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Participatory methods in sociolinguistic sign language survey: A case study in El Salvador

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PARTICIPATORY METHODS IN SOCIOLINGUISTIC SIGN LANGUAGE SURVEY:

A CASE STUDY IN EL SALVADOR

by

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Full Meaning
ACOGIPRI	Asociación Cooperativa el Grupo Independiente Pro Rehabilitación Integral; the Cooperative Association Independent Group for Holistic Rehabilitation
Ad-Hoc International Sign	Commonly called "international sign", this communication style is constructed whenever Deaf people from different countries meet and must communicate despite not sharing one natural sign language. This phenomenon must not be mistaken for a natural or even stable sign language; it is reconstructed at each individual encounter.
AI	Appreciative Inquiry
APRODISCO	Asociación Pro Personas con Discapacidad de Cojutepeque; Association for People with Disabilities in Cojutepeque
APSSAL	Asociación Protectora del Sordo Salvadoreño; the Protective Association of the Deaf Salvadoran
ASL	American Sign Language
ASDICSSA	Asociación pro Desarrollo Integral de la Comunidad Sorda Salvadoreña; Association for Comprehensive Development of the Salvadoran Deaf Community
ASS	Asociación Salvadoreña de Sordos; Salvadoran Association of the Deaf
BTEW	Bible Translation Exploration Workshop
Centro	Centro de Audición y Lenguaje; the Center for Hearing and Language
CET	Cause and Effect Trees
DLU	Domains of Language Use
DM	Dialect Mapping
ECS	Escuela Cristiana de Sordos; The Christian School for the Deaf
EEE	Escuela de Educacion Especial "Licda. Elda de Castellon"; the San Miguel School
FMM	Fundación Manos Magicas; Magic Hands Foundation
FFA	Force Field Analysis

FUNPRES	Fundación Pro Educación de El Salvador; Foundation for Education in El Salvador
IBM	Iglesia Bautista Miramonte; Miramonte Baptist Church
JW	Jehovah's Witnesses
LESCO	Lengua de Señas Costaricenses Costa Rican Sign Language)
LESSA	Lengua de Señas Salvadoreñas (Salvadoran Sign Language)
MinEd	Ministerio de Educación; Ministry of Education
PO	Participant Observation
RTT	Recorded Text Testing
SA	Stakeholder's Analysis
SLQ	Sociolinguistic Questionnaire
TOBY	Iglesia Tabernaculo Biblico Bautista Amigos de Israel; Friends of Israel Biblical Baptist Tabernacle
USA	United States of America

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ABSTRACT

This thesis describes a three-week sociolinguistic survey of El Salvador's Deaf community that was carried out in June and July 2009. The survey utilized various traditional tools that have been used in previous sign language surveys, as well as some new tools derived from participatory research methodology. Results from the various tools were analyzed to form conclusions about the language community and its goals for language development. El Salvador's Deaf community uses Salvadoran Sign Language (LESSA) most commonly, but various subgroups also use American Sign Language (ASL), and Costa Rican Sign Language (LESCO), as well as switching between language varieties when subgroups interact. The highest priority needs identified among the Deaf community were the development of education, interpretation, and sign language resources.

The thesis also evaluates how effectively the survey applied methods of participatory research, and examines the trustworthiness of the results from this new approach to sign language survey. The group environment provided by participatory methods during the fieldwork stage was crucial to this survey's identity as participatory research. However, the survey could have better included the community both before and after the fieldwork stage. Triangulation through the use of a variety of research tools was very important in strengthening the survey's trustworthiness, as various tools either confirmed data that was previously gathered or provided additional information that might have been otherwise missed. At the same time, trustworthiness could have been even greater had the community participated in the analysis process. A notable exception was a workshop that we conducted at the request of community members, which was also very

helpful in providing further information about the sociolinguistic situation in the country generally.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores participatory research and methodology as applied to sociolinguistic sign language survey. In June and July of 2009 my research partner and I cooperated with the Deaf community of El Salvador in a sociolinguistic survey. In addition to various tools that have been commonly used for gathering information during language survey (referred to in this thesis as traditional tools), we utilized participatory methods tools and practices. This thesis evaluates the survey from two perspectives: the trustworthiness and value of the gathered information, and success of the survey in conforming to participatory values.

1.1   Changing Approaches to Sign Language Survey

The motivations and methodology of sign language survey (otherwise known as assessment or appraisal) have changed in recent years. Historically, most sign language surveys have used lexical comparison as their most informative tool to determine similarities between sign languages. I searched for as many sign language survey reports as I could find; this is close to a complete list. Out of the 23 previous surveys I reviewed for this thesis (listed below), 17 of them either exclusively or primarily used lexical comparison in order to draw their conclusions:

1. Aldersson & McEntee-Atalianis, 2007: lexical comparison

2. Al-Fityani & Padden, 2006: lexical comparison

3. Bickford, 1991: lexical comparison and informal interviews

3. Bickford, 2005: background research, lexical comparison, informal interviews

4. Faurot & Dellinger, 2005: lexical comparison, two-way intelligibility test

5. Holbrook, 2009: background research, interviews by correspondence

6. Hurlbut, 2008a: lexical comparison

7. Hurlbut, 2008b: lexical comparison

8. Hurlbut, 2009: lexical comparison

9. Huteson, 2003: methodology unknown

10. Johnson & Johnson, 2008: lexical comparison, recorded text testing, language attitudes assessment

11. Johnston, 2002: lexical comparison

12. Jordan & Netzley, 2007: recorded text testing

13. Mien-Chun, 2006: lexical comparison

14. Netzley, 2005: lexical comparison, sociolinguistic questionnaire

15. Parkhurst & Parkhurst, 2007: lexical comparison, recorded text testing, sociolinguistic questionnaires

16. Parks and Parks, 2008: lexical comparison, recorded text testing, sociolinguistic questionnaires

17. Parks and Parks, 2009: recorded text testing, sociolinguistic questionnaires, participant observation

18. Parks and Parks, 2010a: sociolinguistic questionnaires, participant observation

19: Parks and Williams, 2010: sociolinguistic questionnaires, participant observation

20. Williams, 2010: sociolinguistic questionnaire, participant observation

21. Woodward, 1991: lexical comparison

22. Woodward, 1993: lexical comparison

23. Woodward, 2000: lexical comparison

For most of these surveys, the purpose has been to gather the information desired by the researcher or sponsoring institution in order to understand the language, its history, and its relationship to other languages. Qualitative and self-reported information in survey reports often

took a backseat to quantitative data such as that provided by lexical comparisons and recorded text testing. Without a widely-accepted phonetic transcription system for sign languages, however, adapting lexical comparison to sign language survey has resulted in a wide range of variation in methodology, particularly in what phonetic parameters are used as the basis for comparison (Bickford 2005, Hurlbut 2008a, 2008b, 2009, Johnston 2002, Parkhurst 2007, Parks and Parks 2008, etc.). Disenchantment with the inconsistent methodology used in lexical comparisons has led some researchers to search for methodologies that could provide a broader perspective on a community's language situation.

However, some surveys of Deaf communities and their languages have also leaned more toward the qualitative, e.g., more recent reports from Parks and Parks that bring into the spotlight tools such as informal interviews, questionnaires, and participant observation. The basis for this different focus is the guiding paradigm that Deaf communities have the right to speak their own perception of their language situation, and that their experience and knowledge should carry equal, if not more, weight than the data elicited and analyzed by outside linguists. In recent years, survey reports authored by Parks and Parks have not included lexical comparison studies, and they believe that including them would not significantly impact the conclusions posited by the qualitatively-focused survey (Jason and Elizabeth Parks, personal communication).

At the same time the academic world is changing its goals with respect to minority and oppressed communities, and therefore changing research methodologies to ones that promote greater involvement of local community members and which emphasize the importance of the community's goals, not just the goals of outside researchers (Chambers 1992, 1994). As the paradigm shift toward research including goals for social improvement spreads throughout the social sciences, linguists and sociolinguists are increasingly designing their research to support language and community development rather than to simply describe linguistic and cultural phenomena.

1.2 Participatory Research and Methodology

In this context, participatory research has become prominent. In this section, I explain how participatory methods came to be developed, various parameters that define participatory research, some systems for evaluating the participatory quality of research programs, and the rationale for using participatory research for language survey.

Why use participatory research? What is the benefit and motivation? According to LeCompte and Schensul (1999), there are two main paradigms that informed the emergence of participatory research. One is the Critical Paradigm, or Paradigm of Action Research, motivated by the recognition of systematic inequalities between social groups. Its purpose is not simply to gain knowledge, but also to result in advocacy and activism on behalf of oppressed groups. This paradigm studies how social classes "interact to shape inequalities" (pg 46). The goals of this research paradigm include empowering the community under study and encouraging community development. The researcher using the Critical Paradigm is not neutral; she sides with the community and supports them through her research.

However, simply because research seeks to empower the community does not necessarily mean that the community is involved in the research. This is where the other paradigm forming the basis of participatory research becomes important: the Interpretive/Phenomenological/ Constructivist Paradigm. According to this paradigm, reality is cognitively and socially constructed, depending on the situation and participants. Researchers adhering to this paradigm see culture as an abstract construct put together by participants. This allows for the validation of varying, complex, even opposing perspectives. LeCompte and Schensul describe this view as "...inherently participatory because meaning can be created only through interaction" (1999:49). It uses participant observation and emphasizes the equal authority of researchers, stakeholders, and community members who participate in the research.

These two paradigms came together in Paulo Freire's book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

(1970). This book fueled a change in perspective, calling researchers to recognize that "poor and exploited people can and should be enabled to conduct their own analysis of their own reality" (Chambers 1992:6).

A shift in researchers' motivations naturally leads to a change in the sort of information needed. This change is away from quantitative information that is precisely measurable but less relevant to the community, to information that is highly relevant to the community's context but less quantifiable and precise. Because trustworthiness is often associated with statistics and measurement, some of the general social science community has reacted negatively to this shift. However, promoters of participatory research are quick to point out that applying principles from the hard sciences to social sciences often results in reductionism; research into complex situations is often simplified to measurement of a few variables which do not give anywhere close to a complete understanding of the situation. Without clear attention to relevance, the relationship between rigor and relevance can become almost inverse; the more the rigor, the less the relevance to the actual social situation. In addition, there are other ways to increase the trustworthiness of social science research. "The challenge is to find ways of enhancing both relevance and trustworthiness at the same time." (Chambers 1992:46) With respect to the survey discussed in this thesis, matters of trustworthiness are discussed in chapter six.

According to Chambers (1992) and Pretty & Vodouhê (1998), the following central assumptions and values motivate the use of participatory research:

1. Marginalized and oppressed people are smart, creative, and capable, and can express and demonstrate their knowledge. They can and should do much of their own investigation, analysis, and planning.

2. The marginalized should be empowered with the capacity to act. The goal is to reach the point at which communities "ultimately become the owners and managers of their assets and activities." (The World Bank 1996:8)

3. The information produced should be relevant and useful for the community and their

goals.

4. Outsiders who adopt this perspective and act as conveners, catalysts, facilitators, and learners thereby gain access to a wealth of knowledge that would otherwise not be available to them.

Kutsch-Lojenga (1996) has applied these principles specifically to language research, making the following points:

☒ "The language does not belong to outside researchers, but to the people who speak it" (pg 10). We should view it the way the insider does and not only from the outsider's perspective.

☒ "The analysis will go faster and be of a better quality because of the active involvement of insiders" (pg 10) .

☒ The speakers of the language will benefit by learning from the discovery; this becomes training for conducting further language research and development.

☒ The project will belong to the speakers of the language and grow deeper roots in the community.

☒ Language is close to people's hearts and forms an important part of their identity. People become excited to see the richness of their language. Becoming involved in language research and development affirms their identity.

What are the defining characteristics of Participatory Research? The most central definition of Participatory Research is well summarized by Cornwall and Jewkes (1995): research projects that are truly participatory in nature are only those in which the power for decision-making lies with the people group which is the focus of the study. This is "the key difference between participatory and conventional methodologies... the location of the power in the research process" (pg 1667) The information is owned, analyzed, and used by the local people (Chambers 1992).

That said, the balance of initiative and decision-making power varies widely among different research projects and exists along a continuum rather than in two clearly defined categories of

"participatory" and "non-participatory." Because of this continuum, the label "participatory" is being used to describe various kinds of research that actively involves local people as more than objects of study. Of these studies, few are fully participatory in nature, that is, few exhibit all of the values outlined below. It is much more difficult to change the essential way that people (researchers) operate than it is to simply give them more 'methods' to work with (Chambers 1994). Increasingly, promoters of participatory research call for honest discernment between simply using some participatory methods and facilitating truly participatory research. Reviews of such projects claim that those that adopt a fully participatory paradigm in nature are attaining their goals noticeably more than those that simply use some methods drawn from the participatory paradigm (Pretty & Vodouhê 1998).

From Chambers (1992, 1994) can be elicited the following 10 values (which I also refer to as principles) as being central to participatory appraisal. The nature of participatory research is that it is always growing, and as such, this is not meant to be a complete list:

1. <u>The researcher's critical self-awareness and responsibility for innovation, mistakes, and improvement</u>. The principal facilitator/researcher should conduct honest and open self-criticism, showing awareness of his/her mistakes, suggesting, and then trying adaptations for future research before, during, and after the research project.

2. <u>An open and inviting relationship between the researchers and the community</u>. Initiating this relationship requires a particular behavior and attitude. The researcher must communicate clearly about the purpose of his presence, be willing to take a relaxed pace, show respect, honesty, and interest in the matters of importance to the community. "When the outsider's behavior and attitudes are right, and participatory methods used, good rapport usually comes quickly" (Chambers 1994:241).

3. <u>Group discussion and visualization</u>. When a group of people from the community discuss and diagram an issue, it provides space for them to be innovative, to learn toward action, and for the researcher to take a backseat as the group discusses and discovers. When facilitated

correctly, this visualized group discussion can balance diverse opinions, social status, and personalities of the participants. This helps offset the disadvantage of group discussions being dominated by one or two people; more timid or lower-ranking people can draw or diagram while others have heated discussions. The visual organization can then serve everyone as tools for sharing and further analysis and discussion.

4. A process of progressive, rapid mutual learning for all parties involved. The researcher takes the stance of a learner and facilitates a group environment where all participants continuously build on what they are learning from each other.

5. Analysis by comparison rather than exact counts/measures. Eliciting absolute values, although common in the academic world, can sometimes cause anxiety for the interviewee because it can be difficult to remember. Absolute values are also difficult to obtain for subjective information, such as value judgments. Comparisons, on the other hand, elicit relative values, are less sensitive in nature, and provide an entrance to discussion about deeper issues.

6. Empowerment rather than simply information extraction. There is less concern about gathering data and more on starting a process of the community's ability to effect change in their circumstances.

7. Open research (open to formation by the emic perspective) rather than closed research (preformed by the etic perspective). This allows for the research to gain structure according to the marginalized community's mental organization and knowledge. "It is more the reality of local people than that of outsider professionals that counts" (Chambers 1994:243).

8. The marginalized community's social invention and initiative. The researcher may act as a facilitator, but the solution, commitment, and action belong to the local community.

9. Debriefing and idea-sharing with the local people. Not only the analysis but the conclusions and application as well should be a collaborative effort between the people under study and the researchers.

10. Seeking diversity of opinion and triangulation of information. The research emphasis is on the whole situation rather than just one slice of the community, and on a wide range of perspectives in order to construct a view of the situation from the marginalized community's perspective.

While the ten principles above are seen as crucial to successful participatory research, new principles and guidelines continue to appear through innovation. For example, researchers have found that participatory research should include people in positions of power as well as the oppressed/disadvantaged (The World Bank 1996). Without the approval of those in power, it can be difficult for the marginalized community to enact change. Some are also discovering the importance of presenting a group's analysis to a larger gathering as a way to open up wider discussion of the conclusions and the range of differing interests. This is an important opportunity for the various actors to learn from each other (Pretty & Vodouhê 1998:12)

Based on the values discussed above, the checklist below, taken from Pretty and Vodouhê (1998), lists ten "frameworks" (criteria) for judging the trustworthiness of a participatory research project. They are discussed in chapter six:

1. Prolonged and/or intense engagement between the various actors.

2. Persistent and parallel observation.

3. Triangulation by multiple sources, methods, and investigators.

4. Analysis and expression of difference.

5. Peer or colleague checking. (This is asking colleagues involved in the project to check one's work and give input.)

6. Reports with working hypotheses, contextual descriptions, and visualizations.

7. Parallel investigations and team communications.

8. Reflexive journals.

9. Inquiry audit. (This is the process of asking someone not involved in the work to review one's findings and conclusions to make sure they are not just conjecture.)

10. Impact on stakeholders' capacity to know and act.

A well-rounded research project which claims to be participatory should consider incorporating elements of all of the perspectives mentioned above. As an appraisal research project continues, researchers should continue to monitor their attitudes, approaches and responses to the community.

Participatory research continues to receive criticism from the academic community for the lack of trustworthiness of its information, since it seems to fly in the face of controlled scientific method research. This is a major concern for research in which the highest aim and end goal is to gather and present trustworthy information for the social sciences academic community. Promoters of participatory research respond with the claim that their primary goal is *not* gathering and presenting information for the academic community, rather it is initiating and mobilizing the community's self-assessment and action on its own behalf. That said, participatory research practitioners claim that their work does indeed produce accurate information which is also useful to the academic community.

This argument seems to revolve around two goals which some believe are mutually exclusive: 1) to initiate and mobilize a marginalized community's self-assessment and action on its own behalf and 2) to gather and present accurate information that benefits the academic community. The claim of participatory researchers (and of this thesis) is that these goals are not mutually exclusive. Participatory research, either independently of traditional research tools or in combination with them, addresses both goals better than simply using the traditional methods.

For those whose focus in sign language research has shifted to serving the local community through supporting language and cultural development, it seems natural to adopt a paradigm and a methodology that best serves that goal. Participatory principles and methods provide an effective framework that supports community-based language and culture development. In this thesis I describe a sociolinguistic survey of the Deaf community of El Salvador which was designed to incorporate participatory values, and I compare the efficacy of participatory methods

with traditional ones.

1.3   The Participatory Sociolinguistic Survey of El Salvador

My colleague Christina Epley and I conducted a three-and-a-half week survey of El Salvador's Deaf community in June and July of 2009. For our research, we put special emphasis on understanding the perspective of Deaf Salvadorans. They were gracious enough to share their information and opinions with us, spending many hours introducing us to their community, their languages, their friends, their way of life, their struggles and dreams. Unless the source is otherwise identified, the information we present regarding the Deaf community comes from participant observation and informal interviews with Deaf participants rather than hearing. I make an effort to base my presentation of these factors on the perspectives of Deaf Salvadorans for two reasons. First, I make an assumption as a researcher that while all of our participants are honest, those who are Deaf know their culture and language use better than their hearing peers. Secondly, as an advocate, the purpose of this survey is in part to give the Salvadoran Deaf Community a voice in the academic realm concerning their languages and language use.

The research questions for the survey were deliberately quite broad.

1. What is the sociolinguistic situation of the Deaf community in El Salvador?

2. What sort of community/language development is needed and desired by the Deaf community of El Salvador?

Besides the search for this information, there were three other purposes for undertaking the survey. Two of them were:

3. To be advocates for the deaf community by giving them a voice in the academic realm.

4. To serve the deaf community in their language development goals.

While we were there, a portion of the Deaf community also asked us to assist them in addressing the following additional questions in a participatory manner:

5. Is it feasible to do a Bible translation project in la Lengua de Señas Salvadreña (LESSA,

Salvadoran Sign language)?

      6. What would be required to make that happen?

Among the terms used in this paper are acronyms for Lengua de Señas Salvadoreñas (Salvadoran Sign Language) and for American Sign Language (ASL). The Lengua de Señas Salvadoreñas is sometimes referred to as LESA and sometimes as LESSA. I will use the latter acronym because it is used by Deaf associations in El Salvador. In this paper, the term ASL means the variety of ASL used in El Salvador.[1] When talking about the ASL utilized in the United States, I will refer to it as USA-variety ASL. A third sign language used in the eastern region, particularly in San Miguel, is Costa Rican Sign Language (LESCO). Also highly reported is the use of what Deaf Salvadorans call CVG, which refers to gesture-based communication, international or contact sign situations, and home sign.[2] Participants informally estimate that the percentage of Deaf LESSA-using Salvadorans ranges from 50% to 75% of the entire Deaf population of El Salvador.

Figure 1: Map of El Salvador

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[1]Footnote: Salvadoran-variety ASL differs from USA-variety ASL in several ways. First, Salvadoran ASL mixes ASL signs with LESSA signs. Second, many sign handshapes are changed to reflect the first letter of the corresponding Spanish word; this is referred to as Spanish initialization. Third, Salvadoran ASL adheres to Spanish grammar. Signs have even been invented to take the place of Spanish prefixes, suffixes, and copulas, etc. Thus, it might better be described as a type of Signed Spanish based on ASL vocabulary. I have continued to call it "ASL," however, because that is what it is called in the Salvadoran deaf community.

[2] The use of the acronym CVG was very common among Deaf Salvadorans. Although we learned what it means, we never learned what the acronym stands for.

Figure 1 is a map of El Salvador showing the cities where we traveled to do research. El Salvador divides itself informally into three main regions: west, central, and east, although these divisions do not appear to be politically defined. The Salvadoran Deaf community references these regional divisions when discussing language and attitude variation. LESSA is used throughout the country, with significant influence from LESCO in the eastern region and significant influence from ASL in the western region.

I am hearing and Epley, my colleague, is Deaf. We are both fluent in English. She is fluent in ASL and I am communicative. I am fluent in Spanish and she is communicative. Neither of us knew LESSA before our fieldwork there, but we were able to learn it for communication purposes quite quickly.[3] While in El Salvador, we normally communicated using a situational combination of gesture, LESSA, ASL, and whatever other methods we had available to us at the time. The Salvadoran Deaf community is quite familiar with this ad-hoc communication system. A similar communication style—commonly called "international sign"—is constructed whenever Deaf people from different countries meet and must communicate despite not sharing one natural sign language. This phenomenon must not be mistaken for a natural or even stable sign language; it is reconstructed at each individual encounter. Throughout this paper, I refer to this communication style as "ad-hoc international sign" or by the specific languages used in combination.

This survey utilized three tools that have previously been used in sociolinguistic sign language research: Participant Observation, Sociolinguistic Questionnaires, and Recorded Text Testing. It also included six tools derived from participatory research: Appreciative Inquiry, Dialect Mapping, Force Field Analysis, Stakeholder's Analysis, Domains of Language Use, and Cause and Effect Trees. These are described in detail in chapter two.

El Salvador borders Guatemala to the northwest and Honduras to the northeast, and faces Nicaragua across the Fonseca Gulf to the southeast. It is geographically the smallest country in

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[3]   This seems to be a common phenomenon among signers; a basic communicative competence can be gained in another sign language quickly.

Central America, measuring 20,721 sq. kilometers or 7998 sq. miles (El Salvador 2010). Even though small, it is the third most populous, with 7,185,300 people. Despite a large rate of emigration, its population is growing quickly. 61% of El Salvador's people live in urban areas, mostly in the capital city of San Salvador and its state of the same name. 80% of the population is functionally literate. Fifty-nine percent of the population is between the ages of 15 and 64, while 35% is 14 and under (El Salvador 2010).

El Salvador has had a long history of armed conflict. For example, the 1969 war with Honduras forced many Salvadorans to return home from Honduras, leaving their jobs and homes behind. The 19-year civil war ending in 1992 took the lives of 80,000 people and produced hundreds of political refugees. Among other devastating consequences, this increased the number of disabled persons in El Salvador. The civil war, combined with the strong compulsion to "go north" (to the USA) to find a source of better income and a better lifestyle, has weakened the cultural nuclear family. It is now very common to find families with one parent and a set of grandparents taking care of the children (Giron-Batres 2001). Salvadorans are renowned for being unafraid to raise their voices about issues from education to internal politics, and for having a deep love for the beautiful landscape and culture of their country. They are friendly, helpful, and quick to remind outsiders that the wars which ravaged their country for so long are over, and they are proud of the progress El Salvador has made (Reid 2007, Giron-Batres 2001, Lonely Planet).

I present the survey strategy and methodology in Chapter two. Chapter three describes how various associations, organizations, religious and educational institutions have been involved in El Salvador's Deaf community and language. Chapter four provides a wider view of the Deaf community's language use, culture and identity, and their perceptions of language use and development issues. I then evaluate the survey as a whole from two different perspectives. Chapter five examines the survey in light of the guiding principles of participatory research. Chapter six discusses the trustworthiness of the results. Chapter seven summarizes the findings.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the strategies and methodological tools used in the sign language survey of El Salvador. The cumulative results of these tools are presented in chapters three and four. Here, I describe each tool, including: a summary of its purpose, the details of the data-gathering process, some limitations, the languages involved, and the way the resulting information was analyzed.

Three of the tools that we used in El Salvador have been used often in previous sociolinguistic sign language research: Participant Observation (PO), Sociolinguistic Questionnaires (SLQ) and Recorded Text Testing (RTT). The other six tools are derived from the participatory research paradigm, and depend on group interviews: Appreciative Inquiry (AI), Dialect Mapping (DM), Force Field Analysis (FFA), Stakeholder's Analysis (SA), Domains of Language Use (DLU), and Cause and Effect Trees (CET). We attempted to gather a broad range of information at each location to which we traveled, but due to time and participant constraints, we were not able to use all tools at all locations. The following table indicates which tools were used in which locations:

Table 1: Research tools and number of times they were used in each location

City/Region	PO	SLQ	RTT	AI	DM	FFA	SA	DLU	CET
San Salvador	1	7	4	1	3	1	1	1	1
SS workshop	1	0	0	4	0	4	1	4	4
La Libertad	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sonsonate	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ahuachapan	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Santa Ana	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	1	0
Cojutepeque	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Usulutan	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
San Miguel	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	7	14	10	6	6	5	2	7	5

As seen in the table, some of the tools were used primarily during a workshop that we were asked to help lead in San Salvador, whose main theme was exploring the possibility of translating the Bible. (The Bible Translation Exploration Workshop, henceforth referred to as the BTEW.) Epley and I agreed to assist the Deaf workshop facilitators by training them in several participatory methods tools, which they adapted to fit their theme. In exchange for our assistance, we were allowed to incorporate the substantial information produced there in the survey results. At all other venues, the tools were facilitated by Epley and me, but at the BTEW three out of four groups were facilitated by the Deaf workshop staff. I facilitated the fourth group in Spanish, because it was the only one comprised of hearing people. Although focused on a religious theme, the workshop was attended by representatives from civil and government organizations as well as religious ones, and the information provided was quite informative to our research questions and, more importantly, to the goals of the community members present. Although the participatory tools were all built around group discussion, each participant was also assigned a number and we kept track of what groups they participated in, as well as any individual interaction we had with them around the non-participatory tools.

