

# Reference Guide

Barrier-Free Education



## VISION

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A society where all people are respected; have full access to communication; and are able to participate without social, economic, or emotional barriers.

## MISSION

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The Canadian Hearing Society is the leading provider of services, products, and information that:

- remove barriers to communication
  - advance hearing health
  - promote equity for people who are culturally Deaf, oral deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing
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The views and opinions contained in this report are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the Ministry of Education and its staff.



Cynthia

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# Introduction

Imagine a school where inclusive education is the standard and every student feels engaged and empowered. A deliberate and sustained focus on meeting every student's unique learning needs is fostered by regular diversity and awareness training for educators. Communication and language supports are commonplace. The school building itself is designed as an ideal environment to promote the success of each and every student.

An important step was taken recently towards making this ideal school a reality in boards across the province. The Canadian Hearing Society (CHS), funded by the Ministry of Education, developed the groundbreaking Barrier-Free Education Initiatives project in early 2009. This project assists school boards in creating a more inclusive barrier-free learning environment for deaf and hard of hearing students, with a view to improving these student's educational outcomes in Ontario's publicly funded schools.

Since 1940, CHS has been the leading provider of services, products and information related to deafness and hearing loss. One of our fundamental mandates is to promote equity for people who are culturally Deaf, oral deaf, deafened and hard of hearing. This equity is crucial if we are to realize our vision of a society in which all people are respected, have full access to communication and are able to participate without social, economic or emotional barriers.

The Barrier-Free Education Initiatives project advances the achievement of this vision as it relates to education and the Ministry's commitment to closing the achievement gap for deaf and hard of hearing students. It allows educators the opportunity to assess and reflect on accommodation supports in the classroom and school environment. As well, the project places a necessary focus on personal attitudes and their effect on your practice. Most importantly, it supports new ways to encourage your students' strengths and to ensure a maintained and systematic focus on addressing their unique needs in the learning environment.

The project involves three key components. Together they assist school boards in identifying the access and accommodation needs of deaf and hard of hearing students, and in producing a gap analysis. As well, these components provide the Ministry, and each participating school, with recommendations on how to equip students with the tools they need.

The three components are:

#### **A. Accessibility Site Reviews**

School site accessibility reviews provide an important guide for service delivery to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The reviews assess the physical environment, including technology accommodations, and make recommendations for service improvement and/or enhancement.

#### **B. Research**

Detailed research will be conducted on the current access needs of teachers and deaf or hard of hearing students for American Sign Language (ASL) – English and Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ) – French interpreting services. Research results will be shared with the

Ministry of Education, along with any recommendations aimed at improving interpreting supports in the classroom.

### **C. Professional Development**

A better understanding of the unique barriers faced by deaf or hard of hearing students is essential in creating an inclusive learning environment. An examination of our own attitudes and language, which illuminate how we respond to students with hearing loss, is also necessary. Two training workshops – Anti-Audism and Anti-Ableism Awareness, and Communication and Accessibility Awareness – are provided to aid in professional development.

Each of these components coalesces with the Ontario government's commitment, of over twenty years, to barrier-free education. They also exist within the larger framework of provincial, national and international legislation, policy and research. In particular, in June 2005, the groundbreaking Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was passed in the Ontario legislature. The AODA, which builds significantly on the progress made under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), promises that by 2025 Ontario will be fully accessible to all disability groups within the province. Under this landmark legislation, barriers will be identified, removed and prevented from re-emerging. To achieve this, annual accessibility strategies will be developed in key areas of the provincial and municipal governments, and in the broader public sector (including public transportation, colleges and universities, hospitals, businesses, and school boards). The legislation's requirements are directly applicable to your school board's practices and will mandate how you deliver services to students with disabilities, including those who are deaf or have hearing loss.



# Using the Reference Guide

This reference guide is an important resource for school boards engaged in the Barrier-Free Education Initiatives project, particularly as it relates to the professional development and site review components. The guide also includes additional resources and references connected to the topics explored in the awareness training. In addition, it provides crucial background information to support the creation and implementation of an accessibility plan, once a site review has been completed.

