



Bildung und Kultur

Sokrates
Comenius



The QESWHIC Project

Qualification of Educational Staff Working with Hearing- Impaired Children

www.lehn-acad.net

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The good news is: we are seeing more and more children with severe or total hearing loss attending mainstream kindergartens and schools. A number of factors have made this possible over the last ten years, chief among them being technological advances such as the development of high-performance hearing aids and multi-channel cochlear implants, giving even deaf children access to the world of hearing.

Other beneficial influences include early detection (as neonatal hearing screening becomes more widespread), with these tests rapidly followed by diagnostic assessment and early provision with a hearing aid or cochlear implant. The increasing acceptance of auditory-verbal education as the method of choice in habilitation and rehabilitation is also having a positive effect.

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The not-so-good news is that, for staff at mainstream kindergartens and teachers at mainstream schools, the wide-ranging theme of hearing and hearing disorders, their effect on the personality of the developing child and the question of “how do I deal with these children?” remain virtually uncharted territory. This state of affairs applies not only to Europe; it is also evident in the United States, South America and other parts of the world. The recognition of this manifestly severe deficit gave rise to an idea:



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Creation of a skills-upgrading programme for teachers and other education professionals in Europe who work with hearing-impaired children and adolescents

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The task was a rather complex one, requiring a great deal of both imagination and perseverance.

The first stage involved looking for experienced and dedicated partners who were willing to commit to the project - to give of themselves personally without expecting any financial reward. The aim was to recruit partners from different European countries, all contributing a specific area of expertise. It was important that those involved should have at least a similar view of things, enabling them to work together constructively over a relatively long period.



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The course materials cover:

- ✦ the anatomy, physiology and pathology of the auditory system – i.e. the most important medical aspects
- ✦ audiometry, hearing aids and cochlear implants – i.e. the chief technical aspects
- ✦ methods of rehabilitation and of monitoring progress
- ✦ parental counselling and support – i.e. crucial educational considerations
- ✦ psychological, social and ethical aspects of modern auditory rehabilitation

The content and scope of the material to be prepared, serving as the basis for this skills-upgrading scheme, had to be very carefully defined in terms of the target group. At the same time, it was important not to lose sight of the overall goal. We wished to provide the “students” - i.e. the therapists, teachers and other education professionals - with the knowledge and the tools they needed to enable them to relate to the children in an appropriate way, to maximize their hearing potential and to help them exploit it in spoken language. We also wanted to empower them to give useful counselling to parents and to share with the parenting team the principles of auditory-verbal education as an approach that gets results.

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Contributors had to be found who were willing and able to write authoritative yet easy-to-understand texts covering a range of topics: the anatomy, physiology and pathology of hearing; audiometry; hearing aids and cochlear implants; methods used in rehabilitation; ethical and social aspects of modern rehabilitative approaches; and working with parents. These contributors had to agree to submit their respective chapters by a specified deadline and – an aspect that would test their enthusiasm to the full! – to carry out their assignments free of charge if possible.

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We felt it was extremely important that the course content be made easily accessible to all, and so posting it on the Internet seemed the obvious choice. This would enable other people – those interested in the field but not part of the pilot group - to view the material. We did not want to collate the texts in the form of a printed publication until a later date. It was clear from the start that the first language would be English; the other languages used were governed by the selection of partners.

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Last but not least, the central issue of funding arose. The willingness and commitment shown by our partners notwithstanding, it was clear that the project would entail quite considerable costs, and before launching the venture we wanted to find an organization or a generous sponsor willing to provide the necessary financial backing. We found out all we possibly could about the Brussels-based educational funding programmes and came across SOCRATES, which has an overall budget of 1,850 million euros for the years 2000 – 2006, and one of its subprogrammes, COMENIUS 2.1. These schemes are defined as providing assistance for lifelong learning and Comenius ...



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„ ... is aimed at improving the quality of school education and consolidating its European dimension, in particular by supporting front-line educational staff and upgrading their skills...”

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*Johann Amos Comenius
(1592-1670)*

Some of you may well be familiar with the man from whom the programme gets its name, Johann Amos Comenius. I only had a vague idea about who he was, and so I looked him up – again on the Internet.

