# Educational influences on language contact and variation in sign languages: A critical review

**[1]Tawanda Matende and [2]Kudzai Gotosa**
[1&2]Department of Languages, Literature and Culture, University of Zimbabwe
[1]tawandamatende@gmail.com and [2]kudzaigotosa@gmail.com

**Abstract**

*This paper provides a critical review of how educational systems shape language contact and variation within Deaf communities, with a specific focus on Zimbabwe, South Africa, and the United States. The review synthesizes scholarly literature published from 2000 to the present, selected for its direct relevance to the intersection of educational policy, sign language linguistics, and Deaf community practices in these three national contexts. Drawing on this body of research, the review explores a central question: how do the formal educational settings for Zimbabwe Sign Language (ZSL), South African Sign Language (SASL), and American Sign Language (ASL) influence linguistic standardization and variation among Deaf students? It systematically examines the implications of these processes for three key areas: interpreter training, cultural identity, and linguistic diversity. The review finds that while formal education facilitates language acquisition and social integration, it often simultaneously marginalizes regional and home-based sign language varieties, creating a tension between standardized "school" signs and community-based dialects. This is compounded by inadequate interpreter training—a critical issue in Zimbabwe—which fails to equip interpreters to navigate these complex socio-linguistic realities. Ultimately, the paper argues for a paradigm shift towards more inclusive, context-sensitive educational and interpreter training models that are explicitly designed to account for and sustain the inherent linguistic plurality within Deaf communities.*

**Keywords:** *sign language variation, educational linguistics, Deaf communities, interpreter training, language contact, linguistic plurality*

## Introduction and background

Language contact and variation are dynamic and context-dependent processes that significantly shape the linguistic landscape of Deaf communities worldwide. In these communities, sign language is not merely a communication tool but a vehicle for identity, cultural continuity, and social inclusion (Ladd, 2003). Sign language variation refers to the lexical, phonological, and grammatical differences that arise across users, often shaped by geography, ethnicity, age, gender, and institutional exposure (Lucas & Valli, 2019; McKee & Kennedy, 2006). Simultaneously, language contact in Deaf contexts involves interactions among different signed and spoken language varieties, frequently resulting in borrowing, code-switching, code-mixing, and creolization (Clyne, 2003; Matras, 2009; Kusters, Spotti, Swanwick, & Tapio, 2017). Educational institutions-particularly residential and mainstream schools-play a pivotal role in both promoting and regulating these contact and variation processes. Schools often serve as language planning sites where state-sanctioned sign languages are introduced, either formally or informally, to Deaf learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds. This pedagogical imposition of a dominant or emerging "standard" sign language frequently displaces local, indigenous, or home-based signing systems, thus reproducing hierarchies and marginalization within Deaf communities (Supalla, 2002; Reagan, 2006; Reagan, 2010). The standardization of sign languages through curricula, interpreter training programs, and state policy often promotes linguistic uniformity for the sake of communication efficiency and educational access (Johnson, Liddell, & Erting, 1989). However, it may also contribute to linguistic homogenization, which endangers lesser-used regional or community-specific sign varieties (Miller, 2016; De Meulder, 2015). Such tensions are particularly acute in contexts like Zimbabwe, where Zimbabwe Sign Language (ZSL) is still undergoing development and lacks full institutional standardization, resulting in uneven educational delivery and identity conflicts among Deaf learners (Magwa & Mutasa, 2007; Hove, 2017). In South Africa, while South African Sign Language (SASL) has recently gained official recognition, historical legacies of apartheid, language

inequality, and fragmented interpreter training still affect its uptake and uniformity across the country (Reagan, 2006; Morgan, 2014). The United States, often seen as a model with a long history of Deaf education, offers contrasting insights into how the standardization of American Sign Language (ASL) coexists with regional dialects, Black ASL, and bilingual education models (Lucas, Bayley, & Valli, 2001; McCaskill et al., 2011). In all three contexts, educational settings do not merely transmit linguistic knowledge-they also mediate Deaf learners' access to cultural capital, social mobility, and self-identification.

The dominance of standard sign languages in formal schooling systems can lead to linguistic insecurity, identity fragmentation, and the loss of intergenerational knowledge encoded in non-standard or indigenous sign systems (De Meulder, 2018; Friedner & Kusters, 2020). Additionally, the role of interpreter training is critical in mediating these dynamics. Interpreters often act as linguistic and cultural brokers in classrooms, courtrooms, and medical settings, yet training programs may inadequately prepare them to navigate the multilingual and multi-modal realities of Deaf communities, especially in under-resourced countries like Zimbabwe (Munyaradzi & Mberi, 2021). Without rigorous, context-sensitive training, interpreters may reinforce linguistic exclusion rather than promote access (Witter-Merithew & Johnson, 2005).