You are welcome to contact us for additional information, or with questions or concerns related to this material. Please direct inquiries to:

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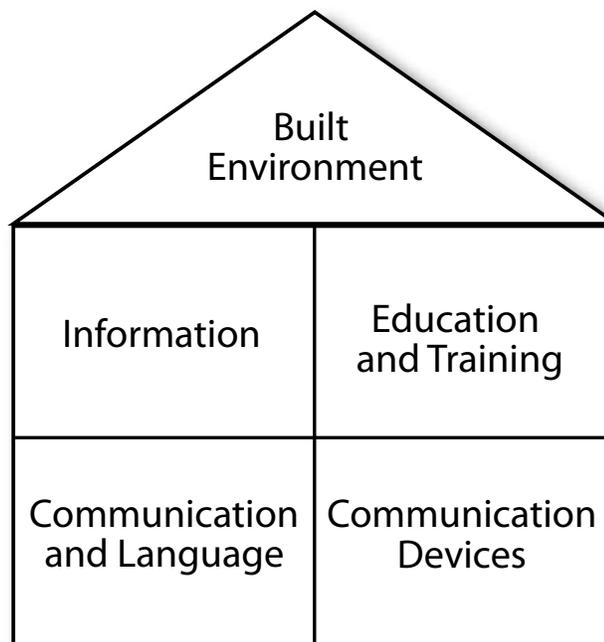
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# Communication and Accessibility

## Accessibility Building Blocks

To build anything properly, you need to start with a solid foundation. When addressing the issue of accessibility and accommodation for your deaf or hard of hearing students, there are five key building blocks that will comprise the foundation of your strategy. They are also the basis of the school site review process. By incorporating these building blocks into every aspect of your classroom, school and practice, you will begin to understand the barriers faced by this segment of your students. Only then will you be able to create an accessibility focus that is built on a solid foundation.



## **Built Environment**

The built environment of your classroom and school can have a significant impact on how information is relayed and received by students. Communicating information clearly and accurately during class, peer and guest presentations, one-on-one teacher-student meetings and emergency situations is of utmost importance. The safety of the physical space itself is also vital. Improvements to the built environment of your school and classroom can ensure you effectively connect with all your students. These improvements include the introduction of communication technology (e.g., adding visual fire alarms and emergency notification systems for students who do not have access to audible alarms or information). Also, simple structural or layout changes can address any identified acoustical challenges (e.g., carpeting and tiled ceilings can be installed to soften background sound) or safety concerns (e.g., convex mirrors can be placed in hallways so that deaf and hard of hearing students can see approaching people).

## **Information**

All students will be able to understand and benefit from school- and teacher-generated information if it is presented in American Sign Language (ASL), or Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ), as well as in plain language. Communicating crucial messages (including important board announcements, report cards, disciplinary notices, teaching material and information/directional instructions within the school) in a clear, visual and audible format, eliminates miscommunication with deaf or hard of hearing students and their parents or guardians.

## **Education and Training**

In order to maintain the long-term effectiveness of your commitment to a barrier-free education strategy, regular education and professional development opportunities must be provided to every member of your teaching, administrative and school support staff.

A deeper understanding of the diverse communication needs of deaf and hard of hearing students, as well as up-to-date communication devices training, will ensure that accessibility and inclusion are woven through every facet of the learning experience. From your newsletters home to parents, to school assemblies and field trips - your deaf and hard of hearing students will recognize your commitment to their learning success.

## **Communication and Language**

Communication is often assumed to refer only to spoken language (i.e., language development is tied to the ability to speak). In fact, communication includes spoken languages and signed languages. A student's preferred language determines the necessary communication accommodations rather than his or her ability to communicate. Identifying and understanding the language choices of a deaf or hard of hearing student is the essential first step in determining how to support and appropriately accommodate that choice. Signed language to spoken language interpreters and Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART or real-time captioning) are the most accurate and efficient means to facilitate communication.

## Communication Devices

Technology that enhances or facilitates communication is an easy and relatively inexpensive means to address the learning needs of your students. For example, providing systems that amplify a teacher's voice while reducing background noise (e.g., FM or soundfield systems) is of great benefit to hard of hearing students, and placing a TTY (teletypewriter a.k.a. text telephone) in the front office provides deaf students with access to telephonic communications.



## A Profile of Access Needs

To understand the distinct supports and accommodation needs of deaf, deafened and hard of hearing students, it is important to understand their respective communication methods. The following chart is a quick reference guide to the descriptive terms, and the communication choices and supports of students who are culturally Deaf, oral deaf, deafened, and hard of hearing.