There are three small towns in south-eastern Moravia in the present-day Czech Republic which lay claim to being Comenius's birthplace. Born in the year 1592, on completing his studies he was ordained as a priest in a Protestant church; he was then compelled to flee, together with many other non-Catholics, before becoming a bishop in Poland in 1648.

After the Great Fire of Lesno in 1656, in which he lost all his manuscripts (including his great Dictionary of the Czech Language) he moved to the Netherlands, where he died in Amsterdam in 1670. His greatest and most lasting contribution came in the sphere of learning. He had a number of ideas which were, for their day, revolutionary. For example, he advocated that both boys and girls should complete several years of education, that small children should attend nursery school, and that talented individuals should be encouraged to study at university. For me, and doubtless for many others, his most important proposition is that of "learning through play". He was convinced that children would learn far more easily if they could get hold of objects and play with them, as opposed to only being told about them.

"Homo ludens – Homo felix!"

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As a coordinating body we were fortunate, at the early stages of our deliberations, to be able to enlist the services of Heidelberg University of Education - specifically, in the person of Professor Gottfried Diller and others. On the strength of its participation in language-teaching assistanceship programmes under the auspices of COMENIUS, as well as in the Erasmus and Tempus programmes and in the thematic network called STERATE, the University seemed virtually tailor-made for taking on the planning and organization of the project, initiating the formation of the Steering Group, and organizing the first team meeting. The University takes care of all aspects of the scheme's contractual and financial management and is involved in the evaluation of the project. It was, therefore, necessary to set up and staff a project office, a role for which Peter Graser kindly volunteered his services. The technical platform required for providing the website and the chat forums is also part of the University's remit, and a further post had to be created for the purpose of maintaining the system.

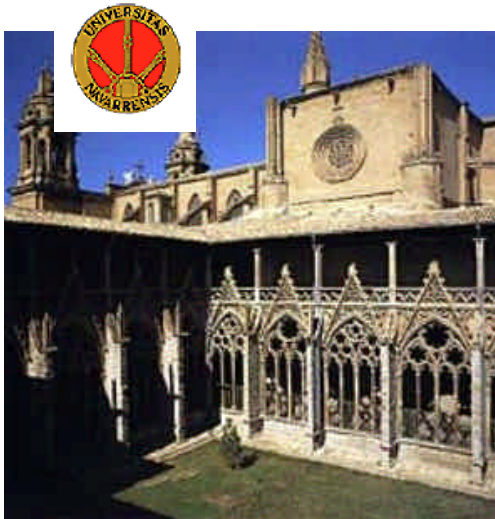
We hope that the course can, in the medium term, be incorporated as a regular programme of study at the University.

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The Professor Ernst Lehnhardt Foundation was established in 1993 with the aim of “giving long-term educational, psychological and technical support to children born deaf or with early-onset (acquired) deafness who use a cochlear implant, as well as instructing and training those involved in providing this support, including the parents...” Headed by Professor Ernst Lehnhardt and Dr Monika Lehnhardt, the Foundation contributes outstanding medical, audiological and technical expertise in the field covered by the project, and can call upon an international network of physicians, audiologists, partner technicians and acousticians, and therapists. The long-term objective is to establish a Lehnhardt Academy, dedicated to upgrading the skills of this project’s overall target group, to the furtherance of auditory-verbal education, and to facilitating parental counselling throughout Europe.

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The University of Navarra is a state-approved training centre for a wide range of vocational fields. Its Department of Educational Science offers degree programmes in both education and educational psychology, and the Department is currently taking part in the SOCRATES project entitled “Educating hospitalized children”. This partner’s specific task is to evaluate our project’s results. We hope that, in the long term, the participation of our Spanish partner will enable us to disseminate the material in Central and South America as well.

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Charles University in Prague is one of the longest-established and most internationally prestigious academic teaching and research institutions in Europe. With its Faculty of Education, and especially its Department of Special Education, it boasts the Czech Republic's leading centre for training educational staff who work with the hearing impaired.

The Department of Special Education has already taken part in a number of international research projects and study exchange programmes.