As with any cross-linguistic study, the languages used to gather and express information affect its interpretation and application, both in the practical and cognitive sense. The original "source" language of the study (i.e. the language used to formulate the research design) and the ultimate target language of the information results (in this study, both English), as well as each language used in between for framing questions, facilitating discussions, or recording responses (in this study, Spanish, ASL, LESSA, etc.) can affect the results. The use of multiple languages does not condemn a study to misrepresentation; in fact, as researchers it is our greatest desire to accurately represent the information that is entrusted to us. However, since as individual researchers we differ from the community under study and from each other in our competence in the various languages used to gather data, it is reasonable to consider the extent to which we may not have been able to accurately interpret the information entrusted to us. The need to use a mix of languages and communications styles created a potential communication gap in which either party could misunderstand some information, however much we attempted to communicate clearly.

As an example, the sign for 'equal/same' in LESSA can mean 'equal in form' or 'equal in value'. When we asked in the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire, "Does everyone here sign the same?", in retrospect it looked like some people interpreted it as asking the question, "Does everyone here sign equally well?" or "…in a way that is equally valuable?" This may explain some responses in which participants asserted that "Everyone is equal (or the same), no matter what they sign." We became aware of several possible ambiguous statements such as this, and there may have been others which escaped our notice. This is an inherent challenge when communication involves multiple languages, and one which needs to be considered in evaluating the results. Thus, for each tool below, I include a chart representing the sequence of languages through which information flowed. For each step at which the information was shifted to another language, or in which we communicated with community members in a language in which we or

they were not fluent, there exists the possibility of a small measure of distortion. Since the issue of translation affects both the participatory nature of a survey and it trustworthiness, I discuss it further in chapters five and six.

2.1 Previously Utilized (Traditional) Research Tools

This section outlines the research procedures and limitations of each of the traditional research tools, as they have previously been utilized by many other sign language surveyors. For these tools, my research partner and I followed procedures already established by Parks and Parks in surveys that they have conducted or supervised, and described in their *Sign Language Survey Practices* (in preparation; see also: Parks and Parks 2008, 2009, 2010a. 2010b; Parks and Williams 2010; Williams 2010).

2.1.1 Participant Observation

For Participant Observation (PO), my colleague and I took note of the social dynamics of each situation as they pertained to the research aims. We recorded these observations from an etic perspective. We also recorded comments, opinions, questions, and stories told to us in informal situations, which provided windows on the emic perspective of the community. While with some other tools we selected particular interviewees or participants, for Participant Observation we selected particular environments: we aimed to visit particular religious institutions, associations, educational programs, and gathering places to observe the events there. This created an important "net" to catch information that was not elicited by other tools. Some important stakeholders in the community spoke with us at length about their positive or negative experiences in the Deaf community and with other stakeholders. This approach worked especially well because, as a team of one Deaf and one hearing researcher, we were exposed to different sources of knowledge about events, issues, and opinions. Sharing our separate insights daily helped us develop a more well-

rounded understanding of each situation. We recorded our informal observations in notes that we kept organized by .

After data collection was complete, I sifted through the Participant Observation data looking for patterns and grouping the data according to topic, such as "Society," "Religion," "Associations," "Education," and "Persons." My goal was to build a topical index from which I could pull significant information and triangulate it with information from other tools. I read, noted, summarized, and incorporated them into the survey report which formed the basis of chapters three and four of this thesis.

The great limitation of Participant Observation is that it is completely filtered through our outsider perspective, based on our own culture, hypotheses, preconceived notions, values and goals for the outcome of the survey. It is the tool most vulnerable to subjective interpretation, particularly because what we recorded depended on short-term memory and was subject to fatigue. To compensate for this, we relied on triangulation from other tools to prevent us from drawing conclusions from thin evidence. Our outsider status also held an advantage, however: we were new in the community, and the various factions did not see us as automatically associated with an opposing faction. Having a lack of prior affiliation sometimes opened doors for us to be listeners to all parties in turn. Participant Observation served an important role in guiding the direction of the research during the field research period and during analysis.

Table 2: The languages and translation involved in each step of the Participant Observation process, from elicitation to presentation.

1	The community members and stakeholders (Deaf and Hearing) interact with each other in our presence and with us	in their native language or in an ad-hoc lingua franca
2	We recall and summarize what we observed according to our perspective	in English
3	We search for common themes to form hypotheses about the community	in English
4	We incorporate the information into a written report	in English

While all of our interaction with the Deaf community members occurred in some form of signed communication, and all of our interaction with Hearing community members was in Spanish, all documentation was written/recorded in English.

2.1.2   Sociolinguistic Questionnaire

The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire (SLQ) was a scripted interview to which participants responded while the researcher took notes on a computerized pre-set document. The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire was targeted to individuals; it involved no group discussion. Questions ranged from personal experience in education, religion, language preference and social interaction to the individual's perspective of community-wide topics as well as hopes for the future of the community. Effective use of this tool depended on our ability as facilitators to clearly express the interview questions in an ad-hoc lingua franca and accurately understand and record answers. It included both closed- and open-answer questions. We asked the questions in the order they were listed, and recorded answers, comments and stories that were offered in response. Sometimes, if pressed for time, we were unable to ask all of the questions. The questions from the questionnaire document are found in the appendix.

When possible, we interviewed one local Deaf community leader in each region we visited. We believed that a community leader would be knowledgeable about his/her community. In some

situations, a leader was not available, so we simply interviewed a willing community member. In San Salvador, we attempted to interview at least one leader of each social network of the Deaf community in order to have as wide a range of perspectives as possible.

In order to analyze the data from the Sociolinguistic Questionnaires, I copied each set of answers from each interviewee into a spreadsheet and categorized them according to topic. I compared, summarized or quantified the most relevant data and combined it with information from the Participant Observation notes to arrive at overall conclusions. I looked for patterns or significant information that could build upon the foundation laid by our Participant Observation data. The Sociolinguistic Questionnaires confirmed (or in some cases, contradicted) information from our Participant Observation notes.

Table 3: The languages and translation involved in each step of the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire, from elicitation to presentation.

1	The questions are in a pre-set form document	in English
2	We ask them during each interview	in an ad-hoc lingua franca
3	The interviewee responds	in his native language or ad-hoc lingua franca
4	We interpret and immediately record the response in the document	in English
5	I analyze and incorporate the data into chapters three and four	in English

As the chart above shows, the source document (questionnaire) for eliciting information is in English, and the elicited information was recorded in English. We interacted with the interviewees in signed communication. Sometimes we negotiated for meaning, i.e., we discussed each question and answer until both parties were confident in our mutual understanding. This decreased the likelihood that the use of multiple languages would distort the information.

2.1.3   Recorded Text Testing

Recorded Text Testing (RTT), is a survey method devised to test a community's

comprehension of a recorded story from a different or related community's language variety. We followed protocols set in place by Parks and Parks' *Sign Language Survey Practices* (in preparation) as well as previous sign language surveys (Johnson and Johnson 2008, Jordan 2007, Parkhurst & Parkhurst 2007, Parks and Parks 2009). We used the Kluge "retelling" method (Kluge 2007) adapted to sign languages by Parks and Parks, rather than the question-answer method as described by Grimes (1995). The reasoning for switching to this adaptation is described in Parks and Parks (2010a). (Basically, it avoids the comprehension problems created by interpreting test questions about the text; this procedure is explained more below.) Our goal was to administer at least one Recorded Text Test in each region we visited. All in all, 10 pairs of people participated in Recorded Text Testing. We asked for volunteers who had grown up in that community and were representative of the sign language in that area. For San Salvador, we attempted to administer it at least once in each significant social network.

In most Recorded Text Testing procedures, the presentation of the story from the other language variety is followed by a series of test questions meant to measure the participant's comprehension of the text. However, in this adaptation of the procedure, each test involves the participation of two people, a watcher and a reteller. The test utilized an ASL story performed by an American Deaf signer. We administered a practice test (with a short story in LESSA) in which we asked the pair to take turns practicing the reteller and the watcher roles. If we noticed that one seemed to adapt best to the reteller role, we invited him to be the reteller for the entire ASL story process. The reteller was first shown a short video of a story in American Sign Language all the way through. We then showed it to him segment by segment and asked him to describe the content of each segment as exactly as possible to the watcher, who was not allowed to watch the video. We video recorded the retelling, then later analyzed it to count how many of the story's content points the reteller reproduced exactly. The English translation of the ASL story and the content points used for scoring can be found in the appendix.

The scoring system is based on 45 content points (specific lexical items) from the story which were all previously mentioned by 100% of a control group of ASL signers in the USA following the same procedure. In most Recorded Text Testing studies, the control group used to identify the content points consists of 10 pairs of test subjects (Grimes 1995). For this test, the control group was only seven pairs. The test was administered to the control group by Parks and Parks (2010b).

No variations on signs were allowed to count as accurate retelling. In order to be counted, the reteller needed to reproduce the signs exactly as was seen on the video. Further, those signs needed to be reproduced in the same sections in which they appeared on the video. If the reteller included them later, after reviewing other sections of the story, they were not counted. The raw score was then converted to a percentage correct.

The Recorded Text Testing results showed us how many specific lexical items the reteller was able to reproduce in each section of the story. We interpreted the results to indicate how much Salvadorans can understand, benefit from, and reproduce information presented in USA-variety ASL. One does have to be careful in interpreting the results. For example, the tool does not tell us whether the percentage of accurate reproduction is due to each participant's language similarity to USA-variety ASL or due to bilingualism. (Some participants in this tool self-identified as ASL users and some as LESSA users.) Also, failure to reproduce a sign exactly does not necessarily mean that the reteller misunderstood the text. Since the retellers communicated the content to watchers that use their local sign variety, they were susceptible to natural code switching and may have been swayed to change their choice of signs rather than reproduce them exactly. Thus, the test is presumably sensitive to the reteller's assessment of the watcher's ability to understand USA-variety ASL;[4] this may affect the retelling as much as the reteller's personal ability to

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[4]   This factor may compensate to some extent for the inability of the test to distinguish inherent intelligibility of two language varieties from bilingualism, swaying the test more towards measuring inherent intelligibility, although it is not currently possible to determine the strength of this effect.

reproduce the ASL exactly. Further, if a subject wished to emphasize the differences between his/her own sociolinguistic situation and USA-variety ASL, it would be possible for that person to feign incomprehension of the text. Because of these factors which might cloud the results, it is important to triangulate the results of Recorded Text Testing against the results of other tools.

Table 4: the languages and translation involved in each step of Recorded Text Testing, from elicitation to presentation.

1	We explain the RTT process	in the ad-hoc lingua franca
2	We show the video	in USA-variety ASL
3	The subject reproduces the video section by section	in ASL, possibly with some interference
4	We analyze the video and write up the results	in English

As table 4 shows, the Recorded Text Testing tool was conducted entirely with sign language, which reduced the potential for misunderstanding and distortion of information.

2.2   Participatory Research Tools

Six tools were derived from participatory methods that have been used for community development. Many aspects of these tools were the same, so I discuss them in general first before examining each one specifically.

Our goal was to use these tools with each group of participants that gathered to work with us, although we were never able to use all six tools in one setting. Participant groups were guided through the use of these tools to discuss and analyze their linguistic and cultural situation. The discussion was processed visually as participants wrote or drew representations of the discussion topics, then manipulated them on poster-paper to represent comparisons. With each group's permission, my colleague and I took pictures of the charts/graphs as they developed. The photos were labeled and stored according to the group that created it, the tool, the date, and the region. Afterward, the content of the photos representing the various steps of each discussion was

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recorded in tables or spreadsheets so that each group's data could, if necessary, be analyzed individually as well as compared to the data of the other groups. For all of the participatory tools, each group was encouraged to keep the poster that they had produced during their discussion, as a way of making the discussion useful to them.

Participatory methodology includes the free choice of each group to adapt the analysis and presentation of data as they wish. Therefore, each group's approach to presentation differed from the others. Although this made comparing the data more difficult, it cast a broader net to capture information that might not have been captured with more rigid procedures. It is up to the researcher to determine how the data compiled from all groups fit together.

The participatory tools gathered a large quantity of data from many people because they were conducted multiple times with groups instead of with individuals. For example, the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire was conducted with 14 individuals while the Force Field Analysis was conducted with 5 groups (around 46 people). The turn-taking and group discussion encouraged in the participatory methods tools allowed for many ideas to be recorded in each group.[5]

Ideally, each tool would be guided closely in terms of organization but loosely regarding topic, providing an environment in which each group could steer the central topic of the tool as they wished. In practice, many of them were guided loosely in organization as well. This flexibility is an important part of using participatory tools.

For each participatory methods tool, the process of translation and languages is the same. Not all groups did step four.

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[5]   While group-oriented methodology does not allow any opportunity of correlating responses with each individual's demographic profile, that level of analysis would have been premature in an initial study such as this. To compile an overall picture of the sociolinguistic situation, a group perspective presumably provides a better picture of the situation than any one individual can provide.

Table 5: The languages and translation involved in each step of the participatory tools, from elicitation to presentation.

1	The facilitators explain the procedure of the particular tool and guide the group step by step through the tool	in their native language or an ad-hoc lingua franca
2	The group discusses the topic at hand and goes through the tool	in their native sign language
3	The group records the discussed information into a visual presentation	in pictures, graphs, and Spanish to varying degrees
4	They discuss or present their results among themselves or to a wider audience	in their native sign language
5	I analyze the visual presentation produced by the group	in English
6	I incorporate the summary and results of each tool into a report	in English

As Table 5 shows, the facilitators of some groups were able to direct them in their native language (these were the groups at the BTEW), and some were able to discuss/present the results in their native language. There was one group comprised of Hearing participants, and the procedure explanation and discussion (steps one and two) was in Spanish for this group. Step four for the Hearing group, however, was in LESSA, since the larger audience to which they were presenting was comprised of three Deaf groups.

One advantage of using these participatory tools was that, unlike in the traditional tools, each group discussed the topic at hand in their own native sign language, without being limited by the requirement that we, the foreign facilitators, understand the discussion. But, this also had a disadvantage, which became apparent when each group's data was turned over to me for comprehensive analysis: I had difficulty deciphering the comments that the groups had written on their charts in Spanish. The tools requiring a high level of Spanish complexity were the most difficult to decipher. The tools requiring a low level of Spanish complexity were easiest to interpret. I translated from Spanish, (a second language for the Deaf community and for us as researchers) to English for my comprehensive analysis, thus requiring me to present my findings

as translated material. This translation gap increased the chance of misinterpretation and limited how much useful information I could glean from some tools.

While it is true that each tool utilized Spanish, the kind of information represented in Spanish differed as to whether whole ideas or simply reference words were required. Some tools required the participants to record whole sentences in Spanish. For others, only place names, people names, or commonly-used nouns were required in Spanish; the rest of their analysis was done using drawings.

Table 6: The complexity of Spanish writing that was required by each tool.

Tool	Type of information elicited in writing (Spanish)	Spanish Complexity Required
Appreciative Inquiry	Hypothetical; dreams and goals	High
Force Field Analysis	Hypothetical; abstract forces in a process	High
Cause and Effect Trees	Hypothetical; process motivations and results	High
Domains of Language Use	Complex but concrete places, events, and domains	Medium
Stakeholder's Analysis	People and place names; simple and concrete	Low
Dialect Mapping	Place names; simple and concrete	Low

Some tools require that complex ideas be expressed in written form (Spanish) while others do not. The complexity of Spanish required is independent of the complexity of the tool itself; for those requiring low complexity in Spanish, the complexity of the analysis is represented in the visual chart produced by the tool. When complex Spanish, such as full sentences, was required, some groups had difficulty writing ideas clearly enough for me to understand them.

2.2.1 Appreciative Inquiry

For Appreciative Inquiry (AI), participant groups analyzed what they considered to be positive about their community and language, then what positive aspects they would like to see develop in their community and language use. They then placed the goals they had expressed

along two continua, one representing low to high importance and the other representing low to high difficulty. Participant groups were instructed to:

(1) Discuss and write down what makes them proud/happy about their language and/or culture

(2) Discuss and write down what they would like to see happen in the future pertaining to their language and/or culture; goals for their future as a language community.

(3) Arrange the future goals in a continuum from most to least important.

(4) Arrange future goals in a perpendicular continuum from most to least difficult.

(5) Choose one dream that they believe is most central to start working on immediately.

(6) Discuss and record what resources, people, and steps would be required to make that central goal possible.

From the pictures of each group's chart, I wrote and translated each "goal" according to group. I categorized the goals according to the most commonly occurring general topics and subtopics. If one goal touched on two major topics, I included it in each category, so that one expressed goal might count twice. I counted the number of comments in each category and subcategory to derive conclusions from how frequently topics were mentioned. Five of the groups that used this tool were comprised of Deaf participants, and one was comprised of hearing participants.

2.2.2   Dialect Mapping

In Dialect Mapping (DM), participant groups analyzed which social and geographic groups in their language community use and understand which dialects or variations of which language. They also discussed and analyzed which language varieties are closer to being understood by all subgroups. Our goal was to facilitate this tool among a group of leaders from each major social network. Our reasoning was to attain as wide a perspective as possible about regional/social

networks and the different sign varieties they use. I hypothesized that leadership of social networks would have a clearer view of social and linguistic differences in order to analyze and compare them. In fact, we were not able to use it in as many groups of leaders as we would like (only two), but used it with several other groups in the San Salvador area and in different geographic regions, including two groups of students, and one group of school alumni and teachers. All participants for this tool were Deaf. Participant groups were prompted to:

1. Identify the name of their sign language and other social or geographic groups that use it.

2. Identify other sign languages in the community and social or geographic groups that use them.

3. Arrange labels of places and institutions to show which ones are socially/geographically related.

4. Discuss and analyze their level of comprehension of each social or geographic group's language variety.

5. Discuss and analyze patterns of adaptation between their group and the other social or geographic groups, i.e., the extent to which each group adapted their signing toward the other group.

6. Discuss which language variety would be most appropriate for language development and why.

I analyzed each group's representation of the following four types of information:

1. Language Use: Each group was encouraged to come up with the language varieties that they felt were definitive of the linguistic separations within the community; if at all possible, language varieties were not suggested or imposed by the facilitators. Each group's list of varieties was slightly different.

2. Social Networking: Only Group one, Group three, and Group six proceeded to arrange their dialect map according to language use similarity and social networks.

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3. Comprehension Analysis (Self-assessment of intelligibility): We asked the groups to analyze each social network or institution they listed and place them in one of the following four categories: We (the participant group) understand them (the institution or social network): a) perfectly, b) more or less well, c) a little, or d) not at all.

4. Adaptation Analysis: We also asked each group to analyze and identify each social network or institution based on which party adapts or changes their signing in order to communicate with the other. They were asked to identify them with the following statements: When we meet people from here a) we adapt for them, a) they adapt for us, or c) neither group adapts for the other; we both remain the same. Sometimes the groups asked about representing a situation in which both parties adapt a little and meet in the middle, using a sign system that is not native to either of them. For that, I asked them to put markers representing both option a and option b.

To analyze the data from this tool, I described significant statements from each group in prose. I created a separate spreadsheet to record comments for each group and each of the four types of data according to each social institution or geographic region mentioned from all groups. I integrated the results into the description of each significant social institution. For groups one and six, Epley and I recorded the discussion of the last step in our Participant Observation notes.

The Dialect Mapping tool provided detail regarding specific geographic regions, churches, educational programs and institutions, associations and organizations, and social gathering places beyond that which was provided by other tools. This information created a wide base dialect "map" to which further information about each group/region could be attached. Each group illustrated the extent to which different networks of Deaf people understand each other and which social groups adapt their signing style in order to communicate with others. This sheds light on possible patterns of bilingualism and code switching. With this information, we could make hypotheses about how many Deaf Salvadorans use which language varieties and which are

strongest.

2.2.3   Force Field Analysis

All groups that did the Force Field Analysis (FFA) were participants in the BTEW (one group was training in to facilitate for the BTEW) and tailored the tool to the topic of Bible translation. It was designed to present a more detailed picture of what the Bible translation process would look like according to their community. One group consisted of Hearing people; four groups consisted of Deaf people. They analyzed the positive forces pushing to attain Bible translation and the negative forces blocking its progress. They analyzed the comparative strength and relationship of these forces to each other, and discussed and recorded some possible solutions to overcome the negative forces. The participant groups were prompted to:

1. Clearly express the goal whose procedure they wanted to analyze.

2. Identify helpful forces that pushed *toward* that goal, or in some cases, steps toward the goal.

3. Identify negative forces that would block or push against that goal.

4. Rank the strength of the positive and negative forces from one (weakest) to five (strongest), or place the positive forces in order of task/importance.

5. Discuss ideas about how to overcome the negative ones.

I analyzed each group's representations of:

1. Positive forces and their strength.

2. Negative forces, their strength, and how to overcome each.

I grouped the positive and negative forces according to their themes or common occurring comments and tallied the times they were mentioned, with separate counts for the Deaf groups and the Hearing group. I grouped the negative and positive comments to see what strong themes came through, since many themes were identical; the only difference was the expression of "lack

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of" or "presence of" being viewed as positive or negative in nature. I then ranked the forces according to frequency of mention from most to least.

2.2.4   Stakeholder's Analysis

Stakeholders were considered by two groups. One participant group, comprised of the Deaf volunteers training to facilitate various participatory tools at the BTEW, used the Stakeholder's Analysis (SA) tool to identify which stakeholders in their community could, should, or might want to become involved in a Bible translation project for El Salvador's Deaf community. Another group during the BTEW analyzed the potential participation of stakeholders as an additional part of their Force Field Analysis.

Stakeholder's Analysis gathered information within a very specific domain. After the groups identified the stakeholders that would be interested in or affected by a Bible translation in LESSA, they ranked their levels of interest and influence in such a project. The first group (the facilitators in training) followed these steps:

1. Identify people, churches, and other groups that would be interested in participating in a Bible translation in LESSA.

2. Group those people/institutions according to their relationships to each other.

3. Identify the level of interest that each group, person, or institution would have in the project.

4. Identify the level of influence that each group, person, or institution would have in the project.

In addition, this group made notes regarding how they envisioned a team and support network developing. For analysis, I made a spreadsheet listing the identified stakeholders according to their relationships to each other and displaying their levels of interest and influence.

The other group that considered stakeholders used Force Field Analysis to analyze the

compatibility of the stakeholders' religious beliefs, and the sign language each stakeholder used. For that group, I simply placed their data in a table and analyzed the results, comparing with the results from the first one.

2.2.5   Domains of Language Use

Domains of Language Use (DLU) asked participant groups to analyze what language variations they use in different societal domains and how often each domain occurs. Participant groups were prompted to:

1. Identify and show what languages they use.
2. Identify and show what situations (domains) in which they use those languages.
3. Identify and show the frequency of their use of the languages in these situations.

Five out of seven participant groups discussed this tool as part of the BTEW. The other two groups used this tool at educational programs, where the groups were comprised of Deaf volunteers who had gathered for school.

I created a spreadsheet for each group, placing languages, domains, and their frequency of use in a graph comparison following the parameters for comparison chosen by each group (and arranged in their visual presentation). I derived results individual to each group, then compared them for comprehensive results, which gave a broader picture of language use in each domain for the entire community.

Rather than only addressing which languages are in use in which regions or networks, Domains of Language Use addressed which languages were in use in different domains in the same participants' lives. It sought not simply to identify which language the community identified with, but what variety of communication styles they used regularly and how often. The resulting information supported the Deaf community members' claims about their use of multilingualism and code switching.

2.2.6   Cause and Effect Trees

In Cause and Effect Trees (CET), used only in connection with the BTEW, each participant group used two large drawings of trees to compare the possibility of using an ASL Bible or a LESSA Bible, and to build the motivations (roots), fruit (benefits), and dead leaves (drawbacks) of each process. This was to help each group think through the options open to them and analyze the benefits and drawbacks of possible decisions within the realm of Bible translation. Each participant group was prompted to:

1. Identify the motivations (roots) for having a Bible translation in LESSA.

2. Identify the positive results (fruit) of having a Bible translation in LESSA.

3. Identify the negative results (dead leaves) of having a Bible translation in LESSA.

4. Identify the motivations for having a Bible translation in ASL.

5. Identify the positive results of having a Bible translation in ASL.

6. Identify the negative results of having a Bible translation in ASL.

I translated each comment into English and grouped them by section, so that all groups' "Roots" sections were together, all "Fruit" sections together, etc., although separated for the two processes. I then grouped similar comments together in each section, to find patterns in what the groups expressed. I summarized those findings and drew conclusions from them.

CHAPTER 3

SOCIAL NETWORKS, ASSOCIATIONS, RELIGION AND EDUCATION

This chapter describes the social networks of the Salvadoran Deaf community. In El Salvador, many associations, organizations, religious groups, and educational institutions/programs serve Deaf people and their families. Here, I present and describe those which substantially reflect or affect the Deaf community, and particularly those that play a role in the controversies of language use and shift. The information presented in this chapter is integrated from all nine different tools described in chapter two. The descriptions of most institutions include tables describing results of the Dialect Mapping tool, with comments identifying what language the institution uses, how well the participant groups understand the institution's language variety, and which party changes its communication style to communicate with the other.