	Communication choice	Communication supports
<p><b>Culturally Deaf students</b></p> <p>Deaf or hard of hearing individuals who identify with and participate in the language, culture and community of Deaf people</p> <p>The capital D in culturally Deaf signifies their view that deafness/hearing loss is a socio-cultural, rather than pathological, difference</p>	<p>Use a signed language such as American Sign Language (ASL) or Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ)</p> <p>May also use speechreading, gesturing, spoken language and written language to communicate with people who do not sign</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed language – spoken language interpreters</li> <li>• Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART)</li> <li>• Speechreading</li> <li>• Hearing aids or cochlear implants</li> <li>• Communication devices</li> </ul>
<p><b>Oral deaf students</b></p> <p>Individuals with severe to profound hearing loss, with little or no residual hearing, who prefer to communicate using speech</p>	<p>Primarily use speech to communicate, utilizing their residual hearing and hearing aids or cochlear implants, communication devices, and/or speechreading</p> <p>Some may also use a signed language such as ASL or LSQ to communicate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed language – spoken language interpreters</li> <li>• Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART)</li> <li>• Speechreading</li> <li>• Hearing aids or cochlear implants</li> <li>• Communication devices</li> </ul>

	Communication choice	Communication supports
<p><b>Deafened students</b></p> <p>Individuals who grew up hearing or hard of hearing and, either suddenly or gradually, experienced a profound hearing loss</p>	<p>Usually use speech with visual cues (such as captioning or computerized notetaking, speechreading, and ASL or LSQ)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed language – spoken language interpreter</li> <li>• Communication Access Real-time translation (CART)</li> <li>• Speechreading</li> <li>• Hearing aids or cochlear implants</li> <li>• Communication devices</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hard of hearing students</b></p> <p>Individuals with hearing loss</p>	<p>Use speech and residual hearing to communicate, supplemented by communication strategies (that may include speechreading, hearing aids, and communication devices)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Access Real-time translation (CART)</li> <li>• Speechreading</li> <li>• Hearing aids or cochlear implants</li> <li>• Communication devices</li> </ul>



# Anti-Audism and Anti-Ableism

## **Anti-Audism and Anti-Ableism Awareness Checklist**

The following checklist was developed in partnership with Gary Malkowski (CHS Special Advisor to the President, Public Affairs) and Dr. H-Dirksen L. Bauman (a professor at Galluadet University). Galluadet is a bilingual (ASL and English) post-secondary liberal arts institution and a model of accessible education. The University has earned an international reputation for the quality of its research into the history, language and culture of Deaf people. Galluadet's Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center is of special interest to this project. The Center serves deaf and hard of hearing children at its two demonstration schools and develops, implements and disseminates innovative educational strategies.

Dr. Bauman directs the Graduate Program in Deaf Studies and is the Coordinator of Bilingual Teaching and Learning at Galluadet. He is co-editor of the book/DVD project *Signing the Body Poetic: Essays in American Sign Language Literature* (University of California Press, 2006) and the editor of *Open Your Eyes: Deaf Studies Talking* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008). As well, Dr. Bauman is the Executive Producer and Co-Director of the video *Audism Unveiled* (with Ben Bahan and Facundo Montenegro, available in your training workshop materials). He also serves as Co-Executive Editor of the forthcoming *Deaf Studies Digital Journal*. Dr. Bauman has published numerous articles on signed language and signed language philosophy, audism, and bioethics.

Gary Malkowski was the world's first elected culturally Deaf politician and the first Parliamentarian to use a signed language in the legislature. He is a provincially and nationally recognized leader in human rights, anti-discrimination, and deaf and disability advocacy work. Mr. Malkowski has served as an advisor and a presenter to a number of government, human rights and ombudsman organizations on issues related to anti-discrimination, anti-audism and anti-ableism guidelines, policy, legislation, and regulation developments.

**The following checklist is intended to serve as a reminder that ableism and audism manifest in individual, institutional and ideological ways. The checklist's purpose is to help us recognize and change audist and ableist patterns of behavior in ourselves and in others.**

1. Am I able to articulate the definitions of ableism and audism and provide examples of each?  Yes  No
2. Have I assertively sought more information (by talking with others, reading and listening) in an effort to enhance my own awareness and understanding of ableism/audism?  Yes  No
3. Do I periodically examine my own ableist/audist attitudes and behaviors?  Yes  No
4. Do I take concrete actions to confront and reduce ableism/audism, such as checking my and others' use of terms, phrases, or behaviors that may be perceived by others as degrading or hurtful?  Yes  No
5. Have I inquired into the curriculum (also, the textbooks, support staffs, teachers of deaf students and administrations) of local schools regarding their treatment of the issues of ableism and audism?  Yes  No
6. Do I contribute time and/or funds to an agency, fund or program that actively confronts the problems of ableism and audism?  Yes  No

## Perceptions of Deafness

### *“Two Views of Deafness”*

*Chris Wixtrom*

Deafness is often perceived either as pathological (a deficit) or as only a difference. The following chart contrasting the two perceptions of deafness will help to highlight the ways in which you understand deafness.

