

## Transformations in Deaf Studies: Implications for Sign Language Policy, Revitalization, and Rights

Deaf Studies Conference Transformations Proceedings

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### Abstract

*This presentation explores various transformations that inform Deaf Studies research, ranging from transformations in deaf networks to larger sign language networks and transformations in applied linguistics, society, and language ideologies, and the related potential impact on sign language policy and revitalisation. After discussing some new research lenses in Deaf Studies, such as visual methods, the presentation suggests some ways forward for Deaf Studies in terms of research priorities and rights discourses.*

### Keywords

Deaf Studies, sign language rights, sign language revitalization, deaf, language portraits, language diaries

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### Presentation Transcript

(Slide 1)

Good morning! Hopefully you're all alert with your coffee and a night of rest, and ready for our second day of this conference. My name is Maartje, and I'm from Belgium. As Annelies Kusters said yesterday, my first academic sign language is actually British Sign Language. At home, with my two children I use Flemish Sign Language. I can understand some ASL but I'm not able to academically present in it — so I'll use International Sign, and am grateful for the ASL interpreter over here. I want to thank Gallaudet University and the Deaf Studies and ASL department for inviting me to give a presentation today. The title of my presentation is "Transformations in Deaf Studies: Implications of Sign Language Policy, Revitalization and Rights." I sign "policy" this way, so you know what this sign means. These are three important concepts, and in my presentation, I will expand on policy and revitalization. I only have one hour, so I can't go into detail on everything. Plus, I think we need to first discuss policy, and what revitalization means, and how these relate to rights. We shouldn't discuss rights first before understanding the other two concepts. By discussing policy and revitalization first, this will lead to the topic of rights. The last slide will discuss rights, but not as much as policy or revitalization. I should also caution you that my documentation and presentation are primarily based on the northern hemisphere, that is, Europe and America, rather than the southern hemisphere. You'll see how the contents are primarily focused on these areas.

(Slide 2)

There are three parts to my presentation: transformations, new research lenses, and in relation to rights, ways forward and questions Deaf Studies should consider.

(Slide 3)

Now, I will begin with a quote that I want you to read. This man, Trevor Johnston, is a linguist from Australia. In 2006, he published an article in *Sign Language Studies* that discussed his future vision of Australian Sign Language, or Auslan. The article, almost as if serving as a warning, served as a wake-up call warning it is likely that the use of Auslan in the future will decrease, more deaf children will receive cochlear implants, and there will be fewer deaf children being born. The picture was quite negative and very worrying. That quote you see here had a profound impact on me. In summary, he says that if the linguistic community dwindles, and there are no native users of the language to pass it onto future generations, then how can we ensure the language continues to exist? There is no known way. This quote has a few words that are interesting. The first one is “the linguistic community.” What does that mean? Then we have “replacement.” Next, “native.” I’ve seen different signs [demonstrates a few examples]; use whatever you prefer. “Users,” “viable,” “language,” — what does that mean? And “goodwill.” We have all these words, and my presentation will connect all of these words. It’s important that you know that his article was a call to collect data for the Auslan corpus. He says his obligation as a linguist is to write about the community sign language that has been handed from generation to generation by deaf native signers who have used sign language throughout their lives. That refers to actual data, and he says that this does not mean that those who are delayed, late-deafened, or hearing first-language users should be ignored. But the authentic data will come from those who are deaf native signers. That is his view. Again, this was written in 2006, quite some time ago.

(Slide 4)

We’ll now discuss a few transformations.

(Slide 5)

Take a look.

(Slide 6)

First is the transformations in deaf networks. I don’t use “community,” because as Annelies mentioned in yesterday’s presentation, in Deaf Studies nowadays, it is a growing community. The better word would be “network.” Many transformations have been happening. Take a look at the next group.