In El Salvador, as in many other Spanish speaking countries, institutions and programs are often referred to by acronyms. Here is a list of the institutions that I will describe, their acronyms if available, and their English translations:

Key Associations and Organizations:

- ☒ Asociación Salvadoreña de Sordos (ASS, Salvadoran Association of the Deaf)
- ☒ Asociación pro Desarrollo Integral de la Comunidad Sorda Salvadoreña (ASDICSSA, Association for Comprehensive Development of the Salvadoran Deaf Community)

- ⬚ Fundación Manos Magicas (FMM, Magic Hands Foundation)

- ⬚ Fundación Pro Educación de El Salvador (FUNPRES; the Foundation for Education in El Salvador)

- ⬚ Asociación Cooperativa el Grupo Independiente Pro Rehabilitación Integral (ACOGIPRI; the Cooperative Association Independent Group for Holistic Rehabilitation)

- ⬚ Asociación Pro Personas con Discapacidad de Cojutepeque (APRODISCO; Association for People with Disabilities in Cojutepeque)

- ⬚ Asociación Protectora del Sordo Salvadoreño (APSSAL; the Protective Association of the Deaf Salvadoran)

- ⬚ The Asociación Cooperativa el Grupo Independiente Pro Rehabilitación Integral (ACOGIPRI; the Cooperative Association Independent Group for Holistic Rehabilitation)

Key Religious Institutions and Programs

- ⬚ Grupo Efetá (Efata Group)
- ⬚ Iglesia Bautista Miramonte (IBM; Miramonte Baptist Church)
- ⬚ Iglesia Nazaret (Nazareth Church)
- ⬚ Iglesia Tabernaculo Biblico Bautista Amigos de Israel (TOBY; Friends of Israel Biblical Baptist Tabernacle)
- ⬚ Iglesia Nuevo Pacto (New Pact Church)
- ⬚ Tabernaculo Bautista San Miguel (San Miguel Baptist Tabernacle)
- ⬚ Jehovah's Witnesses

Key Educational Programs and Institutions

- ⬚ Ministerio de Educación (MinEd; Ministry of Education)
- ⬚ Centro de Audición y Lenguaje (Centro; the Center for Hearing and Language)
- ⬚ Escuela Cristiana de Sordos (ECS; The Christian School for the Deaf)

- ☒ Educame (Educate me)

- ☒ Centro Escolar "Licda. Griselda Zeledon" (Escuela Zeledon; the Zeledon School)

- ☒ Centro Escolar para Sordos "Carlos Langenegger" (Escuela Langenegger; the Langenegger School)

- ☒ Escuela de Educacion Especial "Licda. Elda de Castellon" (EEE; the San Miguel School)

- ☒ Escuela de Educación Especial "Elisa Alvaréz de Diaz" (Escuela Santa Ana; the Santa Ana School)

- ☒ Centro Escolar para Sordos de Cojutepeque (Escuela Cojutepeque; the Cojutepeque School)

- ☒ Circulos de Alfabetización (Literacy Circles)

3.1   Key Associations and Organizations

El Salvador has two Deaf-run Deaf Associations. I describe them first here. Next, I describe some high profile but not Deaf-led organizations whose work has an impact on the Deaf community. Organizations whose work seems to have a lesser impact on the Deaf community are described last.

3.1.1   *Asociación Salvadoreña de Sordos (ASS)*

The Asociación Salvadoreña de Sordos (ASS, Salvadoran Association of the Deaf) was established in 1987. It is registered as a member of the World Federation of the Deaf. Some articles refer to it as "The National Association of the Deaf."

Its first president was Licenciada Griselda Zeledón (Deaf), who remained president at least through 2001 (Caceres de Olivares 2001). Currently, the president is Señorita Berta Luz Pascual (Deaf), who recently graduated with a degree in Social Sciences from the University of El Salvador (Gonzalez 2008d). While the election of people for the offices of the ASS occurs by

association vote and there is a limit of terms for president, their description of the history of leadership indicates that the same circle of leaders seems to rotate offices. The current president, Ms. Pascual, is the goddaughter of former ASS president Emma de Walker (Deaf).

President Srta. Pascual states that some of their current goals are the preservation of LESSA and the creation of a network in the western hemisphere to facilitate international sharing among the Deaf (Gonzalez 2008d). The ASS offers sign language classes (Navarro 2008) in the Escuela Especial de San Jacinto "Romero Albergue" in San Salvador. Their association meetings are held every Saturday in the same location. Most of the leadership committee of the ASS attends the interpreted mass at the Catholic parish San Antonio Padua.

Groups who participated in the Dialect Mapping tool reported the following language use perceptions of the ASS. Some groups identified more than one option for some categories, thus I have listed all of the options they represented.

Table 7: Perceptions of three Dialect Mapping groups regarding the Asociación Salvadoreña de Sordos

This Participant Group...	Identified ASS as using this language variety...	They understand the ASS this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
ASS members	LESSA only	Perfect	We adapt to them/ both remain the same
Comité LESSA/ ASDICSSA	LESSA and ASL mixed	Perfect/more or less well/not at all	We adapt to them/ they adapt to us
Alumni of ECS	LESSA only	More or less well/a little	We adapt to them/ both remain the same.

Interestingly, although the ASS and Escuela Cristiana de Sordos (ECS) alumni describe the language used in the ASS as being exclusively LESSA, the Comite LESSA and ASDICSSA consider the ASS to use a mixture of LESSA and ASL. Since both associations view ASL negatively, ASDICSSA's statement that ASS mixes ASL in their LESSA may also reflect a negative attitude toward them.

There have been many instances of failed cooperation between ASS and other organizations desiring to move forward with community development, creating mutual feelings of frustration and suspicion between them. The leaders of the ASS find themselves offended when other groups do not follow the lines of protocol that they have established for communication and cooperation, therefore leaving the ASS out of the loop. They feel it shows a lack of respect for their authority in the Deaf community of El Salvador. The problem is especially acute with hearing people involved in other institutions; the ASS leadership recounted to us numerous incidents when hearing people had taken action (that they assumed was acceptable) without asking permission or even informing the ASS leadership of what they intended to do. People in other organizations also told us about several such instances of misunderstanding. From this dual perspective, it seems that these misunderstandings result from cultural differences and lack of awareness of culturally-appropriate norms of communication and behavior.

The ASS has a branch association called Asociación Salvadoreña de Sordos Región Occidente y Santa Ana (ASSROSA) which represents the Deaf communities in the western region of the country (specifically the departments of Santa Ana, Sonsonate, and Ahuachapan). Its president is Plinio Castillo (Deaf) (Castro 2007). It is located in Santa Ana and works in conjunction with the ASS in San Salvador (Gonzalez 2009). ASSROSA meets every Saturday in Santa Ana, from one to five in the afternoon. They offer sign language courses and other social and cultural activities. ASSROSA put on a presentation exploring and celebrating Deafness for the International Day of Deaf Persons on September 29, 2007 (Castro 2007).

Table 8: Perceptions of four Dialect Mapping groups regarding the Asociación Salvadoreña de Sordos Región Occidente y Santa Ana

This Participant Group...	Identified ASSROSA as using this language variety...	They understand ASSROSA this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comité LESSA/ ASDICSSA	ASL, a little LESSA	Perfect	Both remain the same
ASS members	LESSA+ASL mixed	Perfect	Both remain the same
Alumni of ECS	LESSA ONLY	More or less well/a little	We adapt to them/both remain the same
ASSROSA members	LESSA+ASL mixed		They adapt to us/both remain the same

3.1.2   Asociación pro Desarrollo Integral de la Comunidad Sorda Salvadoreña (ASDICSSA)

The Asociación pro Desarrollo Holistic de la Comunidad Sorda Salvadoreña (ASDICSSA, Association for Comprehensive Development of the Salvadoran Deaf Community), was formally established on September 28, 2008. At that time they held a press conference about the rights that Deaf people should have to equal access in the media, in particular calling for captioning and interpreter services in television programs (La Prensa Graphica, 2008). Grisel Flores (Deaf) is the president. It is made up mostly of young professionals, many of whom split off from ASS in 2008 (Gonzalez 2009). At the time of our fieldwork (June-July 2009), ASDICSSA did not yet have official recognition as an association with the government, due to lack of funds for the cost of registration.

*Table 9: Perceptions of two Dialect Mapping groups regarding the Asociación pro Desarrollo
Integral de la Comunidad Sorda Salvadoreña*

This Participant Group...	Identified ASDICSSA as using this language variety...	They understand the ASDICSSA this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comite LESSA/ ASDICSSA	LESSA only	Perfect	Both remain the same
Alumni of ECS	LESSA only	More or less well/a little	We adapt to them/both remain the same

The ASDICSSA leadership team currently meets at the house of missionary Toni McAndrew (Hearing) the last Sunday of each month (McAndrew, personal communication). Most ASDICSSA members attend IBM or other evangelical churches, and many are also involved in the group that has initiated translation of the Bible into LESSA. The ASDICSSA is closely associated with the Comité LESSA which meets each Saturday from eight to noon. Consisting mostly of ASDICSSA members, the Comité works to develop sign language pedagogy, adapted from ASL publications by DawnSign Press (www.dawnsign.com) (McAndrew 2009).

Being a fairly new association, ASDICSSA does not share the history of frustration that ASS does in relation to other organizations. While the ASS is wary of partnering with other groups due to past negative experiences, ASDICSSA president Grisel Flores feels confident that her association can and should work in collaboration with these groups.

3.1.3   *Fundación Manos Magicas (FMM)*

Fundación Manos Magicas (FMM, Magic Hands Foundation), is an organization of hearing people who support Deaf education and Deaf equality. FMM was founded in 2003. The president of this non-profit organization is Licenciada Yanira Soundy (Hearing), whose daughter is Deaf. The Executive Director is Eugenio Gonzalez (Hearing), one of the foremost professional interpreters of El Salvador (Soundy 2008).

Table 10: Perceptions of three Dialect Mapping groups regarding Fundación Manos Magicas

This Participant Group...	Identified FMM as using this language variety...	They understand the FMM this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comité LESSA/ ASDICSSA	LESSA+ASL mixed	More or less well	They adapt to us
ASS members	ASL and CVG	More or less well/a little/not at all	We adapt to them
Alumni of ECS	ASL	Perfect	We adapt to them/they adapt to us/both remain the same

Although all groups reported FMM as using some or all ASL, FMM themselves claim to use LESSA and support young Deaf adults who use either signed language.

When FMM first began, its core activity was to provide support to Deaf students going through school and college by providing tutoring for them. At that time FMM worked with ASL-using Deaf students. Since then, its goals have diversified, becoming more far-reaching. They seek to serve Deaf youth who use either ASL or LESSA, and their families. They continue to lobby for Deaf peoples' rights for equal access to information and opportunity. For example, in 2003-2004, the youth committee of FMM organized a campaign for social sensibility and awareness by doing presentations in the commercial centers of San Salvador. They have also put on plays with Deaf casts focusing on awareness (Fundación Manos Magicas 2009). They claim to be instrumental in lobbying for the government's recognition of LESSA (Soundy 2008). They also hold an annual conference on Deafness (Gonzalez 2009).

FMM is distinctive in the diverse array of information it makes accessible on the internet, particularly through its monthly magazine Manos Magicas La Revista, which is sent out to subscribers by e-mail. Each edition has information about Deafness in children, the importance of professional interpretation, and highlights about members of the Deaf community in El Salvador and around the world. Fundación Manos Magicas operates a blog

(manosmagicasonline.blogspot.com) and a "vlog" (video-based blog; sordomultimedia.blogspot.com), whose subtitle is: "Una alternativa informativa del mundo sordo en El Salvador y Latinoamérica" (An alternative information source of the Deaf world of El Salvador and Latin America). The vlogs are hosted by Alex Vega, a young Hearing man, in spoken Spanish, with subtitles.

FMM was "created… to watch over the comprehensive development of Deaf persons, their relatives, and their environment" (Gonzalez 2009). It currently uses LESSA, and operates projects in several different sectors with partnerships like Channel 8, which broadcasts the Mass each Sunday in LESSA. The foundation works to be in communication and maintain friendships with all sectors of Deaf people in LESSA and in what they refer to as altered ASL (i.e. Salvadoran-variety ASL, see introduction for full explanation). There is a group of young Deaf people (bilingual in LESSA and Salvadoran-variety ASL) that have the desire to found a club dedicated to opening spaces for entertainment, but it still is not formalized. They are considered "friends of the Foundation" (Gonzalez).

In November 2008, the first students of a LESSA Interpretation program graduated with a "diplomado" (certificate or diploma) in level-one interpretation. FMM is one of the collaborators in this program. The program director is Luz Marlene Aguilar, a hearing graduate of the Cooperative Association of States for Scholarships (CASS) program, who received her certification in ASL-English interpreting in the USA (Gonzalez 2008c, d). A new branch of FMM is the Comité de Interpretes de Lengua de Señas Salvadoreña (CILESSA), chaired by Diego Morales. According to its blog (cilessa.blogspot.com), CILESSA appears to serve as a forum for marketing the newly available interpreters in LESSA and providing a source of information about interpreting and guidelines for interpreter conduct.

3.1.4   Fundación Pro Educación de El Salvador (FUNPRES)

The Fundación Pro Educación de El Salvador (FUNPRES; the Foundation for Education in El Salvador) is a group of parent advocates that are working to hold the Ministry of Education accountable for advances in quality of education (Gonzalez 2008b). It has formed a committee called Comité para la Integración de Estudiantes Sordos (CIES; the Committee for the Integration of Deaf Students), whose purpose is to advocate for the rights of Deaf students and to fund interpreting services for Deaf students integrated into private secondary schools. The interpreters they provide use ASL, and the funding comes from donations. (Gonzalez 2009)

FUNPRES has initiated a few attempts to raise awareness of Deafness/Deaf culture in El Salvador and to encourage linguistic documentation of LESSA. According to Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees, those projects have not come to fruition due to disagreements with cooperating organizations. FUNPRES also holds workshops for continuing education for Deaf and hearing teachers and the Deaf.

The ASS views FUNPRES as a respectable organization, however one that promotes Signed Exact Spanish. The ASS used to be closely affiliated with FUNPRES but in recent years has not pursued that relationship. ASDICSSA and Deaf educators, however, continue to interact with FUNPRES.

3.1.5   Asociación Cooperativa el Grupo Independiente Pro Rehabilitación Integral

The Asociación Cooperativa el Grupo Independiente Pro Rehabilitación Integral (ACOGIPRI; the Cooperative Association Independent Group for Holistic Rehabilitation) was founded by Eileen Batres in 1981 as a cooperative work group and artisan business for people with disabilities. Their workshop is called Shicali. Almost three quarters of the people who work there are Deaf (Ten Thousand Villages 2009). "For some of the Deaf members, the workshop is the place where they can go and talk with other Deaf adults, learn a skill, earn an income and

participate in social activities." (Doe 1996) In 1996 Canadian Tanis Doe worked with the Deaf

adults from the ACOGIPRI group in a series of participatory workshops, in which they identified

the need for literacy and began a literacy program which eventually involved other organizations,

such as FUNPRES.[6] ACOGIPRI was identified by a Dialect Mapping participant group as using

ASL only. It is still involved in societal and political change, often arranging peaceful

demonstrations to push forward legislation on behalf of disabled people.

3.1.6   *The Asociación Pro Personas con Discapacidad de Cojutepeque*

The Asociación Pro Personas con Discapacidad de Cojutepeque (APRODISCO; Association

for People with Disabilities in Cojutepeque) was founded in 1999 and provides art workshops and

other services for people with disabilities, including Deaf persons. They use LESSA (Gonzalez

2009). They have been proactive in providing additional computer and technical training for Deaf

students in the department of Cuscatlán, of which Cojutepeque is the capital (Dueñas 2008).

3.2   Religious Practice and Groups

There are many religious groups that seek to provide services to Deaf people in El Salvador.

Most of these are in the San Salvador metro area, although a few exist in other parts of the

country. Deaf people are involved in worship performance (McAndrew 2009) and evangelism

(Stepleton 2009), as well as services such as literacy training (Caceres de Olivares 2001). Some

of these groups conduct their activities in ASL, others in LESSA, others in both. All religious

activities with Deaf persons are directed by hearing people, except for the one Deaf church,

Iglesia de Sordos Effatá.

When asked if Deaf people attend church, all but one Sociolinguistic Questionnaire

interviewee responded yes. In San Salvador, we were often told "There are too many (churches)

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6   Because of the similarity of aims, it is possible that this effort eventually developed into the
     program described later as Circulos de Alfabetizacion, although I have no confirmation of that.

to count." In Usulutan, however, we were told that Deaf people do not go to church because there are none available for them to attend.

Reasons vary as to why Deaf people attend church. Some Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees say Deaf people go for spiritual food (perhaps meaning to take the sacraments), and to learn about God and what the Bible says. Others say that they go because there is sign language, and Deaf people choose a church that offers interpretation over a church that has none. Others say that Deaf people go because they want to socialize.

There are at least three long-term missionaries from the USA living and working with the Deaf community of El Salvador. Many ASL-using evangelical groups come from the USA each year for a short time. Some Deaf people from El Salvador completed training with Deaf Opportunity Outreach (DOOR), a Deaf-led Bible and pastoral training program in Costa Rica (Stepleton 2009).

In this section, I first present the religious groups which appear to have a profound involvement or impact on El Salvador's Deaf community, particularly on language use and shift. Other groups that have been mentioned will be described later.

3.2.1   Grupo Efetá

Grupo Efetá, described as a coalition of Deaf and hearing Catholics, was started by Grisel Flores (current ASDICSSA president), Lisseth Amaya (Deaf), and perhaps also by Flores´ ex-husband Julio Duarte (Hearing) in 1999 in the Parish of San Antonio de Padua Colonia América. The current director of this group is Licenciada Sofia Baires (Hearing), a LESSA interpreter. In 2000, they founded a Deaf school, which closed seven years later. (Gonzalez 2009). Most Deaf people refer to this group as "Padua" instead of "Efetá".

Table 11: Perceptions of three Dialect Mapping groups regarding Grupo Efetá

This Participant Group...	Identified Grupo Efetá as using this language variety...	They understand the Grupo Efetá this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comité LESSA/ASDICSSA	LESSA, a little ASL	More or less well	We adapt to them
ASS members	LESSA ONLY	Perfect	We adapt to them/both remain the same
Alumni of ECS	LESSA ONLY	More or less well	They adapt to us

The 9:00 a.m. mass at San Antonio Padua is attended by about 30 Deaf people each Sunday and interpreted by at least two interpreters, one of them being Licenciada Baires. Afterward, Licenciada Baires teaches a catechism attended by about 15 people and ASS president Señorita Berta Pascual teaches a simultaneous sign language class attended by about 12 hearing people.

Numbers attending Grupo Efetá have dwindled recently; some Deaf people shared with us their perspectives about why. They believe that now that Profesora Flores has begun attending an evangelical church and Amaya often attends mass at a parish closer to her home, the group lacks strong Deaf leadership. One participant mentioned that it is difficult for Deaf people to partake of the sacraments because they must first go to confession; this is not possible because there are no priests who sign. According to the Deaf people who shared with us, other options for communicating with a priest such as writing down a list of sins or using a third party (interpreter) are not acceptable to them.

3.2.2   Iglesia Bautista Miramonte (IBM)

Iglesia Bautista Miramonte (IBM; Miramonte Baptist Church) offers an interpreted service in LESSA with interpreters of varying abilities. Some sign ASL and some LESSA, and many use a combination of the two. The LESSA interpreted service takes place Sundays at 8:00 a.m. Then from 10:30 to 12 noon there is a Sunday School for Deaf people, taught entirely in LESSA. Toni

McAndrew (Hearing) an American evangelical missionary, teaches the Sunday School material beforehand to a Deaf teacher, who then teaches it in sign language to the class on Sundays. Between 10 and 20 Deaf people attend here. There may also be an ASL interpreted service at 10:00 a.m., but we were unable to confirm it. Eleana Ventura, a hearing interpreter, is the coordinator for IBM's general ministry to Deaf persons. According to Latin American Mission, there are four aspects to this church's ministry with the Deaf: interpretation, literacy, workshops, and a drama group called Vision2Hear. The secondary school Liceo Getsemani is also an extension of the church's ministry. (McAndrew 2008).

Table 12: Perceptions of three Dialect Mapping groups regarding Iglesia Bautista Miramonte

This Participant Group...	Identified IBM as using this language variety...	They understand IBM this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comite LESSA/ ASDICSSA	LESSA and ASL mixed		They adapt to us
ASS members	ASL and CVG	More or less well/a little/not at all	We adapt to them
Alumni of ECS	ASL	Perfect	We adapt to them/they adapt to us/both remain the same

IBM hosts one section of the national government's Circulos de Alfabetizacion para Sordos program (see in education section, below) to provide education to Deaf adults on Saturdays. One of the teachers, Fatima Stubig, is Deaf. This literacy program offers the equivalent of grades 1-3 to Deaf adults. Twenty-two students graduated from their respective levels in December 2008. The church is hoping to offer higher grades in their local program each year. About 30 Deaf people attend the classes, ranging from about 17 to 35 years old with a few in their 60s. In addition to the regular curriculum, McAndrew teaches Bible lessons at the end of the day (McAndrew 2009).

McAndrew works with this church by advocating for quality inclusion of Deaf people in the

church life, teaching the Bible, and now assisting with the coordination of the newly formed TraduBiblia LESSA project for translating the Bible. She assists two Deaf people, Edwin Molina and Grisel Flores, in training interpreters once a month. McAndrew was highlighted in a Manos Magicas Magazine article (Oct 2008) for giving a workshop on educational interpreting, sponsored by FUNPRES.

According to participants, in the past IBM associated with the ASL-using community, and only in recent years has begun work with those who use LESSA. Now, almost all ministry to the Deaf community uses LESSA, although many of the hearing interpreters, by their own admission, prefer and use ASL.

Part of IBM's program involving the Deaf community is Vision2Hear (V2H), a branch of a USA-based drama/music/sign language performance group. Several of the members of the IBM V2H are Deaf, although there are no Deaf people mentioned in the website of the USA-based parent group (www.vision2hear.org). They have performances for the general public at various times throughout the year. The director and choreographer is Jorge Campos (Hearing), a young man who works at ECS and is fluent in English, Spanish, LESSA, and ASL. The songs performed by the V2H group are signed in ASL and LESSA.

3.2.3   Iglesia Nazaret

The Deaf participants at the evangelical church Iglesia Nazaret are all closely tied to ECS, and at least in the church context, sign strictly Signed Exact Spanish, which they refer to as "American Signs". (It is not, however, clear whether they perceive this to be the same as Salvadoran ASL.)

Approximately 15-20 Deaf people attend here. The worship service is interpreted once a month. Two Sunday schools weekly are held for Deaf attendees, at 9:00 a.m. and at 11:00 a.m. The 9:00 a.m. class is for a young teen audience, taught by a young woman who is a Deaf ECS

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teacher. The 11:00 a.m. one is taught for an older teen/young adult audience by a hearing woman who was formerly a teacher at ECS and now is a traveling trainer in Deaf education. She uses total communication while teaching the class.

Table 13: Perceptions of two Dialect Mapping groups regarding Iglesia Nazaret.

This Participant Group...	Identified Iglesia Nazaret as using this language variety...	They understand Iglesia Nazaret this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comite LESSA/ ASDICSSA	ASL+Spanish initalization	More or less well/a little	They adapt to us
Alumni of ECS	ASL	Perfect	They adapt to us/both remain the same

3.2.4   Iglesia Tabernaculo Biblico Bautista Amigos de Israel

Iglesia Tabernaculo Biblico Bautista Amigos de Israel (referred to by Deaf participants as TOBY; Friends of Israel Biblical Baptist Tabernacle) is a Baptist church which offers services interpreted from Spanish to LESSA, as well as doctrinal formation classes for Deaf people of all ages. They give sign language classes (Gonzalez 2009). Approximately 30-40 Deaf people attend here. TOBY has a sister church in Sonsonate where about 15 Deaf people attend, and approximately 20 people are training to become interpreters. Two Dialect Mapping participant groups and three Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees reported that this church uses only LESSA. One group reported that this church uses an ASL-LESSA mix.

3.2.5   Iglesia Nuevo Pacto (New Covenant Church)

Iglesia Nuevo Pacto (New Covenant Church) has offered ASL interpreted services for 13 years (Gonzalez 2009). They offer doctrine classes for Deaf attendees.

Table 14: Perceptions of two Dialect Mapping groups regarding Iglesia Nuevo Pacto.

This Participant Group...	Identified Iglesia Nuevo Pacto as using this language variety...	They understand Iglesia Nuevo Pacto this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comite LESSA/ ASDICSSA	ASL, a little LESSA	More or less well/a little	They adapt to us
Alumni of ECS	ASL	Perfect	They adapt to us/both remain the same

3.2.6   Iglesia de Sordos Effatá

Iglesia de Sordos Effatá (Deaf Church Effatá) is the only church formed completely by Deaf people (Gonzalez 2009). This church uses and teaches ASL as its main language of communication. Pastor Mario Estrada founded the church 28 years ago and continues to lead it. They meet in a small upper room of Iglesia Bautista Redentor in San Salvador. Their Sunday morning services attract 30-60 Deaf people. About 10-15 Deaf people attend Tuesday night studies, all of whom are in training to assume further responsibilities in the church. On Thursday night there is a youth Bible Study open to the general public. Many of the congregants are young adults who attended ECS at one time.

Table 15: Perceptions of two Dialect Mapping groups regarding Iglesia Effatá

This Participant Group...	Identified Iglesia Effatá as using this language variety...	They understand Iglesia Effatá this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comite LESSA/ ASDICSSA	ASL	More or less well/a little	They adapt to us
Alumni of ECS	ASL	More or less well	They adapt to us/both remain the same

Pastor Estrada lost his hearing at age 3 and grew up partially communicating orally and signing with classmates during his time attending the Centro de Audicion y Lenguaje (although it is not clear what language variety he used). He and his hearing wife began learning ASL as adults

from an ASL book. He received pastoral training in part from Southern Baptist Deaf pastors from the USA and has traveled extensively. It was partly through them that he improved his command of ASL. He also demonstrated his knowledge of LESSA.