<b>1st View: Deafness as Pathology</b>	<b>2nd View: Deafness as a Difference</b>
With this perspective, a person might:	With this perspective, a person might:
Define deafness as a pathological condition (a defect, or a handicap) which distinguishes abnormal deaf persons from normal hearing persons.	Define deafness as merely a difference, a characteristic which distinguishes normal deaf person from normal hearing persons. Recognize that deaf people are a linguistic and cultural minority.
Deny, downplay, or hide evidence of deafness.	Openly acknowledge deafness.
Seek a “cure” for deafness: focus on ameliorating the effects of the “auditory disability” or “impairment”.	Emphasize the abilities of deaf persons.
Give much attention to the use of hearing aids and other devices that enhance auditory perception and/or focus on speech. Examples: amplifiers, tactile and computer-aided speech devices, cue systems. . .	Give much attention to issues of communication access for deaf persons through visual devices and services. Examples: telecommunication devices, captioning devices, light signal devices, interpreters . . .
Place much emphasis on speech and speech reading (“oral skills”); avoid sign and other communication methods which are deemed “inferior”.	Encourage the development of all communication modes including - but not limited to - speech.
Promote the use of auditory-based communication modes; frown upon the use of modes which are primarily visual.	Strongly emphasize the use of vision as a positive, efficient alternative to the auditory channel.

Describe sign language as inferior to spoken language.	View sign language as equal to spoken language.
View spoken language as the most natural language for all persons, including the deaf.	View sign language as the most natural language for the deaf.
Make mastery of spoken language a central educational aim.	Support socialization within the deaf community as well as within the larger community.
Regard "the normal hearing person" as the best role model.	Regard successful deaf adults as positive role models for deaf children.
Regard professional involvement with the deaf as "helping the deaf" to "overcome their handicap" and to "live in the hearing world."	Regard professional involvement with the deaf as "working with the deaf" to "provide access to the same rights and privileges that hearing people enjoy."
Neither accepts nor supports a separate "deaf culture".	Respect, value and support the language and culture of deaf people.

Wixtrom, C. (1988). Two views of deafness. *The Deaf American*, 38(1), 3 – 10.



# Attitude Planning and Language Planning

The following information is excerpted from an article entitled *Attitude Planning: Constructing a Language Planning Framework toward Empowerment in Deaf Education* by Anita Small, M.Sc, Ed.D., and Joanne Cripps, CYW. The article in its entirety can be found on-line at [chs.ca](http://chs.ca).

## Introduction

This article reviews the history of language planning as it pertains to the education of Deaf students<sup>i</sup>. It identifies the crucial role of attitude planning as it impacts language planning and contrasts the education system in Saskatchewan and Alberta as they reflect contrasting language attitudes towards American Sign Language (ASL)<sup>ii</sup> in Canada. We offer a framework to examine attitude shift systemically. Most importantly, we provide a model to examine personal attitude shift as individual educators. We conclude with international studies and propose an evolutionary model to promote attitude shift for educators, health professionals, civil servants and service organization personnel who work with Deaf students. A questionnaire examining systemic and personal attitudes is provided to facilitate an environment that promotes an empowering education for Deaf students in Ontario.

## Audism and its Role in Language Planning

In this article the authors posit the assumption that audism exists in our society and that it has a profound impact on language planning as pertains to ASL. We must therefore begin with a definition of audism. Audism is the notion that one is superior based on one's ability to hear or behave in a manner of one who hears (Humphries 1977,12). Audism is a set of practices that elevates English and other spoken languages and devalues ASL and other signed languages. When we make a decision that a Deaf child should go to a public school with spoken English because they have some "residual hearing", we automatically

elevate English and display a lack of value for ASL. We also deny the contribution that ASL can make in that child's life. The term "audism" lay dormant until Lane revived it 15 years later in 1992. Tom Humphries originally applied audism to individual attitudes and behaviors, but Lane and others have broadened its scope to include institutional and group attitudes and practices that demean Deaf people. "It is the corporate and social institution that makes statements about Deaf people, governing where they go to school, teaching about them, authorizing views about them; audism is the hearing way of dominating, restructuring and exercising authority over the Deaf community" (Lane, 1992, 43). It may be conscious or unconscious, but in both cases it has an inherent and pervasive impact on language planning.