(Slide 7)

Take, for example, traditional signers, who are usually older deaf people, which means they mostly have acquired sign language in a traditional way. Most, not all — I don’t want to be restricted to a specific lens to understand them. But most of them have grown up at deaf schools, acquired sign language early and have been signing throughout their lives. This is a dwindling number of people, though. Another group, like you see here, consists of deaf youth who often are mobile and travel a lot, and meet a lot of people. They have a broader linguistic repertoire and

often can use any of the languages in their possession. They can often sign and write in different languages. Perhaps they can speak, too. There's that wide range that isn't linked to a specific locality. It's more broad for them. We have another group, and this is a group my work focuses on, of deaf people who are new signers, or what I call new signers. They're usually non-traditional signers and they have different profiles. Some may have started signing in kindergarten, then stopped signing when they were mainstreamed, and then returned to using signs once they got older. Some grew up never using sign language, like myself. I grew up never signing and acquired sign language later in life. So there's a great variety that emerges from age and non-traditional methods. Plus they emerge in nontraditional spaces. Maybe they didn't acquire signs at a deaf school, or a deaf club, maybe they went to university and had interpreters provided, prompting them to start signing. Or maybe they had a deaf partner, or learned sign language online. There's a great deal of variety among new signers. And then the next group...in Western countries, there is obviously a saturation of children who have received cochlear implants. We know that, and most of them have as their first language (L1) a spoken language. Some may supplement spoken language with signs, and others don't sign. They have a wide range of language options that they can switch between, or maybe they have no language. There's a variety. For all of these groups their access to visual modalities is compromised. They struggle to get access to sign language. Plus, we also see more diverse groups of signers now compared to in the past. The groups could be deaf people of color, deaf people with disabilities, deaf LGBTQ people, DeafBlind people, and so on. There's more representation now.

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The second transformation can be found in larger sign language networks, which are mostly composed of hearing people. We have hearing children who grow up in deaf families, or in mixed deaf/hearing families. They are CODAs — I don't like that term, but it's how you can easily know who I mean. CODAs grow up signing and have access to sign language. There are hearing children, like my children, who have signed from birth for all of their lives. And then we have more deaf international couples with hearing children at home who use two or even three sign languages and maybe written languages. They have a range in their language options and can easily switch between languages. We have parents of deaf children, who are also new signers. Their access to visual modalities is also compromised, and they don't necessarily have easy access to sign language. Here in the United States, there's the hashtag of #whyisign, which is relevant to this group. They face a lot of barriers, and in the medical world, they often are told not to sign. Another group I've been studying is called "NERD." This is not my concept; it's an American word that emerged around the same time as CODA and SODA. NERD, or "not even related to deaf," refers to hearing people who have separate signs or sign language in their linguistic repertoire but have no direct relationship to the deaf community. Maybe they thought sign language was beautiful and sexy and were fascinated. Maybe they learned it in university, or maybe online, or other ways. The motivation for their wanting to learn to sign can be very diverse. Some love learning a new language and find it interesting, while others find economic reasons that they can benefit from. There are those who work at places like Union Market. They want to sell food, so they learned sign language to interact with customers, so there are many different motivators. This group is growing, and hearing people can easily come in and find sign language. There are no obstacles for them.

(Slide 9)

Here, we have another transformation debate that has to do with ideologies surrounding sign languages. I picked three examples, but there are many more. One recent debate, or maybe it's still going on, was over the purification of ASL. For example, people argued that the sign for FAMILY should be this [demonstrates], or CULTURE [demonstrates], or even PHILOSOPHY [demonstrates]. They were in essence trying to clean up the language. The discussion also was about how language should change parallel to or in connection with purism and ownership. There's another recent example from the Netherlands. There was a World Deaf Day, and there's a sign language center in the Netherlands that's responsible for oversight of changes in language, monitoring, questions, and corpus. The center noticed the language was changing as more hearing people signed, so they decided to post on its website saying that sign language was for everyone, but not of everyone. In other words, they were saying those who have it as a first language, native signers who grew up with it, can come up with new signs, and those who learn it as a second language must oblige with the native signers. That's been a really controversial debate, wow. A third example is the debate about British Sign Language (BSL) preservation. The UK deaf community is dealing with similar issues, seeing the language changing. How do we cope with that? Is this change good or bad? Should we leave things as they are or not? Or should ownership be claimed? All these debates have to do with linguistic moral panic over language change. Most of the panic is about lexical changes, about signs, and how to cope with that. "What's the sign for this word? How about that word?" All the issues associated with language change. These debates have a connection to new signers, who are influenced by the in-fighting and controversies. They then may begin to feel insecure about their signing and it may cause them to lose motivation to sign.

