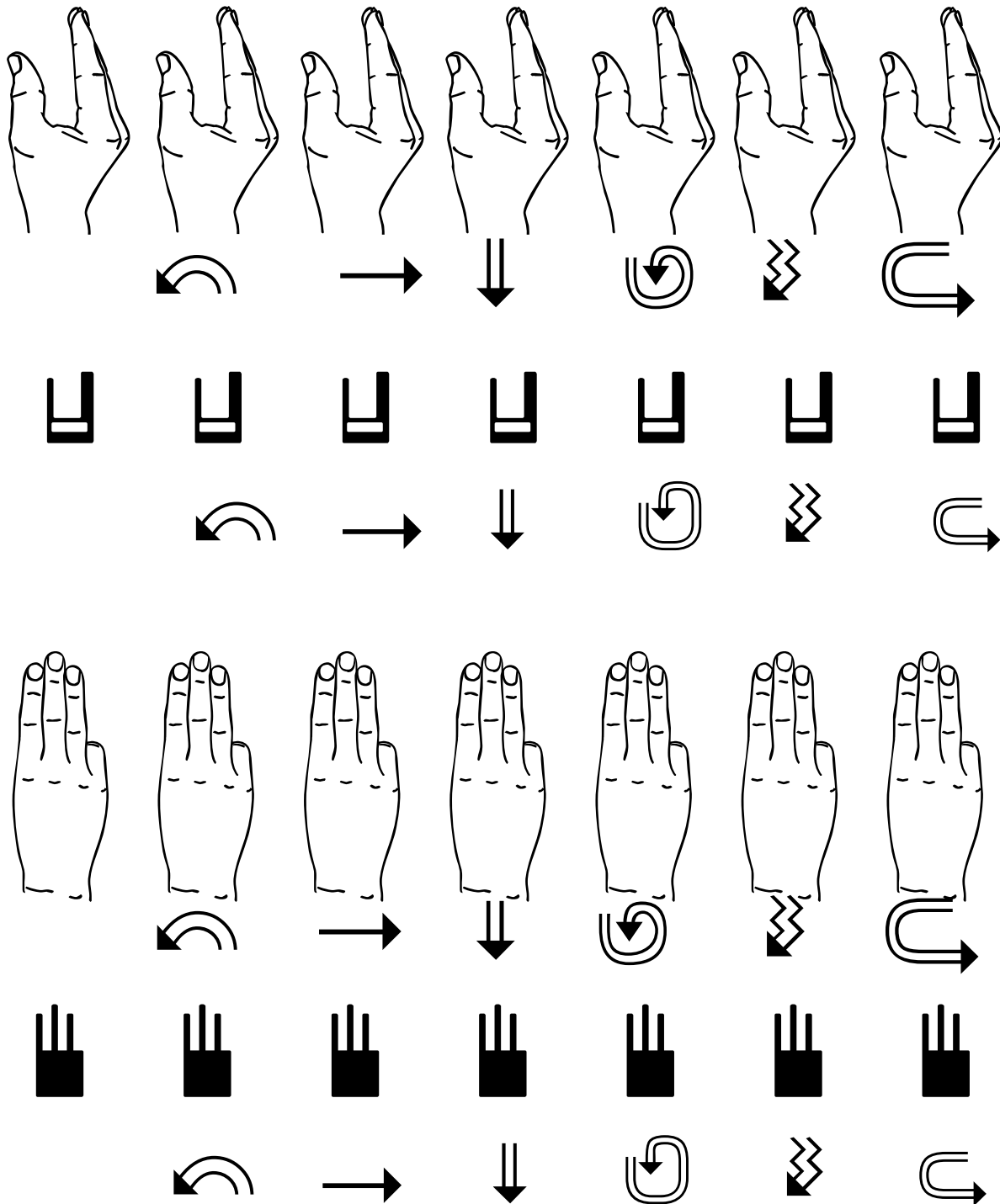
Below: Stefan demonstrates the sign for HEARING, while Eyasu uses SignPuddle Software.
























