~~Chapter Two~~2

Unveiling Sign Languages in the Linguistic Landscape: Representations of Sign Languages in Nonsigning and Signing Milieux

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Much of linguistic landscape studies (LLS) concerns the appearance and presence of languages. Yet absence of representation also tells a story, as in the case of sign languages. Since the signage examined in LLS (as in Gorter & Cenoz, 2017, for example) uses text, the issues about signage immediately frame the focus of LLS as not language per se. That is, text is not language, but only a reflection of language, just as a photograph is not a person, but only a reflection of a person. In a strict sense then, languages lacking a written form lack a linguistic landscape (LL) and are, thus, irrelevant to LLS. Such a conclusion is regrettable in that it precludes from consideration many of the world's languages and linguistic communities, with the result of impoverishing LLS.

The literature on LLs includes few to no mentions of sign languages in the LLs of deaf[1] and non-deaf spaces. This is simultaneously unsurprising and startling. On first consideration, it may seem logical that sign language LLs are unrepresented because sign languages have yet to establish codified, written forms; instead, they borrow the text of the ambient spoken language to translate for the purposes of written documentation. In the spirit of Shohamy (2015) and subsequent authors who have expanded the notion of LL, we challenge the assumption that languages in the LL are necessarily written; surely, technology and creativity ~~affords~~ the ability to project once-evanescent signs and sign languages into the LL in both frozen and animated forms. Now more than ever, sign languages in the LL are ripe for analysis. We argue for a broader notion of LLS, by showing benefits that arise from considering analogues of signage in natural sign languages. In turn, we embark on (perhaps) the first discussion of sign languages in the LL.

> **Comment [Q1]:** AU: I assume LLs (with small 's') is plural form of 'linguistic landscape' and LLS (with capital 'S') means 'linguistic landscape studies' and so retain them as they are. Please confirm my understanding.

In our internal musings on the sociohistorical and sociolinguistic factors influencing sign languages' appearance—both regarding their presence where they were once absent and what form they take—in the LL, we have come to recognize that there are many avenues to explore and far too much to be said for this chapter. We center this foray on a sociohistorical contextualization and subsequent analysis, revealing educational, social, and cultural motivations behind the production and publicity of sign languages. We pay particular attention but are not limited to American Sign Language (ASL) and its representations in the United States with the understanding that varying contexts will have different takes on and presentations of their sign languages. Furthermore, our analysis attends to the sensibilities of deaf people and preliminarily explores the LLs that crop up around deaf people and communities.

We first provide an overview of the sociohistorical context inhibiting the regular and systematic analysis of sign languages in the LL. We briefly trace the evolution of this context, ending with our current social and linguistic landscape, one more amenable to emergence and proliferation of sign languages. Throughout, we provide examples of sign languages as the basis for educational exchange, though with varied underlying motivations. Ultimately, we explore examples of when sign languages in the linguistic landscape serve as educational tools for inhabitants of and visitors to specific contexts, with particular attention to sign language linguistic landscapes (SLLLs), or places in which sign languages are more prominent and spoken/written languages are in the minority. In all cases, we specify the sign language under discussion.

Theoretical fFrameworks and lLiterature rReview:

Sign languages have yet to be explored as viable contributors to the linguistic landscapes surrounding the world's multifarious communities. Here, we take this modest first

ameliorating step, keeping in mind Gorter's (2013) assertion that "[t]he study of linguistic landscapes aims to add another view to our knowledge about societal multilingualism by focusing on language choices, hierarchies of languages, contact-phenomena, regulations, and aspects of literacy" (p. 191). Indeed, LLs are "contextual constellations" (Ben-Rafael et al., 2006, p. : 9) of the actors within a particular time and place and are emblematic of the complex sociocultural inner-workings of a given society.

Waksman and Shohamy (2010) and Shohamy and Waksman (2008) demonstrate what Shohamy (2015) later summarizes about LL studies: "g[G]aining a deeper meaning of the site must include, in addition to the written texts, images and pictures, the geographical locations where it is placed, the history, politics and the practices of the people who attend the site" (p. 154). Closer study of sign languages in the LL is bound to reveal historical, social, cultural, and political forces behind their display (or lack thereof). To understand these forces' true impact on signing communities we must expand our definition of what counts as a contextual landscape; we must look at what others have heretofore overlooked: deaf spaces and geographies.

