Deaf around the World

The Impact of Language

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Introduction

Why Go around the Deaf World?

Gaurav Mathur and Donna Jo Napoli

This volume offers work in common areas of inquiry in Deaf studies around the world, both academic and activist. As such, it reaches out to people in multiple fields, including sign language linguistics and the broader area of Deaf studies, drawing on anthropology, psychology, cognitive science, education, medical demography and ethnography, economic development, and other disciplines. Additionally, while the material ranges from technical matters to ordinary topics, the language throughout is accessible to people from all walks of life, consistent with our goal of being a forum for the exchange of ideas between academics and activists and reaching a wide audience.

Why should we need such a forum? Who benefits?

Both of the editors of this volume are involved in linguistics. Work on the linguistics of sign languages is like work on the linguistics of spoken languages. However, not all linguistic communities are equivalent in terms of a researcher's responsibility to the community. If you work on Italian, for example, your linguistic consultants do not necessarily experience problems in daily life due to their language and/or culture. If you work on Haisla (an indigenous language of North America), on the other hand, your linguistic consultants constantly struggle with problems connected to their cultural heritage, including discrimination that (subtly or overtly) threatens their abilities to realize the full range of rights and opportunities that people who are part of the mainstream culture around them enjoy. Furthermore, their language (and, thus, culture) might even be endangered. Common decency demands that the researcher not ignore the plight of the community but instead offer something in return. Many academic linguists who work on endangered languages feel that they should be responsive to the needs and desires of the community in formal arrangements for the dissemination of information, as well as informal commitments to make their work relevant and responsible to community concerns.

Communities of deaf people present the researcher with a more extreme situation. Not only are rights and opportunities at issue, but so is the cognitive faculty of language itself. Because the critical period for first language acquisition does not usually extend beyond childhood, a deaf child who is not exposed to fluent models in an accessible language before that time may not develop complete fluency in any language. (We, along with several of our colleagues, have argued elsewhere for giving the deaf child consistent exposure to both sign and spoken language models from birth to ensure that the faculty of language is properly nourished and to increase the child's chances of realizing full academic, professional, and personal potential.) Denying people a language they feel at home in—a language with which to communicate their hopes, fears, jokes, ironies, affections—is unconscionable. To watch people you are studying (and benefiting from the study of) be denied their civil rights and do nothing about it can be considered unprofessional. Therefore, linguists working on a sign language can and often do get involved in issues of deaf communities in those ways the communities deem helpful and appropriate.

An additional argument can be made for the importance of scholars' understanding a community's concerns: Such understanding improves scholarly work. We use an example from linguistics. Evidence is amassing that linguistic principles alone are inadequate to fully describe, account for, and predict data patterns in languages. Instead, cultural habits and beliefs often influence linguistic structure. The use of formal persons and honorifics (in languages such as Japanese), for example, is clearly culture bound. However, close study has revealed other less obvious instances of culture affecting grammar. One such example is the appropriateness of certain noun phrases in subject position in combination with certain other noun phrases having other grammatical functions in both active and passive sentences depending on whether the referents of the noun phrases are animate or have other semantic properties (in languages such as Navajo). That is, the grammatical and performance patterns of any communication system will reflect the environment it is used in, particularly the environment that children are socialized in. The growing field of "ethnogrammar" cautions us all to pay attention to the communities that use the languages that linguists study. At the heart of all human communication is the creation and interpretation of patterns. Linguists have tended to focus on grammar, and linguistic anthropologists on seeing patterns in performance and community relations. However, activists also point out patterns, the recognition of which (whether the patterns are constructive or destructive) is essential to the ability of a community to thrive. Scholars will be able to do better work if they explore all such patterns and gain a deep understanding and appreciation of the communities they work with.

