

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
University of Tlemcen



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Attitudes Towards Sign Language Learning: Case of English Master
Two Students in the University of Tlemcen

Dissertation submitted to the department of English as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for Master's degree in Language Studies

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ
أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ
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DECLARATION

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Miss Aicha BELHACHEMI

Date:

Signature:

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation

To my wonderful parents 'Hafida' and 'Boucif' for their support, their love... for everything.

To my sister 'Souad', and my brothers 'Fouad', 'Habib', and 'Abderrahmene'. I would tell them I am lucky to have siblings like you...

To all people I love from far and near.

Thank you all.

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to several individuals who have significantly contributed to the completion of this dissertation.

First, I am deeply grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Amina Benguedda, for her invaluable guidance and support throughout this research. I would also like to thank the jury members, Dr. Lamia Benadla and Dr. Kamila Negadi for their time to give feedback and encouragement.

Special thanks go to Dr. Mohammad Al-Ahmad Hwidi, a Syrian doctoral student, who provided me with a substantial number of sources that were extremely beneficial in accomplishing this dissertation. I am also indebted to Dr. Mohammed Yasser, an Egyptian sign language interpreter, and his Deaf parents, who generously shared valuable information about sign language and Deaf culture.

I would like to extend my appreciation to Dr. Hichem Abdelouafi, an Algerian writer, for his assistance with his book and research on the deaf community in Adrar. Additionally, I am thankful to Dr. Abdelhafid Berkani and Dr. Abdelhak, Algerian sign language interpreters, for sharing their experiences with deaf individuals, which greatly enriched my understanding of the subject.

I also want to thank my classmate Zahra Daoud for her support and advice which were very helpful in completing this research work.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all the participants who collaborated on this work. Your contributions were essential, and I am truly grateful for your support.

Abstract

This dissertation investigates attitudes towards sign language learning by hearing people to foster effective communication with deaf people. It shares awareness about this group and promotes their inclusion in society. The research work is composed of two chapters; the first chapter, named 'Literature Review', sheds light on the main points that enhance comprehension of the topic, while the second chapter provides a deep understanding of the methodology utilized. The study requires the selection of three different types of sample populations: the first represents Master Two students from English Department of the University of Tlemcen, to examine their attitudes towards sign language learning. The second population consists of students and teachers from higher schools for teachers of Deaf and Mute in Beni-Messous, Algiers. The third population represents deaf individuals who were selected randomly. Two research instruments were used for this research; the questionnaire addressed 32 students from the first sample population and interviews targeted 12 participants from the second sample population and six deaf individuals from the third sample population. The second and third were interviewed separately to explore the importance of sign language learning from both sides. The results obtained show that students shared positive attitudes towards sign language learning, motivated primarily by their desire to enhance communication with the deaf community. The findings also highlight the role of learning sign language in promoting inclusivity for deaf individuals and benefiting hearing individuals with various opportunities to work in sign language domains. To conclude, this study explores the importance of sign language learning by hearing people for the sake of creating an environment where both hearing and deaf communities feel valued and integrated.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AJSL: Algerian Jewish Sign Language

AlgSL: Algerian Sign Language

ArSL: Arabic Sign Language

Apps: Applications

ASL: American Sign Language

ASLRC: African Sign Language Resource Center

dB: Decibels

KSL: Kuwaiti Sign Language

LH: Left Hemisphere

PSL: Palestinian Sign Language

QFI: Qatar Foundation International

RH: Right Hemisphere

SL: Sign Language

SLF: French Sign Language

SLR: Sign Language Recognition

WFD: World Federation of the Deaf

WHO: World Health Organization

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GENERAL
INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

Allah says in ‘Annaḥl’ chapter, verse 78: “*And Allah brought you out from the wombs of your mothers while you know nothing. And he gave you hearing, sight, and hearts that you might give thanks (to Allah)*”. Hearing is a pivotal sense emphasized in this verse, while all human senses are important, hearing seems to hold a special place in the Quran. It is not just a psychological ability; it is a profound connection to the world around us. Hearing is seen as a blessing, a way through which we acquire knowledge, learn from others, communicate, share ideas, express feelings, and build relationships.

However, not everyone shares this gift; millions of people worldwide are affected by deafness—the inability to hear—. They encounter several barriers in their lives; deafness makes it difficult for them to interact with others, participate in social activities, and access information.

Therefore, it is essential to emphasize the importance of inclusivity and awareness in our community. We must strive to create an environment where everyone feels valued and included. This begins with raising awareness about deaf people and advocating for their rights. One powerful way to cultivate inclusivity is learning sign language, or at least knowing its basics. This way enables effective communication with this group and thus they feel a sense of belonging in society.

This study aims at sharing awareness about sign language, and motivate people to learn it for the purpose of an inclusive environment for everyone. It studies the attitudes of hearing people towards sign language learning, and how its learning can enable a better life for deaf people.

Thus, in regards to these research objectives, two research questions are raised:

1. What are students’ attitudes towards learning sign language?
2. What is the importance of learning sign language?

In return, the following hypotheses are proposed:

1. Students have positive attitudes towards learning sign language because they are aware of the importance of this language and the help they provide to deaf people when they learn it.
2. Learning sign language enables effective communication with deaf people thus it helps them a lot in their lives and facilitates their integration in society.

To accomplish the objectives of the research, the latter employs an exploratory case study methodology to investigate attitudes towards sign language learning. By focusing on three distinct sample populations, the study aims to highlight insights that traditional methods may overlook. To achieve this, a mixed method approach is adopted, using both questionnaire and interviews as primary data collection tools to collect quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire will be administered to English Master Two students at the University of Tlemcen, allowing for the collection of their attitudes towards sign language learning. In contrast, the interviews will be conducted with the two remaining populations: the first consists of students and teachers from higher schools for teachers of Deaf and Mute in Beni-Messous in Algiers, and the second consists of deaf individuals with each getting different interviews, for the purpose of discovering the importance of the sign language learning.

The current study is divided into two chapters; the first one will review the important literature related to the research, highlighting the overview of deafness, sign language, Deaf and their rights, in addition to the previous studies associated with the topic. Then, the second chapter will provide an understanding of the methodology used in this study, followed by a discussion, reinforced by some recommendations, and ended with the limitations that faced the study.

CHAPTER ONE
LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the main concepts related to the topic and is organized into six sections, each addressing key components of the study. The first section introduces deafness by discussing its classification, types, and causes. The second section offers an overview of the deaf community, highlighting their culture, the barriers they encounter, and the various methods of communication they utilize in their daily lives. The following section elucidates the fundamental aspects of sign language. The fifth section reviews previous studies on the subject, while the final section addresses the rights of deaf individuals and strategies for their inclusion in the community. The chapter concludes with a comprehensive summary that encapsulates the main points discussed in each section.

1.2 Deafness

The ear is a complex organ consisting of three main components: the outer ear, which is the visible part located on the side of the head; the middle ear, which extends from the tympanic membrane to the inner ear (Figure 1.1). The auditory process begins when a sound stimulus travels as a vibration from the outer ear to the middle ear, where the sound waves impact the tympanic membrane. This membrane transmits the vibrations through the middle ear to the inner ear, where they are transformed into electrical signals. These signals are subsequently interpreted by the brain as sounds¹.

Shelly and Schneck state in this respect:

The ear is a complex organ, with intricate parts designed to work together to allow hearing. Its very complexity makes it vulnerable. Accidents, genetic disorders, disease, infection, and even noise can all damage the ear, rendering hearing loss and deafness (1998, p. 16).

¹ Retrieved from: <https://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/topic/default?id=anatomy-and-physiology-of-the-ear-90-P02025>

This emphasizes that the ear is a very complicated organ, and any negligence or carelessness can result in deafness.

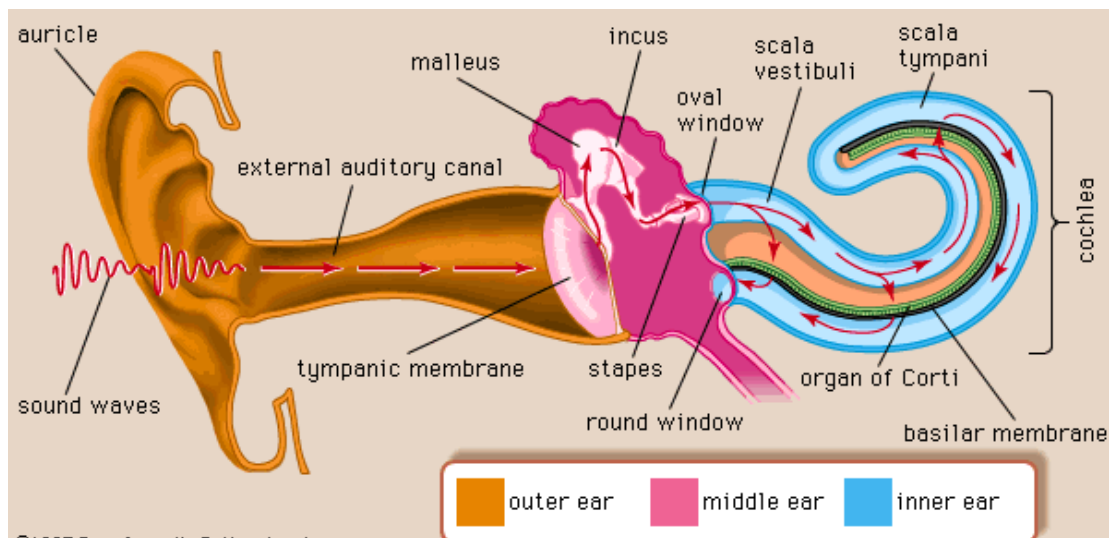


Figure 1.1: The Hearing Process²

1.2.1 Definition of Deafness

The term 'deafness' is commonly understood to refer to the inability to hear; however, it encompasses a range of definitions. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), deafness—also referred to as hearing impairment—occurs when an individual is unable to hear at a level considered normal. The degree of hearing loss can vary significantly, ranging from mild to profound, and it can affect one ear or both ears.

Nada Ibrahim et al. further clarify that "hearing impairment is a broad term referred to partial or complete loss of hearing in one or both ears. The level of impairment varies between mild, moderate, severe or profound." (2017, p. 470) indicating that deafness does not necessarily imply a complete absence of the hearing process, as is often assumed; rather, it can be partial. Additionally, the Oxford English Dictionary (2024) provides two definitions of deafness: the first describes it as "the condition of being unable to hear anything or unable to hear very well" while the

² Retrieved from: <https://www.britannica.com/science/ear/Transmission-of-sound-waves-through-the-outer-and-middle-ear>

second definition highlights "the fact of being unwilling to listen or pay attention to something".

1.2.2 Classification of Deafness

Deafness is categorized based on the degree of hearing loss, which is measured in decibels (dB), a unit that quantifies sound intensity. Hearing loss is recognized when the degree exceeds 20 dB (Aseery, 2016).

As previously indicated, the classification ranges from mild to profound hearing loss. Olusanya et al. (2019, p. 426) elaborate on this classification by providing specific measurements for each category:

- **Mild Hearing Loss:** This category is defined as a hearing loss between 20 dB and 40 dB.
- **Moderate Hearing Loss:** This classification applies to individuals with hearing loss ranging from 40 dB to 60 dB.
- **Severe Hearing Loss:** Individuals in this category experience hearing loss above 60 dB.
- **Profound Hearing Loss:** This designation applies when the hearing loss reaches 80 dB or higher.

The term 'hard of hearing' refers to individuals who experience hearing loss between 20 dB and 40 dB (Vernon & Andrews, 1990, cited in Carmichael, 2014, p. 9), indicating a mild to moderate level of hearing impairment. Shirly and Jerritta (2021, pp. 1-2) summarize all the stages in (Table 1.1). It is essential to note that individuals classified as having severe or profound hearing loss generally cannot perceive sound without the assistance of hearing aids or other auditory devices (WHO, 2023).

Table 1.1: Classification of Deafness

Classification	PTA range in dBHL
Normal hearing	-10 to 15
Slight hearing loss	16 to 25
Mild hearing loss	26 to 45
Moderate hearing loss	46 to 55
Moderately severe hearing loss	56 to 70
Severe hearing loss	71 to 90
Profound hearing loss	91 and above

1.2.3 Types of Deafness

Kolupayeva et al. (2014) categorize deaf children into two distinct types. The first type comprises children who are born deaf and, consequently, they are not able to develop speech skills, as they have never been exposed to auditory stimuli. The second type includes children who become deaf before birth; these children typically possess some speech skills due to their exposure to sound during the early stages of life. Similarly, Shiel (2023) further elaborates on these classifications, referring to the first type as ‘congenital’ deafness and the second type as ‘acquired’ deafness.

1.2.3 Causes of Deafness

According to Shelly and Schneck (1998, p. 16-18), several factors can contribute to hearing loss.

1.2.3.1 Prenatal Causes

Prenatal causes refer to conditions that arise due to viral infections that can adversely affect the development of the auditory system in the fetus. The most prevalent virus associated with these complications is ‘Rubella’, which poses a risk of hearing impairment. The incidence of hearing loss of prenatal factors is estimated to be between 7% and 20% among individuals who are deaf.

Additionally, it is important to note that certain medications, such as specific types of antibiotics, can have detrimental effects on fetal hearing. Furthermore, the consumption of alcohol and illicit drugs by the mother during pregnancy is also linked to serious auditory complications for the developing fetus. These factors emphasize

the importance of maternal health and prenatal care in preventing hearing loss in children.

1.2.3.2 Childhood Causes

Ear infections that occur during childhood can lead to hearing loss, particularly if they are not properly treated. In addition to ear infections, “meningitis, scarlet fever, chicken pox, encephalitis, mumps, and measles are among the other diseases that can cause hearing loss or deafness” (Shelly & Schneck, 1998, p. 17)

1.2.3.3 Inherited Causes

The most common cause of deafness is hereditary factors, accounting for approximately 80% of cases. This type of deafness can occur even when both parents have normal hearing, as they may carry the gene for deafness. In such instances, there is a one in four chance for each child they have to inherit this gene for deafness.