## **Deafhood and Its Role in Language Planning**

The term Deafhood was developed by British Deaf Ph.D, Paddy Ladd, in 1990 "in order to begin the process of defining an existential state of Deaf 'being in the world'" (Ladd, 2003). Ladd defines Deafhood "not as a finite state but as a process by which Deaf individuals come to actualize their Deaf identity" (Ladd, 2003). He posits this as a contrast to the medical term "deafness". Deafness assumes a loss and has been broadly applied to all Deaf people as in the term "hearing impaired" which initially referred primarily to "hard of hearing" elderly adults and rendered the true nature of Deaf collective existence invisible. As Deaf individuals (from birth or later in life) construct their identity as Deaf people, Deaf collective existence - Deafhood - emerges as a resource for the individual and society. Anti-audist attitudes would not only stop the devaluing of Deaf individuals and their signed language but would encourage environments that promote Deafhood.

We are now ready to explore how audist attitudes have impacted language planning and disempowerment of Deaf individuals in their own education and the potential for Deafhood as an essential resource to elevate Deaf individuals and their signed language in an empowering education of Deaf children.

## Language Planning History

Language planning has played a significant role in the education of Deaf students for more than two centuries. Nover (1992) has demonstrated evidence of language planning, beginning with the implementation of manually-coded French by De l’Epee in the 1760s and initiation of signing systems such as-SEE 1, LOVE, and SEE 2 that were put into practice in North America during the 1970s. These were in fact “methods” of instructional planning rather than actual language planning, since they are not naturally evolving languages. Over time they were treated as if they were de facto languages. During the 1970s, the provincial schools for Deaf students in Ontario experienced the introduction of the Rochester Method (fingerspelling), followed by Total Communication, based on the erroneous assumption that these methods would enable Deaf students to acquire English skills the way hearing and speaking enable hearing students to acquire English skills. They were designed to make English accessible on the hands. Although there is no evidence that emphasis on one or another variation of such methods is even a partial factor in contributing to basic language proficiency, the focus of language planning continues to be on the acquisition of English rather than on the acquisition of a signed language in its own right, with its own integrity, structure and knowledge base.

Total Communication is seeing a resurgence in this decade as educators have not been trained to use fluent ASL in teacher training programs and educators who are not fluent in ASL propose that it is only by way of putting English on the hands that Deaf students can become literate in English.

The stranglehold of imposing one or another variation of these “communication methods” on future teachers and their Deaf students interferes with students’ opportunity and ability to become empowered by their language and linguistically versatile with one or more languages such as ASL and English. Educators consistently have held a monolingual perspective that values English, devalues ASL and ignores evidence of the value of ASL in the development of English as well as its value in its own right. Research carried out during the past decade shows clear, consistent and significant findings that children who develop strong ASL proficiency develop better English literacy skills than those whose ASL abilities are weaker or non-existent (Strong and Prinz, 1997; Cummins, 2007). Despite these findings, government policies in Ontario continue to provide little support for the development of ASL proficiency in the early years or for the implementation of bilingual bicultural education for Deaf students. A case in point is our government policies that discourage children who receive cochlear implants from developing fluency in ASL based on the empirically unsupported assumption that ASL will interfere with the acquisition of oral English. In contrast, Scandinavian research specifically suggests a positive relationship between sign language and oral skills among children who received cochlear implants (Preisler, Tvingstedt and Ahlström, 2002).

Small and Mason (2008) point out that governments in general, engage in language planning to control language use among different social groups and populations in the interests of maintaining national, societal, and linguistic cohesion. In contrast, governments can engage in language planning to preserve and maintain the language and to use it as a resource in society (Cummins, 2005). Small and Mason (2008) identify how language planning can serve to enrich the population with the knowledge of a variety of languages and the cultural richness that comes with it. Thus, language planning has a profound impact on every aspect of society and is conducted in four arenas - attitude planning, status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning.