The activist also benefits from being aware of what the scholars are doing. Early work on sign language among deaf people in France (especially Bébian

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1817) and on sign languages among hearing North American Plains Indians in comparison with sign languages of deaf people (Mallery 1881) laid the foundation for scholarly work on deaf community sign languages in the twentieth century. While there was serious work in Europe (Tervoort 1953), it was that of the American William Stokoe (1960) that caught the attention of many, not just in linguistics but also in numerous fields. In fact, Tom Humphries (2008) argues that it was the foundational work of sign linguists that made many deaf people in the United States and Europe and, subsequently, all around the world understand that their language was not some form of gesture inferior to spoken language but instead a bona fide language. Humphries further argues that this realization fueled the Deaf Pride movement of the 1970s and 1980s in the United States and, again, around the globe. The work of linguists was clearly important in helping deaf communities and individuals establish robust identities. The realization that sign languages are natural human languages, with all the cognitive (nonmodally restricted) characteristics of any natural human language, has also been used to critical effect in arguments for legislation that ensures and protects various rights of deaf people, particularly with respect to telecommunications technology and dissemination (as argued in Sonnenstrahl 2008). The increase in commitments to educate deaf children around the world—through the establishment of schools for deaf children and programs within the regular public school system designed specifically to meet deaf children's needs—follows on the heels of the recognition that sign languages are human languages with full "citizenship" so to speak, and the communities that use these languages likewise deserve full citizenship. The price for not having a common communication system (as with isolated deaf people or very small and scattered communities of deaf people) and a coherent community organization is high and evidenced even today when, for instance, deaf people are excluded from conversations about health issues, including HIV/AIDS and high blood pressure. The language decisions of any community impact its economic, educational, medical, cultural, and social life, and deaf activists need to take appropriate action to protect language diversity at the same time that they amass community power to demand their civil rights. If the study of sign languages and their impact on deaf communities has the potential to improve just a single aspect of life in deaf communities, a common forum for activists and scholars is an endeavor well worth pursuing.

It was with this philosophy in mind that, in the spring of 2008, linguistic scholars and activists came together at a conference at Swarthmore College (outside of Philadelphia), funded by the William J. Cooper Foundation, which we hereby thank, and for which all interpreting and computer-assisted, real-time translation (CART) needs were coordinated by Doreen Kelly, whom we also hereby thank. The range of presenters ensured that the audience included people interested in sign languages per se and people interested in

the rights of deaf individuals and communities. Scholars and activists exchanged ideas about the many aspects of and situations concerning sign languages and deaf communities in a holistic way. Blinders were lifted, new alliances were formed, and all of the participants had a chance to get others to focus attention on an issue they considered crucial.

The present volume builds on that conference, including some of the papers offered there, as well as new ones that grew from those interactions. While the generosity of the William J. Cooper Foundation allowed that conference to be as global as possible (many participants flew in from various parts of the world), the book in your hands now is even more so. Too little has been published about sign languages and the deeper social situation of deaf communities outside of the United States and Europe; we aim to help remedy that shortage. The contributors to this volume range from people new on the scene to some of our most trusted and experienced leaders in both scholarship and activism. Each chapter examines an issue in detail and is followed by a response chapter that looks at the same issue or a related one in a different context.

The themes that emerged at the conference have led to the two parts of this book, which are tightly linked. The first part focuses on sign languages used in the Deaf world, asking how they are created, how they are used in context, what their form looks like especially in comparison with other sign languages, how they are acquired (as a first language) and learned (as a second language), what factors are involved in their dissemination and in their endangerment, and what they can tell us about the origins of language. The way to address questions of language evolution, whether in the past or occurring right now, is through analysis of present behavior, including not only natural language settings such as indigenous sign communities and creativity in the use of sign but also the patterns developed by children learning Deaf culture. Cross-cultural comparisons are key. This part of the volume includes discussion of sign languages in Europe, North America, the Middle East, Central America, South America, and Asia.

The second part of the volume takes a broader perspective on the Deaf world by examining the social issues that confront it, especially with regard to civil rights, access to education, medical information and care, economic development, and matters of personal and cultural identity, all of which are grounded in sign language use. This part also looks at situations in many places, including Africa, Asia, and Europe.