This paper presents a critical review of how educational systems shape language contact and variation in sign languages, with specific attention to Zimbabwe, South Africa, and the United States. By comparing these cases, the review might reveal both shared and divergent trajectories in Deaf education and language policy. It investigates how educational practices and interpreter preparation either accommodate or suppress linguistic plurality, and it highlights the need for decolonizing, inclusive, and community-driven approaches to Deaf education and sign language development.

## Research objectives

1. To examine how formal education influences language contact and sign language variation within Deaf communities in Zimbabwe, South Africa, and the United States.

2. To analyse the sociolinguistic implications of standardized sign languages on linguistic diversity and cultural identity among Deaf students.

3. To evaluate the role of interpreter training and educational policies in addressing linguistic variation and fostering effective communication in Deaf education.

## Methodology

This review employed a qualitative approach to select and analyse literature relevant to the impact of education on language contact and variation in Deaf communities. Sources were chosen based on their scholarly contribution to understanding sign language variation, interpreter training, and educational policy in Deaf contexts. Priority was given to peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and authoritative institutional reports published between 2000 and 2023. Key search terms included "sign language variation," "Deaf education," "interpreter training," "Zimbabwe Sign Language," "South African Sign Language," and "American Sign Language." The selection focused on case studies from Zimbabwe, South Africa, and the United States to allow for a comparative analysis across different socio-linguistic and educational environments. Inclusion criteria also considered whether the literature addressed both linguistic and institutional factors impacting Deaf communities. This method ensured a diverse yet focused body of literature for a comprehensive critical analysis.

## Theoretical framework

This study draws on Translanguaging Theory and Language Socialization Theory to explore language contact and variation in Deaf education. Translanguaging Theory (García & Wei, 2014) views language use as fluid and dynamic, where Deaf students blend standardized sign languages with regional and home sign varieties. This perspective highlights how students creatively navigate multiple linguistic repertoires, leading to hybrid forms and code-switching in educational settings. Language Socialization Theory (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Ochs & Schieffelin, 2012) focuses on how individuals learn language alongside social and cultural norms. In Deaf education, it explains how schools socialize students into standardized sign languages while influencing their identities and linguistic practices, often

creating tension between home and institutional language varieties. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the linguistic and social dynamics that shape Deaf students' language use. They emphasize the role of educational environments and interpreter practices in either supporting or limiting linguistic diversity and cultural identity within Deaf communities.

**Limitations**

This critical review is limited by its reliance on secondary literature primarily about Zimbabwe, South Africa, and the United States, which may constrain the broader applicability of its conclusions to other sociolinguistic contexts. The scarcity of empirical research on interpreter training related to regional sign dialects and translanguaging practices, particularly in Zimbabwe, restricts comprehensive evaluation of current educational models. Additionally, the absence of primary data limits the exploration of Deaf community members lived experiences and perspectives. Finally, while Translanguaging Theory and Language Socialization Theory provide valuable analytical frameworks, their application may not fully encompass the socio-political complexities inherent in Deaf language practices. Despite these constraints, the review pinpoints critical gaps and guides future research and policy development in Deaf education.