## **The Role of Attitude Planning**

While attitude planning is the least studied and written about, it has the most profound impact on all other areas of language planning. Attitude planning is carried, consciously or unconsciously, into all other arenas of language planning (refer to Figure 1). It is therefore powerful and insidious, and exerts the greatest influence over either maintaining the status quo, creating destructive change by devaluing a minority language or generating constructive change by promoting minority languages in education.

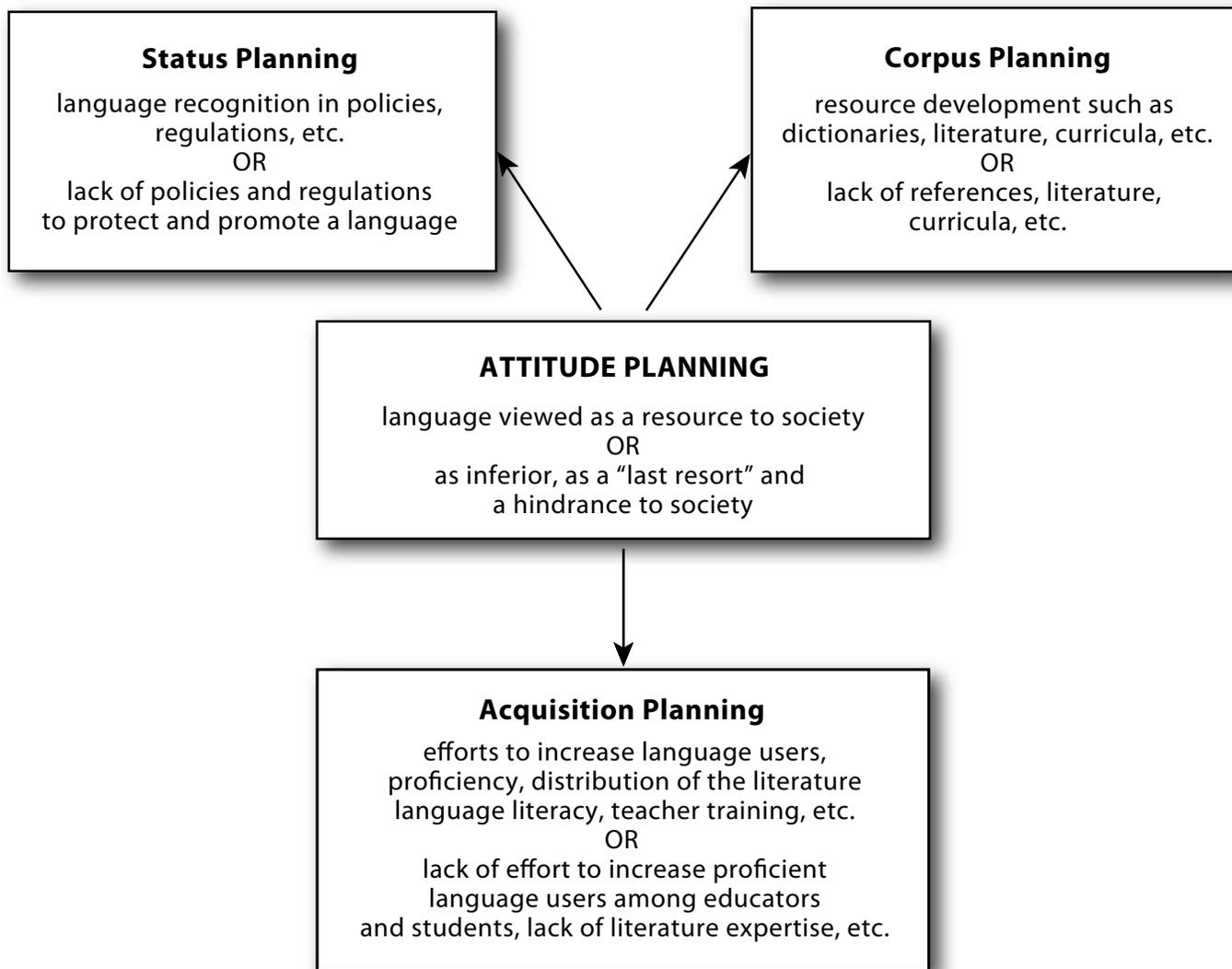


Figure 1. Attitude planning impact on each language planning arena.