Language is a fundamental part of how we define ourselves and how others view us. The deaf situation offers us information that studies limited only to spoken language cannot. Because acquiring language is a human right that most people enjoy without struggle, it is hard to imagine the situation of deaf children growing up in hearing families. They often struggle in linguistic isolation before anyone recognizes their right to a language. As a result, feelings

about language use in deaf communities run fast and deep. In a deaf community, lexical choices can indicate alignments that deeply reinforce or, alternatively, seriously threaten the identity of individuals. We have a chapter on this—Karen Nakamura's. Additionally, unlike any spoken language situation we know of, deaf people typically learn a sign language whose associated culture is unknown to them (unless they happen to have deaf parents). Thus, new deaf signers are in the unique position of having to learn the culture that is their heritage—not via blood but via their very deafness. We have a chapter on this as well—Paul Scott's. By having the two sides of this volume, the linguistic and the activist, we can approach issues that one side might not even realize exist but that, once recognized, may help them to do a better job in their particular arena.

Before talking briefly about the chapters, we want to point out that many books make a consistent distinction between the term *deaf* with a small *d*, indicating an audiological status, and *Deaf* with a capital *D*, indicating a cultural status. Some of our chapters do that. However, while this distinction can be useful in countries like the United States, it may be blurred or even nonexistent in countries where some (if not all) deaf people are raised in isolation from other deaf people and/or where people use only homesign or village sign, for which there may be few users and the formation of a culture is minimized. Therefore, the reader might find *deaf* used throughout a chapter or in unexpected instances when the author is describing people who live in these other situations. Furthermore, while we are on the topic of conventions, please note that signs used as examples are indicated in small capital letters (CHAIR), whereas spoken words used as examples are italicized *(chair)*.

The first part of our book opens with a chapter on "Sign Language geography." Carol Padden describes difficulties in knowing how many sign languages exist and in determining which are genetically related. She compares the situation in North America with that of the Middle East. By looking at the rare remarks about sign languages from a hundred years ago and more, as well as the growth and dissemination of new sign languages (such as Nicaraguan Sign and Al-Sayyid Bedouin Sign Language), we begin to understand how sign languages interact and the extent to which the notion "genetically" related is useful in discussing the relationships among them. Comparisons allow us to see how the pattern of sign language distribution is deeply linked to political, cultural, and social factors that influence how signers have contact with one another.

James Woodward responds in "Some Observations on Research Methodology in Lexicostatistical Studies of Sign Languages" with an overview of how historical linguists classify languages into families. While the comparative method and internal reconstruction are preferable when abundant data are available, the limited data on sign languages indicate that lexicostatistics is the most useful method. This method is made reliable by using the Swadesh word

list revised appropriately for sign languages. Languages can have multiple ancestors, that is, languages that have contributed significantly to the daughters (thus, creolization is included). The history of sign languages must be studied in order for it to be understood—it cannot simply be assumed. Finally, an examination of families of signs in Southeast Asia and Central America puts us on alert to the endangered status of indigenous sign languages, often at the hand of ASL.

Gaurav Mathur and Christian Rathmann in "Two Types of Nonconcatenative Morphology in Signed Languages" examine morphological structure in sign languages with an eye toward understanding the kind of morphology that changes the internal properties of a sign. Cross-linguistic comparisons of several languages, including German, Japanese, and American sign languages, reveal that there are two such types of morphological processes. One changes a sign according to fixed forms listed in the lexicon, while the other looks to interaction with gestural space to determine its realization. While both types are subject to language-specific constraints against marked forms, only the latter type is also subject to phonological constraints against moving or twisting a part of the hand or arm. These constraints arise because interaction with gestural space has the potential to result in forms that exceed the limits of the articulations. This latter type of nonconcatenative morphology makes sign languages unique.