Some people who attend the church are fluent and comfortable in ASL, while others are just beginning to learn it. Following the pastor's lead, they all state that ASL is better for learning about God. Some said that ASL lends itself to more detailed, clear expression, while others, such as Pastor Estrada, were unable to articulate exactly why it is better. They also mentioned that when attending other churches, they could not understand the interpreters or found them to be boring, and by comparison learning from a Deaf pastor is engaging and comprehensible. They attribute this clarity to the use of ASL, but it may be due to the fact that the pastor is Deaf and he teaches using cultural methods and discourse structure that is appropriate for a Deaf audience.

Effatá has a daughter church in Sonsonate each Saturday at one of the congregant's houses, with about 25 people attending. Pastor Estrada travels and teaches there. This church has a mixed reception locally. Most people we interviewed in the Sonsonate area informed us either that they were aware of or attended Effatá. One in particular told us that he holds the church in high regard because the pastor is Deaf and his teaching and preaching is so understandable. On the other hand, another person attributed the diversity of sign language in Sonsonate to Effatá spreading ASL in the region. One Dialect Mapping participant group identified the Sonsonate branch of Effatá as using only ASL.

3.2.7   *Tabernaculo Bautista San Miguel (San Miguel Baptist Tabernacle)*

Tabernaculo Bautista San Miguel (San Miguel Baptist Tabernacle) is a Baptist church with a Deaf ministry in San Miguel. This church has 10:00 a.m. services interpreted into LESCO, and some told us that they also offer interpretation for other services throughout the week. The head interpreter at this church teaches a Sunday school class for Deaf attendees after the service.

Table 16: Perceptions of one Dialect Mapping group regarding Tabernaculo Bautista San Miguel

This Participant Group...	Identified Tabernaculo Bautista San Miguel as using this language variety...	They understand Tabernaculo Bautista San Miguel this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
San Miguel Group	LESCO	Perfect	We adapt to them, Both remain the same

Each week 10-12 Deaf people attend here. Many of the Deaf people expressed to us and to each other that they did not understand the interpretation, although it is unclear whether the lack of clarity is because of the use of LESCO vocabulary or because the interpreters use Spanish grammar instead of sign language grammar. Luis Hernandez, his mother, and his wife (all Deaf), who have attended since he was a child, have various times asked the interpreters to adapt their signing style, to no avail.

3.2.8   Jehovah's Witnesses

According to Gonzalez (2009), the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) have worked with the Deaf community for more than 20 years in El Salvador. They used ASL exclusively until about 2005, when some of their interpreters began learning LESSA. The Jehovah´s Witnesses were mentioned to us by participants in every region that we visited, indicating that they have a pervasive influence in the country.

Table 17: Perceptions of five Dialect Mapping groups regarding the Jehovah's Witnesses

This Participant Group...	Identified the Jehovah's Witnesses as using this language variety...	They understand the Jehovah's Witnesses this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comité LESSA/ ASDICSSA	ASL	More or less well/a little	They adapt to us
ASS members	ASL	Not at all	Both remain the same
Alumni of ECS	ASL	Perfect	They adapt to us/both remain the same
San Miguel Group	ASL	More or less well/a little	They adapt to us/both remain the same
ASSROSA members	ASL	Perfect	Both remain the same

In addition to the Dialect Mapping groups, three Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees identified the Jehovah's Witnesses as using solely ASL. Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees in Ahuachapan and San Miguel mentioned that in addition to teaching ASL, the Jehovah's Witness churches also provide literacy classes to Deaf attendees.

There seems to be sharply divided opinion about the Jehovah's Witnesses. Many Deaf people that we interacted with have negative feelings toward them, some because of religious differences and some because of their perceived extreme efforts to spread what Deaf participants call "pure" (i.e. USA-variety) ASL. On the other hand, in Santa Ana, one of the participant groups was almost totally comprised of Jehovah's Witnesses who expressed their preference for ASL. Some Deaf people who attend JW churches incorporate ASL into their signing, while others switch to ASL altogether. Some mentioned to us that they picked up some ASL from watching the ASL DVDs that the JW church liberally distributes, whether they attend the church or not. Others told us that the DVDs are uninteresting and incomprehensible because they are in ASL. Other participants mentioned to us their perspective that Deaf people are drawn to the JW church by gifts, trips, and the fascination with ASL, but then many are turned off by the constant repetition

of the religious teaching and as a result leave the church.

3.2.9   Other Religious Groups

There are a few religious groups that were mentioned in Dialect Mapping exercises and Sociolinguistic Questionnaires about which we have less information.

In 2008, Rebeca Soundy, a young Deaf woman (and daughter of Fundación Manos Magicas president, Yanira Soundy) began attending a Catholic parish called Parroquia La Resurrección in San Salvador. As a result, a group of young people entered a program to attain the first LESSA interpreting certificates, to be awarded by Fundación Manos Magicas, in order to provide interpreting services for her. They are now trying to include other Deaf people, and create a group similar to the aforementioned Grupo Efetá (Gonzalez 2009).

There is an interpreted service at Parroquia Maria Auxiliadora, Iglesia Camino Neocatecumenal in San Salvador. This program is run by Maria Elena Mancia, the mother of a Deaf young woman who studies at Instituto Técnico Ricaldone (a preparatory/high school). Mancia is an interpreter for the group of Deaf people who congregate at their church, using ASL. She also teaches ASL to persons in that parish who are interested (Gonzalez 2009).

The San Miguel Dialect Mapping participant group identified two local Catholic Churches in San Miguel as LESSA-using. One is Reina de Paz Catedral, which a Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewee identified as using a LESSA-ASL mix and having a Deaf attendance of 8-10 people. Another is Iglesia Basilica Catedral San Miguel, which the San Miguel Dialect Mapping group identified as using LESSA.

Among other religious institutions identified by participant groups were the Mormons, which one Dialect Mapping group said use LESSA, and the Catedral de Santa Ana, identified by the Santa Ana Dialect Mapping group as using LESSA.

3.3   Education and Educational Institutions

For many years, the only educational opportunity for Deaf students in El Salvador was the

Centro de Audición y Lenguaje (Centro; the Center for Hearing and Language). Centro is a

branch of the government's Instituto Salvadoreno de Rehabilitacion de Invalidos (ISRI; the

Salvadoran Institute for Rehabilitation of the Disabled), established in 1963 by a group of parents

of Deaf children (Instituto Salvadoreño de Rehabilitación de Invalidos [ISRI] 2009, Rivas-

Gallont 2007, Giron Batres 2001) and separate from the Ministerio de Educación de El Salvador

(MinEd; the Ministry of Education of El Salvador). In 1987, the private school Escuela Cristiana

de Sordos (ECS; The Christian School for the Deaf) was founded (Crews 2008), becoming the

second educational center for Deaf students. In 1997, MinEd gradually began moving students

from the Centro into day schools for the Deaf, beginning with fourth through sixth grades

(Caceres de Olivares 2001). Throughout the country, there are 17 Deaf-only classrooms for Deaf

students within regular schools. Additionally, some schools for students with special needs have

exclusively Deaf classrooms. In 2001, the government began Educame, a program of distance

learning to reach students (both Deaf and Hearing) in places where no classroom or teacher was

available to them (Caceres de Olivares 2001).

In El Salvador, like in many other Latin American countries, most students attend school

either for the "morning session" or for the "afternoon session." Primary education is divided into

three cycles: grades 1-3 (cycle one) grades 4-6 (cycle two) and grades 7-9 (cycle three). After the

third cycle students can attend preparatory school. On September 20, 2008, for the first time, 103

Deaf students participated in a national academic placement test called "La Paes" along with their

hearing peers. Passing this test allows students to successfully transition from the second cycle

into the third cycle (Joma 2008).

There is a widespread opinion among ASL proponents that educational institutions using

ASL (that is, ECS and the mainstream private institutions where its alumni attend) produce quality graduates, while those using LESSA do not. They attribute this to the choice of language and secondarily to the lack of proper training for teachers in LESSA-using institutions. Proponents of LESSA do not share this opinion.

Emma de Walker of the ASS commented that the Salvadoran educational system does not offer 100% of the services that it should to Deaf students.

Deaf university graduates in El Salvador, using either LESSA or ASL or both, have only begun to appear on the scene since the year 2000. According to Licenciada Ada Montano (Hearing), director of Special Education for the Ministry of Education, 10 Deaf people have graduated from universities with their teaching certificates in various subjects. At the time of our survey, they were all in their twenties and are the first generation of Deaf Salvadorans to accomplish such a high degree of education.

The following sections describe specific educational systems and institutions that impact the Deaf community.

3.3.1   *Public education for Deaf students*

Public Deaf education is under the management of the Atención a Estudiantes con Nececidades Especiales (Educational Special Needs Department) of the Ministerio de Educación (Ministry of Education). Licenciada Ada Montano is the current director of the department. Under her supervision is Licenciado Francisco Ahazar (Hearing), director of Deaf education. Five Deaf-only schools (among other programs) fall under this branch of the Ministry of Education (Ministerio 2009). According to Dialect Mapping participants, these schools use LESSA primarily or exclusively.

Table 18: Perceptions of five Dialect Mapping groups regarding Deaf public schools

This Participant Group...	Identified Deaf public schools as using this language variety...	They understand Deaf public schools this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comite LESSA/ ASDICSSA	LESSA, a little ASL	More or less well	We adapt to them
ASS members	LESSA only	Perfect/more or less well	We adapt to them/both remain the same
Alumni of ECS	LESSA only	More or less well/a little	They adapt to us
San Miguel	LESSA only	Perfect	I adapt to them
Santa Ana ASSROSA	LESSA only	More or less well	I adapt to them

The Ministry of Education has adopted bilingual education as its official method of Deaf education—that students learn to understand and express themselves in LESSA and then, through LESSA, learn reading and writing Spanish as a second language. However, according to Deaf participants, the actual language modalities that teachers use in classrooms vary widely between only LESSA to only speech.

The Ministry of Education highly values Deaf culture, LESSA, and its relationship with the Deaf community. They are looking for ways to continually improve the education given to Deaf students. They have implemented special projects hiring Deaf adults as tutors and teachers in schools to serve as linguistic and cultural role models because they believe that Deaf students learn best from Deaf teachers. Another goal is to create videotaped curriculum using LESSA, in subjects such as mathematics and community skills. According to Licenciada Montano, Deaf education has been stuck in a rut, and the department works toward these goals to lift Deaf education to higher standards. The Ministry of Education is actively searching for more knowledge and training in order to improve Deaf education.

According to Licenciada Montano, an alternative approach to Deaf education is the Educame Program, adapted for Deaf students. It is a partially-independent study program in which students

study independently during the week and attend class only on Saturdays. It is essential especially in areas where no secondary education is available for Deaf students. Some programs are taught completely in sign language by Deaf teachers, such as those that take place in Santa Ana. The program is designed to allow students to gain a high school diploma. There are two levels, one for the three cycles of primary education and the other for a high school certificate. Each cycle is condensed into 18 months.

In the rest of this section I provide details about the Deaf schools that operate under the Ministry of Education.

Centro Escolar "Licda. Griselda Zeledon" (Escuela Zeledon) serves Deaf students in San Salvador and the surrounding area. Two Dialect Mapping participant groups identified this school as using only LESSA; one identified it as using LESSA with a little added ASL. Officially opened in 1997, Escuela Zeledon was the first public Deaf school in the country, although it followed Centro (officially a rehabilitation center) and ECS (a private school). The director is Licenciado Miguel Sosa (Unidad 2007). As of 2006, this school had 210 students (Joma 2006) and it now offers grades 4 through high school. It employs one Deaf teacher.

Licenciada Concepción de Palucha is the director of Centro Escolar para Sordos "Carlos Langenegger" (Escuela Langenegger) in Sonsonate. This school split off from the regional special education school as its own institution in 1999 (Caceres de Olivares 2001) and was set up on land donated by the local philanthropist Carlos Langenegger. LESSA is the language of instruction. It has 80 students between 2 and 21 years of age (Beltran 2008) and offers traditional classroom education through seventh grade, then through ninth grade utilizing the Educame program. It employs 10 specially trained teachers (Beltran 2008). There are at least two Deaf tutors and one Deaf teacher who work there part time. There is no high school in that area that could accommodate the students that graduate from Escuela Langenegger; they must go to San Salvador for high school (Crews 2008). Another option for these students upon completing the

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third cycle is to go to the Educame program in nearby Santa Ana.

Escuela de Educacion Especial "Licda. Elda de Castellon" in San Miguel (EEE) serves only Deaf students and may be changing its name soon to reflect that. It goes up to ninth grade. As far as could be determined, only one Deaf person from the San Miguel area has graduated from high school. He participated in an Educame program for hearing students with an interpreter. According to one participant, many of the teachers at EEE speak much more than they sign. As a result, the students do not understand and instead talk amongst themselves. The school employs one Deaf tutor, who is also the LESSA teacher and coach for the staff.

Escuela de Educación Especial "Elisa Alvaréz de Diaz" in Santa Ana (Escuela Santa Ana) offers Kindergarten through ninth grade. This school is reported by Dialect Mapping groups to use LESSA, with a little ASL included. It serves Deaf students in the afternoon session and students with other disabilities in the morning session. According to a teacher here, the Deaf students used to be integrated with those with other disabilities, but the local Deaf association (ASSROSA) effectively communicated to them that Deaf students are not disabled, they simply operate with a different language. As a result the school segregated the Deaf students. We did not meet or hear of any Deaf teachers or tutors here, however, one of the teachers is the wife of Plinio Castillo (Deaf), the president of ASSROSA. Some students travel from far outside the Santa Ana area in order to attend school here.

Centro Escolar para Sordos de Cojutepeque in Cuscatlán employs two Deaf teachers, one for kindergarten and one which teaches older students. This school is closely tied to APRODISCO, the association for the disabled in the region. Deaf people here are very familiar with Licenciado Francisco Ahazar (Hearing), who is now the director of Deaf education for all of El Salvador. Ahazar lives in this area and used to be the teacher of the Deaf at this school.

3.3.2   Centro de Audicion y Lenguaje (Centro)

The Educational Coordinator of Centro de Audicion y Lenguaje (Centro; Center for Hearing and Language), is Licenciada Griselda Zeledon, the founder of the ASS and a well known and widely respected Deaf Salvadoran woman. The school uses a Total Communication philosophy of education (King 1999). When it was established in 1963 (Rivas-Gallont 2007), it had an oralist philosophy, but this changed to include the use of sign language due to advocacy and continuous efforts by ASS (Giron Batres 2001). Around 1984, the school began incorporating use of ASL as a support to oralism. Later, Licenciada Zeledon became director of the educational section. Acceptance of signing as a modality grew until 1987, when they began the switch to LESSA. According to participants, this switch created an exodus of children whose parents believed that LESSA is inferior to ASL.

Table 19: Perceptions of three Dialect Mapping groups regarding the Centro

This Participant Group...	Identified Centro as using this language variety...	They understand Centro this well...	And indicate which party must adapt for the other...
Comité LESSA/ ASDICSSA	LESSA ONLY	Perfect	Both remain the same
ASS members	LESSA ONLY	Perfect	We adapt to them/both remain the same
Alumni of ECS	LESSA ONLY	More or Less Well	They adapt to us

The educational department offers instruction in Kindergarten through third grade, at which point the students transfer to the school of the parents' choice, most often the Centro Escolar Zeledon (Gonzalez 2009). The school also offers speech therapy (Giron Batres 2001). In 2009, there were 75 students. There are 10 teachers, 8 of whom are Deaf.

One of the professors at the Centro is Emma Flores de Walker, a Deaf CASS graduate who in 2009 had worked there for 11 years and is also secretary and former president of the ASS. Both Licenciada Zeledon and Flores de Walker teach LESSA classes to the parents. The teachers at the

Centro are specialized in their training and have been instructed in sign language in order to communicate with their students (Rivas-Gallont 2007).

As a Deaf woman, Licenciada Zeledon reports that she still struggles for respect with her hearing supervisors and the hearing teachers that she supervises. Many of them are still unconvinced of the merit of using sign language in Deaf education.

3.3.3   Circulos de Alfabetización

The Circulos de Alfabetización (Literacy Circles) program is a country-wide joint project of the Catholic University of El Salvador and the Ministry of Education. The coordinator of this program's country-wide focus on Deaf adults is Licenciado Julio César Duarte (Hearing). As an alternative education program, Circulos de Alfabetización works to provide literacy to Deaf persons (mostly adults) who do not have access to schools that can serve them. The first six grades of the curriculum of El Salvador are condensed into three years of instruction.

Table 20: Perceptions of two Dialect Mapping groups regarding Circulos de Alfabetización

This Participant Group...	Identified Circulos de Alfabetización as using this language variety...	They understand Circulos de Alfabetización this well...	And indicated which party must adapt for the other...
Comité LESSA/ ASDICSSA	LESSA ONLY	Perfect	Both remain the same
ASS members	LESSA ONLY	Perfect	Both remain the same, We adapt to them

As of July 2009, according to Duarte, there were 21 Literacy Circles for the Deaf serving 200 people in communities throughout the country. Six of these are in San Salvador. A bilingual method is used, according to Duarte: "That is, they first learn the basic concepts in their first language, Salvadoran Sign Language, and when they understand it in sign language we start to practice through writing" (Palma 2007).

3.3.4   *Escuela Cristiana para Sordos (ECS)*

Escuela Cristiana para Sordos (ECS; the Christian School for the Deaf) is the only Christian school exclusively for Deaf students. Ana Silva founded ECS as a ministry of an evangelical church in San Salvador in 1987 with four teachers and seven students. Licenciada Carmen de Herrera (Hearing) began working there in 1991 and has been the director since 2006. Now the school serves 80 children and young adults, providing primary education for them and then advocating for them as they receive education in higher grades. The founder states that the primary goal of the school is to share their faith with the Deaf community.

Their language of pedagogy is Signed Exact Spanish (SES; referred to by most Deaf participants as Altered ASL) with vocabulary adapted from ASL as part of a Total Communication philosophy. As the founder explained, at the time of the school's inception, there were no resources showing the availability of another sign language. Now, the goal is for instructors to use SES as communicative language models, so that the students will acquire a good base for learning to read and write Spanish. At the same time, the students are allowed to use among themselves whatever communicative style with which they feel most comfortable. A Deaf teacher at the school expressed that she would love to have material both in ASL and LESSA to use in educating her students. In 2008, a short-term evangelical group from the USA reported that they were able to communicate easily with the students from this school in ASL (Crews 2008).

Table 21: Perceptions of three Dialect Mapping groups regarding Escuela Cristiana para Sordos

This Participant Group...	Identified ECS as using this language variety...	They understand ECS this well...	And identified which party must adapt for the other...
Comite LESSA/ ASDICSSA	ASL and Spanish Initialization	More or less well/little	They adapt to us
ASS members	ASL and CVG	More or less well/a little, not at all	We adapt to them
Alumni of ECS	ASL	Perfect	They adapt to us/both remain the same.

ECS provides an early intervention program starting at one month of age until four years old, then three years of preschool/kindergarten instruction after which students attend grades 1-6. Upon completion of primary school, there are three tracks for ongoing education that children may follow depending on their aptitude and performance. Students that fall in the lower category attend a life skills program at ECS. This is also open to Deaf children who had no opportunity to attend school previously. Those who fall into the middle category can participate in the Educame program, offered on Saturdays through ECS in the school's ASL variety. Students in the higher category are usually mainstreamed (with interpreters) into one of two affiliated private Christian high schools: Liceo Getsemani or Colegio Evangélico Centroamericano (Crews 2008). Occasionally students are transferred to another Deaf school or are mainstreamed into another institution with interpreters.

Since there is no university course for Deaf education in El Salvador, ECS staff have developed their own training and curriculum. They continue to revise their curriculum and teacher training process. One of their top goals is to teach students to think critically. Six teachers at the school are former students. Many children at the school cannot afford to pay the tuition, so they are sponsored.

Several people (mostly hearing) told us that the use of ASL is the key to ECS' success in

preparing their students for continuing education and eventually a university education. However, there is reason to believe that other factors are important to ECS' success. ECS begins education in sign language from birth, trains parents of Deaf children in sign language and pedagogy, has a strict training program and curriculum for teachers to follow, and advocates for their students as they mainstream through secondary and preparatory school, with interpreters paid for by the efforts of a strong parent advocate group. These factors, rather than the use of ASL, are more likely responsible for the high quality of education that ECS provides.

3.3.5   Integrated or Mainstream Programs

There are several schools which integrate Deaf students into hearing classrooms. At Instituto Técnico Ricaldone (high/prep school), Deaf students are "integrated and included" into hearing classrooms with interpreters (Soundy 2008). This school has modified their infrastructure for the inclusion of Deaf students. For example, all classrooms and leisure areas have installed lights that flash when the bells ring (Gonzalez 2008a). Several Deaf students graduated from here in 2008, to continue on to college (Soundy 2008). Ricaldone has been mentioned in several editions of Manos Magicas Magazine because its Deaf students excel in their educational performance and technological innovations. One graduate, Juan Villalobos, won the national Inventors and Innovators prize for his solar energy invention in 2007 (Carbonero 2007). This school was identified by a Dialect Mapping participant group as using ASL only.

After graduating from ECS, some students are integrated into Liceo Getsemani (high/prep school) with interpreters (Inclusión Interamericana 2001). It is associated with IBM (McAndrew 2009). Several Deaf students graduated from here in 2008, to continue on to college (Fundacion 2008). Others are integrated into Colegio Evangélico Centroamericano (preparatory school) with interpreters (Inclusión Interamericana 2001). These schools were identified by one participant group as using ASL only.

The Colegio Español Padre Arrupe (preparatory school) offered classes teaching the Spanish language (reading and writing) to Deaf youth in 2003-2004. They also offered a panel presentation in 2006 featuring successful Deaf professional women who were aided by that program (Soundy 2008). This school was identified by a Dialect Mapping participant group as using ASL only.

In La Libertad, the private Catholic school Centro Escolar Católica Imaculada Concepción (Flores, personal communication) has a classroom of Deaf students, founded by two hearing CASS graduates in sign language interpretation. One of them is Danis Rodriguez, author of the book Sordera: Comunicación y Educación (Deafness: Communication and Education). As of 2005, Grisel Flores, president of ASDICSSA and a CASS program graduate, teaches at La Libertad (Cooperative 2005). One Dialect Mapping participant group reports this school to use LESSA with some ASL added, while another reports that the school uses LESSA with a little CVG added.

Four of the Deaf adults that we met graduated from three years of study at Universidad Francisco Gavidia without the aid of interpreters. Only about four universities in El Salvador accept Deaf students, and only two currently provide interpretation at the university's cost: The Universidad de El Salvador (UES) since 2005 (Gonzalez 2008a) and the Universidad Don Bosco since 2000 (Ventas 2004). The Universidad Evangelica de El Salvador has stated their intention to provide interpreters for their Deaf students soon as part of an initiative toward inclusion of disabled students (Gonzalez 2008a). UES was identified by a Dialect Mapping participant group as using only LESSA. The other universities were identified as using only ASL.

3.4   Conclusion

Overall, there appear to be more institutions serving the LESSA-using community than the ASL or LESCO-using community. The public school system promotes the use of LESSA

exclusively, while most private education uses ASL.

CHAPTER 4

DEAF CULTURE, IDENTITY, AND LANGUAGE IN EL SALVADOR

This chapter discusses factors that either affect or reflect Deaf culture, language, and identity in El Salvador. Conclusions were drawn largely from information gathered through self-reporting or participatory group analyses by the Salvadoran Community, but information was also drawn from observations made by my colleague Epley and me, and from results of Recorded Text Testing. I make an effort, however, to base my presentation of these factors on the perspectives of Deaf Salvadorans.

4.1 Identity and Culture of Deaf Salvadorans

Many times while in El Salvador, whether in formal or informal conversation, Deaf participants mentioned to us the importance of identity. For LESSA-using Deaf Salvadorans, a healthy identity is inextricably linked to nationality, embracing Deaf culture, and the choice to sign LESSA rather than another sign language. They perceive Deaf Salvadorans who do not sign LESSA as having an unhealthy identity and low self-esteem. They see this as both a result and perpetuating cause of oppression of the Deaf community. Such clearly defined perceptions reflect a strong positive identity as Deaf people, which we saw evidenced in other aspects of Deaf culture.

Indeed, for this report, the ASS formally asked us to limit the trust we placed in information given to us by hearing people and highlight the information given to us by Deaf Salvadorans, because, in their view, they have a right to claim and describe their identity, while outsiders (those

who are either not Deaf or not Salvadoran) do not. ASL-using Deaf Salvadorans did not make similar comments regarding their identity as Deaf Salvadorans, nor did they make comments regarding the identity of Deaf LESSA-users.

While in El Salvador, we met several people who have generational Deafness in their family--one of them for three generations. We also met a surprisingly large number of Deaf people who have Deaf siblings and Deaf spouses or significant others. Several Deaf people mentioned to us that they would like to have completely Deaf families and that they admire famous families in the USA in which all members are Deaf.

In the last week of September each year, El Salvador celebrates the National Week of the Deaf. Each region holds its own celebration (McAndrew 2009). The celebrations occur on the last Sunday of the month (Soundy 2008). In 2003, the National Council for Culture and Art (CON-CULTURA) declared LESSA to be a national heritage of El Salvador (Fundación 2008). In November 2008, FMM and CON-CULTURA held the third annual cultural colloquium of the Deaf community in the National Museum of Anthropology, with the topic: "Higher Education for the Deaf: Goals and Challenges." Various speakers, special guests, and a panel presented from both ASL and LESSA-using Deaf communities.

The availability of the internet increases communication among Deaf people all over the world. Contributions from Deaf Salvadorans to international conversations can be found on blogs, vlogs, and YouTube videos. Many go to internet cafes and use computers and webcams there to communicate. One participant mentioned that Deaf people are more likely to use DVD players to watch movies with subtitles/captions than they are to watch television, which lacks captioning. About half of the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees said that Deaf people in El Salvador have DVD players; their estimates of how many range from 25-65%. All but one said that Deaf people do not have computers in their homes; the interviewee who reported that they do estimates that 30-50% of Deaf Salvadorans do own a computer. This technology is mostly in the hands of

the younger generation.