(Slide 10)

So, you see now... revitalization does not balance out, and the overall balance is skewed. In looking at the right side of the slide, it shows how revitalisation efforts mainly target hearing signers. They have access to learning sign language and can easily move forward. Plus, the number of hearing signers is significantly larger than deaf signers. Deaf signers often face obstacles and struggles; it's harder for them, as you see here on the left side. Plus, most of them aren't native signers, but new signers. So there is an imbalance in the revitalization, in favor of hearing signers.

(Slide 11)

Another transformation concerns more theoretical and academic transformations in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. This is similar to what Annelies said in her presentation yesterday: in these disciplines we're seeing more critical thinking now on what language means. Language isn't a limited or fixed concept. Language is an invention; a social construct. We're seeing that in the use of new concepts such as translanguaging. Also, research is more focusing now on language practices instead of language, how people actually use language, what they do when they use language, and how they use their semiotic repertoires. Yet at the same time we see, yes, language is an invention and a construction and all that. But at the same time, we see that the concept of language as language has value for people. They see language as bounded, as my language, as something that needs to be defined and have certain boundaries. One example is found in language laws in different countries that recognize sign languages, and in campaigns for

the legal recognition of sign languages. Deaf people tie their identities into these laws: if you recognize my language, you recognize me. So, yes, language is fluid, but it's bounded too. Next, there has been another transformation about sign language being endangered, sounding the alarm about this. My sign for "endangered" isn't a really good choice, because it's not really about the numbers, but about different levels. But I'll use this for now. I'll give you an example.

(Slide 12)

The UNESCO has surveys about language vitalization, and worked with the University of Central Lancashire in the United Kingdom to adapt this survey for spoken languages to one for sign languages. The newest survey was distributed just last week; maybe some of you received it. They are soliciting information and asking "experts" for feedback and collecting information. The results here are from the first survey. Up to now there's been 15 sign languages listed. It's probably not important to read the small print right now, no, but there are some village sign languages listed, and some smaller regional sign languages, such as Finland-Swedish Sign Language. And there are some larger ones, like Danish Sign Language, New Zealand Sign Language, Brazilian Sign Language. There is a scale — four different levels of the language's endangered status in a range of numbers. This is interesting, because we must look at the ideology behind this. Why is it important to have this information? Who is this data for? What does it say? Plus, how do we categorize and collect this information? Most countries don't even have this information, such as how many signers there are, how many deaf and hearing people there are, and so on. This sociolinguistic information is missing, so how was this information obtained? Who are the "experts" that provided this information? Where is this data from? I don't mean to say the data is insignificant; no, this is certainly significant, but we should always look at the ideology behind this and consider it.

(Slide 13)

Now, there are some areas I see no transformation taking place to date. For example, the arguments to promote sign languages and to achieve sign language rights. I see that we still rely on the same old arguments. One of those are what I call "dependency arguments". We say deaf people "need" sign language because they can't acquire spoken language. So we depend on, or need sign language. We say deaf children need sign language to achieve 100% access and 100% expression. These are the arguments we still use but they have become outdated. Then there is the linguistic bind: "I'm biologically deaf, and therefore I need sign language." Which is true — this isn't bad, but we need to update and upgrade our thinking and arguments.