Despite the acceptance of Bill 4 in 1993 in Ontario recognizing ASL and LSQ as languages of instruction, it is important to note the reluctance to accept regulations to accompany Bill 4 which would ensure the implementation of ASL in the schools (status planning), the lack of ASL curriculum acceptance and ASL literature resources outside of the provincial schools for Deaf students (corpus planning) and the lack of teacher training programs to insist on a level of excellence in ASL skill for those who would teach any Deaf child (acquisition planning).

Despite the nearly unchallenged recognition that ASL meets the criteria of a language, many administrators and educators continue to resist use of ASL in Ontario. Small and Mason (2008) continue to point out that despite the long and rich history of ASL in North America, and the fact that scholarly research on ASL is in its fourth decade, ASL has been slow to gain status amongst hearing academics (Wilcox and Wilcox, 1992, Mayer and Wells, 1996). Such resistance to accept ASL as an academic language likely is attributed to the attitude that English is superior and ASL is inferior even though both are equally sophisticated. The negative attitudes to ASL and other sign languages can be attributed to pervasive audism in our society, whether conscious or unconscious. Policy decisions are primarily made by politicians and educators who do not know ASL or are somewhat familiar with it and take that as license to make decisions about its academic use or lack thereof based on partial information and misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the language. In contrast to North America, in many parts of Europe, language planning efforts encourage multi-sign language use just as hearing children are encouraged to use many spoken languages (Mahshie, 1995). This is in contrast with Canada and the United States which tend to value English above all other languages; The majority of Deaf children in Canada and the US are mainstreamed with hearing children and raised without ASL because of the false assumption that intellectual pursuit and high academic achievement are not possible without

spoken language and that spoken language and human communication are one and the same. Inherent in this approach is the belief that Deaf children are better served if they can assimilate into the mainstream by being as much like hearing children as possible. This attitude has huge implications for language planning for Deaf children in educational systems such as in Ontario, that have accepted ASL education to some extent. Attitudes towards ASL place a cap on how much implementation ASL education will have in the system as a whole.

## **Access versus System Change**

There is a huge difference between access and change. What we gain from access may not be good for us. We must ask ourselves, what do we need to change in order to create true empowerment.

*Adapted from woman activist, Gloria Steinem, June, 2000  
Author of "Revolution from Within"*

Many school boards across Canada work to provide access for Deaf students with an eye towards inclusion and universal design. One cannot deny the importance of access as it begins to provide a level playing field for Deaf students. However it is simply not enough. A Jewish individual may gain full access to a church service in English, but it still is not their place of worship and community and they have the right to express themselves in a synagogue reflecting their values, language, culture and beliefs. So too, a Deaf student may gain access to the curriculum with an interpreter present, but the curriculum and environment still does not reflect Deaf role models, Deaf literature created by great ASL poets, Deaf historical figures who impacted society, and endless opportunity for social participation and leadership. An "inclusive" environment that provides access is still one in which Deaf students are constantly expelling energy in attempts to penetrate the core of the school system. For Deaf children, true "inclusion means: they feel secure, loved and included

in all areas of family life; they have relationships with peers to help gain a knowledge of self; they are provided by the Deaf community with role models, values and heritage thus ensuring a natural social development within a minority; and they are able to interact with hearing society on a daily basis.”(Cripps, 2000, p.3).

In a truly empowering system that is based in ASL and Deaf culture, students are already in the core of the system both in academic studies as well as in the social arena where much of our learning takes place.

While access is palliative, system change is preventative; while access provides opportunities to engage with parts of the educational environment, system change is wholistic and permeates the entire educational environment. System change that creates an empowering environment is generated through ongoing interactions. “The more empowered an individual or group becomes, the more is generated for others to share, as is the case when two people love each other or when we really connect with children we are teaching” (Cummins, 2003). In this context, empowerment is the collaborative creation of power. In an empowering environment, students’ sense of identity is affirmed and extended in their interactions with educators and fellow students. The school nurtures the child’s spirit and in turn, the child’s spirit is enhanced and acts upon the system (Cummins, 2003). As it pertains to Deaf children, the educational system amplifies “who they are”, rather than focusing on amplifying their hearing.