1.2.3.4 Adults' Hearing Loss Causes

Various factors, including accidents and injuries, can damage the ear or any component of the auditory system, leading to deafness. Additionally, numerous diseases can contribute to hearing loss, and prolonged exposure to loud noises is also a significant risk factor. Furthermore, the use of certain substances, such as alcohol and specific types of antibiotics, can increase the probability of hearing impairment. It is important to acknowledge that aging is another natural factor that can result in deafness.

1.3 Deaf

The global prevalence of deafness is alarmingly increasing. Currently, approximately 1.5 billion individuals experience some degree of hearing loss, with around 430 million of these individuals classified as having profound hearing impairment. It is estimated that by 2050, the number of people affected by some form of hearing loss could rise to 2.5 billion, including at least 700 million individuals with significant hearing impairment (WHO, 2023). The following statistics illustrate these projections (Figure 1.2).

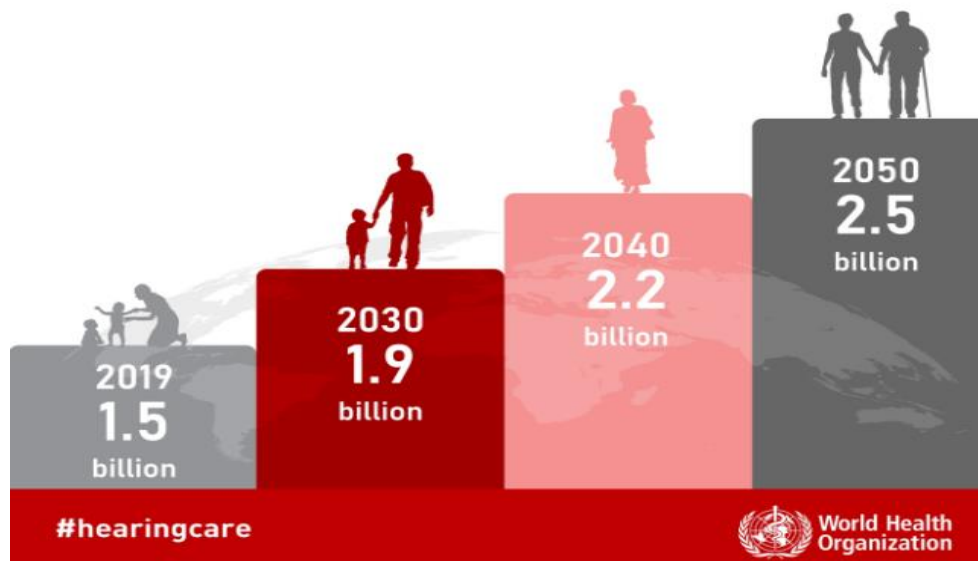


Figure 1.2: Deaf Number Estimation in the Future

1.3.1 Deaf and Culture

According to Padden and Humphries, the terms 'deaf' with lowercase d and 'Deaf' with uppercase D are not the same and have distinct meanings. They state:

Following a convention proposed by James Woodward (1972), we use the lowercase *deaf* when referring to the audiological condition of not hearing, and the uppercase *Deaf* when referring to a particular group of deaf people who share a language—American Sign Language (ASL)— and a culture (1990, p. 2).

In simple words, the term 'deaf' is simply what is defined before as deafness while 'Deaf' are the hearing impaired people who have a specific language (sign language) and a culture in common.

Deaf individuals are often perceived as disabled within society, and government classifications typically label them as such, moreover, deafness is frequently defined as a hearing disability. However, within the Deaf community, many members do not consider themselves disabled, they see deafness as a "cultural identity rather than a disability identity" (Conway, 2018, p. 52).

1.3.2 Barriers Facing Deaf People

Deaf individuals continue to encounter various barriers that negatively impact their lives, with the most prevalent being occupational, educational, and language barriers.

1.3.2.1 Occupational Barriers

Deaf people face significant challenges when it comes to employment. According to DeMare (2019), securing a job is particularly difficult for them. More than 50% of individuals with hearing impairments are unemployed, leading to substantial financial difficulties. Conama describes the situation as follows: "The 'more deaf' you are, the less likely you are to be in high earning employment" (2013, p. 177), indicating that deaf individuals may experience discrimination in the workplace stemming from a lack of awareness and misconceptions regarding their abilities.

1.3.2.2 Educational Barriers

Education poses significant challenges for deaf children, as they often have fewer educational opportunities compared to their hearing peers. The shortage of qualified teachers and inadequate educational resources adversely affects the rights of Deaf individuals to receive a proper education. Additionally, societal misconceptions may lead people to believe that those with hearing disabilities are unable to learn, work, or perform any activities effectively (Khomera et al., 2020).

1.3.2.3 Language Barriers

Communication is one of the most significant barriers faced by deaf individuals. This challenge often forces them to depend on hearing family members or friends as interpreters whenever they interact with hearing people. This communication gap can lead to higher rates of unemployment and educational challenges within the Deaf community, hindering their overall opportunities and quality of life (Pieri & Cobb, 2019).

William Stokoe (2005, p. 12) perfectly summarizes in a scheme all the barriers that can deaf people encounter in their lives. The scheme is presented in (Figure 1.3).

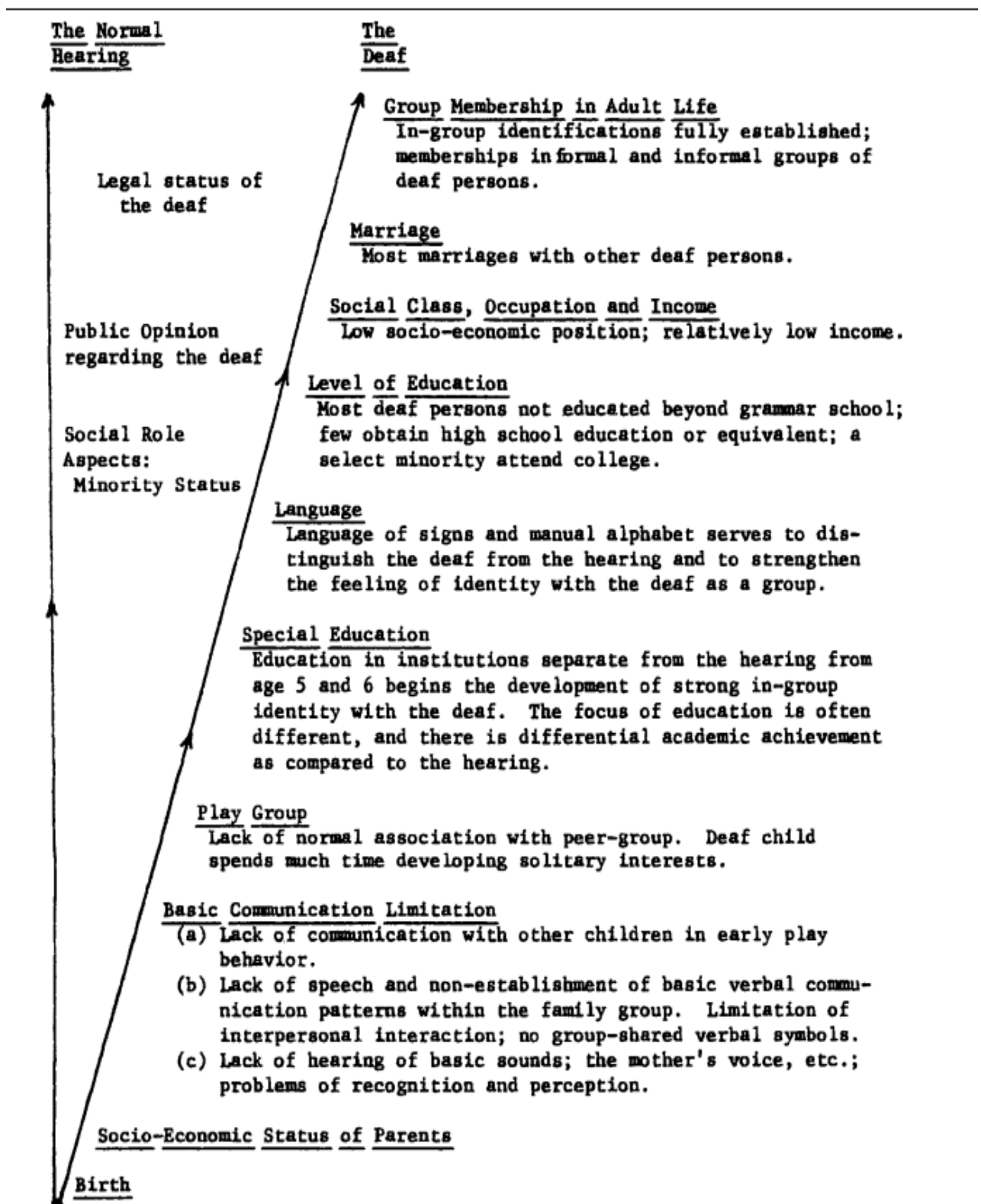


Figure 1.3: Barriers That Face Deaf People

1.3.3 Communication Modalities Used by Deaf

Communication involves the exchange of information, emotions, ideas, or thoughts between a speaker “the communicator” and a listener “the communicant”. This process occurs when the communicator transmits a message to the communicant using a medium or channel, which can encompass various forms of communication. It is important to note that communication is not limited to verbal messages, such as spoken or written words; it also includes nonverbal elements like hand gestures, facial expressions, and body language (Rahmah & Kholiq, 2018, p. 75).

Communication among deaf people can take various forms, the most common types are as follows:

1.3.3.1 Sign Language

Sign language serves as the main mode of communication for individuals who are Deaf (Sruthi, 2022). According to the Oxford Dictionary (2024), it is defined as a system of communicating with people who have hearing loss by using hand movements rather than speech.³

1.3.3.2 Lips Reading

Lips reading also called speech reading, is another communication method utilized by individuals who are Deaf. Many deaf people possess the ability to read lips and infer what someone is saying. This process involves recognizing spoken language by observing the movements of the speaker's lips (Markides, 1979).

However, this approach can be challenging, particularly when words are homophones⁴, as it may lead to misunderstandings. Shelly and Schneck (1998, p. 10) give the example of the sentence "I said the scent of that had set me mad. Send it back and see that it is sent now". It is noted that the words “said, scent, set, send, see, and sent” are pronounced somehow alike, and that results in confusion in the lips reading process.

³ For more details, see the next section ‘sign language’ pages 12-19.

⁴ Words that are similar in pronunciation but have different spelling or meaning.

1.3.3.3 Writing

People who cannot hear does not mean that they do not write, hence, writing represents an alternative way of communication for deaf people to interact and express their needs, especially with hearing people (Best, 2007). In this respect, Moores and Martin (2006, p. 43) state that "writing might be described as training the hands and fingers to do the work of the mouth and tongue".

1.3.3.4 Assistive Hearing Aids

Hearing aids are small devices used by Deaf, worn behind the ear to make the sound louder, and thus the possibility of hearing increases. This method may help deaf people with a partial degree of deafness in hearing by amplifying sounds to their ears. Hearing aids are recommended to be used in the early age of hearing loss or since childhood to be efficient. However, despite their advantages, hearing aids can be costly and may cause discomfort for some users, such as pain and headache (Mahmoud, 2023).

1.4 Sign Language

Deafness is distinct from any other kind of disability due to the existence of a special language for Deaf that compensates for spoken language. Sign language (SL) is often defined as a visual language that utilizes hands movements and body language rather than speech, to facilitate effective communication with individuals who are deaf. Baker et al. (2016, p. 2) describe the situation as follows:

Can you sign in the dark? Of course you can, but it does not make much sense since no one can see your signs. Signers have to make sure that their conversation partner can see them or possibly feel their hands. Sign languages are **visual-spatial** languages – they are articulated by using the hands, face, and other parts of the body.

Sign language is termed "visual" because it requires that the receiver is able to see what the signer signs, that is to say, it is impossible to communicate with a blind person with sign language. Additionally, as Baker notes, there is no meaning for sign language in the dark. Furthermore, SL is called "spatial" because it needs a physical space for the hands to form signs and convey messages effectively.

Sign language is not universal; there are over 200 distinct sign languages in the world (Llamazares de Prado, 2021). Each region has its own unique sign language (Bourahla et al., 2020), although some may exhibit mutual intelligibility and share similar signs. Additionally, certain sign languages, such as those used in the Arab world, may even utilize the same alphabet system (Al-Fityani, 2010).

1.4.1 The Nature of Sign Language

There is a common misconception about sign language, with many people believing it is merely a translation of spoken language into signs. However, this is incorrect. Sign language is "as natural as any other spoken language" (Abdelouafi, 2019, p. 11). It is not simply a signed version of spoken language; rather, it possesses its own unique linguistic structure, including phonology, grammar, and syntax, just like any other natural language (Wood, 2016; Abazi & Aziza, 2023).

1.4.2 Sign Language and the Brain

It has been stated previously that sign and spoken languages share several similarities, including aspects such as their inherent grammar, lack of universality, and diversity in form and variety.

Sign language also shares with spoken language the way it is possessed by the brain. Despite the difference in how each language is produced and received, they are acquired the same way (Johnston & Shembri, 2007).

Before getting deeper into the concept, providing an overview of how the brain processes language is important. The human brain is divided into two lobes, also called hemispheres; left hemisphere (LH) and right hemisphere (RH). The left hemisphere is the part that controls language such as language comprehension and production. Whereas the right hemisphere is responsible for visual-spatial skills, such as the ability to draw and recognize colors (ibid)

A stroke is a serious medical condition that can lead to significant brain damage, which results in different outcomes depending on the hemisphere affected. Damage to the LH can lead to language loss, known as aphasia, while damage to the RH may result in difficulties with visual tasks.

One might assume that damage in RH could impact the production of sign language since the letter is visual-spatial language, however many researchers reject this suggestion. Poizner et al. (1987) as cited in (Johnston & Shembri, 2007), argue that deaf people who have a stroke with damaged LH result in difficulty in signing. In the same vein, Hickok et al. (2002) as cited in (Bouchouk, 2017, p. 16) confirm that. According to them “Taken together, these findings suggest that the brain's left hemisphere is dominant for sign language, just as it is for speech”.

1.4.3 American Sign Language (ASL)

ASL is a visual-gestural language that uses the movement of fingers, hands, and many body parts (Schneden, 2006). The National Association for the Deaf (NAD, 2018) considers ASL a living being because it can be developed and changed through time.