(Slide 14)

All the transformations are shown here together.

(Slide 15)

So now what? What does this mean for Deaf Studies? What should Deaf Studies do? Which questions should Deaf Studies try to answer? We need to think about all that. I'll show you four quotes. I apologize in advance for their academic nature. These quotes have had an impact on my thinking and work.

(Slide 16)

The two top quotes come from a good book. If you can read it, do so. It talks about ideologies associated with language change. It's about spoken languages, but I really recommend it. These two authors said, "We are curious about what it means to say a language 'dies' or 'disappears': what happened to change?" The next quote really impacted me: "Speakers can change language but languages need speakers." Below that is another quote. Revitalization can mean focusing on the survival and preservation of one named language, or shift the focus to individual and collective access to a wide range of language practices. And then the last quote says that revitalization does not necessarily mean to bring the language back to former patterns of use but rather to bring it forward to new users and uses. So the quote says language should move forward, not backward or remain stagnant. These are some of the quotes that informed my thinking and research.

(Slide 17)

All right. Now, I'll talk about new research lenses and my current research project. This is related to the previous discussion about language transformation and related thoughts.

(Slide 18)

Okay, my research is about vitality, and my area of research focused on my country, Belgium, more specifically the northern region Flanders, which is Dutch-speaking. Well, actually, Belgium has three official languages. In the north we use Dutch and sign Flemish Sign Language (VGT), and in the south people sign LSF, plus some people use International Sign. So as you know, Belgium is a multilingual context. In my research I focused on 12 different people, both deaf and hearing. The hearing participants had deaf partners or were parents of deaf children. Interpreters were not included because they were in a different group. I wanted to include CODA's but in the end this wasn't possible. So the hearing participants were partners of deaf people and parents of deaf children. I looked at their language practices, their language ideologies, their language choices in relation to vitality. My methodology utilized linguistic ethnography, through interviews, language diaries (which I will discuss shortly), and language portraits, which I sign like this [demonstrates]. I'll also explain that, and you'll see why I use that sign. Okay. I chose the 12 participants based on their age (linked to them being traditional or new signers), the Flemish region they are from, gender, plus mostly their linguistic background: when and how they learned sign language and other languages, whether their parents were deaf or hearing, and their family. This was a pilot project, so the number of participants was small.

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In my first interview, I sat down with each participant and tried to get a feel of their language biography, which meant I asked questions such as how they learned different languages— not only signed, also maybe spoken, written, anything. I wanted to listen to them share their stories about their language trajectories, the emotions linked to language learning, their concerns, their fears, and thoughts. At the end of the interview, I gave them a language use diary like you see here, and asked them to pick one week, seven days in a row, to keep the diary. They were to record their days starting from the time they woke up until they went to bed. They were to record their language and/or communication methods, whatever they were. They could choose what "language" meant for them, I didn't define anything for them. They could record sign speaking,

speaking, signing, anything. They were to record the times, places, and what the conversations were about. Then in one column, they were to identify if the other person was deaf or hearing, the approximate age of that other person, and their relationship to that person — friend, stranger, or family. All of this was to be recorded consecutively for a week. Then in the last column here, they could write anything they wanted to — something interesting, or something that had an impact upon them, something positive, anything. That provided me with rich data about their language choices, modality choices, use of semiotic repertoires, and more. There's more about this but I'd like to move onto language portraits.