This institution, too, wishes in the medium term to incorporate our course materials as a fully-fledged study programme, and to generate an ongoing multiplier effect by providing links on its own website.

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The Maria Grzegorzewska Academy for Special Education in Warsaw comes under the jurisdiction of the Republic of Poland's Ministry of National Education. As a teaching and research establishment, it offers both Master's and doctoral courses of study in the field of education and conducts academic research. It is Poland's only higher-education institute to specialize in providing professional in-service qualifications and training for special-needs educators, including teachers of the deaf.

The Academy is currently setting up a collaborative academic network with other establishments outside Poland.

The specific role of this partner consists in devising the basic educational and didactical concept for our course.

Within the medium-term future, this institution will also be seeking to incorporate our materials into correspondence courses that it offers.

Owing to its good contacts with publishers, the Academy will be responsible for the final editing of the planned book edition of the course notes, and will be commissioning the printing of the book.



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Letter 1	Hearing Impairment – Educational Possibilities
Letter 2	Functional Anatomy, Physiology and Pathology of the Auditory System
Letter 3	Audiological Assessment
Letter 4	Hearing Aids
Letter 5	Implantable Devices
Letter 6	Habilitation and Rehabilitation of Children
Letter 7	Auditory-Verbal Practice
Letter 8	Techniques, Strategies and Procedures in Auditory-Verbal Therapy
Letter 9	Parental Counselling and Guidance
Letter 10	Interdisciplinary Approach, Cooperation and Support
Letter 11	Success Measurements and Methods of Evaluation
Letter 12	Social, Psychological, Ethical and Anthroposophical Aspects

At the first meeting of our prospective partners' representatives, we agreed on the topics to be dealt with on the course. As long ago as November 2001, the subject areas were assigned to the various partners and suggestions made as to possible additional contributors.

The following aspects are covered in a total of twelve modules which we called “study letters“:

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Gottfried Diller read history and geography for his Honours Teaching Degree from 1969 to 1972. He then studied logopaedics and education for the deaf in Heidelberg from 1977 to 1979 and subsequently took his Diploma in Education in Frankfurt. In 1982 he became Head of Education in the Paediatric Audiology Centre for the Hearing Impaired at the Johannes Vatter School for the Deaf in Friedberg. He did his Ph.D. in 1987 and was then appointed to the post of Headmaster at this School. Since 1993 he has been Professor of didactics of deaf and hearing-impaired children at the University of Education in Heidelberg. He has also been Director of the Rhein-Main Cochlear Implant Centre in Friedberg since 1994.



Martin Kinkel, graduate physicist and PhD; born 1959 in Ludwigshafen/Rhein. Up to 1990 studied physics in Göttingen, 1987 Diploma with a thesis on discrimination of interaural level and time differences in normal-hearing subjects, 1990 Ph.D. with a thesis on the relation between parameters of binaural hearing in normal-hearing and hearing-impaired subjects. After PhD one year as a post-doc at the III. Physikal. Institut and the ENT clinic of Göttingen University. Since 1991 at KIND Hörgeräte, the market-leading dispensing chain for hearing instruments in Germany. Main responsibilities are heading up the company's R&D activities and after-sales service for cochlear implant patients.



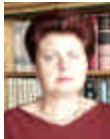
Warren Estabrooks, M.Ed., Dip. Ed. Deaf, Cert. AVT®, is Director of the Auditory-Verbal Centre, Learning to Listen Foundation (LTLF), North York General Hospital, in Toronto, Canada. Prof. Estabrooks is also an international consultant who lectures worldwide on auditory-verbal therapy, education and practice, childhood hearing impairment and cochlear implant habilitation. He is instrumental in the training and development of professionals in related pediatric and adult disciplines. He is a lifetime member of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and one of the founding directors of Auditory-Verbal International Inc. (AVI). He is registered with the College of Teachers of Ontario, has held the position of assistant professor at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Medicine, and he is an International Ambassador of the Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

This line-up has remained unchanged and, today, all the contributors are presented on the Internet with a photograph and a brief personal profile.