At the linguistic level, ASL is far distinct from the English spoken language since it has its own grammar and structure. For instance, the sentence pattern in English is subject-verb-object (S.V.O) while in ASL is object-subject-verb (O.S.V). Daniels illustrates this with the example that shows the differences between spoken English and American Sign Language; the phrase "I live in a big white house with green shutters" becomes in representative signs as "house white big shutters green Live" (2003, p. 65).

At the sociologic level, a significant number of deaf individuals in the United States and Canada communicate using ASL (Padden, 1990). Among them, approximately 10% are considered native users of ASL, as they were born deaf and acquired sign language from their parents as their first language. In contrast, the remaining 90% of ASL users are classified as second-language learners or "late-acquired first language" users. This group may have initially relied on spoken language before their hearing loss or may not have learned ASL until attending deaf schools or engaging with the deaf community (Aarons, 1994, p. 4).

At the educational level, ASL represents the third most learned language in higher education (Goldberg et al., 2015, as cited in Gray, 2018). Many hearing

individuals also choose to learn ASL to be trained as sign language interpreters. This effort facilitates improved communication between hearing and deaf communities, enhancing mutual understanding and interaction (Gray, 2018).

1.4.4 Arabic Sign Language (ArSL)

Arabic Sign Language is defined by Qatar Foundation International (QFI, 2023) as "a form of nonverbal communication for Arabic speakers who are deaf and hard of hearing."⁵ Similar to spoken Arabic, each country or region has its own distinct sign language (ibid).

For instance, various dialects of Arabic Sign Language exist, including Algerian Sign Language (AlgSL), Palestinian Sign Language (PSL), Kuwaiti Sign Language (KSL), and others (Padden, 2010). While these dialects have their own specific signs, they share a common alphabetic system (Figure 1.4), and some are mutually intelligible (Al-Fityani, 2010).

Like other sign languages, ArSL has its own unique rules and grammar that differ from those of standard Arabic. However, in contrast to American Sign Language (ASL) and English, there is a closer relationship between spoken Arabic and its signed counterpart. This is largely due to the structural flexibility of the Arabic language, which allows for various sentence patterns, including verb-subject-object (VSO), subject-verb-object (SVO), object-verb-subject (OVS), and verb-object-subject (VOS). This flexibility positively impacts the comprehension of sign language, facilitating easier communication, particularly for hearing individuals (Abdel-Fattah, 2005).

⁵ Retrieved from: <https://www.qfi.org/resources/infographics/arabic-sign-language/>



Figure 1.4: Arabic Sign Language Alphabet ⁶

1.4.4.1 Key Elements in Arabic Sign Language

Every spoken language has its own rules and grammar that govern its structure; without these, communication would lack meaning. Similarly, Arabic Sign Language is not composed of random gestures; rather, it follows a systematic approach. Shelly and Schneck (1998) elucidate the parameters that contribute to the meaningfulness of signs, which include hand shapes, palm orientation, location, and movements.

- **Handshape:** This parameter refers to the specific way the hand is configured to form a sign. While the alphabet and numbers each have distinct shapes, they are not considered signs on their own. Instead, signs are formed by combining handshapes with the correct application of other parameters⁷.

⁶ Taken from (Latif et al., 2019, p. 3).

⁷ Shelly and Schneck illustrate how the four parameters—handshape, palm orientation, location, and movements—work together to create a meaningful sign. They state “To sign ‘airplane,’ you turn your palm down and move your hand up, out, and slightly away from you two times. The hand moves away from you further, but only once, when signing “to fly in an airplane.” (1998, p. 52).

- **Palm Orientation:** Also known as palm position, this aspect is crucial in sign language, as variations in palm orientation can change the meaning of a sign. For instance, placing the palm facing down versus facing towards the signer can result in two entirely different signs.
- **Location:** This refers to the area in which the signs are produced, often referred to as the signing space. The signing space is typically limited to the area in front of the upper body, as illustrated in (Figure 1.5).
- **Movements:** The movements of the hands are another significant factor that can change the meaning of signs. Variations in how a sign is moved can lead to different interpretations.



Figure 1.5: The Signing Space

1.4.4.2 Features of Arabic Sign Language

Similar to other forms of sign language, Arabic Sign Language employs hand movements in conjunction with various parts of the body to convey meaning. Abazi and Aziza (2023, p. 19) state that “ArSL relies on visual and gestural communication, utilizing hand shapes, facial expressions, and body movements to deliver the meaning”

According to Potrus (2017, p. 4), the main features of sign language include the following:

- **Phonemes:** Just as spoken languages have phonemes as the smallest units of sound, sign languages have phonemes as the smallest units of sign. These phonemes encompass the four parameters mentioned earlier (handshape, palm orientation, location, and movements). Each parameter can significantly alter the meaning of a sign.
- **Fingerspelling:** It is a technique used by deaf people to sign proper names and places, or words that do not have equivalent signs. This process relies on the manual alphabet of Arabic Sign Language, where the appropriate hand shapes are used to spell out words. According to Baker et al. (2016), fingerspelling serves as an alternative communication method, particularly for hearing individuals who are beginner signers, allowing them to interact with deaf individuals.
- **Mouthing:** It refers to the combination of a silent speech while signing. It is commonly utilized by deaf individuals who already acquired spoken language before experiencing hearing loss. There are three types of mouthing: complete, partial, and restricted. Complete mouthing is the full production of the word through lips shape, partial mouthing is the production of the first part of the word, while restricted involves producing only the first letter of the word (Davis, 1989, cited in Cherif, 2020).
- **Non-Manual Features:** Communication in sign language is not limited to hand movements; other parts of the body play a significant role as well including eyebrows, facial expression, and shoulders⁸. In this respect, Baker et al. note that “movements of the eyebrows, the eyes, and the nose can be important for some aspects of meaning or grammar (...) This is also true for certain head and body movements” (2016, p. 5).

⁸ For example, a combination of raised eyebrows, raised shoulders, and a sad lip shape can indicate the phrase "I don't know."

1.4.5 Algerian Sign Language (AlgSL)

African Sign Language Resource Center (ASLRC, 2024) estimates that nearly 2% of the Algerian population is Deaf (around 220,000 people). Algerian Sign Language has been established as the primary means of communication within the deaf community in Algeria and was officially standardized on May 8, 2002⁹.

AlgSL is derived from French sign language (SLF) and many signs are common in both languages, however, AlgSL does not use the French sign language alphabet, rather it shares the same alphabetic system as Arabic sign language (Khaldoun et al., 2024).

According to Abdelouafi (2019), similar to the spoken languages of Algeria, which exhibit regional variations, Algerian Sign Language also encompasses several varieties used in different areas of the country:

- **Algerian Jewish Sign Language (AJSL):** Also known as Ghardaia Sign Language, this variety is used by the deaf community in Ghardaia, a city situated in the Algerian Northern Sahara in the Mzaab region. The reason why it is termed as ‘Algerian Jewish Sign Language’ is due to the historical presence of Jewish deaf individuals in this area. However, by 1966 they immigrated to Palestine and France where they brought their language (Lanesman & Meir, 2007; Padden, 2010).
- **Algerian Sign Language of Oran:** This variety is utilized by deaf individuals in Oran and its surrounding suburbs. It reflects the unique linguistic and cultural context of the region (Mansour, 2007, as cited in Abdelouafi, 2019).
- **Algerian Sign Language of Adrar:** Used by the deaf community in Adrar, which is situated in the southern part of Algeria. (Abdelouafi, 2019).

⁹ Retrieved from <https://africansignlanguagesresourcecenter.com/algeria/>

1.5 Previous Studies

Exploring previous literature with related topics to this dissertation is important to comprehend the purpose behind this research. It is worth mentioning that there are very few studies focusing on sign language in relation to hearing individuals, as most research tends to concentrate on the Deaf community. Below are key studies that offer insights into hearing people's attitudes towards learning sign language.

1.5.1 Mustswanga and Mapuranga (2014)

Conducted in Zimbabwe, this study aimed to explore the perceptions of hearing people regarding sign language learning. The sample comprised 20 participants (10 males and 10 females) randomly selected from the streets of Zimbabwe. Utilizing qualitative methods, the researchers employed observation and interviews as their primary research instruments. The main results of this study are:

- Most Hearing individuals are open to the SL learning idea and express their willingness to learn it.
- Some views perceive sign language primarily as a form of gesture.
- Some participants considered sign language easy to learn, while others believed that learning sign language is a challenge for normal people.
- A segment of the respondents showed negative attitudes, suggesting that learning sign language is unnecessary for hearing individuals unless there is a specific purpose, such as working with Deaf individuals or communicating with Deaf family members (Mustswanga & Mapuranga, 2014)

1.5.2 Fajri and Kusumastuti (2019)

This study also focused on hearing individuals' perceptions regarding sign language learning in Indonesia. The researchers surveyed 100 participants, including students and teachers, to gather insights on five key elements related to sign language:

- Knowledge about sign language.
- The importance of sign language.
- The usage of sign language learning.

- The role of media in sign language learning.
- Societal interest in learning sign language.

The results obtained indicated that many hearing people lacked knowledge of sign language. Others shared positive insights stating that sign language needs to be learned to facilitate effective interactions between hearing and Deaf communities. Therefore, they recommended using media to enhance awareness about SL and to make the learning process easier (Fajri & Kusumastuti, 2019)

1.5.3 Mariette (2017)

Mariette examined in her dissertation, the influence of SL learning in an inclusive classroom. The researcher opted for two research instruments; observation and interview. She spent five weeks observing interactions between Deaf and hearing students in a Canadian inclusive classroom. The class comprised 24 hearing students, one deaf student, a teacher, and 3 ASL interpreters. After the observation period, Mariette interviewed 12 hearing students to gather their experiences related to exposure to sign language. The results of the study were extremely positive, the researcher found that the majority of students appreciated the importance of sign language in promoting inclusivity. Additionally, the diversity of culture and language inspired students, fostering open-mindedness and enjoyment in the learning process (Mariette, 2017).

These studies together reveal the different perspectives that hearing individuals hold about sign language, emphasizing the importance of education and awareness to bridge communication gaps between hearing and Deaf communities.

1.6 Deaf Rights and Inclusivity

Human rights are universal; each person on the globe must have the right to live with dignity, equality, and respect, despite his nationality, gender, age, or any other status. Unfortunately, hearing impaired people's rights are often denied due to social prejudice and discrimination. A lot of misconceptions about deaf people point out that the intelligence degree of this group is inferior to that of normal people, yet this is incorrect, Deaf people possess significant intellectual capabilities that make them

equal and allow them to learn, work, and live just like anyone else (Branson & Miller, 1998).

In response to these issues, the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD, 2016) defends Deaf rights in all domains and calls for inclusivity and support. WFD declares “Our work involves breaking down barriers to the inclusion and participation of deaf people in all areas of society”¹⁰. They established 10 articles aimed at supporting Deaf people, particularly Deaf children, and promoting their integration into society.¹¹

The term inclusion does not mean living in the same place and sharing the same sitting, yet, inclusion is a lifestyle. For instance, in educational settings, inclusion involves more than simply having a Deaf student present in a classroom with hearing peers; rather it requires that he “feels a sense of belonging”, actively participates in the classroom, and engages with peers to building meaningful relationships (Aseery, 2016, p. 25).

In this respect, Huyck et al. (2021, p. 2) State:

Disability equity refers to justice in the way that people with disabilities are treated, such that they have the same likelihood for educational and career success as individuals who are not disabled. Disability equity also extends to interpersonal relationships, where individuals with disabilities should be treated with the same respect as individuals who are not disabled. Inclusion of individuals with disabilities means giving them physical, social, and financial access to the same opportunities as individuals without disabilities.

Inclusion can be achieved if efforts are made from all sides. The acceptance of individuals with hearing impairment by society plays a crucial role in building an inclusive community. When individuals show support and respect for Deaf individuals, it enhances social interactions and contributes to the creation of a more inclusive environment for everyone. To achieve this goal, it is essential to investigate attitudes towards sign language learning, to figure out how people perceive sign language, and to discover the benefits associated with its learning.

¹⁰ Retrieved from <https://wfdeaf.org/rightsdeafchildren/>

¹¹ See (Figure A.1) in Appendix -A- page 59.

1.7 Conclusion

Overall, deafness is a sensory disability that is defined as the inability to hear or having some difficulty in the process. It can be mild, moderate, severe, or profound, depending on the degree of hearing measured in decibels. Many factors can cause this disability; it can be prenatal, where the baby is born deaf, or it can occur later in life, whether in childhood or adulthood. The term "deaf" (with a lowercase 'd') refers to the condition of deafness, while "Deaf" (with an uppercase 'D') describes individuals having hearing loss. Those individuals consider their disabilities as a cultural identity rather than disability. They generally interact with specific means known as sign language based on hand movement and body language. This language is not universal; each country or region has its own language, such as ASL, ArSL, and AlgSL, with unique grammar and vocabulary. Hearing impaired people, like any human, have the right to live freely with full respect. However, those people face many barriers that obstruct their success. Many scholars studied these challenges, advocating for inclusivity to enable a better life for them. The next part outlines the methodology of this research, which seeks as well to foster an inclusive community for everyone, regardless of their diversity.

CHAPTER TWO
METHODOLOGY,
FINDING, AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY, FINDING, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Introduction

Understanding attitudes towards sign language learning is key for enhancing inclusivity and support for the deaf community. This chapter delves into the methodology employed to investigate these attitudes, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research process. Firstly, it outlines the general aim of the research, which is to examine attitudes towards sign language learning in various contexts. Subsequently, it clarifies the methodology utilized, encompassing the description of research sites and the different case studies. Furthermore, this chapter covers the interpretation of diverse research tools, with the use of two instruments: the first one is the questionnaire and the second is the interview. Additionally, the chapter presents the results derived from each investigative tool, providing a detailed analysis and discussion of the data collected and combining the findings with the initial research hypotheses. Finally, the chapter concludes with interesting recommendations and suggestions.

2.2 The Aim of Research

As previously mentioned, the study aims to explore the attitude of individuals towards learning sign language including both deaf and hearing individuals. It shows then the importance of learning deaf language and how can hearing individuals help Deaf in their lives. This, in turn, fosters greater inclusivity for deaf individuals within society.