**Table 1: Research matrix: Education, sign language variation, and interpreter training**

| Theme | Author(s) / Source | Context | Methodology / Focus | Key Findings | Research Gaps / Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Education as a site of linguistic regulation** | Chimedza (2024) | Zimbabwe | Critical Disability & Deaf Studies | Standard ZSL promoted in schools; regional/home signs marginalized; interpreters untrained in variation | Lack of community-centered interpreter training; linguistic insecurity among Deaf learners |
| **Translanguaging in Deaf education** | García andWei (2014); Owuor (2015) | Global / Zimbabwe | Translanguaging Theory; ethnographic observation | Deaf learners use home signs, gestures, and code-switching; schools devalue these practices | Translanguaging not integrated into pedagogy or interpreter training |
| **Language socialization & Deaf identity** | Ochs and Schieffelin (2011, 2012) | Cross-contextual | Language Socialization Theory | Learners socialized into dominant language ideologies through education; internalization of ZSL as 'correct' | Need for documentation of how language socialization affects interpreter–Deaf communication |
| **Interpreter training and ideology** | Napier and Barker (2004); Chimedza (2024) | Zimbabwe | Interpreting Studies | Focus on ZSL limits effectiveness; poor alignment with regional linguistic | Interpreter curricula ignore sociolinguistic variation |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | realities | |
| **Standardization vs. regional variation** | Branson and Miller (2002); Kusters et al. (2023); Ndhlovu and Makalela (2022) | South Africa | Sociolinguistic ethnography; Ideological Critique | Standard SASL promoted; variation persists in communities; schools suppress this variation | Community perspectives on variation not systematically included in curriculum planning |
| **Black ASL and racialized sign variation** | Lucas et al. (2001); Hill (2012) | USA | Sociolinguistics; Variationist analysis | Black ASL distinct and rich; stigmatized in mainstream schools and interpreting | Few programs train interpreters to handle race-based variation; lack of awareness of linguistic discrimination |
| **Interpreter education and Deaf agency** | Humphries et al. (2016); Marschark et al. (2014) | USA | Curriculum Studies; Disability Studies | Interpreters taught standard ASL; struggle with diverse users; Deaf agency often sidelined | Community-based interpreter training models not widely adopted |
| **Epistemic multilingualism and translanguaging pedagogy** | Makalela (2022); Ndhlovu and Makalela (2022) | Africa / Global South | Multilingual education; Decolonial theory | Need to go beyond adding languages; must challenge monolingual ideologies | Implementation frameworks for multilingual interpreter pedagogy |

**Education, language contact, and sign language variation: A critical review**

The role of education in shaping sign language practices and identities across Deaf communities is complex and ideologically loaded. Educational institutions often act not only as sites of learning but also as instruments of linguistic regulation and socialization. In contexts like Zimbabwe, South Africa, and the United States, schools influence which sign languages are promoted, which varieties are considered legitimate, and how Deaf learners navigate their linguistic repertoires in relation to institutional expectations. In Zimbabwe, formal education has historically played a regulatory role in promoting a standardized ZSL, often to the exclusion of regional varieties and home signs. According to Morford and Wood (2016), Deaf individuals living in isolation from the Deaf community have shown remarkable resilience in devising ways to communicate with those around them, often generating complex gesture systems called home signs. Home signs systems provide rare glimpse into the human capacity to generate language without influence from an established language. Chimedza (2024) critically discusses how this standardization, influenced by colonial language ideologies and donor-driven disability policies, results in the epistemic erasure of diverse Deaf knowledge systems. Deaf children often arrive at school with home signs or regional sign variants but are quickly forced to adapt to ZSL, which is treated as the only acceptable form of communication. This linguistic disciplining undermines the sociocultural grounding of Deaf identities and limits the expressive resources of learners.

The classroom becomes a site of linguistic contact where translanguaging often occurs, but dominant ideologies treat these practices as

errors rather than evidence of linguistic creativity or adaptability. García and Wei's (2014) translanguaging framework highlights how multilingual users mobilize their full semiotic repertoires to make meaning. Yet, as Owuor (2015) argues in relation to Deaf education in Zimbabwe, schools typically emphasize standard forms and devalue translanguaging, especially when it involves regional or personalized signs. This monoglossic approach to sign language education aligns with broader African language policies that privilege standardized forms while treating variation as a threat to linguistic purity (Ndhlovu & Makalela, 2022). Language Socialization Theory (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2011, 2012) further reveals how learners are not just acquiring linguistic forms but are being socialized into particular ideologies of language and identity.

Deaf students in Zimbabwean classrooms are socialized into hierarchies that privilege ZSL while constructing regional signs as inferior. Dube (2021) and Chimedza (2024) show how such dynamics are reinforced by interpreters who often lack training in sociolinguistic variation and serve as enforcers of standard language norms. This creates a feedback loop in which Deaf learners internalize linguistic insecurity, viewing their home signs or regional dialects as inadequate or embarrassing. Interpreter training in Zimbabwe remains underdeveloped and heavily focused on standard ZSL, with minimal exposure to dialectal variation or cross-cultural competencies. This leaves interpreters ill-prepared to work effectively across diverse signing practices. Napier and Barker (2004) emphasize that competent interpreting requires sensitivity to variation and the ability to negotiate meaning between users with different linguistic repertoires.