Gulliver and Kitzel (2015) explain that the documentation of human geography has broadened over the last few decades from being limited to ones that emerge from "embodied experience[s] of the environment and ongoing social interaction" (p. 2). They are focused on how geographical spaces change when deaf people are present:

Deaf geographies describe how, by the simple expedient of living out their lives from within visual bodies, rather than hearing ones, Deaf people produce Deaf spaces. These Deaf spaces might be small and temporary, like the signing space that exists between some deaf friends who meet by chance in the street. They might be large but temporary, like a regular deaf pub gathering. They might be small and more permanent, like the home of a deaf

family, or as large and as permanent as a Deaf university. But they all have a number of things in common, and in common with hearing spaces … Deaf spaces exist in time … [They] harness a neutral physical world … [They] progressively shape the physical world ….[and] [they] leave traces in the mind.[2]

(pp. 2–3)

These features also exist in what the authors call "hearing"[2] geographies: the hegemonic notion of social formations in space and time when we forget—or ignore—the fact that deaf people exist within and co-create these spaces. Deaf geographers are thus concerned with power dynamics between hearing and deaf people and their impact on what surrounding spaces look like.

Here we are interested in exploring deaf and non-deaf geographies' impact on how sign languages are represented in the LL. How do the "temporary" and "more permanent" spaces of deaf people impact (sign) language use and recognition in everyday society? What are the social forces that militate against or encourage the use of sign languages in these contexts? How does expanding the criteria for LLs to include the various media through which sign languages can be depicted help us better understand underlying social forces at play that influence (sign) language representation and use? Sociohistorical, sociolinguistic, and deaf geographical contextualization of sign languages will help us better understand the how, when, and why of sign language use in the LL as educational tool (or linguistic prop). Many contexts discussed occur in predominantly nonsigning settings, though some occur in sign-dominant milieux, what we herein call sign language linguistic landscapes (SLLLs). By studying sign languages in the LL and in SLLL, we can better understand the dynamics between signers and nonsigners, and among signers. Unveiling these dynamics will increase

readers' awareness of them, and thus be a modest step toward mitigating social forces that have minimized and marginalized sign languages and deaf people and inhibited deaf people's movement toward equality with hearing counterparts.

A Brief Historical Contextualization of Sign Languages:

With the exception of the few sign languages used by shared signing communities (small communities with a relatively high percentage of deaf members, so that both deaf and hearing use sign language; see Kusters [2014]), sign languages have historically been marginalized by hearing people in most, if not all, countries. It was not until 1960, when Stokoe, a hearing linguist from Gallaudet College,[3] argued that the signing used by deaf Americans at Gallaudet was a bona fide language with a grammar separate from the ambient spoken language, English (Stokoe, 1960). Before then and for years after, until fMRI studies proved that sign languages are processed in the same parts of the brain as spoken languages (see Campbell et al., 2008, for an overview), there were pervasive misconceptions that sign languages were asystematic gestures and not natural human languages, and that deaf people should, instead of signing, be encouraged to communicate through speech, lipreading, reading, and writing of the ambient spoken language (Baynton, 1996). Such beliefs were determined and codified in educational policy without consultation of deaf people and implemented in schools for the deaf. Thus, sign languages were banned in most deaf schools, and deaf people were punished for communicating in sign, the language most natural and accessible to them (Lane, 1984). Such oralist policies existed in deaf schools in Europe and the United States for nearly a century—from 1880 until the 1970s, and in some cases, even later.

With sign languages broadly seen as illegitimate forms of communication, it comes as no surprise that the contexts in which sign languages could be used freely were few, exclusive to deaf people who learned stealthily through peers or immediate family members,

and a handful of hearing people sympathetic to the belief that signing is the natural language of deaf people. In the past (as recently as a few decades ago), it was rare to see deaf people signing in public; if they did, their signing space (the space in which their manual articulators would move) would be smaller than what would be typically produced in a deaf-majority setting. Evidence of sign languages permeating the broader LL of hearing people is thus minimal.

Over the years, the growing acceptance of sign languages' legitimacy has fueled general public interest in and desire to learn a sign language. For thousands of signing people in the United States, ASL is the most frequently used language (in addition to written English) and the preferred language for conversation, although exact figures are hard to come by for a variety of reasons (Mitchell et al., 2006; Murray 2019; Oros, 2015; Murray 2019). ASL vies with French for the position of second most commonly studied language (after Spanish) in postsecondary settings (Looney & Lusin, 2018). Sign languages are taught and proliferate in popular culture in other countries as well, particularly in Western Europe.[4] Accordingly, sign languages have entered the LL with higher frequency and visibility than before. This burgeoning presence of sign languages in everyday (hearing) settings is, we hope, an indicator of social progress with respect to how signing communities and deaf people are viewed.