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Joanna Kosmalowa, M.A., Ph.D. Educator and Counsellor. She holds the post of Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education at the Maria Grzegorzewska Academy of Special Education in Warsaw, and is Consultant at the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing in Warsaw. She graduated from Warsaw University in 1973 (studies in Polish Language and Literature), completed doctoral studies in education at the Institute of Pedagogical Research in Warsaw (today the Institute of Educational Research). In 1998 she completed postgraduate studies in public administration and special education at George Washington University in Washington D.C., USA – East Central European Scholarship Program (ECESP) and later, in 2001–2002, postgraduate studies in therapy and psychoeducational training in Warsaw and Cracow.



Beata Krahulcova, Ph.D. is based at Charles University in Prague, where she holds the post of associate professor at the Faculty of Education's Department of Special Education, and is also Head of the Department of Psychosocial Sciences at the Faculty of Hussite Theology. Her main areas of professional interest are social work, special ethics, special communication (with a focus on education of the hearing impaired). Research activities: projects focused especially on special communication, diagnostics and early intervention, special education of people with special needs, questions of multiculturalism and multilingualism in special education, concepts of university study programmes and lifelong study programmes for logopedists, special-needs teachers, and social workers.



Monika Lehnhardt was born in Vienna in 1944 and graduated from the University in Vienna. She obtained her Ph.D. in philology, psychology and philosophy. Between 1987 and 1999, during her term as Chief Executive Officer of Cochlear Europe, the company grew in size from two to seventy employees and additional offices were opened in London and Hannover. In 1999 she decided to step down, accepting an offer from the Cochlear Ltd headquarters in Sydney to remain with the company on a consultative basis. In this capacity she travels extensively in Europe and also to the US. She lectures at scientific conferences and organizes congresses for professionals and parents of children with cochlear implants. She is a published author on various topics related to cochlear implants (technical, audiological and rehabilitation aspects). Since 2002 she has been Executive Director of the Professor Ernst Lehnhardt Foundation and a member of the Board of Auditory Verbal International, Inc. (AVI, Inc.).



Ernst Lehnhardt, Prof. Dr. Dr. was born on 26 April 1924. Attended humanistic grammar school. Studied human medicine and dental medicine, gaining a doctorate in both, and obtained his *Habilitation* (postdoctoral lecturing qualification) in ENT in 1959. Senior physician in Rostock University Hospital, Charité Berlin and Hamburg University Hospital. Full professorship in Hannover since 1968, retired in 1993. From 1984 provided deafened adults with cochlear implants and, from 1988, deaf children as well, performing the world's first CI surgery on a deaf-born infant (a one-and-a-half-year-old girl). Implanted about 500 patients up until 1993. Initiated the Hannover Cochlear Implant Centre, where since 1990 more than 700 children have undergone postsurgical rehabilitation of both speech and hearing skills. In recent years has supervised cochlear implant surgery in hospitals (some in Germany and many abroad) and played an active role in the Professor Ernst Lehnhardt Foundation for the auditory-verbal training of deaf children.

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Felisa Peralta López is a Doctor of Educational Science. She holds the post of Assistant Professor in the Department of Education at the University of Navarra, where she teaches subjects in the field of psychopedagogy (educational diagnostics, intervention in developmental impairment, and course practicum). In her capacity as an educationalist, she is currently involved in collaborative work at the Clínica Universitaria de Navarra. She gives courses and speaks on the subject of special education, taking part in a large number of congresses and seminars. She has written two books and several articles about special-needs diagnostics and intervention.



Manuel Manrique: *Academic titles and memberships:* Doctor of Medicine and Surgery. University of Navarra. ENT Consultant at the Clínica Universitaria de Navarra. University of Navarra (Spain). Associate Professor, Oto-Rhino-Laryngology, School of Medicine. University of Navarra from 1996. Director of the CI Programme, University of Navarra from 1989. President of the Spanish Commission for the Early Hearing Loss Detection (CODEPEH) from 1999 to 2002. Secretary of the Otolology Commission of the Oto-Rhino-Laryngology Spanish Society from 2000. Vice-President of the Oto-Rhino-Laryngology Navarra Association from December 2000. Member of the Editorial Board for the "Cochlear Implants International and Interdisciplinary journal". Referee for the TIDE TP 1230-PROSOUND project of the EC. Founder Member of the Hispano-German ENT Society. Member of the Spanish Society of Oto-Rhino-Laryngology, Head and Neck Surgery. *Research:* Currently Principal Investigator of the following research projects: "Atraumatic cochlear surgery" and "Penetrating electrodes in auditory brainstem implants".