2.3 Methodology of Research

This part shows the methodology of the study, starting by describing both the site and the case study of research, moving to the interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data with the explanation of each tool separately. Simply, this section will focus on the analysis of the questionnaire and interview followed by the results, and end with a discussion.

2.3.1 Site of Research

The investigation takes place in two sites of research; the first site is the University of Tlemcen at the English department and the second is at the higher school for teachers of Deaf and Mute in Beni-Messous in Algiers. This school contains more than 912 students and includes about 15 Specialties¹², such as mathematics, philosophy, French, and English, in addition to different modules, such as sign language, physiology, ear diseases, and hearing disability. It was inaugurated on October 16th, 2022 and it aims at training teachers and interpreters to facilitate communication with deaf individuals and provide education to them¹³.

2.3.2 Sample Population

The study requires selecting three different types of sample population, and they are as follows:

- The first population is Master Two students at the University of Tlemcen, and they represent hearing people who do not know sign language. The investigation is to determine their attitudes toward learning sign language. The sample chosen contains 32 students, and the latter was selected randomly.
- The second population includes students and teachers from higher schools for teachers of Deaf and Mute in Algiers. The sample selected consists of 12 individuals, including 6 students and 6 teachers. It indicates in the study the hearing people who have already learned sign language and mastered it. The purpose behind selecting this population is to know from them the importance and advantages of learning sign language.
- The third population comprises deaf individuals, the sample was selected randomly and consisted of 6 individuals. It is crucial to understand Deaf perspectives concerning the support provided by hearing people by learning sign language.

¹² From Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research website:

<https://www.mesrs.dz/index.php/2023/09/inauguration-dun-centre-denseignement-des-langues-des-signes/#>

¹³ Taken from Ennahar Tv Plus Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqaGN2p2A6o>

2.4 Instruments of Data Collection:

The study consists of an exploratory case study, concentrating on the investigation of a specific problem. The research method for the current study is the mixed method approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. This process comprises the choice of tools for the data collection; the questionnaire is opted for collecting both various data while the structured interview is opted to collect qualitative data.

2.4.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire refers to a set of written questions that is shared with a group of people to gather information. This research adopts online questionnaires as a strategic tool for investigating the attitudes towards sign language learning within the first population of this study. The process is done by using Google Forms as a systematic way to save time and to get organized work. The questionnaire design, comprising a combination of closed-ended, multiple-choice, and open-ended questions, is tailored to collect specific information essential for validating the study hypotheses.

2.4.2 Interview

The interview is a form of conversation between the researcher and the informants. With a focus on gathering comprehensive insights, this research requires two distinct interview formats tailored to specific populations. The first interview, conducted online via audio calls or text messages, targets students and teachers from the Higher Schools of Deaf and Mute, presenting identical questions to each participant. Conversely, the second interview, uniquely tailored for the deaf population, encompasses a separate set of questions from the first. It is noted in the sampling part that this segment involves a sample size of six individuals, three participants engaged in face-to-face interviews conducted through written communication, while the three remaining individuals were interviewed remotely via text messages.

2.5 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis of research involves the systematic examination and interpretation of the collected data for the purpose of giving meaningful insights, testing hypotheses, and drawing conclusions. This part is divided into two sections; questionnaire analysis and interview analysis.

2.5.1 The Analysis of the Questionnaire

In this section, each question will be explained, interpreted, and illustrated with the use of charts. The questionnaire consists of 12 questions; 4 are close-ended questions and 6 are multiple choice questions, those two types are used to collect quantitative data while the two last questions are open-ended and they are used for the qualitative data.

- **Question 1:** How interested are you in learning sign language?

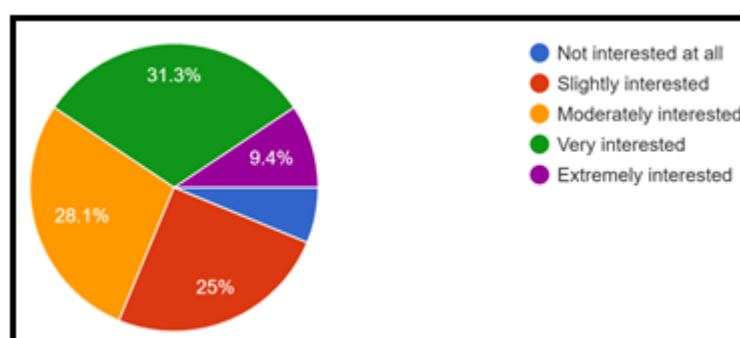


Figure 2.1: Students' Interest in SL

The reason behind this question is to know how students are interested in the subject. The pie chart shows that the majority of students (59.4%, Extremely interested + Very interested) indicate a strong interest towards learning sign language among this group. Additionally, a considerable proportion of students (25%) are moderately interested, suggesting that they are open to the idea but may require further motivation or resources to fully engage in the learning process. However, the remaining students (15.7%) which represent the minority express low interest [Slightly interested (9.4%) + Not interested at all (6.3%)], emphasizes the importance of taking into account different interest levels and designing educational programs to suit a range of preferences and motivations. Overall, the finding suggests generally

positive attitudes among students, with a notable portion expressing high levels of interest.

- **Question 2:** What is your primary reason for considering learning sign language?

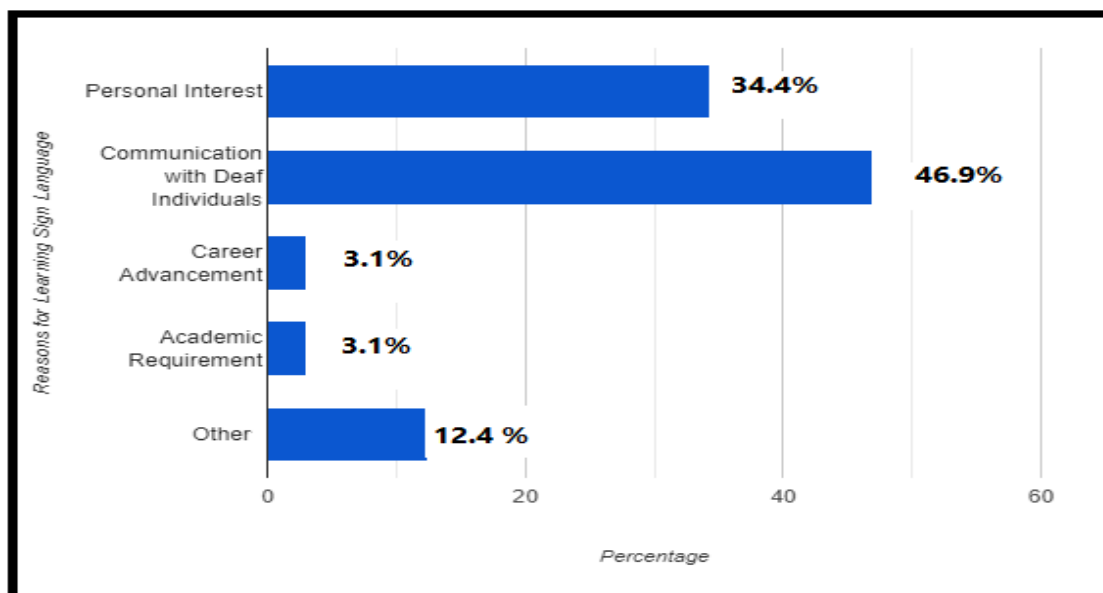


Figure 2.2: Reasons for Learning SL

The analysis reveals a mix of motivations for students considering sign language learning. The primary reason is to communicate with Deaf individuals (46.9%). This highlights a positive intent to bridge the communication gap and engage with the Deaf community. Personal interest and a desire to learn a new language come in second at 34.4%. This suggests a general interest in increasing knowledge and cultural understanding. Career advancement and academic requirements received a low percentage (3.1% each). This indicates that these are not the main reasons for most students. Finally, a small number indicated no interest (3.1%) or no reason at the moment (3.1%).

It is worth noting that one student mentioned his (her) inspiration from a Korean drama (K-drama) featuring Deaf characters. This personal evidence shows how popular culture can spark interest in sign language and Deaf culture.

- **Question 3:** Would you be willing to dedicate time and effort to learn sign language outside of formal academic requirements?

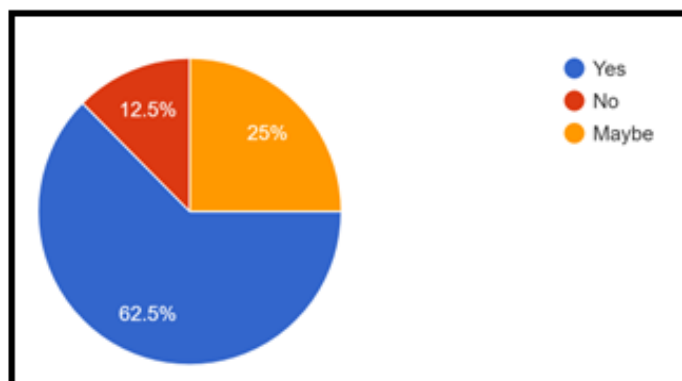


Figure 2.3: Willingness to SL Learning

The pie chart shows a significant majority (62.5%) answered "Yes", indicating a strong willingness to invest time and effort in learning SL on their own. A quarter of students (25%) responded with "Maybe". This indicates some level of interest, but perhaps they are unsure about their time commitment. Only 12.5% of students answered "No", representing a minority who are not interested in sign language learning.

- **Question 4:** What challenges, if any, do you anticipate in learning sign language?

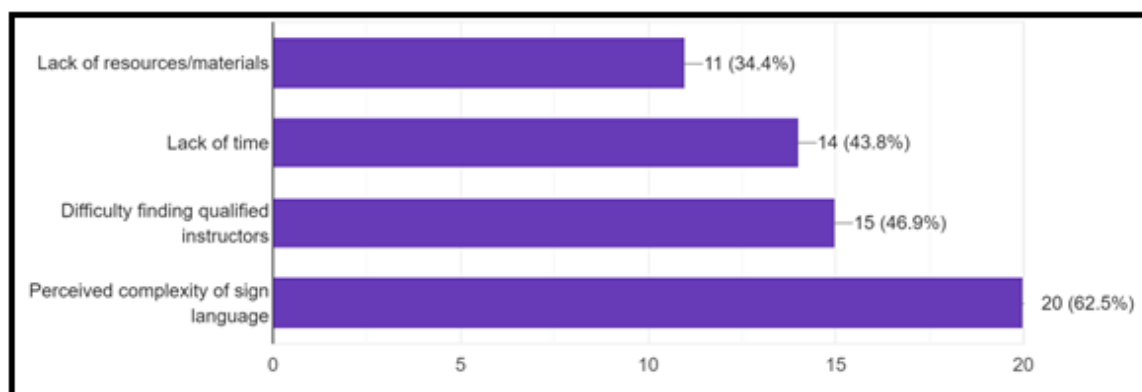


Figure 2.4: Challenges Anticipated in SL Learning

The bar chart indicates that a significant proportion of students anticipate challenges in learning sign language, with the perceived complexity of sign language being the most common, as indicated by 62.5% of respondents. This suggests that

students may feel intimidated by the intricacies of SL and perceive it as more difficult to learn compared to spoken languages.

Additionally, a substantial number of students express concerns about the difficulty in finding qualified instructors (46.9%) and the lack of time available for learning SL (43.8%). This highlights potential barriers that may hinder their ability to engage in SL learning effectively.

Finally, a notable percentage of students (34.4%) anticipate challenges stemming from the lack of resources or materials available for learning SL. This underscores the importance of ensuring adequate access to educational resources and support services to facilitate SL learning for interested students.

- **Question 5:** How important do you think it is for everyone to learn sign language?

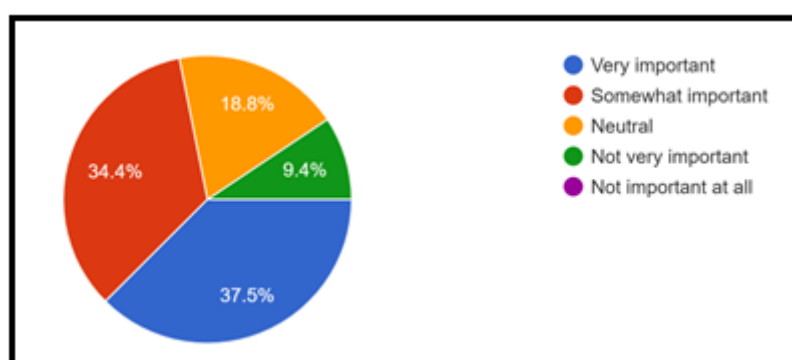


Figure 2.5: Importance of Learning SL

The pie chart shows that the majority of students (71.9%) believe that learning sign language is important for everyone. This suggests a positive attitude towards the widespread acceptance of SL. Nearly two-fifths (37.5%) consider sign language learning very important for everyone, indicating students' recognition of the benefits of inclusivity and communication accessibility. An additional third (34.4%) view it as somewhat important, suggesting they see the value of SL but may not consider it essential for everyone. However, 18.8% (Neutral) and 9.4% (Not very important) of students hold weak views on sign language learning. It is noted that no one believes that it is not important at all.

- **Question 6:** Do you believe learning sign language should be incorporated into school curriculums?

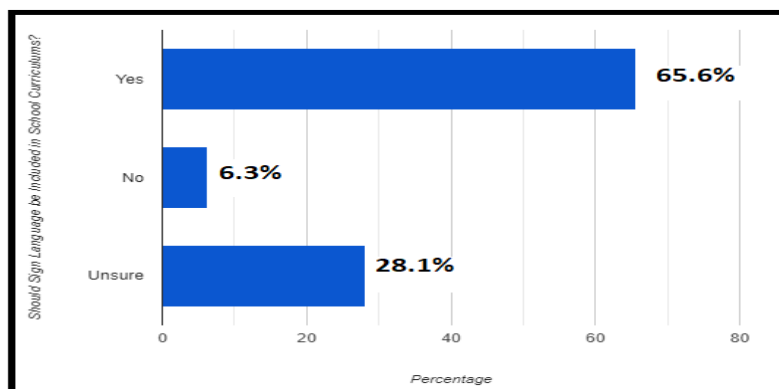


Figure 2.6: Students' Opinions about the Integration of SL in School Curriculums

Based on the data, there is a positive perspective towards incorporating sign language into school curriculums. Over two-thirds (65.6%) of respondents believe that SL should be included in school curriculums. This suggests strong support for integrating SL education into formal educational settings, recognizing its value as a fundamental communication skill, and promoting inclusivity and accessibility for all students. In addition, nearly a third (28.1%), indicate uncertainty about whether sign language should be incorporated into school curriculums, expressing an "Unsure" response. This may reflect a lack of awareness about the possibility of integrating sign language into existing curriculums. However, only a small percentage of students (6.3%) express disagreement with the idea, indicating a minority perspective that may reflect different opinions about educational priorities.