Sign lLanguages and the "pProblem" of wWritten fForm:

The reasons for marginalization of sign languages are largely based on historical prejudice against deaf people and a deaf way of life, some of which persist today under various guises (Lane, 1992; Humphries et al. 2017; Lane, 1992). One somewhat linguistic reason is relevant to the present discussion: the lack of a writing system can bias people. A prevalent idea of the past is that true, mature, valuable languages have a literature——and by *literature*, people

mean a body of text, even though orally -transmitted literatures are more common globally (Prendergast, 2001)——and that oral narrative is the most important foundation for hearing cultures historically (Niles, 1999). That there might exist visual literatures that are treasure troves of deaf communities' cultures is unfathomable to many, though they proliferate (Bauman & Rose, 2006; Sutton-Spence & Kaneko, 2016). The idea behind this misconception is that writing is a higher form of language, perhaps because in the past writing belonged to those with socioeconomic power[5]; writing is taken as somehow more true, more reliable, than other forms of language. In fact, looking at the history of the writing systems for different languages can offer insights about the linguistic knowledge that users of the language had about it (Daniels, 2013). So the lack of a writing system for sign languages might lead people to the mistaken conclusion that sign languages are not bona fide human languages and have no linguistic structure to use as a scaffolding for a writing system.

The reality is that writing systems for sign languages have been devised, such as Stokoe notation (Stokoe, 1960), Sign Writing (Sutton,1995), HamNoSys (Prillwitz et al.,1989), and Si5S developed by Robert Augustus (Bauman & Murray, 2017; Miller, 2001; McCarty, 2004; Miller, 2001; Karpov, Kipyatkova, & Zelezny, 2016), and are currently being devised (Guimarães, Guardezi, & Fernandes, 2014). However, the complexities of dealing with the multiple spatial and articulatory factors involved yield systems that, so far, are hard to learn and unwieldy enough to make them impractical for daily use. But even if one could solve those problems, an intractable one posed by the nature of sign language lexicons remains. While spoken languages have a fixed/frozen lexicon and speakers coin new words only occasionally, sign languages have both a frozen and a productive lexicon (Brennan, 2001). The problems of trying to convey in a writing system these various articulation possibilities in time and space are mind-boggling and, most certainly, are due purely to the modality not to deficits of linguistic structure. Finally, modern technology has made videos

> **Comment [Q2]:** AU: Replace with 'truer'?

and video communication widely available, so the pressing need of the past for a sign writing system has waned.

Sign Languages in the (Hearing) Linguistic Landscape

Despite the lack of a writing system, sign languages filter into the LL with frequency and visibility that correlates strongly with hearing society's recognition and acceptance of deaf people and their sign languages. The tokens of sign languages themselves also reflect the social position of sign languages and deaf people. The following is a discussion and analysis of various representations of sign languages in the LL. Many of these tokens exist through an educational transaction, though not all deliver a positive message about sign languages.

The majority of sign language examples in the LL involve fingerspelling. Some sign languages eschew fingerspelling in the lexicon, for example, Italian Sign Language (LIS) (Nicodemus et al., 2017), and some allow it readily, for example, ASL (Morford & MacFarlane, 2003). Though fingerspelling use in the LL has yet to be examined, we believe its popularity rests on two facts: fingerspelling facilitates comprehension for nonsigners and serves as a signal of a likely sign-dominant environment (SLLL, to be explored below). For nonsigners, fingerspelling becomes a gateway point to learning the connection between the two languages—sign and spoken. Depictions of fingerspelling are thus treated as if it is the writing system of the sign language. For signers, depictions of fingerspelling cue different social and linguistic connections than the ambient spoken language. They act as symbolic invitations to a milieu enriched by visual-gestural and tactile communication, one that, until recently, was almost wholly siloed to signing-only spaces.

Tokens of deaf peddlers[6] are early examples of fingerspelling and sign language crossover from typically -deaf into predominantly -hearing spaces. Superficially, these tokens—often in the form of cards displaying the ASL manual alphabet—play on the

intention of educating hearing people about the ASL alphabet. Upon further examination, it is clear that deaf peddlers—and impostor deaf peddlers[7]—functioned under exploitative terms, characterizing deaf people as pitiable, unable to earn a legitimate living.

In fact, deaf people's lives were far more complex than these tokens suggested. If a deaf person was not in contact with accessible language (spoken or sign), the person was alinguistic, with deficits that followed from the lack of language. That person truly was pitiable and unable to earn a legitimate living at any job other than those an alinguistic beast could handle. If, instead, the deaf person used a sign language, then that person had a basis for learning a vocation. Peddling alphabet cards with the pretense of being unable to work was thus exploitative. Furthermore, the act of peddling reinforces stereotypes that deaf people are pitiable victims of social forces, effectively undermining efforts toward equality with hearing people. Thus, peddling was and is anathema within deaf community circles and as such has been campaigned against—officially and unofficially—within deaf communities (Robinson, 2012). Even still, some of the tokens of peddling are premised on active educational exchanges between deaf and hearing people, albeit ones that reinforce negative stereotypes.

