

ABSTRACT
Presentation 30
SignWriting Symposium 2014

Presenting the SignWriting App To Deaf Students in Germany & Hearing Students in San Diego

Elena Eroshkin
San Diego, California
eeroshkin@me.com

Speech and language is one area of educational apps that has expanded with great success. Recent Apple-based technology (such as the iPad and the iPhone) has fundamentally changed what and how teachers teach in classes and how student learn the material. Due to these new developments, we are able to easily reach out to the younger generation of the 21st century much faster than before.

A great example would be the implication of flashcards into the SignWriting App that App developer Jake Chasan and I designed to incorporate traditional study methods into a program that would greatly decrease the time spent studying and increase the amount the user would learn. I was able to witness these high-scale results in Canyon Crest Academy High School (11th-12th

graders), at San Diego Mira Costa Collage, and when I came to the All-Deaf School in Osnabruck, Germany.

The most memorable moment of this trip was the presentation of my project in Germany at the Osnabruck School for Deaf children. I fell in love with this school right away. The teachers of this school have experience in every area, including math, science, history, and other languages. They work very hard to collaborate with each other to provide the best education for their students, making the school environment very safe and enjoyable for all the kids. It is crucial to find an environment where deaf children receive attention and support.

I had the honor of meeting Stefan Wohrmann, an amazing teacher with great skills and expertise in challenging and nurturing his students and helping them lead the fullest and most fulfilling life possible. He works with enthusiasm and inspiration so well and effectively, using his knowledge of language, math, science, and psychology. Everybody at this school knows, loves, and respects him.

When I walked into the classroom, there were six deaf students. I tried to communicate with each of them... shaking their hands, having eye-to-eye contacts, smiles, and just share mutual respect for just a moment. How could I not be attached to this unbelievable miracle, and my role in it? It is really rewarding to be a part of something bigger than yourself, being able to touch these children's lives for one day and be there and talk to them and help them learn about this new SignWriting App as a small challenge to overcome and learn from it.

All of these students' emotions and smiles showed me that our App was doing something to improve the learning of SignWriting and education of the individuals learning it. I saw that the

children enjoyed using the App, answering the questions, on the quizzes, and I was astonished how quickly these German children were picking up the new English SignWriting Signs and associating them to the words. Still today, my heart glows at the memory of my intimate moments with these rare people, a moment located in Osnabruck School, Germany.

I would like to thank several people who made this App possible. I would like to thank [Valerie Sutton](#) for creating SignWriting and making it possible for us to develop and present a tool to expand this language. I would like to thank App developer [Jake Chasan](#) for teaching me how to program and that computers do not naturally dislike me, and I am just pressing the wrong button. I would like to thank the project advisor, Cynthia Chasan for advising me throughout this lengthy but absolutely phenomenal experience. I would like to thank [Adam Frost](#) for his time, attention and support.