

**Title**

A 'Cat', a 'Köttur', and a 'Con Mèò': Unpacking spoken language multilingualism for DHH children

**Abstract**

More and more often children who are D/deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) are growing up and learning in environments where more than one spoken language is used. Maybe they use Turkish at home and German and Austrian Sign Language are the languages of instruction in the classroom. Perhaps Mandarin and Malay are used at home but Tamil is a frequent language of interaction in the community. Possibly Portuguese is used at home and at school, but English is being learnt as an additional language in secondary school. These are but a few of the possible ways in which the linguistic diversity, especially the spoken language linguistic diversity, of DHH children is changing and growing.

This growing diversity is challenging our knowledge and practices for raising and educating DHH children. This presentation will describe spoken language multilingualism for DHH children from a number of perspectives. Firstly, current perspectives on the cognitive advantages and disadvantages of multilingualism will be described and related to DHH children. Secondly, the current evidence base for what we know about the speech, language, and literacy development of DHH children who use more than one spoken language (with or without use of a signed language). Thirdly, parental and professional perspectives on choices about communication mode and language use for DHH children will be described and compared. Finally, the need for interdisciplinary collaboration for supporting, assessing, and monitoring the speech and language development of DHH children will be discussed, with specific reference to assessment and intervention practices.