Examination of the cards and other wares sold by deaf and impostor-deaf peddlers shows that many play to hearing sentiments of pity without educational motives nor sign language imagery on the card. One early 20th twentieth-century example of a token from a deaf peddler uses only written text to exploit the deafness-as-impediment model (Figure 2.1a). Others more relevant to this discussion, however, use drawings and other images of signing to embellish the English text on the card. Figure 2.1c includes a drawing of a person signing THANK YOU[8] alongside the request for donation. Unlike Figures 2.1d and e, there is no explicit connection to the English text that would indicate this sign means, "Thank you," although "Thank you very much" is written to the left of the image. Still, it is an early

example of ASL crossover into predominantly nonsigning, hearing communities and takes the opportunity to passively educate the nonsigner by using an ASL image.

[insert Figure 2.1 here]

Figure 2.1 Examples of deaf peddler cards

Meanwhile, Figures 1d and e—images from a double-sided card—promote a more instructional approach, as it is billed as a "Deaf Education System card." Many more signs are included on this card, signs aimed to pique the curiosity of nonsigning hearing people enough to prompt a purchase (or donation). The explicit and consistent pairing of ASL signs and English translation serves as an invitation for nonsigners to enter a signing community, one that has historically been hidden away, overlooked, and ignored by nonsigners. This quid pro quo strategy for procuring financial gain plays on nonsigners' naïveté, curiosity, beneficence, and, perhaps, ignorance; the card contains incorrect information that nonsigners would not pick up on, thus suggesting that the deaf peddlers likely were more interested in earning money through this exchange rather than accuracy of the tokens.

These cards show an interesting representation of ASL in the tokens of deaf peddling. Here peddlers don't rely on pity—though other peddlers certainly do—but instead market the exotic nature of their language to the nonsigning public. This strategy, however, does little to improve the subordinated position of deaf people in that it shifts its hook from pity to sign-language-as-exoticized-asset, thereby maintaining a superficial and objectified portrait of deaf people vis-à-vis the hearing majority.

For example, one of the most ubiquitous instances of sign languages in the LL is the ILY handshape on magnets, stickers, clothing, and so on (see Figure 1b, circa late twentieth century, early twenty-first century). Each letter is the first letter of a word in

the sentence "**I L**ove **Y**ou";; thus this handshape originated in America. Though its ubiquity is off-putting to some deaf people, many use this sign in everyday conversation. The sign can be seen on trinkets and other paraphernalia sold by deaf people. Modern technology has invited the ILY symbol into the world of emojis; ⬜is used in texting between signers and others in the know.

Why this handshape is so appealing is easy to figure out. For one, hearing people feel comfortable using it because it seems like what scholars of gesture call an emblem (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2013)—a gesture that has gained a conventional meaning so that it can be used in isolation like a word or phrase or even a sentence. Examples of emblems recognized in many (but not all) places with the same meaning around the globe include the thumbs-up handshape and the obscene middle -finger. Second, deaf people use ILY with many orientations of the palm and in many locations in space and even, sometimes, on both hands simultaneously. This variability comes across as flexibility, so hearing people are not afraid that they will make ILY incorrectly. Third, the message is positive, and who doesn't want to send a positive message? A quick internet search confirms that many companies make money selling paraphernalia with the ILY handshape.

Perhaps the very reasons why the ILY handshape spread with such abandon are the same reasons why there is disagreement among deaf communities as to whether this is a positive or negative development. If only signs that feel somehow familiar, cutesy, or cuddly to nonsigning people catch on rather than ones that challenge them to pay attention to articulatory details and nuances of signing, what does that mean about nonsigning people's appreciation of deaf ways of being? Use of the ILY handshape might reflect no depth or insight into sign languages or deaf experiences. So the spread of this handshape suggests a superficial dip of the toe into deaf spaces, rather than efforts toward a deeper understanding

of cultural values of deaf people. Indeed, the common use of ILY may be a convenient and thoughtless appropriation. Or worse, exploitation. An eloquent video (Ladines, n.d.) points out that those who sell ILY paraphernalia can make great amounts of money quickly—such as at feminist rallies—but often they contribute none of their profit to deaf organizations. The ILY symbol has also been used by deaf peddlers (again, see Figure. 2.1b); its ubiquity makes it a simple and easy image to use in tokens for sale.

Since the formal recognition of sign languages (1960), through the deaf civil rights movements (such as the Deaf President Now movement at Gallaudet in 1988), and now with the current explosion of popularity of sign languages among hearing people, sign language representations (in film, pop culture, universities, and advertising) have become increasingly apparent. Burgeoning interest among typically nonsigning people and communities gives rise to sign languages' spread into the LL.