It is clear from this information that many Deaf Salvadorans not only have a well-formed concept of language, culture, and identity, but that they maintain that in the midst of accessible connection with the outside world. The Salvadoran Deaf community is cohesive and organized for initiatives and events such as those mentioned above.

4.1.1   Perceptions of City Prominence and Other Social Arenas

When asked to identify the best city in El Salvador to live in, all nine Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees put San Salvador at the top of their list. San Miguel appeared as second-best six times, and Santa Ana and La Libertad appeared as second-best four times each. When asked to identify the worst place for Deaf people to live in, there were a wide variety of answers, but Sonsonate was put at the top five times. Many participants asked to remove some the cities from their list of options because they had had no opportunity to observe how Deaf people live in those cities.

In El Salvador, there are many places where Deaf people gather, including for association meetings and events, in parks, malls, city centers, homes, churches, and Circulos de Alfabetizacion. More than one person told us that it was impossible to list them all. In areas where there is no active Deaf association, people tend to meet more informally in houses. Outside of the San Salvador and Santa Ana areas, we were told by six participants "there are no Deaf leaders here." This reflects that there is an absence of a Deaf association or its influence, thus the informal meetings in houses instead of more formal meetings in predetermined, public places.

Following are specific meeting places as identified by Dialect Mapping participant groups. In the San Salvador Metro Area, there are outside parks, plazas, and malls where Deaf people from both LESSA- and ASL-using communities gather to socialize:

1.   Centro de San Salvador

2. Plaza Morazan

3. Plaza Mundo

4. Metrocentro

5. Galeria

Plaza España was identified as an outside park where those who use CVG come to socialize.

In San Miguel, the participant group identified the following as situations in which they use LESSA.

1. Metrocentro Mall

2. Tapa Mall

3. Deaf social events in homes and parks

It is not uncommon for Central American Deaf people to travel within the region. When asked if Deaf people from different regions of El Salvador interact with each other, most Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees responded yes. Deaf people travel to meet people from other regions, to make friends or find significant others. They gather from different regions for large celebrations or events. Most Deaf interviewees from San Salvador commented that Deaf Salvadorans interact with Deaf people from other countries, such as the USA, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras. The majority of interviewees outside the San Salvador metro area, however, responded that Deaf people in their areas do not interact with those from other countries.

While community networking in the San Salvador area is largely organized by associations (or other institutions), networking outside of San Salvador is more spur-of-the-moment and depends more on familiarity. Deaf people outside of the capital region are also on a whole more isolated (or at peace, depending on the perspective) from large social networks; they have less contact with other Deaf people from around their country or from around other Central American countries.

4.1.2   Social Justice and the Media

Social injustices suffered by the Deaf community have been increasingly documented in the last 10 years. For a Deaf person, accessing higher education with interpretation provided by government funds has required a large amount of paperwork and red tape. Examples are given about Deaf people who have been misunderstood and sometimes physically abused in their workplaces (Dueñas 2008). For example, in October 2005, a criminal court had violated a Deaf man's right of defense by failing to provide a sign language interpreter during judicial proceedings (U.S. Department of State, 2007). In 2003, a young Deaf man walking home from school was arrested, searched, and beaten by the police, all before they realized he had not responded to their calls because he was Deaf (Urquilla 2003). In Sonsonate, Escuela Langenegger states that the Deaf community (which they estimate at 6% of the general population) cannot attend school due to economic difficulties. Many Deaf people drive vehicles illegally in the country because they are not allowed a license (Caceres de Olivares 2001).

There is a positive aspect in this trend of documentation, however: it appears in the regular periodicals of El Salvador. National newspapers, magazines, and websites have published information supporting the rights, language, and culture of the Salvadoran Deaf community with increasing regularity. They speak out against these injustices and promote equal access to education, with headlines such as "Deafmutes Ask for Respect" (Urquilla 2003) and "Deaf (people): A hidden potential" (Caceres de Olivares 2001). In 2008 the media lamented a bureaucratic predicament that prevented adequate funding from reaching the school for the Deaf in Sonsonate (Beltran 2008). The public media discusses the heated debate between integration and schools for the Deaf, between the use of ASL and LESSA in education, and the use of appropriate terms with which to refer to the Deaf community. There is no doubt that the media of El Salvador has become an ally of the Deaf community's struggle for social justice by putting them in the spotlight.

FMM's monthly online e-zine Manos Magicas La Revista unabashedly calls for governmental reform affecting the Deaf community. Among other things, they have published a list of rights as expressed by the Deaf children of El Salvador. It includes the right to quality education, equal treatment and access, interpreters, and respect for their language and culture (Fundación Manos Magicas n.d.).

The magazine Manos Magicas regularly includes detailed information directed toward educating the families of Deaf children. Topics include: the importance of quality interpretation, appropriate conduct for interpreters, higher educational opportunities for Deaf students, dispelling the myth that exposing Deaf babies to sign language is detrimental, support for Deaf professional educators who run for office (to serve for El Salvador's national Board of Education), and more.

The fact that perspectives of Deaf Salvadorans and information about deafness and Deaf Salvadoran culture and human rights is available in print and digital media indicates two possible trends. First, the Deaf community may be increasing in their ability to mobilize and work on behalf of their own community. Secondly, the population of El Salvador as a whole may be growing in their understanding of and respect for the nature of Deaf culture and Deaf persons. As mentioned in the above section, however, large-scale social networking, and therefore the passing of information through the media, is much more apparent in the San Salvador metro area than in other regions of El Salvador.

4.2   Sign Language Use and Attitudes

There are two main sign languages in use in the Deaf community in El Salvador: Salvadoran Sign Language (LESSA) and local dialects of American Sign Language (ASL). These sign languages are in use by various religious groups, educational institutions, and interpreting services. A third sign language used in the eastern region, particularly in San Miguel, is Costa Rican Sign Language (LESCO). Also highly reported is the use of what Deaf Salvadorans call

CVG, which refers to gesture-based communication, international or contact sign situations, and home sign. Participants informally estimate that the percentage of LESSA-using Salvadorans ranges from 50% to 75% of the entire Deaf population of El Salvador.

Several Deaf community leaders explained that the western region has historically had a strong reputation for using what they refer to as unaltered ASL (which they use to mean USA-variety ASL), especially in the city of Santa Ana, although LESSA is also in use there. One participant said of the ASL used in the western region, "they prefer it that way"; and in fact, some participants in the western region did express to us directly their preference for ASL. However, the ASSROSA and many others in that region use and understand LESSA, and many do not understand ASL. As well, two Dialect Mapping participant groups reported that the Santa Ana region uses ASL exclusively, whereas two also reported that the Deaf school in Santa Ana uses LESSA exclusively.

Table 22: Perceptions of three Dialect Mapping groups regarding the Santa Ana region and school

Participant Group	Identified Language Use	Identified Comprehension	Identified Adaptation
Comite LESSA/ ASDICSSA	*Region:* ASL	*Region:* More or less well, a little	*Region:* They adapt to us
Alumni of ECS	*School*: LESSA only	*School*: More or less well	*School*: They adapt to us
Santa Ana ASSROSA	*Region*: ASL. *School*: LESSA only	*Region*: Perfect/More or Less Well. *School*: More or less Well	*Region*: Both remain the same. *School*: I adapt to them

In the central region (including San Salvador) both LESSA and ASL are present, with some borrowed signs from Guatemala and other countries. ASL in the central region is modified in order to strongly reflect Spanish structure. For example, initialized handshapes have been added to reflect the Spanish words for the signs. This means that for some ASL signs, the conventional handshape has been replaced with the handshape for the letter of the Spanish word which

corresponds to the sign. For example, the handshape for the letter "T" is used for TIA 'aunt' and TIO 'uncle' in lieu of the letters "A" and "U" used for these signs in standard ASL in the USA.

In the eastern region, especially in the city of San Miguel, most people use a mix of LESSA and LESCO. According to San Miguel participants during the Dialect Mapping exercise, the only institution currently utilizing LESCO in the region is Tabernaculo Bautista San Miguel (Baptist Tabernacle of San Miguel; TBSM) in the city of San Miguel. The interpretation at this church is grammatically very close to Spanish, and the interpreter used some signs which apparently had completely different meanings than the LESSA in San Salvador. Participants from that region self-identify as signers of LESSA, except for two who, in passing conversation, identified themselves as users of LESCO.

Table 23: Perceptions of three Dialect Mapping groups regarding the San Miguel region and school

Participant Group	Identified Language Use	Identified Comprehension	Identified Adaptation
Comite LESSA/ ASDICSSA	*Region:* LESCO	*Region:* More or less well, not at all	*Region:* Both remain the same
ASS members	*Region:* CVG/Gesture/ Native Signs	*Region:* Perfect, More or less well	*Region:* We adapt to them, they adapt to us
Alumni of ECS	*School*: LESSA only	*School*: A little	*School*: They adapt to us
San Miguel	*Region:* LESSA only	*Region:* More or less well/ Perfect	*Region:* We adapt to them

As can be seen by the various reports of language use in the eastern and western regions, LESSA in those areas is mixed with other sign languages, but the Deaf schools in both utilize LESSA exclusively. This is significant because it supports the idea that LESSA may be strong enough to withstand the short-lived influence of other sign languages.

According to a Deaf community leader, "people in outlying areas will often use a large combination of signs and gesture, for example 70% LESSA, 15% ASL, 5% other sign language, and 10% gesture (CVG)." As one Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewee stated: "There is a

wide variety of sign competence and fluency levels among the Deaf community." Many participants said that they do not use "pure" LESSA. Whatever the standard of "purity" is, the perception of mixing between sign systems is common. Some Deaf leaders that we interviewed passionately support the use of LESSA, but admit that they themselves do not sign "pure" LESSA.

When meeting Deaf people in various social arenas around the country, we noticed a large variety of signing styles. Some use more LESSA vocabulary and some use more ASL vocabulary. Some of those who used more LESSA vocabulary code-switched to a variety more inclusive of ASL vocabulary while communicating with us. We observed occasions where LESSA signers adapted in order to communicate with ASL signers, and also where the opposite occurred. For example, one Deaf person incorporated both ASL and LESSA signs into his conversation, experiencing confusion while trying to discern which signs came from one language or the other. At the Deaf-led church Efatá, the pastor and his congregants use ASL signs and advocate for the exclusive use of ASL, but LESSA signs are also incorporated.

There are as many reports of ASL users switching to LESSA to communicate as the other way around. This indicates a high degree of at least semi-functional bilingualism and adaptability in the community. Of course, it does not mean that everyone can understand both languages. The dialect maps support the claim that the LESSA-using population is twice as large as the ASL-using population, and that the LESCO-using population is even smaller. Small but significant as well is the population of those who use CVG.

When asked if sign language use is the same throughout the country, all but one Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewee responded no. Among those who responded no, all mentioned signing variety, such as LESSA, ASL, LESCO, and CVG. The interviewee who responded yes explained that "Everyone's signing is equal" which may well have been a statement of value respecting everyone's individual language choice. Some interviewees said El

Salvador's sign language use is not similar to other countries, while others noted similarities with Guatemala, Honduras, and the USA.

For the Domains of Language Use tool, participant groups were asked to describe their personal domains of language use. All these groups indicated using LESSA as a primary communication style for many daily tasks. Written Spanish also ranked high in use, particularly with text messaging and computer use. ASL and CVG were indicated to be secondary and less often used. In general, LESSA appears to occupy primary place in most identified domains. This shows strong evidence for the prominence of LESSA over ASL in the domains of daily life, at least in the minds of the people who participated in this tool. Since text messaging and using computers was mentioned by all groups except for one, the use of written Spanish is a prominent communication style when relying on electronic communication.

In the Dialect Mapping tool, groups described language use according to geography and social networking. Combining the information from these two tools, I compiled a chart of the groups that mentioned each communication style. This provides a general picture of the diversity of communication styles and how prominently these factor into the lives of the Deaf participants. Tables 24 and 25 do not address the groups' analyses of how often they use the communication styles (for Domains of Language Use) or which networks the groups reported as using these communication styles (for Dialect Mapping). It simply follows the assumption that if a group sees or experiences a communication style as prominent, they will mention it in their analysis.

Tables 24 and 25 show the participant groups (by group number) that went through the Dialect Mapping or Domains of Language Use tools and the communication styles that each documented. The right-most column shows the tally of how many times each language/communication style was mentioned.

Table 24: Communication styles documented by five Dialect Mapping groups

Communication Styles	1	3	6	7	8	Altogether
LESSA	√	√	√	√	√	5
ASL	√	√	√	√	√	5
CVG	√	√	√			3
LESSA-ASL mix	√		√		√	3
Invented/Home Signs	√			√		2
LESCO	√			√		2
ASL, Spanish initialization	√					1

Table 25: Communication styles documented by seven Domains of Language Use groups

Communication Styles	1b	4	5	9a	9b	9c	9d	Altogether
LESSA	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	7
Spanish	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	7
ASL	√			√	√	√	√	5
CVG	√		√	√		√	√	5
LESSA-ASL mix					√		√	2
Invented/Home Signs					√	√		2
English	√				√	√		2
Drawing				√			√	2
LESCO					√			1
Speaking					√			1
Simplified LESSA	√							1
Central American Mix					√			1
Total Communication					√			1
ASL-CVG mix	√							1

As tables 24 and 25 show, LESSA is identified by all groups, with ASL close behind as identified by 10 out of 12 groups. CVG follows, mentioned by 8 groups, and Spanish is mentioned by 7 groups (all of the Domains of Language Use groups). This indicates that LESSA is the language which the groups identify as most widely used, with that claim decreasing in

strength for each subsequent language. Unexpectedly, although CVG is not a language, it ranks third as a communication style of the Salvadoran Deaf community. Also worth note is that LESCO, though reported to be in high use in the eastern part of the country, is only mentioned by three groups, which suggests that it may not actually be used as much as some people think.

Dialect Mapping groups shared with us their understanding of language use in regions we were not able to visit. One group identified Metapan as using an ASL-LESSA mix. Chaletanango was identified by one participant group as using LESSA and CVG/native sign. The cities of Santo Tomas, Sonsonate, and La Paz were all identified by one group each as using CVG/native sign. Usulutan was identified by the San Miguel group as using LESSA, and by a San Salvador group as using CVG or native signs. La Union was identified by the San Miguel group as using "nothing" (which may put it in the same category as CVG/native signs) and by a San Salvador group as using CVG/native signs. Morazan was mentioned by two participant groups; one as using "nothing" and the other as using LESSA. Atquizaya was mentioned by one group as using LESSA.

4.2.1   *ASL Comprehension*

One of the tools used in research was the Recorded Text Testing procedure. The goal of using this tool was to see how much Deaf Salvadorans could understand and reproduce materials in USA-variety ASL. Ten teams of two people each from various regions participated in the Recorded Text Testing. The test used an ASL story performed by an American Deaf signer. The ages of Recorded Text Testing participants range from 19 to 28. From our observations, this is not only a wide representation of the ages of signing and active Deaf people but according to our background research, also a significant representation of the general population of El Salvador.

Table 26: ASL Intelligibility Scores

Participant #	City	Percentage of comprehension
3	San Salvador	56%
14	San Salvador	64%
24	San Salvador	51%
52	San Salvador	67%
18	Sonsonate	40%
58	Ahuachapan	51%
62	Usulutan	49%
67	Santa Ana	58%
42	Cojutepeque	44%
70	San Miguel	42%

The highest score is 67%. The lowest is 40%. The range is 27%. The average (mean) score is 52%. The average for the scores of San Salvador participants is 59%. The average for scores of participants outside of San Salvador area is 48%. This may point to a higher comprehension of ASL in the metro San Salvador area. The highest score was produced by a participant who lived in the USA and attended a Deaf school there for a year. These scores compare to a mean score of 90% (range 9%, standard deviation 4%) in the control group of native signers of USA-variety ASL.

Because ASL has high prestige and presence in El Salvador, whatever ability a person has to reproduce an ASL text from the US could be due to the text's similarity to the local sign variety, or due to some bilingualism, or both. Whatever the cause, the Recorded Text Testing results indicate that ASL video materials from the USA could not be used effectively in the general Deaf population of El Salvador.[7]

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[7] In face to face communication, Deaf people from different countries often have remarkable success communicating with each other cross-linguistically. In fact, this is what we found when we traveled to El Salvador. This is due in part to each person's communicative adaptation for the other and the face-to-face discourse style which Deaf people often employ, which includes constant listener response, checking for understanding, and often even interrupting to ask for clarification.

4.2.2   Perceptions of the history and relative value of signed languages in El Salvador

There are widely diverse perceptions about how the signed languages in El Salvador were introduced to the community, how they have impacted the Deaf community, and their relative prestige. Five participant groups mapped out comparisons of the value of using ASL versus using LESSA for language development, using the Cause and Effect Tree tool. While several statements can be summarized to say: "LESSA was made up. ASL is error free and has no influence of bad language. It is better than LESSA," opposing statements about ASL can be summarized to say: "ASL was made up and Deaf people do not want to go to the ASL school." This shows that there are sharply opposing beliefs surrounding the use of LESSA versus ASL in El Salvador, but both sides make a distinction between a "legitimate" language and one that was just "made up."

Several Deaf people related to us that in the past ASL was the primary sign language used among the Deaf community or taught in schools. Also, several people we met who were over forty seemed to use primarily ASL signs. One Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewee stated: "Few Deaf people know ASL, and they're older. The younger generation knows LESSA." A hearing teacher of the Deaf mentioned that when he began teaching Deaf students in Cojutepeque, he corrected their ASL and taught them to replace it with LESSA, which he had learned from the ASS. ASL used to be taught for a short period at the Centro, El Salvador's oldest educational institution for the Deaf. This school began using ASL signs in order to support oral education around 1984. Its acceptance as a modality grew until 1987, when the school began transitioning to LESSA. Ana Silvia founded Escuela Cristiana para Sordos (1987) using Spanish-adapted ASL because, according to her perception at the time, there was nothing else available.

In contrast to the comments above, there is evidence that points to the existence of LESSA predating the use of ASL in education. All of the people from generational Deaf families that we met indicate that they use LESSA. One Deaf participant with Deaf siblings expressed that she has seen the use of ASL grow more quickly since the past, when it was rarely used. While there are

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some who believe that LESSA was "made up" in the early '80s in response to the desire for a

uniquely Salvadoran sign language, Licenciada Zeledon explained the decision of the newly

formed ASS to switch to official recognition and use of LESSA at that time. As educational

director at the Centro and founder of ASS, she realized in the early '80s that Deaf adults utilized a

sign language completely distinct from ASL. In cooperation, the Centro and the ASS documented

the sign language in the first LESSA dictionary (published in 1996).

One of the prominent sources of ASL influence identified by many participants in El

Salvador is the Cooperative Associations of States for Scholarships (CASS) program. CASS is a

USA government funded program in which "disabled" young people from various Central

American countries are selected to study for two years at a college in the USA. Most candidates

are Deaf and most study computer programming and return to their respective communities

knowing ASL. According to Licenciada Zeledon, this is the main means by which ASL has spread

in El Salvador. During research, we identified about 15 CASS graduates. Many Deaf Salvadorans

told us that some CASS graduates come back to El Salvador having lost their identity, and

therefore their language, to the USA. Along with preferring all things American, they have turned

to using ASL instead of LESSA.

Additional sources of ASL influence throughout the country are the Jehovah's Witnesses and

Escuela Cristiana para Sordos. Several Deaf people emphasized to us that the Jehovah's

Witnesses liberally hand out DVDs with material signed in ASL. Others mentioned to us that they

learned ASL signs from this source. In each place we visited, we also met Salvadoran Deaf

people who are affiliated with them. ECS teaches Salvadoran-variety ASL to its students, and

most Deaf people we met in the San Salvador area were graduates of ECS.

Comments by participants lead us to believe that LESCO has had a long-standing influence

in the eastern region. It is reported by many participants to have been transplanted to El Salvador

by missionaries from Costa Rica. Influence from LESSA began to affect the signing of the San

Miguel Deaf community only recently, in part due to the efforts of Luis Balmore, a leader in the San Miguel Deaf community, who was raised and educated in San Miguel but learned LESSA during his time in San Salvador. He now utilizes it while teaching literacy classes to Deaf adults and teaching LESSA to hearing people, such as teachers at the local Deaf school.

These perceptions of the history of language influence and change are helpful as we make hypotheses about language shift; they also allow us to examine the community's perception of the past as well as the present and future of their language situation. Although there are opposing histories recounted, all of them may be part of the whole story. In part, this helps explain the dynamics of language attitudes and language use among the Deaf community today.

4.2.3   Attitudes: LESSA, ASL, and LESCO

This section discusses the various attitudes and opinions of the Salvadoran Deaf community regarding which sign languages should be used in their country, and how they should be used.

When asked if they feel embarrassed signing in public, Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees gave a mixture of responses. When tallied, there were seven negative comments and four positive comments, but the majority of interviewees mentioned that those who feel confident signing in public outnumber those who feel embarrassed or afraid. In Usulutan, one interviewee remarked, "Here we sign. That's much better, because signing is our way of life. Using the hands to sign, we learn better. With hearing people [i.e. using spoken Spanish], it would be harder and impossible." Both Deaf associations in El Salvador have stated that it is a priority to them to preserve and vitalize LESSA and they are taking steps to do so (Gonzalez 2008b).

Users of LESSA let us know that they have sadly noticed how quickly ASL can displace other, native sign languages. One participant gave the example of Costa Rica, where, in a few generations ASL vocabulary items displaced many native Costa Rican signs.[8] Another participant

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[8]   This generational language shift is documented by Woodward (1991) and is also reported by Christian Ramirez, a Deaf linguist from Costa Rica (personal communication).

stated that the spreading of ASL in El Salvador is due to "hearing people meddling in Deaf culture." Lisseth Amaya, a Deaf Salvadoran professor, believes that the national sign language should be developed in order to meet the growing expressive needs of the Deaf community, rather than simply replaced with ASL (Amaya 2009). In 2004, the then-president of the ASS expressed that ASL is inappropriate because it lacks "… many of the native Salvadoran concepts. Those who define the foreign version when compared to the national sign language allege that it is incoherent, crude, and incomplete" (Ventas 2004).

From the opposite perspective, ECS credits ASL in education as the key to the success of Deaf children ("Inclusion" 2001), because it includes so much vocabulary that LESSA is lacking (Ventas 2004). The Efata Deaf congregation supports the pastor's decision to use primarily ASL in services because in their perception, LESSA is underdeveloped and lacks terminology to describe key concepts. One of his congregants said, "There's no way to express profound concepts in LESSA. ASL is much better."

When meeting with different groups of Deaf people in the capital, we were struck by the passionate differences of opinion between associations, and between users of the two different sign languages. However, on a number of occasions we observed Deaf people from differing groups participating in activities together in a polite and friendly way.

During the Bible Translation Exploration Workshop, the four participant groups compared the causes and effects of pursuing a Bible translation effort (and as an extension, other language development projects) in LESSA versus doing so in ASL. From those conversations came some clear--and some unexpected--statements of attitudes regarding ASL and LESSA. Summaries of the values most often stated are shown below. Some statements were identified by the participants as misconceptions, or could be identified from other information that they do not personally hold those opinions. For other comments, it is ambiguous whether the value stated is held by the participants for themselves, or whether they are reporting the misconceptions of other people (the

surrounding hearing community, perhaps). Either is possible, especially since participants came

from diverse backgrounds. Either way, the message is clear that these attitudes exist. These

attitudes were identified as the strongest attitudes because the same value was represented with

negative attitudes toward one language and positive toward the other.

Table 27: Value statements that are positive toward LESSA and negative toward ASL.

Positive statements about LESSA	Comparative negative statements about ASL
LESSA is a visual language with conceptual, iconic grammar.	ASL does not lend itself to visual grammatical expression and is initialized in Spanish.
LESSA is our original, natural expression. LESSA is part of our heritage, identity, and culture, and we want to rescue/establish it.	There are negative feelings toward ASL; it is perceived as foreign and a linguistic and cultural threat.
LESSA is most widely understood, more expressive and visually grammatical. Deaf people, their families, and schools use LESSA.	People do not know or communicate in ASL.

Table 28: Negative statements about LESSA and their positive counterparts about ASL

Negative statements about LESSA	Comparative positive statements about ASL
Some people are ashamed of LESSA, ignorant about LESSA, or disrespect it as a language.	ASL already has the capacity to incorporate the Bible. It would be perfect/easy. ASL has more prestige; it is beautiful and easy to learn.
LESSA is seen as not being up to par with academics. LESSA is seen as lacking in these areas.	ASL has more/higher quality vocabulary and expressive capacity for higher concepts.
LESSA is weak, informal, unsightly, and in danger of being overrun by ASL.	People see ASL as having beauty and high status.
LESSA does not have published material.	ASL has resources and documentation including the Bible[9]; LESSA has none.
Few opportunities using LESSA exist, and for those in rural areas, LESSA is inaccessible.	ASL is widespread on the internet. It is practically an international language. It would increase communication between El Salvador and the USA; easy access for ASL users.

The positive statements in the first chart show that the participants view LESSA as much

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[9]   They were probably referring to the following ASL Bible translation project through Deaf Missions: http://www.deafmissions.com/?PageID=29

more native Salvadoran than ASL, clearer than ASL, and more widely understood within El Salvador than ASL. These statements are strong, but it is unclear if these are opinions held by the participants themselves or are being reported as other peoples' opinions. The statements in the second chart suggest that ASL is superior to LESSA because it is more prestigious, beautiful, educated, well-documented, has a more developed vocabulary, and is internationally widespread. The presentation of these two opposing views paints a clear picture of the tense attitudes between promoters of LESSA and promoters of ASL.

When asked if they thought that sign language should be standardized throughout the country, six Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees responded yes and two responded no. Of those who responded yes, only one expressed a desire for everyone to sign ASL. Others said that standardization would make it easier to communicate. Those who responded no explained that they appreciated the native diversity of dialect. Four added that regardless of their own personal preference, they felt a higher obligation to respect others' language choices. A Deaf leader compared the beauty of native sign language diversity with diversity of dialect in Spanish. In her opinion, this variation deserves respect as part of the national heritage of El Salvador, but this does not apply to transplanted languages such as ASL and LESCO. In San Miguel, where LESCO preceded LESSA, comments by participants there showed negative feelings toward LESCO and positive identification with LESSA, which would help explain the growth in use of LESSA there.