(Slide 20)

Now, about language portraits... after the diaries were submitted to me, I reviewed them. I met the participants for a second interview, and we discussed the diaries, their experiences, and anything they felt was interesting to share. After that, I asked them to draw this portrait. I didn't come up with this idea; I used a methodology that was first used by researchers of the University of Vienna. This was first used for spoken language research, but I felt it had interesting applications to sign languages. So how did this work? I gave the participant a blank paper with this outline of a person. I asked them to think about their languages and communication modalities, to connect them to colors, and to put them on parts of the body. For example, English could be connected to the head, Flemish Sign Language to the heart. They had unlimited time to do this. Most completed their drawings quite fast, which was interesting. It usually took between 20 and 30 minutes. After that, I asked them to explain what they drew, interacting with them through questions and answers. So it wasn't just having them draw; I had them narrate their drawing. I chose that methodology because vitality research, to date, has mostly focused on language competition, on degrees of language use. I wanted to bypass that, and look at how they used language, their feelings and emotions linked to everyday language use. Plus I hadn't seen a lot of applied linguistic or Deaf Studies research use visual methodologies so I wanted to promote these more. Language portraits are a rich multimodal research tool. Another interesting aspect was that during the research interviews, talking about vitality and the future, there was a lot of "we" and "us" and "them", such as "we are responsible", "the deaf community," etc. In the portraits, this "us" became "me." It was about "me," not about other people. So that was a shift in focus. Thirdly, I wanted to give them a different perspective through a different research lens, rather than just L1 or L2 or mother tongue/language. I put all of that aside, because I wanted to give them a new lens to think about language, and language practices. I'll show you a few examples.

(Slide 21)

Sam is a deaf 32-year-old person from a deaf family. His first sign language is marked by a red heart; its old Bruges sign language is a regional sign language. That's in red and over the heart. The yellow surrounding the red heart represents VGT in general. His feet are marked green for football, in relation to LSFB, which is the signed language used in South Belgium. His team plays at the Belgian, not the Flemish level. So both Flemish Sign Language and LSFB intermingle among his team. So he associated that with his feet, football. His belly represents French, because he always wanted to have a better command of French. But there were always obstacles in the way. The left — no, right hand, is representative of ASL because he had family

living in the United States. When he was younger, his parents would take him to visit family in America. The right represents his parents taking his hand and saying, “Come on, let’s go.”

And then his left hand is for Dutch, because he said he learned Dutch by writing it. The eyes represent English, because he wants very much to be fluent in English and work and think in English. His head, on the top, shows his creativity and thinking — in International Sign. The last one, which is interesting, is the mouth. He marked it in blue, and I asked if that was in relation to speaking. That was my assumption, but he said no, it had nothing to do with speaking. It was about hope. In VGT, one sign for “hope” is signed at the mouth like this. I’ll show you a video.

(Slide 22)

Sam: My mouth is linked to hope. I hope to learn a new sign language one day. Not by studying here but by living in another country and learning that country's sign language.

Maartje: Interesting that you drew it at the mouth of the figure.

Sam: Yes, hope, hope... I didn't know how to write H-O-P-E on the figure so I linked it to the sign HOPE.

All right? Do you want to see it again?

Sam: My mouth is linked to hope. I hope to learn a new sign language one day. Not by studying here but by living in another country and learning that country's sign language.

Maartje: Interesting that you drew it at the mouth of the figure.

Sam: Yes, hope, hope... I didn't know how to write H-O-P-E on the figure so I linked it to the sign HOPE.

(Slide 23)

Ludo is deaf and 62 years old. His parents are hearing, but he grew up at a deaf school and signed all of his life. He often attends the deaf club and is what we’d call a traditional deaf person. For this activity, it was hard for me to explain it to him. He did not quite grasp what I wanted him to do. He said he didn’t like drawing and never drew growing up at his deaf school. I tried to explain it to him and he finally understood. It’s interesting that he didn’t identify any languages on the drawing, while the previous one had Dutch, English, LSF, etc. He didn’t do that, using only colors on the body. He said the feet were black because he sees how today deaf people go out a lot and meet each other but don’t come to the deaf club anymore. He feels like we’re stuck and not moving forward. His feet feel heavy. Now his hands for signing, he said he needs his hands now and forever, his hands are important. The head represents thinking and the future, both in negative and positive ways. His heart represents being deaf. I’ll show you.