Evidence of this popularity is visible in pop culture and beyond: deaf characters are showing up in films not specifically about deaf people. To the point: deaf characters and sign languages are proliferating in popular culture and ultimately in the LL because they are more visible and accepted than ever before. Depictions of sign language use as everyday phenomena give rise to the opportunity for them to appear in the LL. In the century before Stokoe, it would likely not have occurred to most nonsigners to include sign languages in depictions of a typical setting. Now they proliferate, and not only in SLLLs, perhaps as an attempt by producers/broadcasters to demonstrate their awareness of diversity and commitment to inclusivity.

One of the authors of this paper observed a framed poster of the LIS alphabet as part of a staged photograph advertisement for an Italian bank located on a metro line in Rome, Italy (Figures 2a–c).

[insert Figure 2.2 here]

Figure 2.2. Italian bank advertisement featuring the LIS alphabet

This advertisement does not concern being deaf nor does it appear to be marketing to deaf people. The tagline translates to "Does your story need more space? The solution is a BPER bank mortgage." In the corner of the full ad (Figure 2.2c), a framed poster of the LIS alphabet with small Roman letters next to each fingerspelled letter is part of the set. It is not prominent, nor completely presented. But it is there and its existence helps to change the narrative of what can be part of the everyday LL. Perhaps these people depicted are supposed to be deaf; perhaps not. Regardless, the image sends a message to signers and nonsigners alike that sign languages are part of everyday life.

Language uUse in the sSign lLanguage lLinguistic lLandscape (SLLL):

We have discussed evidence of sign languages appearing in a typically nonsigning LL. But is there a difference between the LL of spoken/written languages and languages that are signed? Might it be that the LL is different in predominantly signing environments? As Gulliver and Fekete (2017) remind us, "Deaf users of sign languages inhabit a world that is different than their Hearing [*sic*] counterparts due to their uniquely visual method of communication" (p. 121) and "Knowing more about the Deaf community, as producers of uniquely Deaf spaces, provides a means of considering the production of space in visual terms as defined by the lived experiences of a linguistic minority group" (p. 121).[9] These deaf spaces—some temporary, some permanent—indeed look different from those not heavily populated with sign language users. As such, the surrounding LL—one that is sign-dominant—also displays differently. Not surprisingly, in SLLLs, sign languages—both in digital and static form—are prominent. They are featured with or without the written text of the ambient spoken language. We posit that depictions of sign languages can stand alone in SLLLs, whereas, with the

exception of the ILY sign—which we argue above has become an emblem—they would not exist without the written form as mediation in the general, nonsigning LL.

What follows is a brief sketch of several contexts within the SLLL, including examples from the earliest documentation of sign language in video form to contemporary SLLLs and the linguistic output they produce. We note the circumstances and participants that construct these deaf geographies and connected SLLLs, and describe the deliberate and incidental educational opportunities that arise in these contexts. Like written language tokens in a nonsigning LL, meaning for sign language tokens is made in what Shohamy and Waksman (2008) call "interwoven 'discourses'"; "what is seen, what is heard, what is spoken, what is thought" all interface to construct what is displayed and perceived (p. 313). To members of signing communities, visibility of sign language in the SLLL might prompt feelings of pride, community inclusion, cultural connection, and inspiration. For nonsigners, these tokens are a reminder of the visual and tactile orientation of the people within the SLLL. For those aware that they are in a SLLL, they serve as a reminder to respect and follow the cultural mores of signing people. For others who are unaware of signing community values, they might prompt curiosity and inquiry into the meaning of the signs, why they are articulated in that manner, and what more they can learn about the people in the SLLL.

Before the advent of film, the memory and history of deaf people were passed down among deaf peers from generation to generation using ephemeral signs and stories. The use of static drawings to document and preserve signs for their own use and for posterity was limited (see Long [1908], for example). To communicate from afar, deaf people in the United States relied on reading and writing of English text. A printing association known as Little Paper Family (LPF) emerged at various state residential school communities and served as an information network for deaf students, alumni, and associated signing people.

Film technology revolutionized the way deaf people could document their languages and histories. Indeed, film and video are integral to the persistence of sign languages—through oralist periods and still today. Some of the earliest films in history were used for such documentation and are the first examples of the animated forms of sign languages in the SLLL. Meanwhile, it is only recently (Shohamy, 2015; Shohamy & Waksman, 2008; Troyer & Szabó, 2017) that this medium was considered a possible tool in surveying, capturing, constructing, and analyzing the LL. Even still, there has yet to be discussion of the use of film and video for documentation and analysis of sign languages in the LL.

From 1910 through 1921, the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) organized, funded, and promoted a film series to document and preserve what was known then as "the sign language," and what we now recognize as ASL (NAD, 1910–1921). These films had an explicit educational intention: to remind deaf communities of the contemporary threat of oralism to their language and people as well as to prompt them to preserve their language and culture for posterity. They featured multiple sign masters performing stories of various topics and in varying registers for the purpose of preserving the sign language under threat by oralist methodology. The films were signed, with no subtitles and no voice-overs, targeting only signing deaf community members.[10] They are a tribute to the expected persistence of sign languages and are symbols of resistance to oralism. They were circulated in milieux that were majority signing rather than speaking—deaf clubs and deaf schools—and were the first contributions to and documentation of SLLLs.