- **Question 7:** Do you believe it is important to learn sign language to better understand and respect Deaf culture?

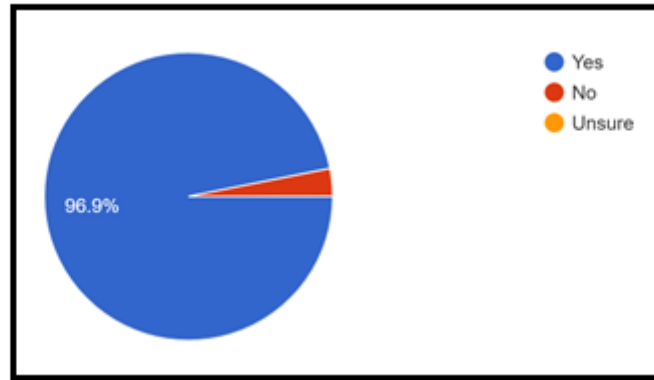


Figure 2.7: Importance of SL for Deaf Culture Understanding

The pie chart shows that there is a great majority of students, comprising 96.9% of respondents, believe that it is important to learn SL to better understand and respect Deaf culture. This indicates strong support for the idea that sign language proficiency plays a crucial role in fostering cultural awareness, empathy, and respect for the Deaf community's language and identity. In addition, the small percentage (4.1%) who said “no” might believe that using interpreters or relying on written communication is sufficient. Overall, the data strongly suggests that learning sign language is a valuable way to show respect and appreciation for Deaf culture and the Deaf community.

Question 8: Do you think learning sign language increases awareness and understanding of Deaf culture?

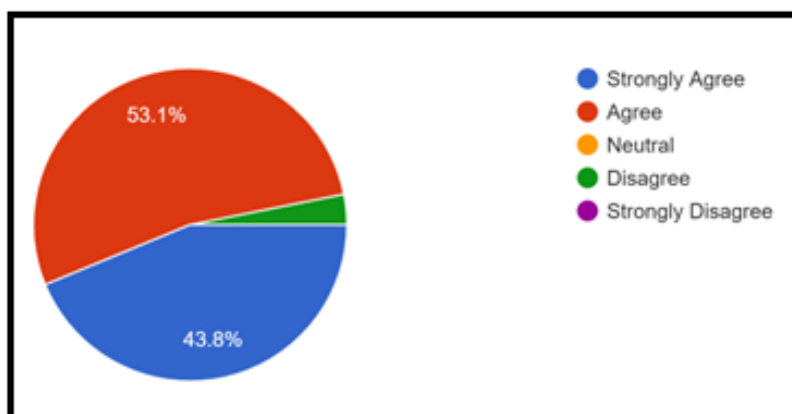


Figure 2.8: Learning SL and Deaf Culture Awareness

Based on the data, it is observed that the majority of students, including 96.9% of respondents (43.8% strongly agree and 53.1% agree), believe that learning sign

language increases awareness and understanding of Deaf culture. Additionally, a small percentage of students (3.1%) do not agree with the notion, indicating different perspectives concerning sign language learning.

Question 9: How do you perceive the importance of sign language in promoting inclusivity of Deaf people?

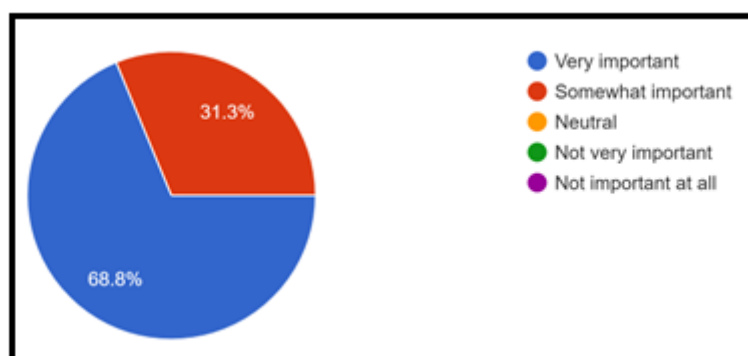


Figure 2.9: Importance of SL for Deaf Inclusivity

The pie chart shows a very strong belief (100%) that sign language is crucial in promoting inclusivity for Deaf people. Nearly 70% (68.8%) consider SL very important for inclusivity. This highlights a strong recognition of SL as a key factor in creating a more accessible environment for Deaf individuals. An additional third (31.3%) view it as somewhat important, suggesting that they see the value of sign language but may not consider it the sole factor in inclusivity. It is noted that there were no responses indicating neutrality, minimal importance, or complete insignificance. This suggests a consensus about the positive role of sign language in promoting inclusivity.

- **Questions 10 & 11:** Have you ever interacted with Deaf individuals or been involved in activities related to Deaf culture? If yes, please briefly describe your experience or exposure.

These two questions are analyzed together since they are related to each other. The data collected are depicted as follows:

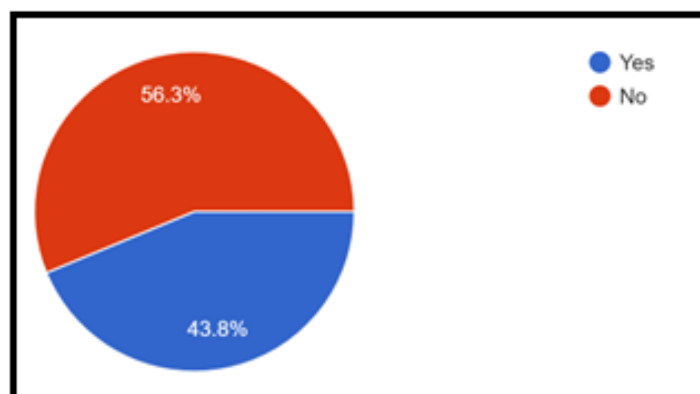


Figure 2.10: Participants' Experiences with Deaf Individuals

It demonstrates that nearly half of the respondents have interacted with Deaf individuals or been involved in activities related to Deaf culture. Some respondents describe positive experiences, such as having effective conversations with Deaf individuals in daily life or having family members who are Deaf, indicating ongoing immersion in the Deaf community.

Another response indicates the exposure to Deaf culture through online interactions, such as communicating with Deaf through texting (e.g., "communicated with deaf gamers through written messages"). This illustrates the diverse ways in which individuals engage with Deaf communities.

Others shared feelings of frustration or inadequacy in communication due to a language barrier (e.g., "bad experience", "difficult experience", "struggle to understand"), highlighting the importance of sign language for effective interaction. Some responses suggest missed opportunities for connection. They felt sorry for not being able to communicate directly (e.g., "felt sorry") or relied on interpreters (e.g., "wait for their parents to translate").

Overall, the responses reflect a mix of experiences, attitudes, and reflections regarding interactions with Deaf individuals and involvement in activities related to Deaf culture among students. While some respondents demonstrate positive experiences and a willingness to engage with Deaf communities, others highlight the need for increased awareness, understanding, and support for inclusion within society.

- **Question 12:** Is there anything else you would like to share about sign language learning, experiences with Deaf culture, or any suggestions?

The responses provided offer valuable insights, suggestions, and reflections on sign language learning that emphasize inclusivity and accessibility.

- **Support for sign language learning:** a strong majority of students recommend learning sign language (e.g., "highly recommend", "a good idea to learn", "everyone should learn"). Others highlight the benefits of SL, including improved communication, cultural understanding, and cognitive development (e.g., "facilitate our communication", "opens up a whole new world", "enhanced cognitive development").
- **Integration into Education:** Several students suggested incorporating sign language into school curriculums (e.g., "module like this", "included in the schooling curriculum"). However, one student proposed offering it as an elective, allowing students to choose if they want to learn ("optional choice").
- **Challenges and Suggestions:** A few students mentioned the challenge of having multiple sign languages (e.g., "better if sign language was universal"). Some suggested alternative solutions like technology-based communication tools ("create an application").
- **Importance of Deaf Culture:** Students acknowledged the Deaf community as an integral part of society (e.g., "those people are part of the community", "Deaf people are also a part of our society"). There is a desire for greater understanding and communication between Deaf and hearing communities (e.g., "strengthen sign language", "hope to see more collaboration").

Overall, the responses highlight a strong sense of advocacy for sign language education, cultural awareness, and inclusivity, reflecting a collective desire to promote communication access and mutual respect for Deaf individuals within society.

2.5.2 The Analysis of the Interview

Since the study involves conducting two different interviews with different populations, each interview should be analyzed separately.

2.5.2.1 Students' and Teachers' Interview

This interview targets students and teachers from higher Schools of Deaf. As mentioned previously, this sample represents hearing individuals who have already learned sign language. The analysis of this interview for both groups of people (students and teachers) would be accomplished together since both get the same questions during the interview.

- **Question 1:** What are the main motivations that led you to learn sign language?

The answers highlight the diverse motivations for learning sign language among both students and teachers. Students are driven by a sense of responsibility to communicate effectively with individuals with hearing impairments (e.g., “I must learn and master it to effectively convey information”), personal curiosity (e.g., “Curiosity and the desire to learn a new language”), and empathy towards family members or friends with disabilities (e.g., “to effectively communicate with my siblings with disabilities”). They also recognize the importance of sign language in overcoming communication barriers and advocating for its usage in various contexts (e.g., “help the deaf community”).

Teachers, on the other hand, emphasize the practical necessity of learning sign language for their professional roles (e.g., “teach my students”, “I need it for work”), as well as a commitment to serving the deaf community (e.g., “to assist the deaf is my overall goal”), and a love for language and teaching (e.g., “Love of the profession”). Overall, these motivations underscore the importance of sign language in facilitating communication and inclusion for individuals with hearing impairments.

- **Question 2:** How did your journey in learning sign language begin?

The question posed to both students and teachers revolves around the initiation of their journey in learning sign language. The responses reflect a variety of starting

points, ranging from formal training courses at educational institutions to self-study methods such as watching online videos, reading books, and learning from family members.

- **Question 3:** What were the most challenging aspects you faced while learning sign language as a hearing person?

The responses of students highlight a range of difficulties, including the complexity of sign language with multiple meanings for a single sign (e.g., “some signs seem similar”), and the inability to speed up hand movements to convey information quickly. Some students also express challenges related to the lack of practice partners (e.g., “I don't have anyone to practice with”), the hard of memorizing signs, and the limitations of sign language in expressing certain concepts or words without direct equivalents (e.g., “some words do not have direct equivalents in sign language. For example, the word "news" in Arabic”).

Similarly, teachers provide insights into their struggles with learning sign language, such as forgetting signs, difficulty in harmonizing hand movements with mental processes, and the challenge of maintaining proficiency after periods of not practicing. Regarding this, they highlight the importance of gathering information and terminology from various sources to overcome these challenges.

- **Question 4:** Do you have specific experiences related to interacting with the deaf community or using sign language in daily life?

The students' responses offer a glimpse into the effective communication they have had with individuals from the deaf community. Some students express deep emotional connections formed through their interactions (e.g., “confiding in you and trusting you blindly”), highlighting the immense capacity for love and trust demonstrated by deaf individuals once they perceive even the basics of sign language (e.g., “even a basic understanding”). Others share the joy and fulfillment they experience from being able to engage in meaningful conversations and communicate effectively with people with disabilities (e.g., “most enjoyable parts of my life”).

Teachers as well provide insights into their own experiences, which often involve professional engagements requiring sign language proficiency. They recount instances of serving as translators in various settings, including sports events, religious sermons, court proceedings, and notary offices, emphasizing the importance of sign language in facilitating communication and inclusion for the deaf community.

- **Question 5:** How have you felt your sign language skills develop over time?

Students and teachers offer a range of perspectives based on their personal experiences and engagements with sign language. Students reflect on their journey of improvement in sign language skills, with some expressing noticeable progress and increased confidence in their ability to communicate effectively. Some students emphasize the practical aspect of learning sign language by highlighting common signs used in daily life and their significance, illustrating how familiarity with these signs facilitates the learning process (e.g., “many signs are used in daily life”).

On the other hand, teachers provide insights into their own development in sign language proficiency, often attributing progress to consistent practice and exposure to real-life translation situations where their skills were put to the test, such as translating religious sermons or speeches at national events for people with special needs, highlighting the ongoing learning process and the challenges encountered along the way.

- **Question 6:** Do you have any recommendations for hearing individuals who want to effectively learn sign language?

Based on their own experiences and observations, both students and teachers offer recommendations and advice for hearing individuals who want to learn sign language.

Students emphasize the importance of consistent practice and real-life application in the learning process. They highlight the benefits of interacting directly with the deaf community and learning from deaf individuals, as this provides a more immersive and effective learning experience. Additionally, they advocate for the

integration of sign language learning into broader societal education, emphasizing its significance for fostering inclusivity and communication with the deaf community.

Teachers also advise the need to consistently engage with sign language to avoid signs forgetting and to facilitate learning. They suggest utilizing social media platforms for learning and interacting with the hearing impaired, noting the welcoming nature of the deaf community towards those interested in their language.

- **Question 7:** Have you noticed any positive or negative impacts on your life after learning sign language?

Students reflect on the positive effects of learning sign language, including the ability to positively influence others by teaching sign language to family members and the broader community. One student notes that his proficiency in sign language goes beyond Deaf interaction (“I subconsciously interact with hearing individuals in SL”). Another student highlights the importance of SL in overcoming challenges to communication with people with disabilities (“Today, thanks to it, I help in overcoming difficulties for the deaf community”) emphasizing the potential for societal impact and calling for others to join in creating positive change (“What about you? What are you waiting for to make a positive change too? Be a hero in someone else's story”).