(Slide 24)

Ludo: My heart is with deaf people. There will be deaf people in the future but deaf people and sign language need to be valued. Sign language is really invaluable for me. My heart hopes for the future, but my head is not that optimistic. But I do hope. Hope with my heart.

When I met him at our first interview, he was extremely positive about sign language and its future. “Yes, don’t worry! It’ll be around.” He was very positive, and said, “Why are you asking me this? Of course sign language will be around.” At the next interview — he worked as a delivery driver dropping off clothes, and often worked alone. At a later point, a deaf school invited him to come and teach the deaf children about what he does as a driver. He met with children aged 7 or 8. After that, I met with him for our second interview, and his mindset changed. He was really affected by the deaf children he met, because most of them didn’t sign. They asked him why he didn’t speak, because they could speak well, and if he really was deaf. He was really affected by that. So he drew that. Maybe if I had given him that on another day, it would be different. So that drawing is directly related to his day at that time.

(Slide 25)

(Slide 26)

Marieke is a 29-year-old deaf woman who has a hearing family but has a deaf sister. She used sign language when she was younger at a deaf school, but then when she was mainstreamed, she stopped using — well, not quite stopped, but her everyday use of sign language declined. She began using signs again when she began going to deaf clubs and into the deaf community. She has what in Flanders we call an “oral background”. I personally hate the word “oral,” but oral in terms of spoken language. She signed, too; it’s a complicated background. On the face, you may see orange and green. This represents Dutch and Flemish Sign Language, because she thinks in those two languages. Her heart with different colors represents her interest in different languages. Her arms are green, which she linked to signing being natural and not forced. The drawing of a document represents her preference for documenting things in written language. It may be hard to see, but the yellow lines around her head represents her positive feelings about her way of communicating. So actually, she discussed her semiotic repertoire.

(Slide 27)

Marieke: ALWAYS BEEN IN ME USING MY HANDS ^^KISS FIST^^ I feel using my hands to express myself gives me the best outcomes for communication. But I didn't always use it and I didn't always realize it, up until now. But now I realize "yes, of course, that's it." I want to continue like this, I feel good this way.

Lena is a hearing person who is the partner of the first person you saw, Sam. She is hearing, and 23 years old. Again, you can see different languages in her portrait. Her body and heart shows that she uses half Dutch and half Flemish Sign Language. The balloon in her hand, she said, represents the different languages she has used, such as LSF, LIBRAS, ASL, and International Sign. She wants to use them more, and not to let that balloon go, but she hasn’t had the opportunity to continue practicing these languages. The clouds above her head represent her thinking in English, her dreaming, proficiency in English to get a job, etc. It’s interesting how

English is important in many language portraits. Her feet represent French, which she had a hard time learning. She feels heavy with French. I noticed a thin pink line around her feet — I don't know if you can see it, but I asked what that meant. I asked if Flemish Sign Language also made her feel heavy.

(Slide 28)

Lena: Feet are not a nice place to me. I'd rather not see them. One foot, not both, because... Because it's not all negative. Sometimes I feel that Flemish Sign Language... Sometimes I feel really nervous when I need to sign. Never with Sam, but... I often say things like "today I signed really bad" or "I feel bad...", or "I have doubts" or "I feel insecure" or after a party with Sam's family I often say to Sam "sorry I signed awful today" or things like that. It's just... I WANT to do it better. Yes... Because... For me there is a difference with making a mistake in English. That's ok. But Flemish Sign Language, for me that's a part of my identity. So if I make a mistake, to me that really matters. Because [Flemish Sign Language] means a lot to me, more than English for example, you see...

That's her portrait. That's just a short video, but all the interviews were usually an hour or longer, so I only showed short clips.

(Slide 29)

So, what's next? This is the last part. We've talked about transformations, new research lenses, and now the way forward. Now what?