4.2.4   Language Use and Perceptions of and by Hearing People

This section discusses hearing people who interact with the Salvadoran Deaf community and how they view and use sign languages. It also discusses the state of interpreters in the Deaf community.

We met many hearing people involved in the Deaf community who identified their signing as ASL. One hearing signer even expressed to us his preference for ASL because it better

facilitates self-expression. Salvadoran-variety ASL is taught to hearing teachers and interpreters by the network of people supporting the work of ECS. It is possible that the use of this ASL influences how hearing people in El Salvador view the signing of Deaf people in the USA. It also appears that this ASL variety has a powerful influence on the language choice and use of ECS alumni.

We did not meet any adult children of Deaf parents (CODAS). A participant in Usulutan mentioned that her hearing teenage son does not sign and resists learning. A participant in San Miguel expressed his frustration that children of Deaf people tend to grow up using gesture and not signing well.

Three times, we heard the following opinion expressed among hearing people: "LESSA is not developed enough for education/expression'" According to the report of one Deaf participant, this was the consensus of parents who, in the early 1980s, pulled their children out of Centro and enrolled them in ECS when it first opened. This was a reaction to the new policy at the Centro which switched from using ASL to using LESSA. The newly-available LESSA dictionary at that time had only 500 terms; parents of Deaf children apparently took this to indicate that LESSA only had 500 signs, as opposed to the thousands of signs in ASL dictionaries. This event may have caused or strengthened the pro-ASL stance among some hearing people. Following from this belief is the claim that ASL-using educational institutions are largely superior to those which use LESSA.

We heard from many participants that hearing parents tend to keep their Deaf children at home, at any age, rather than allow them to interact with society. Most Deaf young children do not acquire language early because their parents keep them at home until it is time to send them to school. However, if the Deaf child is not the first Deaf person in the family, he/she may learn it from another family member. One participant mentioned that parents do not let their young adult Deaf children come to church because they are afraid they will join a gang.

Deaf people's experience of hearing people reflects this same tension. Eight out of 10 Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees said that they interact more with Deaf people than hearing people. The most common reasons given were that communication is hard or impossible with hearing people, communication with Deaf people is easier, and because family members are Deaf. Two participants said they interact equally with Deaf and hearing people. Most interviewees said hearing parents do not sign to their Deaf children. Several interviewees said that only a few hearing people show support to the Deaf community and a few emphasized that most hearing people do not.

However, there are some hearing people who are indeed supportive of LESSA. In 2008, Fundación Manos Magicas (FMM), la Universidad de Costa Rica, and Programa Regional de Recursos en Sordera (PROGRESO) collaborated to create a LESSA interpreter training program. The first 11 students graduated from level one of LESSA interpreting on November 8, 2008. The graduation celebration was funded by the National Council of Culture and Art. (Gonzalez 2008c). Those students went on to form the Committee of LESSA Interpreters (Fundación 2009) and are now promoting their services. The May 2009 edition of FMM's magazine Manos Magicas contains a list of 22 people who formed an association of professional interpreters in 2007 (some ASL and some LESSA) and who affiliate with a range of groups. In actuality, Manos records, the number of interpreters is three times that. There is not an official accreditation program for interpreters, but FMM is in the process of beginning one.

We had the pleasure of meeting four or five LESSA interpreters who are very skilled. However, we also received a large number of comments about the inadequacy of most interpreters' skills. One participant told us several stories about times when she had been misquoted in the media due to interpreter mistakes or intentional misrepresentation. She does not have confidence in the accuracy of interpretation in El Salvador.

Many hearing people are involved in support of the Deaf community, but some do so

according to the expressed preference of the Deaf community while others do so according to their own, hearing, preferences. Such variation in support, or the lack thereof, has impacted the language use of the Deaf community, particularly in the realm of education and religion.

4.3   Language Development and Future Goals

With regard to what Deaf community members would like to see happen with sign language in the future, both the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviews and the participant group analyses revealed the same three issues as being high priority needs and goals for development among the Deaf community: education, interpretation, and sign language resources.

The comments of Sociolinguistic Questionnaire Interviewees are summarized and categorized below. The general topic and subtopics are listed on the left, and the number of comments made on each topic is given on the right. Some participants mentioned both the more general topic as well as more specific topics.

Table 29: Needs of the Deaf community as expressed by Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees

Topic and subtopic of comments	Number of comments
Better Education (University education, training for teachers, to start education young, Deaf teachers)	11
Interpreters (For news, for education, professionalization of interpreters)	8
Resources for the development of sign language (University training in LESSA education and interpretation)	8
Better jobs and work opportunities	6
Access to technology (Access to computers, training)	6
Respect from hearing society	6
Support of legal rights from the government (Bus passes/transportation, the right to own property, driver's licenses)	4
For Deaf people to respect and understand themselves	3
Clubs and socialization	3
Right/Access to information	3
Improve Spanish Literacy	3

These needs were elicited with an open ended question rather than with any suggestions.

With regard to sign language resources, all but two Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees indicated that the need for a sign language dictionary in El Salvador is high. Most want a dictionary to supplement the LESSA dictionary already available, in order to teach hearing and Deaf people. Two participants indicated that the need for a sign language dictionary is low, but even they had lexical concerns. They explained that what is needed more is a concept-based way for the Deaf community to develop vocabulary items, "to bridge the gap between vocabulary and concept." As Licenciada Griselda Zeledon, a widely respected leader in the Deaf community of El Salvador, expressed, "one of the things that is most lacking for the Deaf community is a forum to discuss and form concepts for abstract things."

All but two Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees ranked the need for interpreter

materials at "high." All elaborated on this ranking by commenting on the poor quality of interpreting that is currently available and the huge range of interpreting needs; materials for interpreters could help meet these needs. In some areas of El Salvador, there are no skilled interpreters available at all. Two respondents ranked the need for interpreter materials at "medium," because material without proper training does no good.

All but two Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees placed the need for literature in sign language at a score of high. Reasons given were: for enjoyment, to inform the Deaf community of health concerns, to provide access to information about rights and responsibilities, to build community, and to inspire creativity and learning. They noted information conveyed by hearing people gets lost in translation and is clearer when conveyed by a Deaf person.

Licenciada Zeledon offered us this statement: "My hopes for the future are… whatever God wants. That Deaf people can read and write well, and get the jobs they want; for Deaf people to have equality and not be sub-standard to hearing people. We want Deaf people to be equal to hearing people." She expressed to us her opinion that education and language use should be consistently LESSA, in order to create less confusion and divisions in future generations. The use of ASL should be relegated to communication with foreigners who use ASL.

A Deaf teacher at ECS told us that her students would benefit from material in sign language, both in ASL and in LESSA. A participant mentioned to us a program that is just beginning with the goal of strengthening LESSA standardization through the Circulos de Alfabetización , and through which more "circulos" will be established.

For the Appreciative Inquiry tool, six participant groups (five Deaf and one hearing) brainstormed and categorized what they would like to see happen in the future for the Deaf community of El Salvador. In Table 30, these future dreams are categorized according to the topics and desires expressed in them. On the left is found the broad category into which each dream fits; in the middle is the number of dreams or expressed needs in that category. On the

right side is found the subcategories and the number of goals in each.

Table 30: Hopes of the Deaf community, expressed by groups using the Appreciative Inquiry tool

Category	Number of goals	Subcategories (number of comments regarding that sub-category in parenthesis)
Sign Language	38	That LESSA be further developed and kept pure (11) That there be materials available in LESSA (8) That interest increase in learning it (8) That LESSA gain official/legal recognition (5) That there be an office/institution/governing authority for LESSA (5) That ASL include more expression (1)
Education	26	That Deaf education in general improve through various means (12) That educators of the Deaf receive quality/better training (7) Desire to learn (6) That there be interpreters available for education (1)
Interpretation	19	That it be professionalized, with appropriate training and a certification authoritative body (10) In the media (6) In church (mentioned by hearing group) (1) In education (1) Provided as a legal right (1)
Religion	17	That Deaf people be included in religious activities (8; 7 of these comments from hearing group) That the Bible be made accessible through various versions, through sign language, and in depth (9)
Access	11	That technology be made available to facilitate communication and access to media (7) That employment opportunities be made available (4)

These five categories emerge as most important to the participant groups: Sign Language, Education, Interpretation, Religion, and Access. The dreams regarding Interpretation, Education, and Sign language development were seen as hardest to accomplish, while the dreams regarding Religion were viewed as most important (this last point may be due to the fact that four out of six instances of this exercise occurred at the Bible translation exploration workshop).

The great majority of the dreams/goals listed by the group in San Miguel fall within one of two subcategories: The desire to learn academic material and the desire to learn sign language. While the other five groups are people who came together for the purpose of discussing

community and language development, the San Miguel participants were in a school setting at the time. As facilitators, we may have been unsuccessful in communicating that the dreams and goals they put down could be about more than just school-related topics.

Whether counting or discounting the San Miguel group's comments, Sign Language is the topic about which the most comments were made. Within that topic, the most frequently mentioned subcategory was the development of LESSA as a language. Education and Interpreting Services follow as the most frequently mentioned topics. For Education, the subcategory most frequently mentioned was the improvement of educational materials, policy, and administration. For Interpreting Services, the subcategory most frequently mentioned was training, certification, and professionalization of interpreters.

Ana Silvia, founder of ECS, lamented that parents of Deaf students who are placed in mainstreamed classrooms must pay for interpreters themselves. She emphasized the need for the support of the whole society in order for Deaf students to receive the quality of education to which they have a right. "Deaf people deserve more than they have now. Resources are there, but it requires community involvement!"

4.3.1   *Literature regarding Sign Language in El Salvador.*

This section discusses the published materials about sign language in El Salvador as well as attempts to make such materials more widely available. Educational and religious institutions in El Salvador use a wide variety of materials.

In 1986, *Sign Languages Around the World* was compiled by Oliver K. Sandager, including a section on signs in El Salvador. The sign vocabulary in this book is almost identical to ASL. It was not mentioned to us by any participants in El Salvador. In 1996, the first edition of *Diccionario de Señas Basicas Salvadoreñas* was compiled by the ASS and published by Profesionales de textos y Publicaciones in El Salvador. Many people mentioned this dictionary to

us and referred to it as the LESSA dictionary with the blue cover. It is out of print and several

participants in some outlying areas of El Salvador told us that it is not available to them. One

participant told us that there was a second volume—a white cover dictionary—that had begun to

be distributed but then was recalled due to errors and never resurfaced.

The MinEd, FMM, CONAIPD, and ECS all use materials adapted from other countries for

their educational goals. One Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewee told us that while there are

no ASL materials that are developed in El Salvador, there are several ASL books that were

brought from the USA, then copied and distributed informally.

According to participants, there have been several attempts to produce literature and

materials for the development of LESSA and the Salvadoran Deaf community, but many of these

efforts have fallen apart. FUNPRES has published or is publishing a DVD about Deaf culture and

sign language that is to be distributed for free to the Deaf community in El Salvador but sold to

others who want to learn more about the Deaf community. The Universidad CentroAmericana

(UCA) had been working on a project to develop a software program called SENLES that would

aid in teaching sign language to Deaf students. One participant reported to us that both of these

language development projects had been halted; we were unable to confirm this.

4.3.2   *Community Perspectives about a LESSA Bible Translation project*

Despite great debate within the community about the use of one sign language or another,

Bible Translation into LESSA has become an initiative with support from many different

segments of the community, not just religious institutions. While some community members

emphasize the spiritual and religious benefit of the Bible being accessible in LESSA, others are

more enthusiastic about this project's potential to open the doors to a flood of language and

literature development in LESSA. All BTEW participants saw the translation of the Bible as

advantageous for the further development of education, literature, the language itself, and the

attainment of civil rights.

Assisting Deaf Salvadorans in exploring the possibilities of Bible translation, which exemplified the participatory paradigm of empowering and supporting the community to reach their own goals, turned out to be very helpful from a research perspective as well. Much of the data gathered in the BTEW shows the community's perceptions regarding their languages and language development goals on a broader spectrum.

Eleven interviewees shared their opinion about the importance of a Bible Translation for the Deaf community of El Salvador. Eight participants ranked the need at "high." They gave many reasons: to experience God, to present the Bible in its clearest form (signed by a Deaf person), to train children in spiritual areas, to bring understanding of God to those who do not yet have such knowledge. Two people ranked the need for a Bible Translation at "medium." One remarked that with a Bible available to them in sign, Deaf people could feed themselves spiritually and memorize things. The other said that a Bible in sign language would not make much of an impact on the Deaf people who have no basic concept about God. One person ranked the need for a Bible as "low,", because understanding the Bible would still be difficult. In San Miguel, one interviewee remarked that although the need is high, those who have used LESCO for many years would have a difficult time understanding it.

Two groups (group 1b and group 9c) did an analysis of stakeholders who may want to be involved in a Bible Translation effort. Group 1b clustered stakeholders according to relationship and ranked each party's possible interest (column two) and influence (column three) from 1 (weak) to 5 (strong). The other group's Stakeholder's Analysis was part of their Force Field Analysis: they showed strong community stakeholders that could be involved in a Bible translation project (column one), the sign language used by each stakeholder (column four), and whether they believed these stakeholders' religious beliefs are compatible or incompatible with the group's own beliefs (column five). Below are the combined results of their analyses.

Table 31: Results of the Stakeholders Analysis tool

Grouping 1	Interest level	Influence level	Language Used	Compatibility
Iglesia Bautista Miramonte	5	5	LESSA/ASL	Compatible
Iglesia Tabernaculo Bautista San Miguel	5	5		
Toni McAndrew	5	5		

Grouping 2	Interest level	Influence level		
Iglesia TOBY (San Salvador)	5	5	LESSA	Compatible
Iglesia T.B. (Related Church in Sonsonate)	5	5		

Grouping 3	Interest level	Influence level		
Manos Magicas	3	1		
San Antonio de Padua/Grupo Effeta	3	5	LESSA	Different/ Compatible

Institutions Without Group	Interest level	Influence level		
Iglesia Nazaret	2		ASL/Made-up signs	Compatible
Nuevo Pacto	5		ASL	Compatible
Iglesia Efata	2		ASL	Compatible
Lic. Griselda Zeledon	3			
Jehovah's Witnesses	3		ASL	Different
Mormon			ASL	Different
Asamblea de Dios			LESSA	Compatible

The first two clusters shown here, all having high interest and high influence levels, are potentially those who could be involved at the forefront in a Bible translation project. The other stakeholders could also be involved. As seen from the table, while group 9c thought of some religious institutions as being of "compatible opinion" (sharing the same religious beliefs), they

may use ASL instead of LESSA.

Five groups (four Deaf and one Hearing) conducted a Force Field Analysis exercise. The groups discussed the questions, "Why would we want a Bible translation in sign language? What would that attain?" While one group expressed Bible translation in sign language as their end goal, the other groups expressed goals that would include Bible translation as only a step along the way. When the identified positive and negative forces are compiled, many similar themes can be found among the groups. Many of the same forces are expressed both positively as "the presence of ___" and negatively as "the lack of ___." Below is a list of the most commonly expressed themes (those that appeared three or more times), separating out comments expressed by the Deaf and hearing groups. Forces are expressed as either "needed" or as being present but a "negative force."

Table 32: Strong themes represented by all groups as forces in the Force Field Analysis

Theme: Positive/negative forces needed or present	Deaf	Hearing	Total
Bible in LESSA on DVD	10	0	10
Accessible teaching/training of Biblical concepts for the Deaf/ discipleship/Bible Study	10	0	10
Deaf church leaders/pastors/Deaf church	9	0	9
Lack of LESSA Biblical vocabulary (negative force)	6	0	6
Drama/acting/music/art/movie	5	0	5
Appropriately skilled interpretation/interpreters	5	0	5
ASL influence in the Bible/Variety of communicative styles in El Salvador (negative force)	5	0	5
Finances	3	1	4
Meeting with Deaf (and hearing) people from various churches	2	1	3
People (power)/unity/church support	1	5	6
SIL/Linguistic support/training	0	4	4

The three top forces affecting the goals expressed above are: the need for the Bible in

LESSA on DVD, the need for biblical training and study that is accessible to the Deaf community, and the need for Deaf church leaders. The two overtly negative forces most often mentioned are the lack of LESSA Biblical vocabulary and the variety of communication styles among the Deaf community of El Salvador combined with the force of ASL in the realm of Biblical vocabulary. Sociolinguistically, perhaps we can refer to this last phenomenon as a lack of standardization, partly due to language replacement.

The current LESSA Bible translation project is being led by a team of Deaf translators with the support of Iglesia Bautista Miramonte (IBM) and Toni McAndrew, an American missionary to El Salvador. However, the ministry to the Deaf community is currently under a branch of ministry called COM-VIDA that serves a wider community of disabled and impoverished people. McAndrew has commented that she desires to see the Bible Translation effort move under the ministry of Traducción El Salvador (TRES, another organization housed by the church) rather than COM-VIDA. TRES is enthusiastic about the beginning work of a Bible Translation into LESSA and is open to partnering with other churches and organizations in order to make this possibility into a reality.

The subcategory "That Deaf people be included in religious activities" had seven comments from the hearing group and only one comment from a Deaf group. More significant than the wealth of comments made by the hearing group on this topic is the lack of comments by Deaf groups on this topic. This suggests that while hearing people highly value integration of Deaf people into hearing-led religious activities, Deaf people do not.

Outside the BTEW, however, there were differing opinions among the ASL-using population. Pastor Mario Estrada seemed dubious that any translation of the Bible would be comprehensible to his congregation without his explanation. After a Dialect Mapping exercise, The ASL-using group comprised of ECS alumni discussed with us the possibility of a Bible Translation in the sign languages of El Salvador. They came to the conclusion that while they (the

ASL using population) may not need a Bible Translation in their own sign language due to their high literacy rate in Spanish, the LESSA-using population does need it.

4.4   Conclusion

The Salvadoran Deaf community celebrates their identity as a unique minority linguistic and cultural group. The media of El Salvador in practice recognizes that identity status of the Salvadoran Deaf community and is actively promoting it. Deaf Salvadorans are knowledgeable, expressive, and active in working for the betterment of their community. They utilize technology to their advantage. Although they are flexible communicators, Deaf Salvadorans' comprehension of USA-variety ASL is not high enough to merit simply using language materials from the USA.

Most Deaf Salvadorans use LESSA flexibly, incorporating influences from other communication styles. They are versatile communicators, adjusting their language use to communicate effectively with Deaf and hearing people from throughout their country. Still, LESSA is seen as native Salvadoran, embedded in their sense of identity and pride, and therefore precious. Although the influence of ASL in the Western region and LESCO in the Eastern region has been strong, the Deaf schools in both regions utilize LESSA for instruction. This is supported by national and local Deaf leadership. This indicates that the community in all regions of El Salvador will continue to use and develop LESSA as their main language of choice, particularly if they are able to combat the negative false stereotypes about LESSA and ASL. Tolerance, understanding, and cooperation between Salvadoran users of LESSA and Salvadoran users of ASL are growing as they work together toward common goals.

Deaf Salvadorans desire development of education, interpreting services, and language development including LESSA resources. They want not only that these materials be developed but that they be carefully and appropriately utilized for maximum impact. They desire equal respect, access, and recognition for the current Deaf community, but also that a sense of identity,

ability and self-worth be instilled in Deaf children when they are young.

On the topic of LESSA Bible translation and religion, Deaf Salvadorans desire that the religious practice of their community be spiritually independent of hearing people, to develop their own disciplines, worship, leadership, and methods of Scripture study. They desire that LESSA and Christian practice mutually develop congruently, enriching practitioners' experience of both. As with other language and community development materials, Deaf Salvadorans are intent to point out that the Bible in LESSA should not only be produced, but utilized effectively for maximum benefit and serve as a catalyst for further language and community development.

CHAPTER 5

MEASURING THE SURVEY OF EL SALVADOR TO

NINE PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH PRINCIPLES

In this chapter, I present a self-critical evaluation of the sociolinguistic survey of El Salvador's Deaf community from the perspective of nine out of ten principles of participatory research outlined in chapter one. Here, I repeat in full the statement of the principles as they are listed in chapter one, and then discuss them. Some principles are discussed individually and others in a group. Principle number ten, regarding diversity of information and triangulation, is discussed in chapter six as part of the discussion there on trustworthiness of results.

Conducting language research even without participatory methods could be useful to the community under study by providing important information about the community to the world at large. In a way, this is a helpful act of advocacy, but it is different than empowerment. For the purposes of this chapter I would like to suspend the assumption that is often inherent in language survey: that the foremost goal of the survey is to elicit useful information, and any immediate benefit to the community is a side-benefit. Instead, in this chapter I seek to examine this survey in light of principle six: that the priority is empowerment, rather than information extraction, and to consider how effective the survey was in adhering to participatory principles generally

5.1 Self-awareness and rapport

This chapter, in fact, is an important part of practicing principle number one:

1) The researcher's critical self-awareness and responsibility for innovation, mistakes, and

improvement. The principle facilitator/researcher should conduct honest and open self-criticism, showing awareness of his/her mistakes, and suggesting then trying adaptations for future research. This should be a continually-implemented viewpoint before, during, and after the research project.

We made all efforts possible to establish this positive rapport with community members in the course of our travel. Often, this meant meeting with community leaders or educational directors on their terms instead of our own. When meeting community members, we explained who we were, the purpose of our research, what we hoped to accomplish, and the expected outcome. We discussed with them what their goals would be for such research and we discussed how we could conduct the research in the most respectful, mutually beneficial way possible. In this open environment, the ASS requested that our survey results report emphasize the perspective of Deaf Salvadorans over hearing people, and proceeded to explain to us the importance and parameters of Salvadoran Deaf Identity.

Often, Participant Observation notes or a Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interview resulted from these first encounters. Or the other way around: the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire often became a segue to open other, more interviewee-led conversations. In this way, for example, participants shared with us how ASDICSSA began.

When stumbling into awkward situations in El Salvador where we were operating on misinformation or wrong assumptions, we admitted our mistakes and asked to be corrected and directed. Thus, before and during the survey, the practice of principle one falls in line with the practice of the following principle, number two:

2) An open and inviting relationship between the researchers and the community. Initiating this relationship requires a particular behavior and attitude. The researcher must communicate clearly about the purpose of his presence, be willing to take a relaxed pace, show respect, honesty, and interest in the matters of importance to the community. "…when

the outsider's behavior and attitudes are right, and participatory methods used, good rapport usually comes quickly" (Chambers, 1992:46).

There were some instances in which we were unsuccessful at initiating this relaxed and open rapport. Mostly these occurred when we mistakenly assumed an intermediary had explained our presence. Once when visiting a deaf school we neglected to explain our presence and research to the director and teachers because we assumed the friend who had guided us there had already explained our presence and obtained permission for us to be there. This created a confusing and embarrassing situation that could have been avoided, had we taken care to clearly and graciously explain our presence to everyone involved. As it stood, we were only able to complete a little research there.

When interacting with an association leader for the second time, we learned that on our previous meeting with him we had not sufficiently explained our relationship (or lack thereof) to another entity with which he had previously had bad experience. Eager to correct the mistaken impression we had left, we explained our goals more fully, answering the leader's questions and listening to his experiences and perspective. When he was satisfied, he then introduced us to his association members and guided us in arranging opportunities for research.

It was encouraging to us to realize that the community members, whether in positions of authority or powerless, truly wanted us to realize a clear picture of their situation. Therefore, they made an effort to provide that clear picture, despite our mistakes.

Whether during group discussion, elicitation, or interview, due to our or the participants' desire to finish the tool and move on, much of the time these activities did not lead to discussions of deeper issues. Too hurried and eager to complete the interview, and we often focused more on simply recording answers rather than discussing reasons for them with the interviewee. On the occasions when we were able to implement the emphasis of principle two on relaxed pace, discussions were clear, lengthy, and of fruitful depth.

5.2   Learning together

Principles three and four describe the unique environment provided by research tools designed with participatory research in mind. These principles describe well-facilitated group discussion for mutual learning.

3) <u>Group discussion and visualization.</u> When a group of people from the community discuss and diagram an issue, it provides space for them to be innovative, to learn toward action, and for the researcher to take a backseat as the group discovers. When facilitated correctly, this visualized group discussion can balance diverse opinions, social status, and personalities of the participants. This helps offset the disadvantage of group discussions being dominated by one or two people; more timid or lower-ranking people can draw or diagram while others have heated discussions. The visual organization can then serve everyone as tools for sharing and further analysis and discussion.

4) <u>A process of progressive, rapid mutual learning for all parties involved.</u> The researcher takes the stance of a learner and facilitates a group environment where all participants continuously build on what they are learning from each other.

Visual representation of group discussion is very important. While conducting the participatory tools, the facilitators (either Epley and I or, in the case of the BTEW, the Deaf Salvadoran facilitators) were able to encourage each group to discuss and agree or compromise regarding what they wanted to represent visually for each step of each tool. When visual representation was done, each step led naturally to the next period of discussion, and each member of the group learned naturally from the others. In this way, the knowledge and understanding of the issues about the topic at hand grew and enriched each participant—including the facilitators. A good example is the Dialect Mapping tool, in which each step built upon the visual representation of the previous step.

There were some groups which I was unable to lead into healthy group discussion. These were typically groups that had gathered for some other reason (such as students at school). They were not expecting us and were unprepared for such a discussion. They responded only to questions directed at individuals, and they did not accept the invitation to write or draw as visual representations. Neither did they discuss the topic among themselves. After one attempt to involve the students in a participatory tool, a Deaf teacher of Deaf students remarked that it was unsuccessful because the students were unaccustomed to presenting their opinion in a group setting; they did not know how to engage in a group discussion. These cases were complicated by a violation of principle two; our time in the area was limited and the hurried environment did not allow for a relaxed rapport so that we were unable to make a natural introduction to the group discussion.