Paul Dudis, in "Some Observations on Form-meaning Correspondences in Two Types of Verbs in ASL," continues the discussion of linguistic characteristics unique to sign languages by looking at the structures and conceptual work needed in integrating visual imagery into the proper use of indicating verbs and handling-classifier predicates. Both types of verbs have some unspecified components within their phonological structure that must be elaborated in a way compatible with their semantic structure. The form-meaning correspondences in the indicating verb prompt the signer to direct the movement of the sign toward an appropriate discourse referent—thus filling in location features. On the other hand, these correspondences in the handling-classifier predicate prompt for the depiction of the event that it encodes. Therefore, the phonological features of the handling-classifier predicate filled in by context are not limited to location but, rather, pervade the verb's phonological structure.

In "Sources of Handshape Error in First-time Signers of ASL," Deborah Chen Pichler reports on a study that investigates the phenomenon of "sign accent," or systematic phonological errors made by nonsigners attempting to mimic isolated ASL signs. The study has implications for sign language teaching, where people are learning an unfamiliar language in a modality new to them. Chen Pichler finds two factors relevant to how well nonsigners produce the target handshape. One is markedness; anatomical features of the hand affect dexterity in making a sign, although with qualifications. This

general finding is no surprise—studies of acquisition repeatedly show the relevance of phonetic markedness. The other factor, however, is surprising. Chen Pichler finds that transfer of phonological features from gestures hearing people make (with or without accompanying speech) affects the ability to mimic signs.

While Russell Rosen in "Modality and Language in the Second Language Acquisition of American Sign Language" applauds studies of second language learning regarding sign languages, he notes that previous studies concentrate on phonetic phenomena, where the modality difference between spoken and sign languages is most apparent. However, studies of phonological, syntactic, and semantic phenomena where differences are not limited to differences in modality allow us to look more broadly at language differences. For signers whose first language is spoken, the modality difference can affect the acquisition of word-formation processes that are not based on simply adding one meaningful unit after another (as in a word like *unlikely*: [un + like + ly]) but on a nonlinear (nonconcatenative) pattern (such as changing the dynamics or size of a sign). It can also affect nonlinear syntax since this kind of syntax cannot occur in speech given that we have only one speech tract. On the other hand, for signers whose first language is sign, differences in the interface between modality and sign in the two languages are important.

Marie Coppola and Ann Senghas, in "Getting to the Point: The Development of a Linguistic Device in Nicaraguan Signing," pay particular attention to the contribution of generations of child learners, who actively change their language as they inherit it. The researchers consider the fact that, over the past thirty years, deaf Nicaraguans have come together to form a community and in the process created their own new language. The deaf children started with a variety of gestures, called homesigns, to communicate with their families. Together they developed them into the complex linguistic system that is Nicaraguan Sign Language today. Coppola and Senghas follow this process by focusing on a single sign, the humble point, as it transformed from a gesture into a linguistic device.

Roland Pfau responds in "A Point Well Taken: On the Typology and Diachrony of Pointing" by pulling in cross-linguistic observations about the development and use of pointing, whether as a gesture or a sign, from communities that use spoken languages (in Laos, Thailand, Australia, and Latin American Spanish) and from those that use sign languages (in Denmark, Bali, and Germany). He argues that, if we set aside indexicals indicating plurality or time points, subtle changes in the phonological makeup of the remaining pointing signs allow us to distinguish between different functions, considering both manual and nonmanual changes (e.g., eye gaze). He also addresses the issue of grammaticalization and shows how Senghas and Coppola's study adds to our understanding of diachronic change in sign languages.

In "The Acquisition of Topicalization in Very Late Learners of Libras: Degrees of Resilience in Language," Sandra Wood describes the necessary ingredients for learning language, asking what degree of competency is possible for homesigners when they acquire sign language late, especially with different amounts of linguistic input. Homesigners, late learners of Libras (Brazilian Sign Language), and native signers are compared on certain tasks. This study tests people's competence in topicalization, a syntactic construction that is hypothesized to be acquired only after exposure to the target language. Differences are markedly apparent with respect to age and amount of exposure to Libras, as expected. However, this study is of great import not just to linguistics but also to applications in language teaching since it shows that, given proper input, functional mastery of a language can be achieved even after the critical period for language acquisition has passed.