Teachers also share their experiences, emphasizing the positive impact of learning sign language. They note benefits such as ease of communication with hearing impaired individuals, the desire to continuously learn and master sign language, and a sense of uniqueness and advantage in social interactions. Additionally, teachers express gratitude for the special relationships formed within the deaf community and the opportunity to serve and support deaf individuals.

- **Question 8:** Have you encountered difficulty in communicating with the deaf community?

Students express varying degrees of difficulty in communicating with the deaf community. One student initially faced challenges but found that shaping the word using sign language (the fingerspelling method) helped mitigate the difficulty (“I

could spell out the word using the letters, and therefore they could understand me”), this provides an alternative method of communication through spelling. However, others acknowledge the difficulties they faced, highlighting the need for hard work and persistence to overcome language barriers and reach a professional level.

Teachers similarly attribute the difficulty in communication with Deaf to incomplete language proficiency or insufficient time spent with the community to achieve mastery. Others replace initial struggles in conveying information, by written communication, due to unfamiliarity with sign language. Additionally, someone notes that the variation in sign language across different deaf communities presents a challenge, necessitating up-to-date learning and diversifying resources.

Overall, the responses highlight the various difficulties encountered when interacting with the deaf community providing the initial alternative ways to communicate with them.

- **Question 9:** How can hearing individuals better support or engage with you after you've learned sign language?

The responses underscore the importance of social support for sign language learners, emphasizing the need for collective efforts to promote inclusivity and communication accessibility for individuals with hearing impairments. They call for active engagement and participation from hearing individuals in learning and advocating for sign language to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for the deaf community. One of the participants says:

In my opinion, the best support is not to underestimate its importance. Many people say that they are not obligated to learn it and that it is not a necessity! My question to them is as follows: If acquiring your language is essential for communication among you, what about them? Are they not also members of our community? It is astonishing that a society learns foreign languages to boast about their vast knowledge while refusing to learn a language that helps others and alleviates their burdens!

- **Question 10:** Can you share any inspiring stories or experiences from your journey in learning sign language?

Students share personal stories that motivated their interest in sign language. One student recounted a teaching experience at a school for children with disabilities, highlighting the impactful interactions with pupils and emphasizing the importance of integrating individuals with disabilities into society through learning sign language.

Teachers also share their experiences with sign language, including challenges faced and milestones achieved. One teacher recounts the initial difficulties in mimicking hand signs and controlling facial expressions but he highlights the progress made over time. Another teacher shares an unforgettable experience organizing a trip for Deaf, demonstrating the joy and fulfillment derived from creating memorable experiences for the deaf community.

Overall, the responses illustrate the positive impact of learning sign language on personal growth, communication, and the fostering of inclusive communities.

2.5.2.2 Deaf Interview

The purpose of the interview is to provide a deeper understanding of the importance and the advantages of sign language from deaf individuals' perspectives. To answer the questions of the interview, half of the sample was interviewed online via text messages and the others were interviewed face-to-face with gestures and familiar signs that everyone uses in daily life in addition to writing communication.

- **Question 1:** How long have you been using sign language?

Each response provides insight into the person's lifelong engagement with sign language, ranging from learning family signs in childhood to utilizing sign language as their primary mode of communication at a young age, highlighting its foundational role in their communication and education.

- **Question 2:** What are your thoughts and feelings about hearing people learning sign language?

The answers explore Deaf perspective on hearing people learning sign language, focusing on their emotions and attitudes towards this phenomenon. Each response

reflects a positive sentiment towards hearing individuals acquiring sign language skills. Deaf expressed hope for improved communication and interaction, and they share happy feelings witnessing hearing individuals learn sign language (e.g., “I feel happy”, “I hope they learn sign language”). Additionally, the willingness and interest showed by hearing individuals towards sign language learning further underscore the positive impact in fostering connection within the Deaf community (e.g., “It shows respect and a desire to connect with the Deaf community”).

- **Question 3:** Have you ever interacted with hearing individuals who have learned sign language? If yes, what was your experience like?

Deaf people perceive how hearing signers facilitate communication and bridge the gap between the Deaf and hearing worlds (e.g., “it allows for better communication and understanding between us”). Additionally, the mention of the deaf parents’ communication with hearing children who use sign language further emphasizes the positive impact of these interactions on the individual's daily life (“I have four hearing children whom I communicate with in sign language daily”). Overall, these responses convey a sense of appreciation for hearing individuals who have learned sign language and their role in enhancing communication and fostering mutual understanding.

- **Question 4:** In your opinion, why do hearing people want to learn sign language?

The question shows Deaf perspectives about the motivations behind hearing individuals' interest in learning sign language, ranging from the desire to facilitate communication and understanding with Deaf individuals to the curiosity about Deaf culture and the wish to support the Deaf community through teaching or volunteering.

- **Question 5:** How do you think the learning of sign language by hearing individuals impact the Deaf community?

The responses assert that learning sign language by hearing individuals produces benefits that impact the Deaf community positively. Some highlight the practical utility of hearing individuals as interpreters in social gatherings and official

events, acknowledging their contribution to facilitating communication for the Deaf. Others underscore the broader positive impact of sign language learning by hearing individuals, including fostering inclusivity, breaking down communication barriers, and promoting understanding and respect for Deaf culture.

- **Question 6:** What challenges do you think hearing people might face when learning sign language?

Each response offers different insights on the difficulties faced by hearing learners of sign language. Some responses highlight the challenge of maintaining consistent practice and interest, this reflects a common struggle faced by language learners when they encounter difficulties in real-life application or when motivation decreases. Another response introduces a financial barrier, suggesting that some deaf individuals may demand payment for teaching sign language, thereby making it inaccessible to those who cannot afford it. This highlights a socio-economic challenge that hearing learners may encounter in accessing sign language education. Finally, other responses provide a comprehensive list of challenges, including mastering non-verbal elements such as facial expressions and body movements, and finding opportunities for immersion and practice.

- **Question 7:** Conversely, what benefits do you think hearing people gain from learning sign language?

The answers explore the advantages and rewards that hearing individuals can derive from learning sign language. One response emphasizes the social and emotional benefits, highlighting how learning sign language results in joy and happiness during the mutual interaction with Deaf and hearing individuals. Some deaf interviewees expand on the societal benefits, noting how sign language proficiency opens up opportunities for employment and involvement in various sectors that support Deaf integration, while also enriching the learner's cultural understanding and knowledge base. Other responses introduce a practical benefit, indicating that sign language interpreters can receive rewards for their services, thus creating potential income opportunities for hearing signers.

- **Question 8:** How do you think hearing people learning sign language can contribute to promoting inclusivity and respect for Deaf culture?

Deaf responses emphasize the power of awareness and communication in bridging understanding between hearing and Deaf individuals, highlighting how spreading awareness of Deaf culture and language can foster welcome and understanding among hearing individuals.

- **Question 9:** Based on your experiences and perspectives, what advice or recommendations would you give to hearing individuals who are interested in learning sign language?

The last interview question seeks advice or recommendations for hearing individuals interested in learning sign language, aiming to provide guidance based on the experiences and perspectives of the interviewee.

The first recommendation highlights the desire for inclusivity and suggests that even a basic understanding of sign language can foster meaningful communication and connection (“even if only a little”). It underscores the idea that every effort, no matter how small, contributes to bridging the communication gap between the hearing and deaf communities. Others emphasize the significance of practice and patience (e.g., “to practice the language repeatedly”) since learning sign language is described as a gradual process that requires persistence, by practicing regularly with deaf individuals and being patient with the learning.

Moreover, some recommendations extend beyond individual learning to highlight the potential social impact of sign language proficiency. It suggests that after learning sign language, individuals can actively engage with deaf associations and participate in programs aimed at enriching both themselves and the deaf community.

Overall, these recommendations offer valuable guidance for hearing individuals interested in learning sign language, emphasizing the importance of practice, patience, and engagement with the deaf community.

2.6 Discussion

The findings derived from the questionnaire and interviews align closely with the hypotheses posited at the outset of the study. The first hypothesis, which suggests that students have positive attitudes towards learning sign language, finds strong support in the research outcomes. The questionnaire results indicate a predominant positivity among students towards learning sign language, with the majority expressing an openness to the idea. Moreover, their motivations for learning sign language, as revealed through the questionnaire responses, are primarily driven by their desire to enhance communication with the deaf community. This underscores the students' recognition of the significance of sign language in facilitating meaningful interaction and bridging communication barriers between hearing and deaf communities.

Furthermore, the conclusions drawn from the interviews corroborate the second hypothesis that learning sign language enables effective communication with deaf people, helps them a lot in their lives, and facilitates their integration into society. Both interviews with deaf participants and students and teachers from the Higher School of Deaf and Mute emphasize the significant role of sign language in enhancing communication and promoting social inclusion. Their answers underscore the practical benefits of learning sign language, affirming its efficacy in facilitating meaningful interaction and fostering mutual understanding between different linguistic communities, noting that even a minimal understanding of sign language demonstrates a respectful effort to bridge the communication gap.

From the results, it is worth mentioning that sign language proficiency not only enhances effective communication but also opens employment opportunities for SL interpreters, SL teachers, and Deaf teachers.

These findings align with the research conducted by Phillipa Mustwanga and Barbara Mapuranga in Zimbabwe, titled "Perceptions of 'Hearing' People on Sign Language Learning." Their study revealed that a majority of hearing participants believe that sign language is learnable and they emphasized that they "are ready to learn SL" (2014, p. 65)

Similarly, a study by Baya Ramdhani Fajri and Grahita Kusumastuti (2019) in Indonesia supports these results. This research found that hearing individuals generally hold positive attitudes towards sign language and have a strong desire to learn it, recognizing its importance for effective communication between deaf and hearing people.

Additionally, Monney Mariette's research (2017), titled "'Hearing' the Signs: Influence of Sign Language in an Inclusive Classroom," conducted in Canada, corroborates these findings. Her study highlighted several benefits of learning sign language, including that mastering sign language helps hearing individuals develop cultural sensitivity, making them more open to other cultures and languages. This appreciation for diversity fosters support, respect, and empathy, and enhances the sense of belonging for Deaf individuals in inclusive communities where both hearing and deaf individuals live.

In summary, the research outcomes not only validate the hypotheses but also provide a deeper understanding of the motivations driving sign language learning, the emotional outcome of both communities when effectively interacting, and the practical benefits it offers in fostering communication and societal integration for the deaf community.

2.7 Recommendations

Based on the data collected from participants through the questionnaire and the interviews, along with insights obtained from the literature review, several recommendations are proposed to achieve the objectives of this dissertation.

2.7.1 Hearing Care

It is essential for hearing individuals to prioritize the health of their auditory system to safeguard against hearing loss. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) recommends the acronym 'H.E.A.R.I.N.G', which summarizes the key elements necessary for fostering hearing health and addressing hearing loss (Figure 2.11)



Figure 2.11: The Acronym H.E.A.R.I.N.G

- **Hearing Screening and Intervention:** Conducting routine hearing tests to identify and treat hearing impairments at an early stage.
- **Ear Disease Prevention and Management:** Educating individuals on methods to prevent ear diseases and providing treatment for existing conditions.
- **Access to Technologies:** Ensuring that everyone has access to hearing aids and other assistive devices that enhance auditory perception.
- **Rehabilitation Services:** Providing support and training for deaf individuals to help them adapt to hearing loss and enhance their communication abilities.
- **Improved Communication:** Promoting effective communication strategies with individuals who have hearing loss, including the use of sign language and alternative methods.
- **Noise Reduction:** Implementing measures to minimize environmental noise to protect individuals' hearing.
- **Greater Community Engagement:** Fostering community programs and activities that support individuals with hearing loss to enhance inclusivity.

2.7.2 Precaution in Dealing with Deaf

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) suggests some strategies to communicate effectively with hearing impaired people:

- Before speaking get Deaf attention with a hand wave or a shoulder tap.
- You should face the deaf during the conversation.
- Do not wear face masks or hide the mouth to enable Deaf the ability of the lips reading process.
- Speak loudly even if he wears hearing aids.
- Do not interact in noisy places.
- Speak slowly with clear lips shapes and spell the word if necessary.
- Reinforce what you say by using facial expressions and gestures.
- Use visual aids, such as pictures and note writing when possible.
- Use simple words.
- When the SL interpreter is available, speak to the Deaf, not the interpreter (ADA, 2006)
- And finally, when you fail to understand, do not neglect the speech, or pretend you understand by saying 'yes, yes'. This makes them very angry and they feel disrespect. Instead, in this situation ask the help of another person; he may comprehend what you misunderstand, or rather use the writing method; it may be effective and bridge the communication gap.

2.7.3 The Importance of Technology in Effective Communication

If you fail in communication and you find no way to interact, you just need a smartphone and download some applications. Technology plays a crucial role in promoting effective communication between hearing and deaf people.

Many of these applications utilize a process known as Sign Language Recognition (SLR), which aims to convert sign language into spoken or written language and the reverse (Abdallah & Fayyumi, 2016; Pieri & Cobb, 2019).

These apps are built with algorithms designed to identify various gestures, enabling them to recognize hand movements and translate them into corresponding speech or text. Conversely, when converting spoken or written language into sign language, the application uses input from a microphone or keyboard to interpret the data, into sign language through either a video featuring an assistive bot or an

animated representation of the relevant sign (ibid).

Mahmoud (2023, pp. 115-118) effectively depicts these applications in a table¹⁴ that highlights the most common effective applications available in online app stores, providing a summarized description of each application.

2.8 Limitations of the study

The majority of studies on sign language are conducted on deaf people whatever the objective is. Yet, there are very few studies that deal with hearing individuals when it comes to sign language topics. Therefore, the topic of the study is new and presents a challenge for the researcher. Several limitations faced this research.

First, the research encountered a notable lack of sources and previous studies, especially concerning Arabic and Algerian sign languages, as most available literature focuses on American Sign Language.

Second, when asking the students through the online questionnaire, some of them did not answer the open-ended question though its obligation, they just put a full stop (.) instead of a clear answer. This could affect the finding, but fortunately, this behavior was exhibited by only a minority of respondents.