In other groups, each person worked independently and without interacting with the others while drawing, writing, or representing something on the collective visualization. In the diagram of one group's Dialect Mapping tool, for example, three out of three choices are indicated numerous times—each choice selected by one of three different individuals. The lack of interaction and discussion did not lead to learning from each other or a building of knowledge shared between the group members.

Principle four emphasizes reproduction of group learning. In particular, once a person has participated in a participatory group discussion, she can use that experience to facilitate other group discussions herself. This was evidenced by the Deaf Salvadoran volunteer facilitators (Group 1b) who participated in five Participatory tools on a Tuesday, then selected four tools to facilitate themselves the following Saturday for the BTEW. As a result, about 50 people worked together to produce and present a wealth of information and direction regarding their languages and language development.

Unfortunately, when my research partner and I facilitated the participatory tools with the

group of Deaf Salvadorans who would then become facilitators, we were limited on time and therefore hurried. We emphasized completion of the steps in each process instead of focusing on fostering healthy group discussion. This underlying feeling of rush—and success measured by timely completion—was carried over to the volunteers' facilitation at the workshop, thereby abbreviating some of the group discussions that could have produced more thoughtful analysis.

Principle four also describes the importance of each group presenting their analysis to a wider audience. This was evident at the end of the workshop when each group—including the hearing group—selected a member from their group to present their conclusions and the highlights of their analysis to all other workshop participants. In this way, each group learned from the others, and this fostered discussions of the issues even after the workshop had finished. While the participatory groups at the BTEW took advantage of the opportunity to present their findings to a larger group, the groups in other venues did not because we interacted with them each only one at a time. The advantage of that small, homogeneous environment, however, was that it allowed groups in these other venues to discuss ideas and perspectives that they may not have felt comfortable discussing in a larger, heterogeneous environment.

For the BTEW, the Cause and Effect Trees exercise was particularly helpful in promoting this sharing between groups. It was the last tool utilized by each group, and as such acted as a culmination of all the other discussions while they were still fresh in their minds. It presented an opportunity to express concerns, fears, stereotypes, and affinities in a way not captured by other tools. This effect drew all groups in the workshop to a central discussion point upon which the large-group discussion expanded.

While the participants are creating wider and higher cycles of learning and thinking together, the researcher has the opportunity to learn as well, first as a facilitator (teaching the group how to walk through the tool and gleaning information the groups know) and lastly as an observer. For example, in the "capstone" Cause and Effect Trees exercise, participants expressed Salvadoran

Deaf culture in ways that were surprisingly clear and unique.

Conversely, the tools that focused on elicitation from individuals, such as Sociolinguistic Questionnaire and Recorded Text Testing, did not incorporate the benefits of group discussion, learning, and representation. Although in some instances our Participant Observation took place with groups of people, they discussed issues but did not document or analyze them visually. Certainly these informal group discussions were beneficial for our notes, but the lack of a visual representation kept the discussion general and limited the benefit that a visual representation might have provided.

When surveyors work with individuals, there is opportunity for the individual to teach the surveyor and for the surveyor to encourage the individual. When the issue is posed to a group, however, and discussion is facilitated well, all participants have the opportunity to be learners and teachers together and to encourage each other. This is one reason to prefer participatory tools over traditional tools, because they create more opportunities for empowerment for the community.

5.3   Culturally Accessible Collaborative Analysis

Principle five addresses a value that attempts to make analysis accessible to people whether or not they are familiar with the systems of analysis which scientists commonly use.

5) <u>Analysis by comparison rather than exact counts/measures</u>. Eliciting absolute values is useful in the academic world, but can sometimes cause anxiety for the interviewee because it can be difficult to remember, and it is difficult to use that as an entrance to more qualitative information, such as value judgments. But comparisons elicit relative values, are less sensitive in nature, and are an entrance to discussion about deeper issues.

Each participatory tool encouraged analysis by comparison as part of its visual representation. Our facilitation of the tools tended to encourage continua, e.g., for the Appreciative Inquiry tool participants were encouraged to place dreams or goals along two

continua, one ranging (horizontally) from most important to least important and the other ranging (vertically) from easiest to most difficult. However, most groups preferred to do the comparisons by breaking the continua into distinct categories. For example, most groups converted the importance-difficulty continua into a chart with four quadrants representing categories in which they could place the goals.

Other participatory tools resulted in similar groupings, with clear distinctions between each category. For the Domains of Language Use tool, one group even arranged their comments in clusters (instead of the suggested columns and rows) and drew circles around them to mark clear boundaries. When given the opportunity to rank positive forces during the Force Field Analysis tool, some groups chose to collect several together, so that there was one grouping labeled "importance 1," another labeled "importance 3," and a third labeled "importance 5", using that amount of tally marks on each force. Other groups chose to rank each force in order of steps that must be taken to reach the goal, as "step 1," "step 2," etc, so that no force shared its rank with another. On the occasions when these comparisons led to discussions of deeper issues, they produced fruitful conclusions both for us as researchers and for the groups involved.

The five groups that used the Cause and Effect Trees tool compared motivations and results from using LESSA or ASL, particularly for language development. This comparison exercise led them to visually demonstrate some strong beliefs and attitudes associated with LESSA and ASL.

The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire also incorporated some comparison, particularly at the end when we asked the participants to rank cities in their countries by different parameters, for example, from best city for Deaf people to live in to worst city for Deaf people to live in, etc. When we were not pressed for time, this yielded an entrance to deeper discussion, as the participant explained his/her ranking choices.

Overall, all participatory tools and part of the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire provided opportunity for comparison leading to fruitful discussion. However, we were only able to take

advantage of such segues to fruitful discussion part of the time, since some circumstances did not allow for it.

While in El Salvador, our main goal was to gather information, albeit information that would assist the Deaf community of El Salvador once compiled into a community-accessible report. However, principle six points to an immediate and tangible instance of empowerment.

6) <u>Empowerment rather than information extraction</u>. There is less concern about gathering data and more on starting a process of the community's ability to effect change in their circumstances.

While we were in El Salvador, some Deaf community members asked Epley and me to assist in facilitating the BTEW. We trained the facilitation team and they planned the workshop with the participatory tools they wanted to use. The workshop laid the foundation for a Deaf Bible translation team to form and begin their work. Apart from the discussing the topic of Bible translation, the workshop participants clarified some common needs, goals and possibilities toward which they could work together. Participants identified obstacles and stereotypes that would need to be overcome. This was a small but significant step toward the community's own action for their benefit. Particularly, the Force Field Analysis aided the LESSA Bible Translation team (which formed after our visit there) to plan their first steps and proceed with their goal to translate the Bible. Outside of the BTEW, one group's use of the Dialect Mapping tool led to discussions of how that group could be involved in the development of language materials.

The Recorded Text Testing, Participant Observation, and Sociolinguistic Questionnaire tools were not effective in initiating empowerment, but they were not designed to do so. These tools were designed only to gather information, and that is precisely what they did.

Even the use of the participatory tools did not necessarily result in empowerment. In most situations, as far as we know, our facilitation of participatory tools did not lead to immediate empowerment of the community, nor to ongoing use of the information or participatory tools. As

an example, although the Appreciative Inquiry tool incorporates a "next steps" section designed to help a group develop a bridge to action beyond the group discussion, only one out of six AI groups discussed that section.

Principle seven emphasizes the importance of understanding a community from its own perspective.

7) <u>Open research (open to formation by the emic perspective) rather than closed research (preformed by the etic perspective)</u>. This allows for the research to build structurally upon the marginalized community's mental organization and knowledge. "It is more the reality of local people than that of outsider professionals that counts." (Chambers 1994:243)

The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interview partially followed this principle. Overall, it is a closed research tool; there are specific questions and the researcher and interviewee are more or less bound to it. The closed-answer questions are intended to gather information which can be quantitatively analyzed. (Sometimes this can push away from an accurate representation of what the interviewee wants to express; for example, he may want to say "some" or "maybe" for questions that will accept only a "yes" or "no" answer. (This raises concerns of the validity of conclusions based on such questions.)

However, the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire also contains some open-ended follow-up questions that request lists, explanation, or reasons to support and elaborate on previous answers. Many of the topics covered directly address the survey goals by asking for the interviewee's opinion about them. The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire also elicits information about the interviewee's personal experiences on a variety of topics, which provides information for a wider picture of the Deaf sociolinguistic situation.

Also, apart from the questionnaire itself, as facilitators we sought to create an environment of interaction in line with principle two, which invited the interviewee to expound upon the topics mentioned. This provided opportunity for more open sharing that could be directed by the

interviewee. When that occurred, we recorded any stories and additional information in a special

section, and then drew upon it as qualitative information to compare with responses from other

interviews and tools. As well, although Participant Observation consisted solely of the

researchers' observations (etic perspective), we intentionally conducted informal interviews

asking community members for their opinions about what they wanted the outcome of the survey

to be and even what they thought should be in the final report (emic perspective). In that way, the

observations of the community were incorporated into the observations we made as researchers.

Participant Observation cast the broadest net for gathering information; we recorded anything we

observed that could have even the slightest significance. After fieldwork was complete, we were

able to sift, sort, and categorize the information according to (1) its applicability to our research

questions and (2) themes that emerged as important to the deaf community.

As mentioned before, many participatory groups adjusted the suggested visual

documentation according to the flow of their discussions. This was made possible by the

flexibility in the tools and the facilitators. Also, the tools were designed to be open not only in

terms of how the visual documentation was used, but also in using open-ended questions to create

a free flow of discussion. For example, during the Dialect Mapping tool, we asked the open

questions, "in what regions, churches, schools, or gathering places do people use your sign

language? What about other sign languages?" We allowed time for the group to discuss and

elaborate on as many or as few institutions/geographical markers as the group wished, although

we encouraged more rather than less. This approach encouraged them to express their own

perspective on the situation rather than to conform to our pre-formed categories.

Due to the power the participants had to shape the direction of the research, one of the key

themes that emerged was the complexity of the multilingual situation in El Salvador and the

resulting tensions. My colleague and I recorded these attitudes in our Participant Observation

notes and in Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviews, and the Deaf community members

analyzed and recorded it themselves, particularly (and surprisingly) in the Cause and Effect Trees tool. Eventually, it became central to the rest of the comprehensive analysis and the results.

Overall, the Recorded Text Testing was the most closed tool, followed by the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire, which was closed but with some flexibility built in. The participatory tools were open but guided, and Participant Observation was the most open of all the tools (although the information derived from it required suspension of judgment because of its weight toward the etic perspective). Our research in general followed a reflective pattern, as we revised each further step based on what information was brought to light in the process.

5.4   The Community's Authority and Involvement on Every Level

As in principle six, the emphasis of principle eight adds to our definition of empowerment versus helping:

8) <u>The marginalized community's social invention and initiative</u>. The researcher may act as a facilitator, but the solution, commitment, and action belong to the local community.

Our goal was not to implant our own ideas of what direction the community should take, but instead to gather information about the community members' perspectives and to assist them as they made steps in the direction of their choosing. Therefore, as we facilitated various groups through the participatory tools, each group chose for themselves what information they wanted to represent, how to document it, and how much. The groups which used the Cause and Effect Tool, for example, were given instructions to represent the motivations and ramifications of using either ASL or LESSA for a Bible Translation. Although this was what we had originally been requested to facilitate, instead most groups broadened this to a discussion about the attitudes and beliefs regarding the general use of both languages, in comparison with each other. One group even meshed two tools (Force Field Analysis and Stakeholder's Analysis) in order to create a complex analysis of steps toward the goal of Bible Translation and the stakeholders that could help or

hinder those steps.

When given the parameters, the groups were free to discuss, brainstorm, refine ideas, decide what they wanted to represent and how to present it together. In this way, each group was in control of its own presentation of data and conclusions in their own language. This was very effective at the BTEW, which culminated in group-designed final presentations.

The Stakeholder's Analysis was only used twice. The second time, the group decided to vary from the steps they had been given. They chose to represent the information that was particularly important to them about each stakeholder, which is a valid alternative way to conduct the tool. When compiling information about each stakeholder, this variation actually provided some information that had been missing: their perspective of each stakeholder's doctrinal compatibility. Perhaps the simplicity or flexibility of the tool allowed the group to focus on utilizing the particular aspects of each tool that they valued.

When groups gathered with the purpose of discussing these issues, they took up the discussion with enthusiasm. In these cases, the tools functioned very well, everyone learned together and produced helpful information. However, when we visited groups who had gathered for another purpose, the facilitation did not go well and the group did not take up the initiative in the discussion. This was such a clear distinction that it led us to the conclusion that it is better to ask groups to meet for the particular purpose of discussing these topics rather than to simply appear where they were not expecting us.

Principle nine also illustrates the very deep level at which the community should be involved.

9) <u>Debriefing and idea-sharing with the local people</u>. Not only the analysis but the conclusions and application as well should be a collaborative effort between the community under study and the researchers.

The Recorded Text Testing and Sociolinguistic Questionnaire tools were not designed to

adhere to this principle, and they did not support it. They were designed to utilize data gathered from the population for analysis and conclusions to be drawn by the researcher, and this is precisely how we used them. We used our informal time with local community members often to debrief with them about what they thought of events in the community or our other research tools. Thus, some of our Participant Observation notes consisted of informal debriefing sessions which guided further steps in our research fieldwork. While the Participatory tools are designed to support this principle, we as facilitators were often unable to bring groups to the steps of conclusions and application, and so that component was rendered moot.

The activity that best exemplified this principle was the BTEW. During the group presentations at the end of the workshop, the various groups discussed, analyzed, presented, and cross-referenced with the other groups in order to come to some conclusions about possibilities for their language and culture. We did not meet with the Salvadoran Deaf volunteer facilitators afterwards to debrief from the workshop, although we should have.

Overall, though, the comprehensive analysis and conclusions drawn from this research have been done by outsiders—myself and my advisers.

However participatory our fieldwork was during the time we were in El Salvador, there was little interaction with the community afterwards. In light of this fact, our attempt to follow this principle is at present unfinished. Our hope is that once the information from the survey is returned to the community, they will be able to utilize it to further their goals.

5.5 Measures of Participatory Value in the Languages of Elicitation

The language(s) in which information is gathered and stored provides one means by which to measure power and participation. One of the social justice issues of concern to Deaf communities worldwide is access to information. Because information is often available primarily in the surrounding spoken language, either verbally or written, it is out of reach to the majority of

the Deaf community. In El Salvador, the language of the majority community is Spanish, but the languages of the Deaf community are LESSA, ASL (in various forms) and LESCO.

In Chapter Two, I described the steps of each tool and the languages in which information was passed. While all the information gathered was ultimately analyzed and written in English (by myself), the tools themselves varied in their accessibility in the Deaf community's own languages.

Participant Observation, Recorded Text Testing and Sociolinguistic Questionnaires all required that participants interact with us in a communication style other than their native one during the information gathering process. However, the participatory tools allowed for groups to discuss, analyze, and produce information in their native language. Also, when the groups had the opportunity to present to a larger audience of people, that took place in their native language as well. This made the information and the analysis process clearer, more complete, and more their own.

5.6   Conclusion

At the conclusion of our research, we realized that we could have directed our survey project in a more participatory manner than we did. Looking back, there are many things that we could have done differently to increase the participatory nature and the potential for empowerment, and as is discussed in Petty's 10 frameworks for evaluating trustworthiness, to further impact the community's capacity to know and act. Perhaps our time in El Salvador and during the information analysis process would have been more participatory if, instead of asking the Deaf community "How can we go about our research in a way that is acceptable and respectful to your community?" we had instead asked, "We have three weeks here. What would you like us to do in these three weeks?" Such questions would have given members of the Deaf community directive instead of consultative inclusion in our activities while there.

Unfortunately, my research partner and I did not document the culminating discussion of the BTEW, which would have been beneficial for our learning. We neglected to ask questions of the larger group that would facilitate some practical, further steps toward addressing the goals and needs they had identified. For other participatory groups, not only the ones at the workshop, it would have been advantageous to have explored an opportunity for them to present to the wider community as well.

Clearly, the participatory tools had more potential than the traditional tools to fall in line with these participatory research principles. They are not guaranteed to do so, however; care must be taken to follow participatory principles and not just attempt to make use of specific techniques. Indeed, our use of some traditional tools (particularly Sociolinguistic Questionnaire and Participant Observation) actually conformed better to some of the participatory principles than some of the participatory tools themselves. On the other hand, even when facilitated well, the traditional tools are unable to capture the three principles that emphasize the benefits of a group environment and visual representation (principles two, three, and four), whereas participatory methods do provide this.

Overall, we found that although the primary criteria for making the survey participatory was in the selection and design of participatory tools, the way those tools were implemented had just as much impact, if not more, on how participatory the survey was. This leads me to conclude that a survey can include traditionally utilized tools (although not exclusively) and still be successfully participatory, as long as it is guided as a whole by these principles, from the planning stages to the analysis and conclusions.

Especially in these areas, triangulation and other steps for self, peer, and supervisor checking are needed to support the hypotheses that arise from the information. The more support that is provided by triangulation and checks, the more reasonable it is to regard the conclusions as

trustworthy. Since each tool is subject to the uncertainty inherent in translation, it is especially

important to use a variety of tools in a variety of communicative and elicitation styles. When

several tools all point toward the same conclusions, this provides support for the trustworthiness

of those conclusions, as well as support for the validity of the tools themselves.

CHAPTER 6

MEASURES FOR EVALUATING TRUSTWORTHINESS OF PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH DATA

This chapter addresses frameworks for evaluating trustworthiness in Participatory Research and provides an analysis of the trustworthiness of information collected on sign languages through our survey in El Salvador. This is the focus of Participatory Research principle ten:

10) <u>Seeking diversity of results and triangulation of information</u>. The research emphasis is on the whole of the information rather than patterns of conformity and on a wide range of perspectives in order to construct a view of the situation from the marginalized community's perspective.

This principle is expressed particularly well in two of the frameworks for evaluating trustworthiness outlined by Pretty & Vodouhê (1998):

☒ Triangulation by Multiple Sources, Methods, and Investigators

☒ Analysis and Expression of Difference.

Participatory research assumes as a working base that principle two is in place, i.e., that a open, honest, and comfortable rapport with the host community has been established. This usually means that the participants or interviewees in the project have a clear, complete picture of what the researchers are doing. When this occurs, the participants are best empowered to contribute effectively to the research. They are able, in fact, to direct the part of the project in which they are involved. This leads to clear and careful work.

Participatory research's main claim to trustworthiness is its capacity to triangulate, that is, to

compare information on an issue from various points of view and various sources and thus refine the overall quality of the research. In this chapter, I first examine different levels of triangulation. From this perspective, I provide some examples of information we were searching for, which were answered/elucidated by triangulating from various tools. Next, I discuss diversity of results and provide examples from our survey. Finally, I briefly address the other frameworks for trustworthiness and their application to this survey.

6.1   Levels and kinds of Triangulation: Triangulation by Multiple Sources, Methods, and Investigators

There is a tension that arises along the continuum of open versus closed research methods. The more open the methodology, the more possibility of misinterpretation; the more closed the methodology, the more possibility for misapplication. Open research methods allow for the participants to steer discussions, analysis, data production, and presentation, perhaps moving it outside the researcher's ability to understand. On the other hand, closed research methods can easily be reductionistic, confining themselves to data that is amenable to exact measurement but tempting one to derive conclusions out of context. Faced with this dilemma, while choosing the open style of participatory research for most of our methods, we depended heavily on triangulation to confirm the trustworthiness of our conclusions.

In this section I discuss different levels of triangulation and give examples of the substantial contribution provided by each tool to the information we were seeking.

For participatory tools, there are three levels of triangulation and refinement. The first level occurs within one group when participants discuss an issue with each other, working together to refine the representation of their ideas, experiences, and opinions. This triangulation uses different sources (each individual) to refine the information coming from that one group. The second level of triangulation is achieved through comparison of the results from a particular tool

by all groups who conducted it. This level uses compilation, counting and comparison to refine. In the El Salvador survey, this level of triangulation was also used with the traditional survey tools, except that the comparison was between individuals rather than groups. The third level occurs when the information from one tool is compared with that of other tools.

I use the term "triangulation" for group discussion and inter-group comparison, instead of just calling it "information compiling," because in these processes, each group may begin with the same instructions but can ultimately modify it to produce their own "tool," independent of all the others. That is, application of the tools to each group is a process of information creation or production, not simply information extraction for the purpose of comparison.

These three levels of triangulation can be illustrated by how the Appreciative Inquiry tool was applied in the Salvadoran Deaf community.

Level one: The Appreciative Inquiry tool directly elicited information regarding what community/language development the Deaf community of El Salvador needs/wants. Each group brainstormed about dreams and goals for the future of the community. The groups then charted which goals were easy/difficult and more/less important, combining in their charts the various perspectives of different members of the group to form a group consensus.

Level two: Since Appreciative Inquiry's central question was very broad, each participant group presented a broad range of responses. As I collectively analyzed the Appreciative Inquiry presentations, certain themes and courses of action appeared repeatedly, mentioned independently by different groups. Within each broad topic of dreams and goals, I grouped goals/dreams into subtopics in which the participant groups suggested similar courses of action for each one.

Level three: The issue of dreams and goals for the Deaf community of El Salvador was also addressed by the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire tool. The results from Appreciative Inquiry and Sociolinguistic Questionnaire were compared to check for similarity. The top three topics for goals and dreams identified by analysis of the Appreciative Inquiry results were the same as those

expressed by Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviewees. This increases the strength of the argument that these are the development issues most important to the Deaf community. It also supports the claim of trustworthiness for the results from both tools.

To give two other brief examples, Sociolinguistic Questionnaires and Recorded Text Testing utilize two levels of triangulation each; once when an individual elicitation is compared with all the others, and a second level when the results of the one tool are compared with the other. Participant Observation also utilizes two levels of triangulation; once when the two researchers compared their individual observations and notes, and a second when the results from Participant Observation are compared to the results from other tools.

6.2   Triangulation Across Tools for Each of the Survey's Research Questions

The topics covered by this survey were quite broad. Rather than testing pre-formed hypotheses about the sociolinguistic situation of the Deaf community of El Salvador, we were instead searching for information that would help us form strong hypotheses. The general survey goals as outlined in the introduction can be broken down into a search for answers to many different questions. Here, I discuss the most significant questions.

A chart for each question summarizes how much the results from each tool contributed to the research aims and goals that are presented in Chapter One. A scoring of "high" signifies that the tool provided substantial information toward answering the specified question or meeting the specified goal. A scoring of "medium" signifies that the tool provided supporting, but not substantial, information. (Some tools provided little or no information about some questions, and in these cases I leave the score blank.)

1. What Sign Language(s) are used in this country and where? (based on the perception of the Deaf community)

Table 33: Tools that helped to answer question 1

Survey Question	PO	SLQ	RTT	AI	DM	FFA	SA	DLU	CET
Question 1	High	High	High		High			High	

With regard to participant observation, our experience interacting with LESSA-using Deaf Salvadorans gave us the distinct impression that LESSA and ASL are quite different. Our observations while interacting with ASL-using Deaf Salvadorans gave us the impression that the ASL used in El Salvador is similar, but not the same as ASL in the USA. Both in informal discussions and in the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire, we asked people this question directly. Some interviewees gave concise answers while others discussed the matter with us at length. One respondent's e-mail to us (before our fieldwork in El Salvador took place) gave us our first clue that the ASL varieties used in El Salvador were not the same as the ASL used in the USA. The data from Recorded Text Testing supported this hypothesis.

Dialect Mapping provided detail regarding specific contexts within which these languages were used: geographic regions, organizations, and social gathering places. This information went beyond that which was provided by other tools and created a base framework to which further information about each institution/region could be attached. Domains of Language Use elicited similar information, but it further addressed the complexity of the multilingual situation to present the circumstances in which the participants use various communication styles and how often. This addressed a very different dimension of sign language usage.

All these tools, then, provided useful information about what languages were used, where, and under what circumstances.

2. How similar is/are these sign language(s) to each other and other sign languages?

Table 34: Tools that helped to answer question 2

Survey Question	PO	SLQ	RTT	AI	DM	FFA	SA	DLU	CET
Question 2	Medium	Medium	High		Medium			Medium	

Our observations as ASL-using foreigners gave us a general idea of how similar various

signing styles were to USA-variety ASL. The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire included questions

about variations in sign languages, both within El Salvador and in comparison with other

countries. Once we had formed the hypotheses that (1) LESSA and USA-variety ASL are distinct

languages and not similar enough to be dialects and that (2) USA-variety ASL material would not

be understood adequately by deaf Salvadorans, Recorded Text Testing was used to confirm them.

Dialect Mapping prompted the participants to analyze and document how well they understood

the varieties used by various institutions. Domains of Language Use again addressed this question

from a different angle by prompting participants to analyze their language use in different

contexts in their lives. This provided a detailed list of language varieties and their nuances,

ranging from (using participants' labels for communication varieties) LESSA, to LESSA with a

little ASL, to LESSA-ASL, to ASL with a little LESSA, to what was called unaltered ASL or ASL

with Spanish initialization. These labels and analyses reflected each group's perception of

similarity of sign languages in use.

3. What sorts of changes in language use are happening and how might language use change

in the future? What are peoples' attitudes toward their language(s)? What do community members

predict/hope/fear will happen?

Table 35: Tools that helped to answer question 3

Survey Question	PO	SLQ	RTT	AI	DM	FFA	SA	DLU	CET
Question 3	High	Medium		High	High	Medium		Medium	High

In regard to the questions above, each tool acted not as much to repeat and confirm the

information provided by others, but to elaborate it by supplying different information on the same

topic. In this way, the use of different tools provided a wider, fuller view of the issue at hand.

Participant Observation and informal interviews provided information about the attitudes and

perceptions of the Deaf community, as well as their hopes, fears and predictions for the future of their language situation. It was in this context that Deaf Salvadorans talked with us about their fears of ASL replacing LESSA as the dominant sign in El Salvador, as happened with Old LESCO in Costa Rica. Sociolinguistic Questionnaires touched on this subject by asking interviewees at length about what language varieties they think their community should use and what they feel their community needs; these are listed in chapter four. Appreciative Inquiry delved into the topic of hopes and dreams in great detail, asking participants to compile, brainstorm, and categorize their hopes and dreams and then to mobilize them.