Cyril Courtin fills in the French situation with his response, "A Critical Period for the Acquisition of a Theory of Mind? Clues from Homesigners." He complements Wood's questioning about the linguistic achievement of homesigners by asking whether homesigns are sufficient to help children develop a mature cognition. Several studies on theory of mind in deaf children and adults suggest that language communication (not just gestural communication) is a critical variable in proper cognitive development. Additionally, the age of ten appears to be a significant time—an earlier critical period than Wood's studies found. These findings, while not constant, are relatively persistent regardless of whether children eventually receive hearing aids or cochlear implants (where no difference between the two types of aids is noted).

In "Interrogatives in Ban Khor Sign Language: A Preliminary Description," Angela Nonaka looks at the linguistic process of question formation in a sign language isolate in Thailand that until recently was undocumented and undescribed. Interrogatives are a linguistic feature found in every language, but like other language universals, they vary across languages with respect to several properties. Elucidating these similarities and differences expands our understanding of the extent of linguistic diversity stemming from the human characteristic of and common ability for language. Nonaka shows that yes-no questions in Ban Khor Sign Language have many of the properties of yes-no questions in other sign languages. However, the *wh*-question has some characteristics unique, so far as we know, to this language. There are two *wh*-morphemes, and, while the range of questions for each is similar (*who, what, when,* etc.), the sense of the questions differs, as do their syntactic properties. Nonaka also reports on a mouth morpheme that accompanies other question morphemes but can also be used on its own to indicate interrogativity.

In "Village Sign Languages: A Commentary," Ulrike Zeshan replies that the study of village sign languages is at the forefront of new approaches to developing a typology of languages. Indeed, recent research has shown that the study of village sign disconfirms some of our previously held assumptions

about the linguistic structure of sign languages based on the study of the better-known sign languages of Europe and North America (such as that they all use entity classifiers—Adamorobe Sign Language does not). Further, village sign languages present distinct sociolinguistic contexts that are instructive to study with respect to understanding language contact issues. Finally, the endangered status of these languages raises philosophical questions about the nature of human language.

In "Sign Language Humor, Human Singularities, and the Origins of Language," Donna Jo Napoli and Rachel Sutton-Spence build on the increasing evidence for the proposal that sign languages preceded spoken languages, as they present another piece of the jigsaw by exploring the human singularities demonstrated in creatively artistic humorous sign language. Using the conceptual integration theory, they argue that what may be seen as "just a funny story in British Sign Language" contains all of the human singularities needed to create the novel mappings and compressions between preexisting conventional cognitive parts and conventionally structured ones that make up human language. While it is arguable that spoken language could do without things like analogy, framing, and the like (though it would be vastly impoverished), it is entirely impossible for sign language to do so. Thus, the fact that these human singularities emerged at roughly the same time as language makes sense if the first human language were signed.

In "Gesture First or Speech First in Language Origins?" Adam Kendon gives an overview of the debate about whether spoken or sign language came first. He challenges a foundation of the debate: that languages are monomodalic. He reports on his study of people describing events. The subjects matched kinesic expressions to the meaning of words and produced kinesic versions of the pronunciations of words, using gestures as schematic devices when describing the shape, location, and size of entities, many of which are conventionalized. Language, then, can be constructed in multiple dimensions and modalities simultaneously. The idea that sign languages are unique in being able to express multiple propositions at once is challenged. Kendon conjectures that writing has skewed our idea of how spoken language works since writing, perforce, is concatenative. Probably the earliest languages were multimodal, as today, and made use of whatever fit the circumstance and convenience.