SignWriting in Germany & Ethiopia

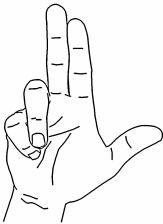
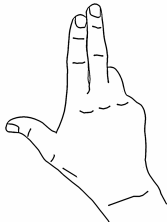






















Report & Photos by Stefan Woehrmann, September 27, 2009


















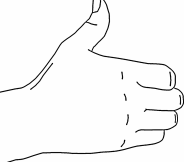


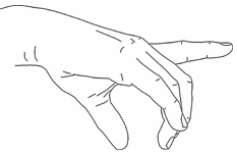
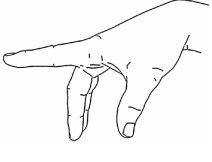


I (Stefan) am creating True Type Fonts of Ethiopian Handshapes, based on Eyasu's demonstrations and teachings. On the following pages you will see some examples, although there is much more work to complete.


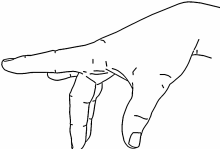












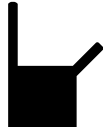



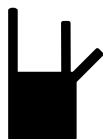








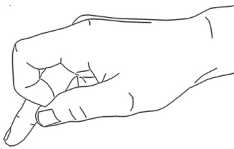



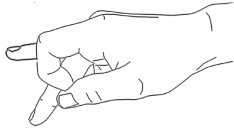






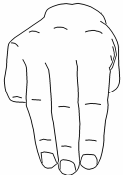











2 examples of one handshape with 7 variations

hands drawn by Stefan Wöhrmann			EMA number 1- 33
receptive point of view	expressive point of view		
			
			
			
			
			

			Z
			θ
			4
	 seen from top down expressive		T

SignWriting® Year-End Report 2009

...Important Events Around The World...

8

The 2009 SignWriting Document Preservation Project

<http://www.signwriting.org/literature/preservation>

The SignWriting Document Preservation Project (SWDP) received an unusual grant in 2009 to fund the re-writing of hundreds of old SignWriting documents that were written by hand or by old software from 1974 to 2004. The documents were re-written into our new modern web-based software, SignPuddle Online, which provides free web access to a large online archive of SignWriting dictionaries and literature from over 40 sign languages:

SignPuddle Online

<http://www.signbank.org/signpuddle>

SignWriting copyists looked at old documents and copied them one sign at a time, symbol by symbol, into SignPuddle Online. Because of this preservation work, we can now produce printed versions of these old dictionaries and documents, and web visitors can read them online. For example, a complete 7000 sign dictionary from Spain is now available in SignPuddle Online:

Spanish Sign Language Dictionary Madrid

<http://www.signbank.org/SignPuddle1.5/index.php?ui=5&sgn=55>

Over 100 documents were preserved in 2009. Here are a few of the titles:

American Sign Language

1. One Harbor Poem
2. ASL Grammar Lesson: Topics
3. ASL Grammar Lesson: Relative Clauses
4. ASL Grammar Lesson: Questions in ASL
5. ASL Grammar Lesson: Classifiers
6. Good Samaritan
7. Foreword by Darline Clark Gunsauls
8. ASL Newsletters 1995
9. ASL Newsletters 1996
10. ASL Newsletters 1997-1998
11. National Association of the Deaf (NAD)
12. Frosty the Snowman
13. Cinderella
14. Goldilocks Levels 2, 3 and 4
15. Fond Memories by Paulette Sottak

Brazilian Sign Language

1. Menino Pastor Lobo
2. Exodo
3. Davi
4. Uma
5. Historia Alvaro
6. Historia Porqui
7. Nacional
8. Proverbios

Nicaraguan Sign Language

1. Babar
2. History of Nicaragua
3. Balto Togo
4. Matematicas
5. Elves Shoemaker
6. Helios Phaeton Myth
7. Little Red Riding Hood
8. Three Little Pigs
9. David and the Giant
10. Frog
11. Greek Myths
12. Lindbergh
13. Olmo

Spanish Sign Language

1. 7000-sign dictionary
2. Balloon
3. Birdjar
4. Dicho1
5. El Cancer
6. Ponce de Leon
7. Little Red Riding Hood
8. Three Little Pigs
9. Tom Thumb
10. EMU2
11. Goldilocks & 3 Bears
12. Mushroom
13. 140 page Mystery Novel
14. Romeo
15. Tomatoes
16. Violin
17. Navidad1
18. Olentzero
19. Historia SignoEscritura