George A. Tavartkiladze, Professor, M.D., Ph.D. is Director of the National Research Centre for Audiology and Hearing Rehabilitation, Director of the Course on Clinical Audiology, Russian Medical Academy for Postgraduate Training, Moscow, Russia. *Main research interests:* experimental and clinical audiology, including audiological electrophysiology (acoustically and electrically evoked auditory potentials), frequency selectivity of the auditory periphery, otoacoustic emissions (properties, generation mechanisms, suppression, clinical application), early detection, diagnosis and rehabilitation of hearing disorders, cochlear implantation, hearing aid fitting (more than 220 publications). *Membership of professional societies, extramural activities:* Active Member of the American Academy of Audiology; Association for Research in Otorhinolaryngology; Collegium Oto-Rhino Laryngologicum Amicitiae Sacrum; Member of the Council of the International ERA Study Group; Member of the Executive Committee and General Assembly (Representative of Europe), International Society of Audiology; Member of the Expert Advisory Panel, World Health Organization; Representative of the Russian Federation in the European Federation of Audiology Societies (EFAS); President of the Russian Society of Audiology. Member of the Editorial Boards of various international and national journals.

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- ✍ 1999 The idea is born
- ✍ 2001 The partners are found – and meet up in November
- ✍ 2002 The application is completed in February and submitted to Brussels
- ✍ 2002 The great news – „approved!“ – reaches us in August
- ✍ 2003 The first „study letter“ is posted on the Internet on 1 April – but it’s not an April Fool prank, it’s for real!

It took almost three years from the initial conception of the idea until it finally became reality.

The services provided by all our partners, before we even knew whether Brussels would approve our funding application, have been quite remarkable and are testimony to their terrific enthusiasm.

The decision from Brussels came relatively quickly and the outcome was just what we had

hoped for – the funds we had applied for were provided in full.



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As planned, 12 training modules had been posted on the Internet by January 2005.

All of them are now available not only in English, but also in either one or two other languages, and accessible for anyone who is interested.

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Chat room und homework



Our students regularly have the opportunity to make use of chat rooms. These are organized on an international basis in English, with additional sessions led by the mentors (i.e. the partners' representatives) in the respective languages of the partner countries.

At any given time, the most recently published letter can be viewed on the Internet for discussion, this being led by the author.

The students are also set homework which they send in to their mentors for marking.

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Steering Group meetings

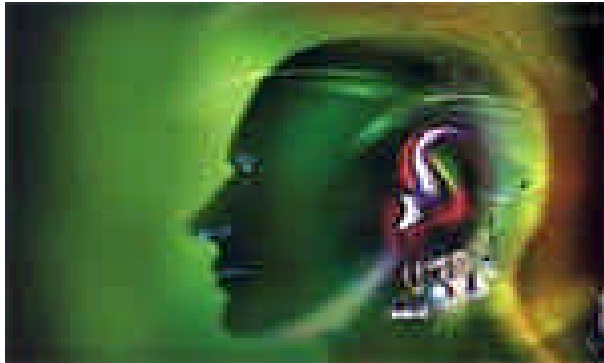


Our Steering Group meetings are extremely important in helping us assess and monitor how well the project is going. So far the representatives have met in Friedberg, Prague, Warsaw and Pamplona.

Over the course of two full days, progress is discussed, and any weaknesses brought to light and remedied. So far there has been a 100 % attendance record at all meetings. Detailed minutes are kept and sent to the participants. These also contain action points that each representative has to deal with by a specified deadline.

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The future



Our project is set to run until the autumn of 2005 and is rounded off with a pilot course involving our 24 "students" (eight from Germany, six from Spain, six from Poland and four from the Czech Republic) and all the contributors. The students had a final examination to prove that they have thoroughly assimilated the material.

Our long-term goal is to disseminate the material as efficiently as possible, to publish it in book form and to offer training programmes not only over the Internet but also in the form of workshops and seminars.