One of the most well-known films of the series, "The Preservation of Sign Language," is a "strong, uncompromising, and unflinching" (Padden, 2004: 246) sermon-like lecture, which has been archived in the Library of Congress for its literary, linguistic, and cultural importance (Veditz, 1913). In the film, Veditz, the then-seventh

president of the NAD, reaches wide audiences of deaf people by invoking the spirit of Abbé de l'Épée, the French priest considered to be the father of signing deaf education. He reminds the American deaf audience of the threat of oralism, warning that "~~O~~[o]ur beautiful sign language is now beginning to show the results of [oralist] attempts … to banish signs from the schoolroom, from the churches, and from the earth" (Veditz, 1913, as translated by Carol Padden). Veditz ends his address to American deaf people in hopeful terms intended to prompt deaf people to remain steadfast against oralist methodology. He professes, "As long as we have deaf people on earth, we will have signs. It is my hope that we all will love and guard our beautiful sign language as the noblest gift God has given to deaf people" (Veditz, 1913, as translated by Carol Padden).

The new film medium was a boon to dissemination of deaf-centered messages in deaf people's native language. Deaf people seized on opportunities to document and reach their widely dispersed deaf audiences via film despite exorbitant cost. Since then, documentation of sign languages in visual media has proliferated exponentially and plays a significant role in shaping the SLLL.

The most obvious environment to house, produce, and contribute to the SLLL is Gallaudet University and its surrounding community. Located in Washington, D~~.~~C~~.~~, Gallaudet is the first and only liberal arts institution for deaf people in the world. It has been the academic center and cultural anchor of the American—and even global—deaf communities since 1864. Though Gallaudet is committed to bimodal-bilingual[11] education, a campus visit reveals the primacy of and universal reverence for ASL and other sign languages. The SLLL presents itself across campus and in the surrounding neighborhoods.

A visitor to Gallaudet's campus who walks through the James Lee Sorenson Language and Communication Center cannot help but notice how the architecture facilitates

signing. Walkways open on one side to a ceiling-high atrium allowing people on different floors to communicate with each other; windows from floor to ceiling allow people inside and outside the building to see each other and communicate. Orientation toward sign language use presents itself in explicit and implicit ways in signage and displays. Around campus, video announcements are displayed in ASL on TV screens and signing is seen in academic and social forms.[12] Upon entering the ASL and Deaf Studies Department, a sign reads in English, "Sim-Com [prohibited]. Use one language at a time, *please*."[13] Such signage, though in English, sets the linguistic tone of the setting.

Sign language images feature prominently in and around campus, signaling the SLLL for instructional as well as symbolic ends (see website for Figure 2.3). All are emblematic of the sign-dominant context. Figures 2.3c and 2.3d feature the ASL alphabet along with corresponding Roman alphabet letters. Figure 2.3c was taken on a playground close to campus. Such signage is likely less common in contexts where there are few-to-no signing people, but integration of signing into the everyday play life of deaf and signing children should come as no surprise. Figure 2.3d, displayed at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center on Gallaudet's campus, has a similar intent: it signals the sign-dominant context while facilitating ASL fingerspelling access to nonsigners.

Figure 2.3 SLLL examples around Gallaudet campus (available online)

The new Gallaudet logo (seen in Figures 2.3a, 2.3b, and 2.3d) also underscores the signing context, albeit implicitly. It is visible on and off campus, expanding the SLLL beyond Gallaudet proper. The images in Figures 2.3a and 2.3b show the etymological relation between symbol, form, and meaning. The image contains two banners that read, "We are Gallaudet [woman signing GALLAUDET]" and "A Signing Community." Figure 2.3b shows a stylized formation of movement feature in the sign for GALLAUDET. Figure 2.3d shows the logo along with "Gallaudet University" printed on the bus that~~which~~ transports

Gallaudet community members around town and beyond. The mediating image of the woman signing GALLAUDET is not there, but its symbolic representation is evident to signing people. These qualities make it is a quintessential symbol of the SLLL.

Crossover between SLLLs and ~~n~~Nonsigning LLs~~:~~

Sign languages might prevail in SLLLs, but as mentioned earlier, there are times when sign language images and tokens crossover into the nonsigning LL. These situations are instructive, particularly for those new or naïve to sign languages. Areas with a significant contingent of signing deaf people tend to produce tokens from sign languages but with the intended audience of both signing and nonsigning people. Said contexts are ripe for educational exchange, and savvy deaf and hearing people are now seizing on these opportunities.