However, Zimbabwe's focus has been on increasing the quantity rather than the quality of interpreters, driven largely by compliance with international frameworks such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). As Chimedza (2024) critiques, this results in tokenistic inclusion where interpreters are present, but communication is still compromised due to linguistic mismatches. In South Africa, the politics of sign language education reflect both progress and persistent inequality. The country officially recognized South African Sign Language (SASL) as the 12th official language

in 2023, a milestone that came after years of advocacy. Studies by Kritzinger (2016) and Hough (2019) show that Deaf learners in South Africa often experience a more structured exposure to SASL through formal education, including teaching materials and interpreter services. Yet, as Branson and Miller (2002) and Kusters et al. (2023) observe, regional variation in SASL continues to thrive in community settings, creating tensions between standardization in schools and linguistic fluidity in everyday life. Educators often perceive variation as problematic, thus privileging a narrow, institutionalized version of SASL that may not reflect the learners' linguistic backgrounds.

Moreover, despite constitutional recognition, challenges remain in aligning SASL instruction with actual Deaf experiences. In some cases, teachers lack fluency in SASL, and Deaf students receive education through spoken language or poorly interpreted instruction. Kusters et al. (2023) discuss how Deaf students navigate this multilingual landscape by deploying translanguaging strategies, using gesture, fingerspelling, regional signs, and even mouthing or written language to communicate. However, formal curricula often fail to accommodate such dynamic practices. The standardization of SASL within educational spaces continues to reflect the state's desire for uniformity, which may marginalize community-based knowledge systems.

In the United States, American Sign Language (ASL) is widely recognized and used in Deaf education, but it is also subject to institutional ideologies that regulate variation. Stokoe's foundational work (2005) established ASL as a legitimate language, paving the way for its inclusion in educational contexts. However, Lucas et al. (2001) and Hill (2012) have demonstrated that ASL exhibits extensive variation along lines of race, class, and geography. For instance, Black ASL is a rich variant shaped by historically segregated schools, yet it is often stigmatized in mainstream educational contexts. Humphries et al. (2016) note that Deaf students of colour frequently face linguistic assimilation pressures that marginalize their dialects in favour of the standardized ASL taught in schools and interpreter training programs. Interpreter education in the U.S. has become increasingly professionalized, with programs incorporating courses on ethics, linguistics,

and Deaf culture. However, Marschark et al. (2014) argue that many programs still inadequately address the sociolinguistic realities of Deaf communities. Interpreters may be competent in standard ASL but struggle to interpret for users of regional, ethnic, or idiosyncratic sign varieties. This gap has led to growing calls for community-based interpreter training that values variation and centres Deaf agency. Such training would move beyond the "code model" of language to embrace what Makalela (2022) terms "epistemic multilingualism," where all communicative practices are recognized as meaningful and valid.

Across all three contexts, the common thread is that education often reinforces dominant language ideologies that privilege standardization and suppress variation. These ideologies are deeply rooted in colonial legacies, technocratic models of disability inclusion, and neoliberal frameworks of educational performance. While schools offer Deaf learners access to standardized sign languages and broader networks, they also act as gatekeepers that determine whose language practices are validated and whose are excluded. To reframe Deaf education and interpreter training through a more inclusive lens, scholars and practitioners must embrace a multilingual, translanguaging perspective. Translanguaging does not simply describe the mixing of linguistic codes; it recognizes the legitimacy of fluid, embodied, and contextual communication practices. As García and Wei (2014) emphasize, translanguaging is both a pedagogical and political act one that challenges linguistic hierarchies and affirms the full range of communicative resources available to learners.

Reimagining education from this perspective also requires structural transformation. Curricula must reflect the actual linguistic ecologies of Deaf communities, teacher training must incorporate sociolinguistics and Deaf epistemologies, and interpreter education must prioritize community engagement over prescriptive norms. As Ndhlovu and Makalela (2022) argue, this shift involves not just adding more languages to the system but challenging the very ideologies that determine which languages-and which bodies-count as legitimate bearers of knowledge.

## Implications
The findings of this review underscore the deeply entangled relationship between language, identity, and institutional power in Deaf education. Education, as a site of linguistic socialization (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2012), becomes a key arena for either reproducing or resisting linguistic hierarchies. The implications of this critical analysis extend across four interrelated domains: educational policy, interpreter training, linguistic rights, and research for socio-cultural inclusion.

## Educational policy and curriculum development
Educational institutions must reconceptualise sign language variation not as a pedagogical problem but as an epistemic and cultural resource. Policies that promote rigid sign language standardization—often reflecting state-sanctioned ideologies—tend to erase the heteroglossic repertoires of Deaf learners, especially those from rural, low-income, or historically marginalized communities (Ndhlovu & Makalela, 2022; García & Wei, 2014). Rather than promoting communicative access, such policies risk producing exclusionary spaces that invalidate students' linguistic and cultural identities.