(Slide 30)

Here are some topics I think Deaf Studies should focus more on, more than what we've done up to now. Language transmission is important for language revitalization. If we don't have that, we lose the language. But what does language transmission mean? One important area is family language policy, or FLP. Annelies talked about that yesterday, and we're currently studying that on a pilot basis. It's a good thing to focus on deaf people from deaf families and language transmission, but at the same time we need to look at mixed deaf-hearing families, such as deaf parents of hearing children, but also communication between hearing children, e.g. CODAs or new signers. What does language transmission mean in this context? Will these children continue to sign when they grow up? How does this work? The second area I think we need to focus on is language learning. This is related to motivation. How do people want to learn sign language, and why? What is their motivation? What are their tools? Their networks? How does sign language learning happen? Online, apps, in-person classes, and different ways? Like today, we have the Tinder dating app. If a deaf person meets up with a hearing person, and the hearing person learns to sign, how does that happen? How is learning taking place? We need to open up research in that field. It's really interesting. Then we have language choices and modality choices. How do multilingual deaf people navigate everyday life, and make different language and modality choices in different contexts? How does that work? This is important to research for both deaf people and hearing people for new signers and traditional signers — all of these people — there are many issues. This research can have an impact upon Deaf Studies, applied linguistics, language policy and planning, and political theory. It has broad applications.

(Slide 31)

Now we come to rights. As you see here, we have two discourses happening at the same time: a multilingualism discourse and a rights discourse. Multilingualism... Those of us in Deaf Studies must visualize deaf people as multilingual beings, not as people dependent upon only one language. Sign language is important, yes, but we need to look at the whole linguistic repertoire. A linguistic identity is not composed of only one language; it's hybrid. If Deaf Studies can recognize that, and policy recognizes this, then how can it apply to rights? If now we have transformations where in different situations, deaf people can choose not to sign because they have other languages, what implications does this have for rights? How can rights and legislation give people the motivation and the desire to sign? Even if we know we can use other languages, we still want to sign. How can a rights discourse support this? That's a crucial question. Plus, when we talk about rights, who are the rights for? The boundaries surrounding rights often move. Rights for what? Right to language? Right to language practices? Access to language practices? For who? Again, there are multiple questions we need to consider and discuss. If sign language transforms, which is now happening, and language practices transform, what exactly is it we want to recognize, protect and promote? This needs new thinking. How can we recognize language rights at the same time we recognize that people are multilingual? Plus how can the law do this? The law can recognize that people use different languages and have the right of choice in using them. That's indeed a paramount question for deaf children, deaf people, and hearing people, too.

(Slide 32)

Let's go back to the first slide with Trevon Johnston's quote. Maybe we can read it again with new eyes. In his quote, the phrase, "no known way" — perhaps we simply don't know yet. "Shrinking" could perhaps be "changing." Replacing could be "expansion," maybe. Native users could maybe be "new users." "Language" could be "language practices". It's very thought-provoking to rethink that quote. And that concludes my presentation.

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You can find my PowerPoint at that website address. Thank you for your attention!

## FUNDING

This work was supported by a “MOVE-IN Louvain” Incoming Post-doctoral Fellowship, co-funded by the Marie Curie Actions of the European Commission.

## PUBLICATION FUNDING

This conference proceeding was made possible with the financial support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Digital Humanities Advancement Grants [#HAA-258756-8, 2018]; and Gallaudet University: the Office of the Chief Bilingual Officer, Yeker Anderson Club, and Department of American Sign Language and Deaf Studies.

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## SUGGESTED CITATION

De Meulder, M. (2020). Transformations in Deaf Studies: Implications for Sign Language Policy, Revitalization, and Rights. In P. Boudreault (Ed.), *Deaf Studies Digital Journal, Vol. 5: Selected Papers from Deaf Studies Conference Transformation 2020*, <https://doi.org/10.3998/15499139.0005.006>

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