As Gulliver and Kitzel (2015) note, intersecting LL and SLLL sometimes occurs temporarily, in typically nonsigning contexts, as in the case of Sainsbury's food store in Bath, England, in July 2019. Here, a typically nonsigning locale converted into a sign-dominant context for a four-day event in recognition of the deaf employees and deaf customers. During this time, store employees learned basic British Sign Language (BSL) and the store was temporarily renamed *Signs*bury's, a signal that this context intended to be perceived as sign-language learning. Staff communicated with customers in BSL as well as verbally, and attending children who learned basic signs earned a snack as a reward. A signing-friendly context was facilitated by installation of multiple video screens around the store that depicted BSL signs for relevant foods. Nonsigning passers-by could learn the demonstrated signs while signers could see familiar images become further integrated into their community (Sainsbury's, 2019). Such an effort is emblematic of the widening understanding and acceptance of deaf ways of being, including but not limited to sign language use. It is also economically shrewd:[14] popularity of sign languages makes them broadly marketable:

Comment [Q8]: AU: Partial italicization intentional?

signers and nonsigners are drawn in by these efforts to create temporary SLLLs and such events are opportunities to exponentially expand customer base.

Another example of the marketability of sign language linguistic crossover is the "signing" Starbucks near Gallaudet. This Starbucks integrates multiple principles of a sign-dominant context to appeal to signers and nonsigners:

- It employs only signing people.
- There is widespread depiction of sign language imagery made by deaf people.
- It has abundant, but carefully positioned, light to increase visibility.
- It has low counters to increase sign visibility between patrons and employees.
- There is no music to distract people with any amount of hearing access from the signing.
- It uses deaf-friendly interfaces for transactions: digital notepads and styluses to place orders.
- Finally, they seize on opportunities to directly and indirectly educate their nonsigner patrons.

One example of direct educational instruction is their "Sign of the Week" blackboard display, that is in Figure 2.4, signing COFFEE (center top) and SUMMER (center right). This display, changing weekly, features an ASL sign alongside its English translation. Figure 2.4a showing a Starbucks employee apron with S-T-A-R-B-U-C-K-S fingerspelled along with corresponding letters signals the primacy of sign language to the location. Figure 2.4c features the hard-to-come-by signing Starbucks mug, with a drawing of the ASL sign STARBUCKS, and written English on the inside that says, "Coffee brings us together." It is coveted by deaf people around the United States (and maybe the world) for its symbolic representation of a space where signing and being deaf are valued and privileged. Finally, Figures 2.4e and 2.4f feature both ASL fingerspelling and English signage (separately),

overtly reminding each customer and passer-by that this is a signing-friendly store and sign-dominant context.

[insert Figure 2.4 here]

Figure 2.4. Gallaudet Starbucks signage

Interestingly, the S-T-A-R-B-U-C-K-S fingerspelling on the storefront and umbrella have no Roman alphabet translations as linguistic mediation for nonsigners, indicators that this space—unlike most—is one where signing is privileged and typical barriers that deaf people face are eliminated. The STARBUCKS mug, the apron, and, of course, the wall display that declares, "This store is dedicated to people united by sign language and Deaf culture," are additional reminders of the linguistic dominance subversion.

Sign language tokens broaden and makes portable the potential for deaf geographic spaces. For example, the Starbucks mug is intended to be purchased and brought out into the world beyond the established signing space of that store. Once the mugs leave that space, the potential contexts for display and viewing of the image are infinite with the potential to spread far beyond the SLLL. Another example of a mobile signing token intended for public consumption can be found in T-shirts and swag produced by an Italian educational and advocacy organization in Rome, Italy, called Gruppo SILIS. They contracted with a company to produce wearable and otherwise publicly visible items[15] featuring LIS signs. Additionally, Buske, a German publishing house that produces language-learning calendars, recently introduced a German Sign Language (DGS) calendar[16] produced by linguists at the University of Göttingen. Inevitably, these images—designed and developed by signing people—filter into nonsigning spaces by virtue of the fact that signers and nonsigners come into contact frequently—whether they realize it or not. Through these commodified sign

images, deaf geographies proliferate beyond their once-siloed contexts, emerging in fleeting and more permanent milieux.

As noted, these tokens are all intended for public consumption. When nonsigners encounter said tokens, the opportunity is ripe for educating nonsigners in the sign translations as well as the ways and values of signing people and deaf communities. They are a conversation starter, or as Caldwell (2017) calls them, a "conscious speech act," a dialogic model, which in and of itself is an educational opportunity. A nonsigner might see someone wearing a T-shirt with the LIS sign, AMO ("I love"), printed on the front, and recognize that the image displays someone signing. They might then ask what the sign means, prompting a signing-centered discussion that could go in myriad directions, many likely educational.

