



# ONE GESTURE IS ENOUGH

GUIDELINE  
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## Guideline for the Recording and Display of Sign Language Material



With the support of the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
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## **Skills and Tools**

**To record sign language videos, you will need people, skills, and tools to:**

- Do the sign language interpretation
- Record it
- Edit the video file

## **Skills and general requirements**

The team should be comprised of people who bring together the following competencies:

### **Narrator**

The narrator will be responsible for transmitting the message in sign language in the video and presenting the content clearly. This team member will also participate in the validation and linguistic adaptation of the material.

**The narrator should possess the following profile:**

- Deaf or hard of hearing (this will ensure that the content is not just transmitted in a linguistically effective way, but that it reflects a way of understanding the world and important visual behaviours)
- Fluency in sign language
- Native knowledge of the local sign language
- Recognized by the Deaf community as role models in the knowledge of sign language
- Fluency in written language
- Training and experience in general linguistics, language teaching and interpretation,
- Prior experience of working with the Deaf community.
- Knowledge of the Deaf culture and the Deaf community.
- A propensity to interact periodically with members of the Deaf community.



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- The ability and experience to translate written materials into sign language and vice versa.
- Knowledge of audiovisual production, design and editing.
- Skills to control, validate and follow up on the final result.

### **The Sign Language Coach and Team:**

**The Sign Language Coach:** The sign language coach who assists the narrator during the production of sign language videos is an individual with proficiency in:

- the local sign language
- interpreting sign language

**The Sign Language Team:** The sign language team evaluates and approves the recordings made by the narrator. These individuals must be:

- Representative of the Deaf community.
- Able to serve as linguistic role models.
- Able to evaluate and approve the quality of sign language and delivery in the videos.

**Technical expert:** The technical expert should be able to work with and make the most of the below presented recommendations.



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## **Technical recommendations**

### **Camera format**

- Preferably the person behind the camera should know sign language.
- A digital camera should be used because of its superior usability, quality and edition.
- The camera should have sufficient storage to record 60 minutes of video.
- The camera should be able to film in high definition. The exact quality to be used is decided in post-production but, for editing purposes, filming of the highest quality is crucial.
- The camera should preferably allow the aperture and exposure time to be configured manually.
- The camera should preferably have an optical zoom that also allows manual focus.
- The camera should preferably allow white balance to be set automatically or manually.

### **Clothing of the Narrator:**

- In consideration of low-vision deaf individuals, wearing solid clothing that contrasts with the skin tone of the narrator is recommended: either dark colours (e.g., black, brown, navy blue, dark green) or light colours (e.g., off-white or peach). Use colours that are easy to distinguish -Usually it is best if the background and the signer's clothing are solid colours that contrast with their skin tone. That way their hands and face are easier to see.
- The clothing should not be striped or patterned.
- No low V-neck or scooped neckline.
- Though this is not a must, long sleeves ending at the wrists may be preferred.
- Hair style, jewellery and clothing should not obscure the face and hands. (This requirement can be adjusted to reflect sensitivity to various cultural contexts.)



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## **Lighting**

- Ensure good lighting to help make the signer clearly visible.
- When filming, special attention must be paid to the shadows from the screen or from the presenter, which should be kept to a minimum.
- The light should be sufficient to generate contrast between the screen and the narrator.
- Natural light is recommended.
- Paying attention to the shadows that may appear is very important.
- When using artificial light, there are two methods:
  - o Three-point lighting: A main light is positioned about 45 degrees to the right or left of the subject and 45 degrees downward, pointing to where the face and torso are located. A filler light is placed behind and opposite the main light, at the height of the camera, and a rear light is positioned slightly above the subject, shining back to the screen.
  - o Flat lighting: Two lights are positioned behind the camera, in opposite directions, to cover the entire surface and eliminate shadows.

## **Studio and equipment**

- Film studio
- Recording studio
- 1 digital professional camera
- 1 tripod
- 1 computer
- Editing software
- Video compression software
- Screen, green or blue color
- Map of the studio showing the necessary distances between the camera, the presenter, the reflectors, the screen, etc.



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### **Recording and filming**

- The camera should be at eye level. The narrator should be signing directly to the person who is watching the video.
- The signs should not be cut off by the camera (the narrator signing upwards, downwards and to the sides must be visible).
  - Capturing the full signing space - most sign languages the signing space extends from well below the waist to above the head and at least an elbow width to each side.
- The camera should not be moved; it should remain in the same position.
- An indication of the space the signer can use must be provided.
- The correct position of the narrator should be marked on the floor.
- If possible, it is best to disable automatic focusing as it reduces the filming quality, and to use manual focusing on the face. Either a manual zoom should be used or the camera should be placed at the correct distance.
- Minimum space (less than 2 meters) should exist between the screen, the narrator and the camera.
- The presenter must be natural and should not look towards the assistant or stop signing in the camera.
- It is essential that the Narrator practice the material thoroughly and respect the written material.
- The translation team should focus on a conceptually accurate translation into sign language, not on a word-for-word translation.
- It is preferable to record small sections at a time to facilitate the editing and keep it natural.



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### **Additional tasks**

- Make sure that the studio is clean and available.
- Make sure that the camera is charged or can be plugged in during filming.
- Check that the lights are working and that the necessary cables are available.
- Convene the technical coordinator, the narrator and coach and the cameraperson.
- Arrive at the studio one hour before filming starts to prepare the equipment.
- Film short test clips before starting the real shoot.

### **Post production:**

- Ensure the signer is large enough on the screen accessed. Viewers need to be able to clearly see all movements and facial expressions.
- Make sign language video(s) easy to discover and use. (see: Guide for accessible design of web site and phone application)