A translanguaging-informed curriculum would affirm the legitimacy of local sign systems and enable Deaf learners to draw upon their full semiotic repertoires in meaning-making. Translanguaging pedagogy challenges the binary of "standard" and "non-standard" and foregrounds students' linguistic agency. Educators must be trained not only in sign language proficiency but also in sociolinguistic reflexivity—an awareness of how language contact generates hybrid forms and how power legitimizes certain varieties over others (De Meulder, 2018). Curricula must be flexibly designed to incorporate dialectal variation and multimodal expression as part of students' educational life worlds. This approach not only fosters linguistic justice but also cultivates inclusive learning environments that validate Deaf students' identities and experiences.

## Interpreter training and professional standards
Interpreter training must evolve from a narrow focus on standardized language proficiency to embrace multidialectal and sociolinguistic competence. In linguistically complex contexts such as Zimbabwe, interpreters must navigate

a rich interplay of standardized ZSL, regional dialects, home signs, fingerspelling, gesture, and other contact-influenced forms. Yet most current training models fail to reflect this linguistic reality, often privileging urbanized, classroom-based ZSL over more contextually embedded practices (Chimedza, 2024; Dube, 2021). A translanguaging-oriented interpreter education framework (Creese & Blackledge, 2010) centers the multilingual sign ecologies interpreters operate within. Interpreter programs must integrate sociolinguistic variation, identity negotiation, and ethical cultural mediation into their curricula.

As Napier et al. (2007) argue, interpreters must be prepared not only to translate language but to navigate complex social worlds and represent community meaning systems. Certification systems should assess interpreters' capacity to work across diverse sign varieties, rather than privileging rigid linguistic uniformity. Further, interpreter education in under-resourced regions requires infrastructural investment and innovation. Participatory curriculum co-design involving Deaf communities, alongside South–South collaborations, can foster more sustainable, context-sensitive, and inclusive interpreter training programs. These initiatives must reflect the lived linguistic realities of the communities served, rather than impose external language ideologies.

## Linguistic rights and social inclusion

The privileging of a singular, institutionalized sign language often mirrors colonial language hierarchies and marginalizes historically suppressed sign systems. This review underscores the need for decolonizing language policies that foreground the linguistic rights of Deaf individuals (De Meulder & Murray, 2017). Legal recognition of a national sign language must be accompanied by formal recognition and protection of regional, home-based, and indigenous signing practices. Linguistic justice demands the creation of communicative spaces in which Deaf individuals are not required to abandon their community-based signing practices to access education or public services. Such validation supports not only language rights but also epistemic justice (Fricker, 2007), the right to be recognized as a knower and cultural agent in one's own language. It also bolsters mental well-being, identity development, and social cohesion (Padden & Humphries, 2005).

Governments, educational institutions, and advocacy organizations must therefore promote sign language policies that institutionalize dialectal diversity, provide inclusive teacher and interpreter training, and support community-led documentation, archiving, and revitalization of local sign systems. These measures move beyond tokenistic inclusion to foster deep, structural transformation.

## Research and future directions

There is a pressing need for longitudinal, ethnographic, and participatory studies that investigate how language contact and variation shape Deaf learners' educational outcomes in diverse sociopolitical contexts. Much existing research focuses on language policy or standardization, but less attention is given to the everyday, interpreter-mediated learning experiences of Deaf students—especially in rural and underfunded schools. Future research must critically examine how interpreters navigate linguistic variation in practice, how Deaf learners engage translanguaging in formal and informal settings, and how educational systems can be redesigned to accommodate these linguistic realities.

Participatory action research grounded in Deaf epistemologies and community collaboration can reveal context-specific models for inclusive education and interpretation. Translanguaging spaces pedagogical environments that legitimize students' full semiotic repertoires offer a promising direction. They can support multimodal learning, affirm diverse linguistic identities, and serve as counter-hegemonic spaces in which marginalized sign systems are centred rather than erased (García & Wei, 2014). Such research will be essential in driving both theoretical advancements and practical reforms in Deaf education and sign language policy.

