

IMPORTANCE OF THIS WORK

"As a deaf teacher of SignWriting, I consider this book to be a very special milestone!

I intend to use it as teaching material in my classes. In the past, when SignWriting was introduced in 1974, a manual was created to explain the rules of this system. Over the years, this manual was gradually improved, but initially it was only available in English. This meant that deaf Americans who could not read or write in English were unable to access information on how SignWriting worked. The same was true for deaf people from other countries.

With the advent of the Internet, the manual was translated into several languages, including Portuguese, Spanish, German, Japanese, and others. However, there was still one obstacle to overcome: deaf people who could not read or write in the language of their home country were also unable to access the manual. Furthermore, when translated into other spoken languages, the manual did not present an easy-to-follow teaching sequence, perhaps due to the technical language or formal writing style.

In Brazil, SignWriting arrived in the 1990s, but it was only in 2015 that it began to become popular and be adopted by deaf and hearing writers (interpreters or bilinguals) in their daily lives. This happened thanks to the didactic adaptation of the material to updated Portuguese and the creation of workshops, mini-courses, complete courses, art and videos that transformed the knowledge of SignWriting using the SignWriting method directly into Libras.

However, there is still a challenge to be faced. The ethnography of deaf people is diverse, and there are deaf people who do not know Libras or who started learning late. Even with current videos, some still have difficulty understanding the system. This is why Mauricio Barreto's work, which uses more images than text, is so valuable. He takes advantage of intersemiotic resources to reach an even greater diversity of deaf people who were previously deprived of this information.

When I came across Maurício's material, I felt compelled to convince him to publish it in book format. During our conversation, I explained the importance of deaf ethnography, especially considering deaf people who have little or no knowledge of Libras. To my delight, he readily accepted my proposal for publication and agreed to make the material available for free. This decision will allow it to reach everyone, regardless of their social class. This is true inclusion! I sincerely hope that Mauricio Barreto and other deaf people and teachers continue with this project of explaining the Sutton (SignWriting) system using more images than text. This way, we will be able to have more deaf people who are literate and learn to read and write directly in their sign languages, empowering them and showing the richness of deaf culture!" (Prof. Carlos Cristian)