Perceived Gaps and the Use of Supplemental Materials in Postsecondary American Sign Language Curricula

Abstract

In the 1990s, American Sign Language (ASL) began gaining widespread acceptance as a foreign language in higher education, but instruction, programming, teaching, and learning are still in the process of becoming mature fields. This survey study was designed to assess perceived gaps in current ASL curricula, how and to what extent instructors are supplementing the curricula, how ASL labs are implemented and to what degree supplemental lab materials are needed, and whether outcomes and standards are being applied in ASL instruction. For the future development of instructional materials, implications and recommendations are provided that follow the American Sign Language Teachers Association’s Standards for Learning American Sign Language. Additionally, recommendations are made for new instructional materials to be based on research and for the implementation of integrated standards, content-based instruction, and task-based language teaching.

Although some institutions of higher education, particularly those with deaf education and interpreter-training programs, began accepting American Sign Language (ASL) as a foreign language

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