## Conclusion

Language contact and sign language variation in Deaf education are not merely technical issues of linguistic difference but are deeply political matters of equity, identity, and justice. This review has shown that while the standardization of sign languages can enhance national cohesion and facilitate access, it often imposes homogenizing norms that suppress local and community-based signing practices. Educational institutions through policy,

curriculum, and interpretation function simultaneously as sites of regulation and potential transformation. Applying Translanguaging Theory and Language Socialization Theory reveals how Deaf learners are socialized into dominant language ideologies that can restrict their communicative agency. Interpreter practices, too, are shaped by and reproduce these ideologies unless explicitly trained to navigate diversity and hybridity. The suppression of variation reflects broader structures of linguistic and epistemic exclusion. To realize linguistic justice, stakeholders must reimagine Deaf education as a translanguaging space—an environment where diverse sign systems are not only permitted but celebrated. Interpreter training, curricular reform, and policy frameworks must align with this vision, recognizing the full spectrum of Deaf semiotic repertoires as legitimate and valuable. Only through such inclusive, participatory, and justice-oriented approaches can education become a tool for empowerment rather than erasure.

## References

Althusser, L. (1971). *Lenin and philosophy and other essays*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Chimhundu, H. (2005). The language factor in development: The role of the African languages. *Journal of African Development, 7*(2), 1-18.

Chimedza, R. (2024). The place of sign language in the inclusive education of deaf learners in Zimbabwe amid CRPD misinterpretation. *Zimbabwe Journal of Educational Research, 36*(1), 35-54.

Creese, A., & Blackledge, A. (2010). Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: A pedagogy for learning and teaching? *The Modern Language Journal, 94*(1), 103-115.

De Meulder, M. (2018). *Sociolinguistics and sign language standardization*. London: Routledge.

De Meulder, M., Murray, J. J., & McKee, R. L. (2019). *The legal recognition of sign languages: Advocacy and outcomes around the world*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Dube, N. (2021). Interpreting for justice? The implications of interpreter training gaps for the deaf community in Zimbabwe. *African Journal of Disability, 10*, a749.

Fricker, M. (2007). *Epistemic injustice: Power and the ethics of knowing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Humphries, T., Kushalnagar, P., Mathur, G., Napoli, D. J., Padden, C., Rathmann, C., & Smith, S. (2016). Language choices for deaf infants: Advice for parents regarding sign languages. *Clinical paediatrics, 55*(6), 513-517.

Kritzinger, A. (2016). Signed language interpreting in South Africa: Mapping the field. *Per Linguam, 32*(2), 1-18.

Lucas, C., Bayley, R., & Valli, C. (2001). *Sociolinguistic variation in American Sign Language*. Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.

Makoni, S., & Pennycook, A. (2007). Disinventing and reconstituting languages. In S. Makoni & A. Pennycook (Eds.), *Disinventing and reconstituting languages* (pp. 1-41). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Marschark, M., Peterson, R., & Winston, E. A. (2014). Sign language interpreting and interpreter education: Directions for research and practice. In *Oxford Handbook of Deaf Studies in Language* (pp. xx–xx). New York: Oxford University Press.

McKee, R., & McKee, D. (2011). Old signs, new signs, borrowed signs: Diversity and variation in New Zealand Sign Language. *Language and Linguistics Compass, 5*(9), 690-701.

Morford, J. P., Wood, S. K., Gertz, G., & Boudreault, P. (2016). Linguistics: Gestures and home signs. *The SAGE Deaf Studies Encyclopaedia*, 611-613.

Morgan, R., & Monaghan, L. (2007). Sign languages in contact. In C. Lucas (Ed.), *Sociolinguistics and deaf communities* (pp. 49-73). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mutswanga, P. (2024). Learner voices on the schooling of deaf children in Zimbabwe: A quest for inclusive educational practices. *Perspectives in Education, 42*(1), 66-83.

Ndhlovu, F., & Makalela, L. (2022). *Decolonising multilingualism in Africa: Recentering African languages and*

*multilingual practices*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Pfukwa, C. (2020). Lexical variation and schoolization in sign languages: The case of South African Sign Language. In *Sign Languages in Southern Africa: Sociolinguistic Perspectives* (pp. 55-70). Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Swanepoel, D., & Naudé, J. A. (2019). Linguistic interference in interpreting from English to South African Sign Language. *Journal for Translation Studies in Africa, 10*(1), 112-131.

United Nations. (2006). Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD), U. *New York: Division for Social Policy and Development Disability*, 1-31.

ZIMCODD. (2019). Zimbabwean Sign Language: Recognition and rights. *African Disability Rights Yearbook, 7*, 129-145.