Unlike many of the other crossover tokens from the past discussed above, none of these signing images contain translations of signs. While we have not yet done a methodical study of images found in the SLLL, it is fair to say that the lack of translation— intended for nonsigning consumption—is likely a key feature of linguistic tokens from the SLLL.

Conclusion

We have attempted to unveil LL representations of sign languages that have heretofore been hidden away, as though behind a veil that obscures something taboo, by the dominance of textual representations. The consistent broadening of what encompasses a LL paved the way for us to look at situations that elicit, engender, and literally shape sign languages' appearance in the LL. We have provided a historical overview of sign languages in context which, in turn, buttressed our presentation and analysis of how representations of sign languages in the LL have evolved from ones that bordered on apologetic to ones that unapologetically burst with pride in signing and being deaf. Within said representations, we examined the potential for educational exchanges that the sign language tokens produce vis

~~a vis~~vis-à-vis their contextual appearance and those who have the opportunity to interact with these tokens in their respective milieux. This overdue first foray into the SLLL is hardly all-encompassing; multiple avenues remain to be explored. Future research should document extensively what sign languages look like in the LL, SLLL, and what happens when signing and nonsigning communities interface and/or collide.

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1 For years, it was convention to use lower-case "d" to indicate audiological status and upper-case "D" to indicate sociocultural connections to signing people. More recently, this convention has been seen as divisive (Fisher, Mirus, & Napoli, 2018; Woodward & Horejes, 2016). We thus use lower-case "d" for all references to deaf people except in quotations in which cited authors used upper-case "D."

2 Many of the dynamics in these spaces stem from inclusion of signing people (or nonsigning as the case may be) rather than from being audiologically deaf, though it can be argued that some features of deaf geographies come strictly from audiological status. See Sections IV and VI from Bauman and Murray (2014).

3 Gallaudet College, now known as Gallaudet University, is the only liberal arts institution in the world with the mission to educate deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals. The dominant language is ASL. It remained a signing institution throughout the domination of oralist philosophy in the late nineteenth~~19th~~ and throughout most of the ~~20th~~ twentieth centuries.

4 There are many more countries in which sign languages are still seen as underdeveloped gesture systems, inferior to spoken languages. We would imagine that sign languages hardly emerge in the ambient LL in those countries.

5 Some would argue that it still does today; Clark and Ivanic (2013).

6 Deaf peddlers have existed for decades if not centuries in the United States~~U.S.~~ and beyond. There is evidence of deaf vagrancy and peddling in America in the 1850s (Chamberlayne, 1859/2001), during the peak of manualist education before the 1880 Milan Congress edict to ban sign languages in deaf schools (Moores,

2010). Furthermore, deaf peddling still exists today, albeit far less frequently. For a relatively recent account of deaf peddling, see Buck (2000).

7 Some hearing people pose as deaf to more quickly and easily solicit money via peddling. William A. Rockefeller, father of famous oil baron, John. D. Rockefeller, was one. Robinson (2012) gives information on these cases and on deaf community responses to peddling with respect to their own quest for citizenship and equal status to hearing people.

8 Text written in small capital letters represents glossing of ASL signs into written English form. This is conventionally used when discussing signs in textual formats.

9 It is not our intention to exclude deafblind populations here. Gulliver and Kitzel (2015) and Gulliver and Fekete (2017) mention visual orientation as part of deaf geographies. Though not our task at hand here, we would argue that deaf and deafblind geographies are also constructed by the use or exclusion of tactile communication and whether or not those spaces are physically accessible to deafblind people.

10 Padden (2004) notes efforts to provide ASL-to-English interpreters at some of these gatherings, though it is not clear that Veditz's written translation was necessarily the copy read aloud since there is evidence of significant delay of dissemination of a written translation by Veditz.

11 One that includes ASL and written English.

12 Thanks to Greg Niedt for pointing out this observation.

13 The sign, which can be seen [we will present a link here on the companion site], does not read "prohibited"; it has the Ø symbol around *sim-com*. *Sim-com* is short for "simultaneous communication," which means signing and speaking simultaneously. This is frowned upon because it is not possible to use both ASL and English at the same time without compromising the structural presentation of one of the languages, more typically ASL.

> **Comment [Q14]:** AU: Please update

> **Comment [Q15]:** AU: Do suggest which symbol should be inserted here.

14 We are not advocating for the commodification of sign languages without direct involvement of or benefit to sign language communities and deaf people themselves. Nor do we advocate for exploitation of deaf people in this process. See Fisher, Mirus, and Napoli (2019) for more information on the problematic nature of sign

language appropriation. We are simply pointing out the economic argument that the popularity of sign languages makes them ~~more ripe~~riper for commodification.

15 To view some of these tokens, see https://worthwearing.org/store/gruppo-silis

16 View their site, https://buske.de/sprachkalender/sprachkalender-der-deutschen-gebardensprache-2020.html