

Hands on the Stars

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Abstract. Hands on the Stars is a long-term project developed by the IAU Commission C1 Education and Development of Astronomy and its WG3 Astronomy for Equity and Inclusion with the goal of creating the first international comparative list of astronomical words in as many sign languages as possible.

Keyword. Accessibility in Astronomy

1. Introduction

This project is motivated by the fact that technical words in Astronomy are absent in many sign languages. To alleviate this problem, we proposed the creation of a comparative list of signs that already exist in different languages so they can be used as the starting point to create these signs in other languages in which they have not yet been defined. The ultimate goal would be to try to converge as much as possible to a universal sign, although this is quite difficult as signs are developed with a strong link to each particular cultural heritage.

2. An OAD funded project: Sign Language Universal Encyclopedic Dictionary

Our starting point was the dictionary in French sign language *Les mains dans les étoiles: Dictionnaire encyclopédique d'astronomie pour la Langue des Signes Française (LSF)* by D. Proust *et al.*, 2009. This dictionary contains approximately 300 signs describing several classical celestial bodies such as planets, asteroids, galaxies and quasars, as well as technical terms such as telescope, spectrograph and photometry. Many of them were developed by the authors of this book as these terms did not exist previously.

The OAD project had therefore two goals. First, we translated the French Encyclopedic Dictionary into English and Spanish. The translations are available online at the WG3 website (<http://sion.frm.utn.edu.ar/iau-inclusion/>). Second, we developed a first comparative list comprising 47 astronomical terms in 31 languages. The list is available at <http://bit.ly/2HHsXul>. We are currently working on an expansion of this list.

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