Last point, the interviews were conducted online, and many of the participants did not respond, they may not appreciate the importance of the study, or perhaps they were too busy to answer. For instance, out of 100 participants who were asked remotely, only 15 participants answered; 12 from higher school, and three deaf people.

¹⁴ See (Table A.1) in Appendix -B- pages 60-62.

2.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, the second chapter of the dissertation focuses on the methodology utilized in this study. The research design was formed to address the research questions and validate the hypotheses using a mixed-methods approach to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire and the interviews were used as research tools that addressed the three types of sample populations to gather data about sign language learning from different insights. The findings revealed the profound impact of sign language on improving social integration for deaf people and expanding career opportunities for hearing individuals. The dissertation provided vital recommendations to improve communication between hearing and deaf communities. However, it identified significant gaps, including limited literature and participation challenges. Overall, the study underscored the essential role of sign language learning by hearing individuals in promoting inclusivity for the deaf community.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

General Conclusion

This dissertation has explored the vital role of sign language learning by hearing individuals in fostering inclusivity for the deaf community. It is composed of two chapters. Chapter one named 'Literature Review' sheds light on the main points that enhance understanding of the topic. Through an examination of key themes such as deafness, sign language, and Deaf rights, the chapter has established a comprehensive understanding of the importance of sign language in bridging communication gaps between hearing and deaf individuals.

The second chapter has provided a deep understanding of the methodology utilized. The findings from both the questionnaires and interviews provide strong support for the initial hypotheses. Notably, the majority of students demonstrated positive attitudes towards learning sign language, motivated primarily by their desire to enhance communication with the deaf community. Additionally, the qualitative insights gained from interviews with deaf participants and signer students and teachers, reinforce the notion that learning sign language significantly aids effective communication. It not only enriches the lives of deaf individuals and facilitates their integration into society, but also offers various job opportunities for hearing people such as interpreters and Deaf teachers.

In light of these findings, the research work suggested some strategies to deal with deaf people and help in the interaction. Then, it recommended some mobile applications, highlighting the role of technology in effective communication between communities.

Finally, the study highlighted the significant gaps that faced the research, such as the limited availability of literature, the incomplete questionnaire responses, and the low participation rates in the interview. Future research should address these limitations to enhance the validity of findings in this important field. They are suggested to focus more on the role of media and technology in sign language learning. Furthermore, they should investigate the challenges that sign language learners face; by exploring these barriers, the study seeks solutions that can enhance awareness, accessibility, and motivation for sign language education.

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APPENDICES

Appendices

Appendix -A-

Article 1

All deaf children, like all humans, are born free and equal in dignity and rights.



Article 2

All deaf children have a right to a sign language. National sign language(s) are the only fully accessible language for deaf children from birth onwards.



Article 3

The right of deaf children to their national sign language(s) shall not be infringed.



Article 4

All parents, carers and family members of deaf children must be provided with free instruction in their national sign language(s).



Article 5

All deaf children have a right to quality, inclusive, multilingual education in their national sign language(s) and the national written language(s).^[1]



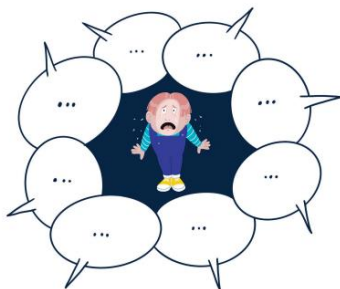
Article 6

All deaf children have a right to learn the linguistic identity and culture of the deaf community.^[2]



Article 7

All deaf children have the right to protection from language deprivation. Not providing access to the national sign language(s) to all deaf children constitutes discrimination^[3].



Article 8

All deaf children have a right to fluent national sign language models, including teachers in education.^[4]



Article 9

All deaf children have a right to express their views on a matters affecting them.^[5]



Article 10

All the above declarations must be implemented for all deaf children immediately and without delay.





















WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF

Figure A.1: Declaration on the Rights of Deaf Children



Appendix -B-


Table A.1: Effective Applications for Deaf



Name & Logo	Photo	Description	Rate
<p>Tebyan Quran for Deaf</p> 		<p>The Tebyan Quran is an interactive app for the deaf and those who suffer from hearing disabilities. The app facilitates novel technologies and rich interactive visuals dedicated to aid such individuals recite, memorize, and understand the meanings of the noble Quran. = <u>Freeware App</u></p>	<p>4.2</p>
<p>Musheer learn Arabic sign language</p> 		<p>"Mosheer" in its first version as a phone application that contains 38 signs for learning, "Mosheer" is based on the "Unified Arabic Signal Dictionary". Musheer has a practice section, a challenges section, and a dictionary. In the training section, you will find the signal displayed in an image, and after saving it, you can move to the next step and perform that signal in front of the camera, and the AI model will recognize that signal and tell you if it is correct. = <u>Freeware App</u></p>	<p>4.5</p>
<p>Merge Interpreter</p> 		<p>It is a video call center to translate between the Deaf and others by interpreting oral to sign language and vis versa – it gives the deaf free minutes then he has to pay a subscription. = <u>Commercial App</u></p>	<p>4.8</p>
<p>Sign Language Keyboard</p> 		<p>A sign language keyboard is a specialized keyboard for several uses, by using this keyboard, you can use sign language in any of your applications on the phone and send short messages through ArSL characters. = <u>Freeware App</u></p>	<p>4.8</p>




Name & Logo	Photo	Description	Rate
<p>Deaf-Mute Helper</p> 		<p>This app improves the communication experience of people with partial or total hearing loss problems and mute people.</p> <p>It's super easy to use and intuitive.</p> <p>The app has text-to-speech and speech-to-text features and includes 40+ languages. = <u>Freeware App</u></p>	<p>4.1</p>
<p>Sign Language ASL Pocket Sign</p> 		<p>An Educational Application to learn ASL fast, with interactive video lessons and a dictionary</p> <p>It is easy for deaf and hearing persons.</p> <p>= <u>Freeware App</u></p>	<p>4.7</p>
<p>Deaf Note - Large Text Notepad</p> 		<p>Designed with the philosophy of delivering a simple interface for textual communication with design customization, Deaf Note is perfect for everyday use.</p> <p>= <u>Freeware App</u></p>	<p>4.8</p>
<p>Hand Talk Translator</p> 		<p>Designed for two different languages American and Libras.</p> <p>It translates audio or text to ASL</p> <p>= <u>Freeware App</u></p>	<p>4.4</p>
<p>DEF-ISL</p> 		<p>The DEF-ISL app makes learning sign language easy, accessible, and interesting. The customized mobile app is available for download on iOS and Android platforms and thus offers an opportunity for anyone and everyone to learn Indian Sign Language. This project promotes a more inclusive</p>	<p>4.2</p>


		society by enabling people to learn ISL and reach out to the Deaf community more easily. – <u>Freeware App</u>	
<p>Learn Sign Language</p> 		<p>In the sign language app, you will find gestures for alphabets, numbers, and also some everyday words. This app can also give you a daily guide to sign up easily and you can refer to it when you want to save cards offline. – <u>Freeware App</u></p>	3.6

Name & Logo	Photo	Description	Rate
<p>BarkiASL</p> 		<p>This Application provides the important signs in Algerian Sign language illustrated with animated pictures.</p>	5



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Appendix -C-

Students' Questionnaires

Students' Attitudes Towards Sign Language Learning

This questionnaire aims to understand students' perceptions and attitudes towards learning sign language (deaf language). Your participation is greatly appreciated, and all responses will be kept confidential.

1. As a student how interested are you in learning sign language?
 - Not interested at all
 - Slightly interested
 - Moderately interested
 - Very interested
 - Extremely interested

2. What is your primary reason for considering learning sign language?
 - Personal interest
 - Communication with Deaf individuals
 - Career advancement
 - Academic requirement
 - Other: _____

3. Would you be willing to dedicate time and effort to learn sign language outside of formal academic requirements?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Maybe

4. What challenges, if any, do you anticipate in learning sign language?
Tick all that apply.
 - Lack of resources/materials
 - Lack of time
 - Difficulty finding qualified instructors
 - Perceived complexity of sign language
 - Other: _____

5. How important do you think it is for everyone to learn sign language?
- Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Neutral
 - Not very important
 - Not important at all
6. Do you believe learning sign language should be incorporated into school curriculums?
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
7. Do you believe it is important to learn sign language to better understand and respect Deaf culture?
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
8. Do you think learning sign language increases awareness and understanding of Deaf culture?
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
9. How do you perceive the importance of sign language in promoting inclusivity of Deaf people?
- Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Neutral
 - Not very important
 - Not important at all

10. Have you ever interacted with Deaf individuals or been involved in activities related to Deaf culture?

Yes

No

11. If yes, please briefly describe your experience or exposure.

12. Is there anything else you would like to share about your attitudes towards learning sign language, experiences with Deaf culture, or any suggestions?

Thank you for your collaboration.

Appendix -D-

Motivated Hearing Individuals' Interview Responses

Interview Questions

ENS_SM المدرسة العليا لأساتذة الصم و البكم عائشة
March 17 at 2:00 AM

السلام عليكم رب يحفظكم خاصني مساعدة.. عندي ميموار تع ماستر على الصم و تعلم لغة الإشارة من طرف الأشخاص السامعين.. لازمني أجوبة على بعض الأسئلة بخصوص الموضوع.. تتمنى تعاونوني 🌹

1. ما هي الدوافع الرئيسية التي دفعتك لتعلم لغة الإشارة؟
2. كيف بدأت رحلتك في تعلم اللغة الإشارة؟
3. ما هي أكثر التحديات التي واجهتك أثناء تعلم اللغة الإشارة كشخص سامع؟
4. هل لديك تجارب محددة تتعلق بتفاعل مع مجتمع الصم أو استخدامك للغة الإشارة في الحياة اليومية؟
5. كيف شعرت بتطور مهاراتك في اللغة الإشارة مع مرور الوقت؟
6. هل لديك أي توصيات للأشخاص السامعين الذين يرغبون في تعلم اللغة الإشارة بشكل فعال؟
7. هل لاحظت أي تأثيرات إيجابية أو سلبية على حياتك أو تفاعلاتك الاجتماعية بعد تعلمك للغة الإشارة؟
8. هل واجهت صعوبة في التواصل مع مجتمع الصم أو تبادل المعرفة والخبرات معهم؟
9. كيف يمكن للأشخاص السامعين الآخرين دعمك أو التفاعل معك بشكل أفضل بعد تعلمك للغة الإشارة؟
10. هل يمكنك مشاركة أي قصص أو تجارب ملهمة عن رحلتك في تعلم اللغة الإشارة؟

55 34 comments

Like Comment Send

Participant -1-



Admin Top contributor

- 1- أولا كوني أستاذة بالمدرسة العليا للأساتذة الصم والبكم ولأنني موجهة ل هاته الفئة فهذا يدفعني لتعلم لغتهم لأتمكن من أن أكون جزءا من عالمهم
- 2- بدأت مع التكوين الذي قامت به المدرسة ولا تزال مستمرة وهي رحلة شاقة وتحتاج إلى صبر وتعب والإستمرارية خاصة لكنها رحلة ممتعة في نفس الوقت
- 3- أرى أن تعلم لغة الإشارة في حد ذاتها تحدي ..ولعل أصعب تحدي هو أن تتذكر الإشارات بعد مرور فترة معينة من عدم الممارسة والتكرار
- 4- نعم وكانت التجربة الأجل على الإطلاق مع أقسام خاصة بالصم في الثانوي وكذا ب المركز الخاص بهم .
- 5- ل حد الساعة لازلت في بداية المشوار لكن متأملة أن يكون هناك تطور أكبر وملحوظ في الفترة القادمة .
- 6- عليكم بالممارسة ولا تتوانوا لحظة في الولوج ل عالم الصم عن طريق تعلم لغتهم فهذا العالم سيبهرك حقا 🤩
- 7- نعم هناك تأثير إيجابي فتجعلك تحس أنك لك ميزة إضافية ومختلفة عن من حولك.
- 8- نعم نظرا لأن لغة الاشارة تختلف من مجتمع الصم ل آخر فتجد نفسك امام حتمية أن تتعلم وتكتسب أشياء جديدة ومختلفة في كل مرة

22w Love Reply Edited

6 ❤️👍

Participant -2-



[Redacted]



بسم الله



1/هناك العديد من الدوافع الدافع الاساسي حب اللغة أنا أحببتها و أعجبت بها كثيرا و هناك دافع التواصل بصفتنا بشر لدينا غريزة مع الغير و التأقلم وكل هذا يكون عن طويق لغة التواصل ❤️



2/رحلتي مع لغة الإشارة بدأت عام 2015 عندما حضرت حفلة في المسرح الجهوي عبدالقادر علولة بوهران و عندما إنتهت خرجنا عند الباب كان هناك العديد من فئة صم يتواصلون بالإشارة و كانت معهم نائبة رئيس جمعية لصم أعجبت بهاذ اللغة و طلبت منها مقر الجمعية و إنخرطت معهم و من تلك لحظة بدأ مشواري مع لغة الإشارة ❤️



3/أكثر التحديات إنسجام العقل مع اليدين وجدت صعوبة في التناسق اليد مع العقل و أيضا التواصل معهم و التأقلم معهم ❤️



4/الحمدلله لدي الكثير من التجارب أبرزها مترجم رسمي لفريق رياضي كنت اجول معه ولايات الغرب لانه كان فريق لديه صعوبة في التواصل مع مسؤولي الرياضة و أيضا مترجم لخطبتي الجمعة بمسجد الإمام مسلم ولاية معسكر و والكثير ❤️

5/ الحمد لله عندما إنتخيت لأكون مترجم في مسجد خارج ولايتي هذا كان من أبرز التحدي الذي يختبر مدي إختبار تطور لدي و كانت أول ترجمة لدي متوسطة بحكم أول مرة أقابل جمهور من الناس لا يسمعون و لا يتكلمون ينتظرون مني ترجمة خطبتي الجمعة وهم يتطلعون لمعرفة دينهم و الحمد لله مزال نتعلمو