Dialect Mapping revealed that all government-supported educational programs for Deaf students (traditional and alternative education) utilize LESSA for instruction, even in regions that have historically incorporated other sign languages (ASL in the Western region and LESCO in the Eastern region). This corroborates the reports of the Ministry of Education which were based on informal interviews. Further, since this reflects the perception of Deaf community members themselves, it confirms the hypothesis that LESSA is well-supported and is not likely to die out. By asking about patterns of adaptation, Dialect Mapping provided insights about language attitudes, as reflected in the willingness of people to adapt to other varieties. Domains of Language Use revealed that across the board, Deaf Salvadorans use LESSA and written Spanish in more contexts than ASL, although many use ASL often enough to identify the contexts in which it is useful. This identifies the contexts in which language use might increase or decrease. Cause and Effect Trees revealed the strong tension in beliefs and attitudes attributed to LESSA and ASL in San Salvador, making it clear that the Deaf participants are aware of them and that language attitudes factor into their desires for future community development.

4. What are the perceived needs, goals, and concerns of the deaf community about their lives (jobs, finances, accessibility, education, language use, quality of life)?

Survey Question	PO	SLQ	RTT	AI	DM	FFA	SA	DLU	CET
Question 4	Medium	Medium		High		Medium			

Our informal conversations during Participant Observation often turned to topics other than languages, and this is appropriate since our goal was to discover the linguistic situation in the wider context of the Deaf community's life. In Participant Observation, Deaf Salvadorans shared with us their desire to acquire technology that would provide them with wider access to information and communications, to gain better access to higher education, to have an all-Deaf-run school for the Deaf, and to encourage all members of their community to have appropriate self-esteem as Deaf persons.

The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire included a question about community development needs and goals; some interviewees explained in detail their foremost desires for their community, echoing those described above in Participant Observation. The tool that by far addressed this question the most was Appreciative Inquiry. The central question of this tool was very broad, therefore it included non-linguistic as well as linguistic matters. The three most dominant hopes for the future expressed in the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire interviews were the same as those expressed in the Appreciative Inquiry exercise and which emerged from Participant Observation: the development of education, availability of skilled interpretation, and the development/celebration of LESSA (among many others that did not rank as high in either tool). That the same life-goals of the Deaf community were expressed by all three tools reinforces the findings of each tool and increases the trustworthiness of the conclusion.

Force Field Analysis (at the BTEW) also helped answer this question from a different angle (with a religious focus), since the path to each group's goal (a Bible translation in LESSA) included much more than language-related steps. These steps included expressed desires for various ways to teach and train; for example, to train Deaf leaders in religious leadership, to meet

regularly or to meet in large groups for training. Analysis of the number of comments that reflected these goals shows that they were mentioned with similar priorities throughout the groups that used Force Field Analysis (except for the hearing group).

5. What players affect the language use and attitudes of the deaf community? (associations, religious institutions, educational institutions, leaders, etc.)

Table 37: Tools that helped to answer question 5

Survey Question	PO	SLQ	RTT	AI	DM	FFA	SA	DLU	CET
Question 5	High	Medium			High	Medium	Medium		

Background research provided us with a list of associations and institutions that we made plans to visit. Our goal was to make contact eventually with each major social network and talk to those involved about their perceptions of language and societal issues. Participant Observation was the tool from which we gained the broadest insight into these institutions and social networks; while we sometimes had deep conversations about issues, we usually just caught small bits of information that gave us clues as to where to look for more. Many of our initial contacts were made through Participant Observation. The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire asked questions regarding associations, educational institutions, and religious institutions, but many times our interviewees told us there were too many to count, so we asked them just to name the top three or four. The most detailed listings, including language variety information, were derived from Dialect Mapping. While the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire provided a list of approximately 27 schools, churches, associations, and meeting places, Dialect Mapping provided a list of approximately 67 of them. All institutions mentioned through the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire were also mentioned in Dialect Mapping. The mix of sources, tools, and depth of information received about each institution helped us to gauge which ones were the most influential in language and Deaf society. Groups that used the Stakeholder's Analysis mentioned institutions (although none that we had not already seen represented by other tools) and their influence that

would help or hinder their goals, but these were somewhat less useful generally because they focused on the specific issue of Bible translation.

6. Who are potential stakeholders in language development projects?

Table 38: Tools that helped to answer question 6

Survey Question	PO	SLQ	RTT	AI	DM	FFA	SA	DLU	CET
Question 6	High	Medium			High	Medium	High		

This question narrowed the focus of concern from all of the players identified in question 5 to those players who would play an important role in projects that sought to expand or improve the use of sign languages in El Salvador. Our conversations with leaders in a variety of institutions and social networks, both formal (through Sociolinguistic Questionnaires) and informal (by way of Participant Observation) gave us impressions about which institutions would have the desire and resources to support and collaborate in such projects. Through both of these tools, we learned that although many users of ASL do not wish to switch completely to LESSA, they still encourage the idea of language development projects for LESSA and the LESSA-using community. One side benefit of Dialect Mapping, was that it provided a list of institutions and which languages they supported, adding information about possible stakeholders to the list compiled from other tools. Details regarding these possible stakeholders' views, resources, and willingness to support language development projects came through Force Field Analysis and Stakeholder's Analysis.

As the tables above show, the results from each tool touched on a variety of research questions/goals, and the combination of tools helped to guarantee that each question or goal was addressed by more than one tool, thus making triangulation possible. Some tools gave the same information but differed in the amount or detail; other tool combinations covered the same topic but from different angles. While it would have been possible to receive conflicting information from different tools, we did not encounter any of significance. The utility of each tool can be

measured by the extent to which it provides the same or similar information as other tools in order to confirm or strengthen our conclusions. A tool can also be seen as valuable because it addresses different questions, ones that might otherwise not be sufficiently addressed by other tools, thus ensuring that each research question (and thus the results) are viewed from a wide variety of angles. We used tools that performed both of these functions.

6.3   Expression and Analysis of Difference

One of Pretty & Vodouhê's (1998) frameworks for evaluating trustworthiness is analysis and expression of difference. This framework emphasizes that significant things might be learned from information that veers away from or opposes expected findings or findings from other sources. Such deviant information should not simply be ignored or explained away, but should be examined for its potential to provide deeper insights. In this survey, there were several instances in which unexpected information became critical to our understanding of the sociolinguistic situation of the Deaf community.

Ten SLQ interviewees, when asked, responded that the need for a sign language dictionary was "high" for their community. Only two responded that the need was low. One of them explained that Deaf people were not familiar enough with Spanish to benefit from such a dictionary. The other explained that there is a higher need: a method for developing signs for concepts in order to make the language richer and fuller, to "bridge the gap between vocabulary and concept." Because these two answers did not conform, they pointed the way for us to find important information (about bilingualism in Spanish and the adequacy of the LESSA lexicon) that we would have missed if we were simply looking for agreement among the interviewees and disregarding opposing answers.

As another example, by the time we traveled to San Miguel to begin research with the Deaf community of the Eastern region, all information shared with us thus far had indicated that the

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Deaf people of the Eastern region used and identified with a LESCO-LESSA mix. When we arrived, an exception appeared through the Dialect Mapping tool. In their discussion and analysis, the San Miguel Deaf participants identified all of their social activities and institutions with LESSA, except for two churches (one Catholic and one Protestant), where they reported LESCO usage. This seemingly contradictory information led to our understanding that the Deaf community of San Miguel associates their identity with the LESSA using community, even if their language use shows influence from LESCO. This suggests that a LESSA standardization effort in this region (i.e., lessening the use of LESCO signs) might be welcomed because it would strengthen those social identity ties.

Lastly, an interesting insight revealed itself while I compiled the comments from the Appreciative Inquiry tool. The one hearing group to use the Appreciative Inquiry tool made seven comments communicating the underlying goal that Deaf people be included in religious services and activities. Out of the five Deaf participant groups, there was only one other comment expressing this as a goal. This shows that the hearing group has a different perspective than the Deaf group about what their dreams and goals are for integration in religious practice. The hearing group showed more desire that the Deaf be integrated into hearing religious practice than all the Deaf groups put together.

6.4   Other frameworks for evaluating trustworthiness

6.4.1   Interaction, Observation, and Journaling

Three frameworks for evaluating trustworthiness (Pretty & Vodouhê 1998) can be woven together to describe a meticulous way of interacting and documenting, with an observing eye directed outward and inward as well:

- Prolonged and/or Intense Engagement Between the Various Actors.

- Persistent and Paralleled Observation

☒ Reflexive Journals.

Epley and I stayed in El Salvador for about 23 days. We spent as much time as possible with members of the Deaf community, balancing between the formal use of tools for group discussion/elicitation and informal sharing time. All of this provided opportunity for observation. We shared meals with community members, went to religious services with them, went shopping with them, accompanied those who worked at Deaf schools, and attended association meetings with them. Each day, we journaled about the course of events, people present, content of conversations, our observations, and our reflections. While there was no way for us to remove the subjectivity from our etic perspective, we could at least record such things as personal reflections, exhaustion, emotional or physical distractions, etc. This is relevant because these factors shape how we interact with participants, how we remember the interaction and how we reflect on it. We also dialogued about and compared our observations and compiled them, looking at the differences between my experience as a hearing person and Epley's experience as a Deaf person in each context. This intense interaction, reflection, and documentation allowed us to observe some crucial conversations and events that we would have missed if we had not been intentional about interacting with the community in that way. The informal interaction was just as important as the more formalized research methods.

6.4.2   Interaction With Other Researchers

Four additional frameworks provide accountability in research through critical interaction with other researchers:

☒ Peer or Colleague Checking.

☒ Reports with Working Hypotheses, Contextual Descriptions, and Visualizations.

☒ Parallel Investigations and Team Communications.

☒ Inquiry Audit

Before, during and after the survey fieldwork, the research was shaped through consultation and discussion with colleagues who are involved in similar work, and some of whom had conducted sociolinguistic surveys of other Deaf communities. During the survey, my colleague and I discussed and checked our observations and data collection. Afterwards, I compiled the information from the survey into a Survey Results Report (which eventually became the core of the material in Chapters Three and Four). I submitted this report for examination by a supervisor and a colleague who were not involved in this particular survey but who had both done similar surveys before. Their review and comments about the report helped to refine the analysis and increase its trustworthiness. Since this is a thesis, my committee members also served in this role.

6.4.3   Local Impact

The last framework for evaluating trustworthiness is the one most expressive of the overall philosophy of Participatory Research:

☒ Impact on Stakeholders' Capacity to Know and Act

This hearkens back to Participatory Research principle six regarding a shift of emphasis toward empowering the community under study. The claim is that if the people have been empowered, then the research project has been successful, at least in this regard. The strongest examples of how this framework was fulfilled took place during the BTEW. The volunteers who walked through the participatory tools with us and then took on the role of facilitators themselves learned to use those tools in group discussion, and discovered a new way to talk about their language situation and related goals. As well, the participants at the BTEW discussed topics relating to language use, attitudes and development. Eventually the Bible translation team formed as a result of that workshop. We have also heard of a number of positive, collaborative events that have taken place between associations and other branches of the community since we left, but we are unable to determine whether or not these developed in part as a result of our research efforts there. Ideally, we could have taken further steps to empower the community, such as debriefing

with major stakeholders before leaving.

One purpose of the stated objectives of this survey is to supply the Deaf community stakeholders with the results. Our hope is that this information will empower them to further their language and community development goals. Other examples of the impact framework are described in Chapter Five, under principles eight and nine.

6.5   Translation and Trustworthiness

The use of multiple languages in the course of research raises some significant challenges for trustworthiness of information. In Chapter Two I describe for each tool (or tool set) the steps of translation that the information went through from initial elicitation prompts to the final report. Where we used more estimation to understand the information elicited, the trustworthiness of the results is correspondingly more suspect due to the possibility of distortion. Epley and I compensated for this through reflection, and asking for clarification while in conversation with participants, and by comparing and checking with each other for understanding, both during and after each encounter with community members. This brings us full circle to participatory research principles eight and nine (from Chapter Five):

8) The marginalized community's social invention and initiative. The researcher may act as a facilitator, but the solution, commitment, and action belong to the local community.

9) Debriefing and idea-sharing with the local people. Not only the analysis but the conclusions and application as well should be a collaborative effort between the community under study and the researchers.

The need for checking accuracy during translation, analysis, and presenting results is further reason to open the door for community members to be involved as collaborators in every step of the research process. As mentioned in Chapter Five, we did not include community members during the translation, analysis, and presentation of results, although this would have further

insured accurate representation in cases where translation was significant.

Triangulation and other steps for self, peer, and supervisor checking are particularly needed in these areas, to support the hypotheses that arise from the information gathered. The more support that is provided by triangulation and checks, the more reasonable it is to regard the conclusions as trustworthy. Since each tool is subject to the uncertainty inherent in translation, it is especially important to use a variety of tools in a variety of communicative and elicitation styles. When several tools all point toward the same conclusions, this provides support for the trustworthiness of those conclusions, as well as support for the validity of the tools themselves.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis, I have explored the application of participatory research methods and paradigms to sociolinguistic sign language survey, or rather, perhaps the other way around: the application of sociolinguistic sign language survey techniques to participatory research methods and paradigms. Epley and I conducted a survey of the Deaf community of El Salvador in an attempt to use these paradigms and methods.

We discovered that there are three competing sign languages in El Salvador: LESSA, ASL, and LESCO. LESSA appears to be the dominant sign language, and evidence suggests that although it is being influenced by ASL, its use may actually spread in the future rather than diminish. In light of the shift from the native sign language to ASL in other countries such as Honduras (Williams 2010), Costa Rica (Amaya, personal communication), and the Dominican Republic (Parks and Williams 2010), it is encouraging to see evidence that points to the strength and stability of LESSA and the LESSA-using Deaf community. It is also encouraging to see the increasing cooperation between Deaf associations and the Ministry of Education, which has adopted a LESSA-Spanish bilingual education pedagogy and is eager to continue working toward improving education for Deaf Salvadorans, both children and adults. Most of all, it has been encouraging for us to see Deaf Salvadorans express and take initiative toward language development and advocacy, as exemplified at the BTEW.

In Chapters Five and Six, I have reflected upon the survey and its results to evaluate it in light of 1) the principles of participatory research and 2) the provision of useful, trustworthy

information to the larger academic community. In the process, several significant results surfaced. First, the use of research tools derived from participatory methodology does not automatically make a survey participatory. Neither does a survey which includes traditional tools completely miss the mark set by participatory principles. Instead, the principles of participatory research mostly address overarching themes of the survey project, spanning from rationale and planning to documentation, analysis, conclusions, and application. It includes the state of mind and heart with which the researchers choose to interact with the community. The researchers' attitudes, and by extension, their manner of engaging with the community are the most crucial measure of a project's participatory nature. This was certainly true in our survey of El Salvador's Deaf community. On some occasions, we missed the mark by failing to engage with the community members and stakeholders in a way which reflected a participatory attitude. The clearest examples of this are when we approached an unprepared group, which had gathered for other purposes, and attempted to facilitate group discussions while limited on time. On other occasions, we succeeded in engaging the community in a truly participatory way.

When comparing the participatory methods tools with the traditional tools used in this survey, it becomes clear that several principles for participatory research can only be satisfied through appropriately-facilitated, visually-charted group discussion. No matter how well-facilitated the traditional tool is, it cannot reap the benefits of the learning and information production done by a participatory group. Another benefit provided by the participatory tools is the environment for native-to-native discussion and presentation; in this environment the information and representation is produced and refined in the participants' native language rather than a contact language between the researcher and community members. Participatory tools provided in-depth information regarding sociolinguistic networks and code switching between communication styles which the traditional tools were unable to address.

Many of the issues of trustworthiness that affect participatory tools also affect the traditional tools, such as the capacity for misrepresentation of self-reported information and the problem of ambiguity or lost information in the process of translating. Fortunately, there are some effective frameworks and methods for checking and refining for accuracy. The most significant framework is triangulation of source, method, and tools, and it is the one utilized the most in this survey. However, it is not the only framework; data can be gathered and checked by continuous discussion and comparison between the outsiders, their colleagues, and community members themselves. Although this was not practiced as fully as I would have liked in this survey, there is no reason why it could not be possible. Ideally, the line between community member and researcher would be blurred until even the process of developing a comprehensive report of survey results becomes the collaborative work of the community members themselves.

It was mentioned earlier that as yet, the results of the survey have not been shared with the community. Partly this has been necessary because of its use to satisfy the requirements of a graduate thesis, which must be original research. Following the completion of this thesis, a revised version of Chapters Three and Four, the report of survey results and conclusions, will be translated into Spanish. This report will be summarized into LESSA and ASL and made available to the stakeholders of the Deaf community in El Salvador.

Based on the results from the survey in El Salvador, I would encourage the Salvadoran Ministry of Education, the Deaf Associations, and other organizations serving the Deaf community to consider collaborating on the following projects:

- Create or facilitate a sign linguistics training program. Such a program should include information on bilingual education pedagogy, grammar, semantics and discourse of sign languages. A program with a wide base of support from stakeholders in El Salvador could be useful and accessible to:
  - Deaf linguists and translators

- ○ Hearing linguists and translators

- ○ Interpreters

- ○ Educators of the Deaf

☒ Strategize to create a program that produces educational material in LESSA and for the acquisition of LESSA, as well as pedagogy for its use. An example of such pedagogy would be Profesora Lisseth Amaya's videos in LESSA about social studies and governmental systems, posted on YouTube (www.youtube.com/user/lissethamaya).

☒ Strategize to create an early education program, employing Deaf educators to teach LESSA and Deaf culture to families with Deaf children.

Based on my reflections on the survey in El Salvador, I would encourage other researchers and communities engaging in survey work to do the following things:

☒ From the inception of the project, prioritize empowerment of the community, not simply helping the community, as of equal or higher value than information elicitation.

☒ Consider and discuss the desired outcomes of the research project first, not only those of the researchers but those of the community as well.

☒ Consider what participatory tools (of which those described in this thesis are only a small sample) would best serve those desired outcomes.

☒ Strategize to include the community in every step of the research process.

Particularly lacking in this survey was the community's involvement in the comprehensive analysis of information in order to express results and conclusions; it is my hope that future surveys will find ways to do that.

In reflection, I believe that whether a survey/research project calls itself participatory or not, its researchers and stakeholders must take care to be aware of how their attitudes and culture interact with the local people and affect the outcome of the research. As social scientists on the

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field, we do not conduct research in controlled environments; we must be aware that we do not and cannot know all the variables that impact the people who are sharing their language, lives, and cultures with us. We also must be aware that we cannot assume what impact, whether negative or positive, we will leave on those with whom we have interacted. Our time with them as human beings can be weighty, and the potential for positive impact can be great.

APPENDIX

7.1   The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire

Below is a list of the questions asked of the interviewees in the Sociolinguistic

Questionnaire. Many of the more open questions provided a forum for more informally gathered

information, such as personal experiences, opinions, and life stories.

Table 39: Questions in the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire

Participant Metadata
1. Roughly how old are you now?
2. Do you have any deaf family members? If so, who?
3. Where do you currently live?
4. Where do you interact with deaf people?
5. How many years of education have you completed?
6. Please name the school(s) you have attended.
7. At what age did you first start signing? Where and instructed by whom? Name:

Deaf Services and Meeting Places
8. List associations and organizations serving deaf people in your area, indicating their role:
9. Do deaf people attend religious services? If no, explain why not. If yes, please answer the following: What services do they attend? Why do deaf people attend services? What language(s) does the service use? How many deaf people attend these services?
10. Please list the deaf schools in your area. How many years of education do these schools offer students? Please identify the communication philosophy of each school (oral, bilingual, TC, etc.)
11. Please list any published materials about the sign language in your area.
12. Do deaf people in your community interact with deaf people from other places in El Salvador? If so, please answer the following: Which other communities? Where and why do they meet?
13. Have deaf people here interacted with deaf people from other countries? If so, which countries?
14. What type of jobs do most deaf people have in El Salvador?
15. Do most deaf people in your area have a DVD player and/or computer in their house?
16. Please list the leaders, hearing or deaf, of your local deaf community.

Language Use and Attitudes

17. Where do deaf people learn sign language in your community?
18. How many deaf people sign in your community? How well do they sign?
19. Do you interact more with deaf or hearing people? Why?
20. Do deaf parents sign with their hearing children?
21. Do hearing parents sign with their deaf children?
22. How do deaf people feel when signing in public?
23. Are hearing people supportive of the deaf community? Explain your answer.
24. Do all deaf people in El Salvador sign the same? If no, what factors lead to different signing?
25. Do you want everyone in El Salvador to sign the same? Explain your answer.
26. What is the name of the sign language in your community?
27. Is your sign language like the sign language of any other country? If yes, which one(s)?
28. Do you think that it is better for deaf people to use sign language or spoken language? Explain your answer.
29. How well do you read and write Spanish?
30. What does your deaf community need most to succeed in life? What type of language materials (e.g. Bible, dictionary, interpreter training manual, sign literature, etc) do you want to be developed? How and where would you use them?
31. The perceived need for the following materials in sign language: sign language dictionary perceived need: Explain your response. Materials for interpreter training: Explain your response. The Bible: Explain your response. Literature in sign language: (history, poetry, health education (sexual, AIDS, etc)): Explain your response.

Comparisons
32. When choosing a president in your deaf association/organization, how would you rank the importance of the following five characteristics (deaf, sign well, able to speak, able to read/write, well educated)?
33. Best place (city or country) for deaf people to live in (most services, education, support, etc.).
34. Place with sign language that is the easiest to understand.
35. Place with the most beautiful sign language.
36. Additional Notes:

7.2 RTT text and point system

Below is the English translation for the ASL story that we used in order to administer the RTT. Each numbered section represents a pause in the story at which point the reteller would retell the story to his/her receiver, according to the methodology described above in the methodology section.

1. Hello, my name is Karen Gouby. My sign name is "KS."
2. Hey, this happened a long time ago, when I was eight. I lived on a farm. It was pretty good sized. We had cows, plants, and chickens.
3, One morning, or I suppose it was afternoon, I was swinging. You know, the kind in a tree, with a huge trunk, and strong branches. It was a rope swing with a wooden seat. Well, I was swinging and swinging.
4. I was enjoying myself, talking to myself. My aunt and two cousins drove up. I waved at them and my cousins got out of the car and waved back. I kept on swinging.
5. My two cousins ran off and went to play with my three brothers and I was all alone. Oh well, I just kept swinging. While I was swinging, I was looking at the car and had an idea.
6. I got down and ran to, you know, a small garage. I snuck in and was looking for something. You know what? Nails. The big kind of nails that you hammer. I found four! So I took them.
7. I ran and stuck them under my aunt's car's tires. I set one under/by each tire and then went back and started swinging.
8. I was swinging for awhile when my aunt and cousins finished. My cousins were playing (over there). Mom and Dad finished talking with my aunt. Everyone said "goodbye."
9. I wasn't included. Oh well, you know why? Because I'm deaf and can't communicate. Whatever. They drove off and I waved goodbye and then went back to swinging.
10. I was swinging when, all of a sudden, something happened. Dad, mom, and my three brothers all came running out saying, "Come on, come on, come on!" I didn't know what was happening. I jumped down and said "What?!" They said "Come on!" So I sat down in the back of the car, an old fashioned car.
11. "Hey Mom," I said. They were all talking amongst themselves. "Mom, what's going on?" She said, "Wait." I tried again, but they were all talking. My father was driving fast. You know how a dirt road is – he was making a big dust cloud. Meanwhile, I'm sitting in the back keeping silent. Wow.
12. We're racing along when I see my aunt. She's standing smoking, and looking irritated! Just then it hit me, this might be my fault! The car stopped and we all got out. Then I saw it. It was awful! Four tires, all flat! I looked at it.
13. Everyone was talking. I just stood there and watched. I understood what happened. They kept talking. Finally they decided to go. We were close to my grandparents' house, it wasn't far.
14. Dad stayed there. Mom, my aunt, my cousins, three brothers and I got in the car. Mom drove. We all squeezed in the car, and I sat there keeping my mouth shut.
15. We arrived at my grandparents' house. We got out and ate. We waited and waited while Dad fixed it. I think he called a friend to help. I think, but I'm not sure what happened. I think that's what happened.
16. Anyway…Finally, my Dad came in. He was exhausted and filthy! So he gathered everyone up and went back home.

Below is a list of the lexical items that were counted as points when produced by the reteller in each section of the story. The list below of is of single lexical items in ASL, but the English translation may be insufficient because one lexical item in ASL often encodes much more information than its corresponding translation in English. Section eleven has no points for scoring

because in the hometown test, none of the seven test subjects retold the story using any lexical

items in common. Altogether there are 45 points. The tally is then calculated out of a possible 45

in order to produce a percentage from which we are able to gain information about how much of

the ASL text the reteller successfully reproduced.

Table 41: Lexical Items Counted as Points for RTT Scoring

Section 1 (points: 3)	My
	Name
	K-A-R-E-N
Section 2 (points: 3)	Lived
	Farm
	Chickens
Section 3 (points: 3)	I swinging
	Tree
	(huge) trunk
Section 4 (points: 6)	I swinging
	I swinging
	My aunt
	Cousins
	Drove-up
	Cousins
Section 5 (points: 3)	Cousins
	Playing
	I none (alone)
Section 6 (points: 3)	Searched/looked for
	N-A-I-L
	Nail
Section 7 (points: 7)	Put
	Car
	Tire
	Put nail (near tire 1)
	Put nail (near tire 2)
	Put nail (near tire 3)
	Put nail (near tire 4)
Section 8 (points: 1)	Aunt
Section 9 (points: 2)	Deaf
	Leave/drive off
Section 10 (points: 3)	I swinging
	old fashioned
	Car
Section 11 (points: 0)	
Section 12 (points: 5)	Aunt
	Smoking
	Four

	Tires
	Flat
Section 13 (points: 1)	Talk among themselves
Section 14 (points: 2)	Mom
	Squeezed/squished
Section 15 (points: 2)	Arrived
	Dad
Section 16 (points: 1)	Dirty

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