We now move into the second part of the volume. Amy Wilson and Nickson Kakiri, in "Best Practices for Collaborating with Deaf Communities in Developing Countries," highlight some aspects of the best practices of researchers and organizations when collaborating with deaf communities to nurture them in achieving their independence and an enhanced quality of life. The two authors discuss joint work and what brought them to it. Wilson recounts experiences in Brazil that changed her approach to the deaf community from protecting its members to helping to empower them to lead independent lives. Her personal

journey reflects a paradigm shift around the world. Nickson describes their joint study to discover how outside funding institutions can aid the economic development of Kenyan deaf communities from the point of view of those communities. Community members identified problems of corruption and misunderstandings of culture that led to the misuse of funding. They recognized the need for community planning, management, and evaluation of projects. They recommended that money from institutions go directly to the communities rather than be funneled through brokers and that deaf Kenyans be trained to help train other deaf Kenyans in what needs to be done. In sum, deaf people must be empowered to make their own changes.

In his reply, "Deaf Mobilization around the world: A Personal Perspective," Yerker Andersson recounts the history of his own work on deafness and development, supporting the call for the establishment of schools and local and national organizations for deaf people, as well as for international organizations to empower deaf communities to meet their goals. Andersson describes how he represented European deaf communities at meetings of international aid institutions after WWII, helping to effect changes in the worldview of deaf people, which led to the establishment of schools for deaf children. Missionaries typically introduced foreign sign languages or the oral method rather than local sign languages. British Sign Language and Swedish Sign Language were often imposed on African and Asian schools, although tribal sign languages not only existed but also continued to be used. Andersson helped bring about the requirement by USAID that the agency's teacher trainers have adequate signing skills. Still, much work remains to be done in raising awareness of Deaf culture and of the validity of sign languages as natural human languages since only a third of the world's countries officially recognize sign language for institutional purposes.

Leila Monaghan and Deborah Karp, in "HIV/AIDS and the Deaf Community: A Conversation," let us eavesdrop on their discussion of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in deaf communities. With respect to these groups, they recommend national rather than local action with regard to HIV/AIDS funding, information dissemination, and information gathering. At the same time they focus on the strengths that the deaf communities bring to this fight, such as peer teaching. They discuss what factors hamper outreach and treatment efforts, including communication barriers, the stigma of AIDS, and the lack of recognition and funding from larger organizations. Karp tells of getting drawn into outreach work by seeing friends become afflicted in greater numbers due to the failure to deliver information to the deaf communities about almost every aspect of the disease—from how it is transmitted, to what a plus symbol really means (i.e., it means something negative regarding the individual's health, whereas in other contexts the symbol indicates something positive), to what is appropriate medical treatment and how to get it. Monaghan explains how the lack of accessible language in outreach organizations has been a major culprit in this confusion.

John Meletse and Ruth Morgan extend this discussion to a different world arena: "HIV AIDS and Deaf Communities in South Africa: A Conversation." They, too, talk about the pernicious effects of lack of access to proper health information, particularly regarding sexual behavior. Meletse is an activist— and was the first Deaf African to self-identify as HIV positive—and Morgan is a linguistic anthropologist. They met in 2000, when he was interviewed for a Deaf culture project, and they have been colleagues and friends ever since. In South Africa even some outreach workers are misinformed and pass on that misinformation. The social stigma associated with HIV/AIDS leads to secrecy, which compounds the problem. National organizations, including disability ones, do not meet their responsibilities to deaf communities, resulting in an ever-escalating number of cases.

In "The Language Politics of Japanese Sign Language (Nihon Shuwa)" Karen Nakamura outlines the difficulties in determining a national sign language by examining language ideologies in a time of transition. She witnessed political fragmentation in Japan as the older generation, represented by the Japanese Federation of the Deaf (JFD), coined and disseminated new signs in order to compete with the national public television service, as well as to fend off criticisms from younger, culturally Deaf members. While everyone agrees new signs are necessary, the JFD is challenged as the guardian of the Japanese Sign Language lexicon both by D-Pro, a group that wants to protect against spoken language influences, and by the television network NHK, which reaches out to all deaf regardless of the extent to which they vocalize or sign and regardless of which variety of sign they use.