6/ نعم الحمد لله هناك من يتابعني و يحب هذه اللغة و دليل صفحتي في الفايسبوك هناك نسبة مشاهد لمنشوراتي ماشاء الله و هذا يشرفني و يحفزني علي المزيد من العمل الجاد

Mar 17, 2024, 11:41 AM

7/ هناك العديد من التأثيرات الإيجابية الإجتماعية خاصة بين أصدقائي أصبحت لدي مكانة خاصة أيضا مع فئة الصم أصبحت محبوب عندهم و اي أصم يحتاج مساعدة أنا في خدمة الحمد لله توفيق من الله

8/ نعم واجهت صعوبة كبير في التواصل و التأقلم مع فئة الصم خاصة و صعوبة الكبيرة في الثقة لأنهم يختبروك و الا شافوك إنسان تاع ثقة و متخلق راح يحبوك و راه يساعدوك و يعلموك باش تتمكن في لغة الإشارة

9/ الأشخاص الذين يسمعون هم يشجعوني و يحفزوني و يتفاعلون مع منشوراتي و مباشر علي صفحتي في الفايسبوك

Mar 17, 2024, 12:14 PM

10/ أحلي واروع تجربة عشتها في يومهم العالمي أنا و شيخي أخذنا 30 اصم الي حمام بوجر ولاية معسكر البداية كانت قبل الموعد بالأسبوع حيث إتصل محسن بشيخي و ضمن له حافلة ليوم كامل و محسن آخر ضمن وجبت الغذاء و بعدها حددنا الوجهة علي حسب مايجبه الكل و كانت الوجهة حمام بوجر ولاية معسكر و خصصناه في يومهم العالمي الموافق ل 3 ديسمبر من كل عام أقلعنا صباحا 09 وصلنا مع حدود منتصف النهار رتبنا الأمور و نظمناها مع شيخي و دخلو للحمام مسبح ساخن انا كنت مسؤول علي حمايتهم داخل المسبح و مع 3 زوالا أكملو و أخذناهم من أجل وجبة الغذاء كانت أروع تجربة عشتها في حياتي و الحمد لله

Participant -3-



Top contributor

1. الدافع الأول و الرئيسي كان الهدف منه التواصل بشكل فعال مع إخواني من ذوي الهمم فئة الصم و البكم و من ثم تكونت أهداف و دوافع مرتبطة بأهمية تعلم لغة الإشارة للإسهام في تذليل صعوبات التواصل لدى فئة الصم و البكم في المجتمع (مثال بما انني أجيد لغة الإشارة إذا صادفت شخصا أصما في البقالة يواجه صعوبة في شرح ما يريد للبائع سأكون أنذاك مترجما يذلل صعوبة التواصل و سأنوه للبائع أهمية تعلم لغة الإشارة)
2. بدأت بين أفراد أسرتي حيث تعلمتها منهم
3. أعجبتني هذا السؤال جدا لأن تحديات لغة الإشارة عديدة أهمها محدوديتها هناك بعض الكلمات لا يوجد نظير لها بالإشارة مثال كلمة خبر في قواعد اللغة العربية و هنا نضطر لإستعمال لغة الإشارة الوصفية لإستكمال هذا النقص لكن المفهوم يبقى مبهما بعض الشيء،
4. نعم و هذا من أكثر الأجزاء التي أحبها في حياتي لا شيء يضاهي سعادة أن تتمكني من إنشاء محادثة متكاملة مع شخص من ذوي الهمم لأنك سترين الفرحة جالية على وجهه لمجرد فهمك إياه، إن حاولت وصف الإحساس هنا سأكتفي بقول أنه يماثل فرحة النجاح بعد مشقة من الكدّ الطويل
5. لازلت أعمل على تطوير لغة الإشارة لدي و ذلك لأن لغة الإشارة في ذاتها متطورة تطراً عليها تغييرات لكن بالحديث عن التطور فله الحمد و الفضل انتقلت من مرحلة الكتابة على الأوراق و الاستعانة بالآخرين لترجمة ما أريد قوله إلى الحديث بأريحية و ثقة بلغة الإشارة
6. لغة الإشارة كغيرها من اللغات تتطلب منك وقتا و تركيزا و إهتماما لتعلمها ،أوصي كل فئات المجتمع بتعلم لغة الإشارة
7. لغة الإشارة إضافة إيجابية لحياتي و تفاعلاتي المجتمعية كنت أتوق للتواصل مع فئة ذوي الهمم و كان الحاجز أنني لا أجيدها و اليوم بفضلها أساعد في تذليل صعوبات فئة الصم "لكل من يقرأ الآن هذه الإنتقالة تصنع فرقا مجتمعيًا، ماذا عنك ماذا تنتظر لتصنع تغييرا إيجابيا أيضا .. كن بطلا في حكاية أحدهم"

8. نعم، للأسف لم يكن الطريق معبدا بالورود و لم يكن مستحيلا أو تسنه الأشواك أيضا لنقل أنه طريق تطلب العمل الجاد و الكدّ و لم أبلغ مرحلة الإحتراف إلى الآن لكنني أحاول و لن أبرح حتى أبلغ بإذن الله(من الصعوبات التي أواجهها حاليا هي كما ذكرت أنفا كلمات لا توجد نظير لها بلغة الإشارة فألجئ إلى تهجئة الحروف أو لغة الإشارة الوصفية أو الصور لتوضيح الفكرة)
9. برأيي أفضل دعم هو عدم الإستهانة بأهميتها هناك العديد من الأشخاص يقولون أنهم ليسوا مجبرون على تعلمها و أنها ليست بضرورة !!! سؤالي لهم كالتالي إذا كان إكتساب لغتكم ضرورة للتواصل فيما بينكم ضرورة قصوى فماذا عنهم أوليسوا أفرادا من مجتمعنا أيضا؟! بلى هم كذلك ألا تنطبق عليهم ضرورة التواصل كغيرهم ؟ بلى تنطبق إذا أين الخطب؟؟ هل في إختلاف اللغة !! عجا لمجتمع يتعلم اللغات الأجنبية بغية التفاخر بالعلم الوفير و يرفض تعلم لغة تساعد غيره و تزيل عنهم العديد من الأعباء!
10. هناك العديد من القصص في الحقيقة لكن سأذكر المفضلة لدي أول تجربة تدريس لي كانت في قسم سنة أولى متوسط بمدسة الأطفال ذوي الهمم بولاية تبسة و ذلك لإتمام مذكرة تخرجي أول إحتكاك لي مع التلاميذ كان لا ينسى تجمعهم حولي مخاطبتهم لي بكل إحترام حبهم للتعلم و تفاعلهم مع طريقة التعلم المدعمة بوسائل التكنولوجيا و العديد من التفاصيل التي لا تنسى أجملها اللحظة التي أنشئوا لي فيها إسما 🥰
- أختم أجوبتي بشعار "إعاقتهم لا تعني عجزهم" فئة ذوي الهمم من الصم و البكم فئة من السهل دمجها في المجتمع بفعالية فقط إن ساعدنا في ذلك و أولى الخطوات تعلم لغة الإشارة 🌟

22w Love Reply

8

Participant -4-



[Redacted Name]

- 1- حب المهنة.
- 2- الاحتكاك بالفئة من خلال التعليم المتخصص. 3- جمع المعلومات والمصطلحات من عده جهات.
- 4- أكيد منها التعليم التلاميذ ذوي الاعاقة السمعية - الترجمة للاشخاص الصم في المحكمة - الترجمة للاشخاص الصم عند الموثق- اللقاء بهم في مقهى خاصة بهذه الفئة
- 5- أثناء الترجمة الفورية لخطاب مسؤول معين في مناسبة وطنية لذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة أو غيرها.
- 6- إذا كنت تريد فإنك تستطيع .
- 7- كسب محبة هذه الفئة لك و ثقتهم بك واحترامهم لك...
- 8- في بدايه المشوار نعم، أما الآن فلا والحمد لله.
- 9- الحمد لله و الفضل لله.
- 10- أجمل ذكرياتي مع هذه الفئة حين قمت بترجمة النشيد الوطني الجزائري إلى لغة الإشارة و لأول مرة على مستوى التراب الوطني بمشاركة تلاميذي من ذوي الإعاقة السمعية، كذلك عندما قمت بإعداد قاموس في لغة الإشارات الجزائرية في شكل تطبيق إلكتروني بمحرك بحث يحتوي على فيديوهات كثيرة بمشاركه تلاميذي من ذوي الاعاقة السمعية و كانوا سندا قويا ليدي، بالإضافة إلى مرافقة هذه الفئة إلى عدة ولايات للمشاركة في تظاهرات اليوم العالمي لذوي الاحتياجات الخاصه و اليوم الوطني لذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة...



Participant -5-



[Redacted Name]

دوافع : لانها تعتبر الوسيلة الوحيدة للتواصل مع الأفراد الذين يعانون من الاعاقة السمعية و بما انني استاذة علوم متخصصة في الاعاقة السمعية يجب علي تعلمها و اتقانها لاتمكن من توصيل المعلومات لهاته الفئة + تقديم الدعم لهاته الفئة العزيز اندماجهم في المجتمع و تحسيسهم على انهم فرد عادي كأقرانهم



بدات رحلتكي في تعلم لغة الاشارة بالدورة التكوينية في ال مدرسة العليا لاساتذة الصم و اليكم حيث يتم تدريسنا هاته اللغة عن طريق اساتذة يعانون من اعاقه سمعية...كما ايضا كنت مهتمة بتواصل مع اشخاص صم بصفتهم مصدر جيد لاكتساب لغة الاشارة بالإضافة إلى متابعتي لبعض الفيديوات على اليوتيوب و الكتب لتعلم المزيد ايضا استفدت من التبرص الذي اجرته عند اساتذة متخصصين في المراكز و مدارس المعاقين سمعيا



اكتر التحديات ...
هي تعدد مفاهيم لاشارة واحدة
و زيد مانقدرش نزرّب باه نعبر على معلوماتي ولا باه نوصل معلومة بسرعة..



4. تجارب

حاجة عجبتني انو بمجرد مايعرف التلميذ او الشخص الاصم انك تتقني ولو القليل من لغة الاشارة راح يولي مهتم بيك بزاف و يحبك و مع لوقت راح يعتبرك مثابة كلش عندو يعني راح يحكيك مشاكلو و اي حاجة تتعلق بيه يدير فيك ثقة عمياء عندهم كمية حب كبيرة بزاف و في نفس لوقت كمية مره كبيرة يعني الا كسبتيه راح يحبك بزاف و لا مكسبتيهش راح يحقد عليك بزاف و يولي يكرهك و مايتعاملش معاك هذي عن تجربة يعني اخره مرة كنت رايحة لستاج كملت من ثانوي رحلت لتاع ابتدائي كمية الحب لي عندهم مش طبيعية 😊 لدرجة اني متخلعونيش نروح ريحت نص نهار معاهن



مخلونيش*



نفس شي مع اساتذة لي قراوني بحكم هم عندهم اعاقه شدتها حادة كي ولاو يجوبونا ولاو بزاف متعلقين بينا



تطور المهارات في لغة الاشارة مع مرور الوقت...
حمدلله حسيت بتحسن كبير و اني قادرة في مدة وجيزة تتمكن فيها بحكم انو اغلبية الاشارات رانا نخدمو بيها ديجا يعني منتشرة بزاف في مجتمعنا كمثال كي نقولو حمدلله نبوسو اطراف اصابع اليد اليمنى من الامام ثم من اليسار هذي اشارة شغل منتشرة بزاف سيغتو عند ناس لي كبيرة فالعمر و هي نفسها اشارة كلمة الحمد لله عند الصم كذلك نفس الشئ عند اغلبية الاشارات



يعني مناش راح نلقاو صعوبة كبيرة في تعلمها



توصيات
لازم المداومة و التطبيق يعني كي يتعلم حاجة. يطبقها في الوسط تاغو بلا ما يحشم ولا ... بسك الا مكنش تطبيق و المداومة مراحش تكون نتيجة واكيد يتعلم و يعلم ناس معاه يدي اجر هكا باه تنتشر اكثر لغة الاشارة. و يحسو ناس لي يعانو من الاعاقه السمعية انهم مندجين فالمجتمع



7. نعم شغل وليت الحاجة لي نتعلمها نعلمها لدارنا و العائلة كل 😊
بديت نحس روجي انا الصم 😊



8. نعم مع لول واجهت صعوبة من بعد كي تعلمت الحروف بلغة الاشارة بدات تروح شوي صعوبة لانهم كي مانعرفش الكلمة بلغة الاشارة و لي نشكلها بالحروف (باصابعي) ولا نكتبها و هوما يعلموموالي



وليت هك ندير كي نلقا صعوبة



9. دعم ... يكون بالتعلم و يزيدو يعلمو ناس معاهم على الأقل حوايج خلاف برك حروف... الخ

الملخص

تستكشف الدراسة وجهات نظر حول تعلم لغة الإشارة من طرف الأشخاص السامعين بهدف تسهيل التواصل مع الأشخاص ذوي الإعاقة السمعية، كما تبرز أهمية تعلم هذه اللغة في تعزيز التعايش والشمولية لهذه الفئة في المجتمع مع تقديم بعض الاقتراحات والنصائح التي تساعد على التواصل الفعال والفهم المتبادل بين مجتمعي السمع والصم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: لغة الإشارة، الصم، الأشخاص ضعاف السمع، الإعاقة السمعية، الاندماج الاجتماعي.

Summary

This study explores attitudes towards learning sign language by hearing people to facilitate interaction with hearing impaired people. It also highlights the importance of sign language learning in promoting inclusivity for this group in society, providing some suggestions and recommendations that foster effective communication and mutual understanding between hearing and deaf communities.

Keywords: Sign language, Deaf, Hearing impaired people, Deafness, Social inclusion.

Résumé

Cette étude examine des avis envers l'apprentissage de la langue des signes par les personnes entendantes pour faciliter les interactions avec les personnes sourdes. Elle met également en avant l'importance de l'apprentissage de cette langue pour promouvoir l'inclusion de ce groupe au sein de la société, en proposant suggestions et recommandations qui encouragent une communication efficace et une compréhension réciproque entre les communautés entendantes et sourdes.

Mots-clés : Langue des signes, Les sourdes, Les personnes malentendantes, La surdit , L'inclusion sociale.