Soya Mori responds in "Pluralization: An Alternative to the Existing Hegemony in JSL." Mori has been advising the Myanmar government on policy regarding deaf people. Because Myanmar, like many developing countries, does not have a national deaf community, a national sign language cannot emerge by natural processes. The government wants to develop and promote a standard sign language. However, it did not accept the recommendation that it form a national deaf organization as a first step since that organization would be a power to contend with. The new recommendation is that a Myanmar Sign Language textbook be published, including information about the culture and language of the community. The hope is that the textbook will enlighten both hearing and deaf readers and foster a sense of entitlement to rights, from which a national organization will emerge to advocate for deaf communities. Mori ends with remarks on the changing situation in Japan regarding power with respect to JSL.

In "Social Situations and the Education of Deaf Children in China" Jun Hui Yang presents an overview of the Chinese social situation, where heath care, education, and employment are persistent family concerns. While at least 80 percent of deaf children are now receiving an education, since the country places great emphasis on literacy as a tool for being a useful citizen, many do

not use standardized Chinese Sign Language and have little exposure to deaf adults as role models. Although charities and international organizations in cities help some deaf children receive assistive technology and training, most go without. A major goal of the Chinese Disabled People's Foundation is thus to get deaf children placed in local regular schools (not in bilingual-bicultural schools) with rehabilitation and vocational support. On the other hand, recent media attention to sign language has led to sign courses in universities, and a Deaf Pride movement has begun, so Deaf culture is now valued, and several new bilingual-bicultural schools have sprung up.

Madan Vasishta turns our attention to another developing country in "Social Situations and the Education of Deaf Children in India," once again highlighting the two main problems hampering deaf rights: lack of appreciation of Deaf culture and a shortage of successful role models. Having helped develop the first dictionaries of Indian Sign Language (ISL), he moved on to scholarly and activist work with deaf communities. Because Indians tend to hide their deaf children, only 5 percent attend school, and only 10 percent of those are enrolled in programs designed to meet deaf needs, while the rest struggle along without interpreters or other support in regular programs. Few have hearing aids. Most deaf children arrive at school with no language and pick up ISL from other children since most of the teachers know little sign. There are no training programs for interpreters. To date, little research has been done on deaf communities or ISL.

In "Do Deaf Children Eat Deaf Carrots?" Paul Scott shows the effect of his work as exactly the sort of social, cultural, and linguistic role model the preceding chapters argue for. He describes the methods he uses to teach deaf children how to be Deaf. Part of his work is teaching British Sign Language, focusing particularly on characteristics that are typical of sign languages but not of speech, such as the use of space in locating participants in an event. Another aspect is introducing them to Deaf culture. He helps the children to understand that experiences they may have had are typical of deaf people and, as such, make them part of the community. Finally, he educates them about deaf history and famous deaf people in order to instill in them a degree of pride in their cultural heritage.

Donna West and Paddy Ladd close our book with separate responses to Scott's chapter. West worked with Scott educating deaf children before entering academia. She reports on an earlier research project in which she interviewed children about their experiences in Scott's classroom. She gives us the children's responses to her questions, showing through masterfully chosen examples their eloquently expressed appreciation of Scott's instruction. Ladd, instead, uses Scott's chapter as a jumping-off point to talk about deaf education in general. He starts with the value of Deaf educators in the deaf classroom, argues that deaf education is minority education and should be afforded the same attention, urges the inclusion of cultural education, and laments the

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dominance of medical procedures that threaten Deaf culture. The deaf child in a hearing world needs a safe environment in which to develop a healthy identity that will allow for a strong education and the ability to find a satisfying, productive place in the worlds the child must straddle.

Thirty-one scholars and activists (sixteen deaf, one hearing of deaf parents, and fourteen hearing) have contributed to this volume with the optimistic goal that our joint work will help improve our understanding of both deaf matters and the daily lives of deaf people. The chapters here deal with gestures, sign languages, deaf issues, and deaf communities in Australia, Brazil, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, and the United States. While we in no sense cover the entire globe, the picture that emerges shows great similarity and continuity in the Deaf world.

Welcome to our whirlwind tour.

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