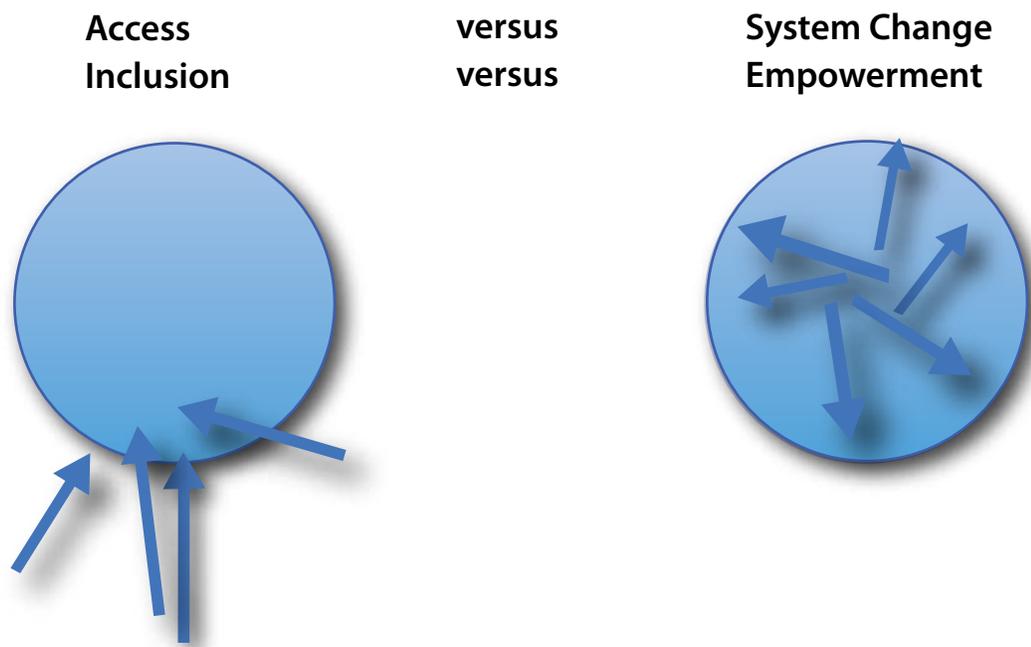


Figure 2. Access versus System Change (Small, 2000).



## A Framework for Complex System Change

VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVE	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	CHANGE
	SKILLS	INCENTIVE	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	CONFUSION
VISION		INCENTIVE	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	ANXIETY
VISION	SKILLS		RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	GRADUAL CHANGE
VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVE		ACTION PLAN	FRUSTRATION
VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVE	RESOURCES		FALSE START

Figure 3. Managing Complex System Change (Ambrose, 1987)

This framework can be most helpful in implementing change including attitude change, by identifying areas of support needed to ensure that educators involved do not get “stuck” in one arena. The framework outlines areas in need of attention. These include: the development of a common vision (e.g. bilingual education), the skills necessary (e.g. staff ASL expertise), incentive (e.g. increased pay with increased levels of ASL), resources (e.g. curricula, ASL literature on DVDs), action plan (e.g. free ASL classes for teachers and implementing ASL environments where it is understood that ASL is used to the best of everyone’s ability at all times). Business professionals teach this framework (e.g. Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto) and hospitals educate their administrators on its design with an eye to improving their system (e.g. Hospital for Sick Children). This in and of itself does not promise change in attitude. We must first examine our individual attitudes.

## A Framework for Individual Attitude Change

In the early 1990's Helms described majority identity development and Cross described minority identity development as it impacted race relations among Caucasian and African-American students (Tatum, 1992). These frameworks were examined and found to be extremely useful when applied to cross cultural interaction among Deaf and hearing educators in the first bilingual schools for Deaf students in the United States (Philip and Small, 1992). They were later adapted by Small for bilingual bicultural education teacher training at York University. The frameworks are most helpful and intended to be used introspectively – to examine our own attitudes and behaviors rather than others. We cycle through these stages and sometimes re-cycle through them. It is important to note likely scenarios that may occur as the frameworks for majority and minority identity development interact with each other. For example, a hearing individual in the Pseudo-independent stage will be inclined to want to be with Deaf individuals while perhaps still unintentionally perpetuating audism. If that person interacts with a Deaf individual in the Immersion/Emersion stage who is inclined to wish to be with Deaf individuals, the two will in all probability, clash. However, both are progressing along in their identity development and at some future time could collaborate beautifully with one another to eradicate audism and promote an empowering educational environment for Deaf students.

## Minority Identity Development

STAGES	VALUES	STRATEGIES
Pre-Encounter	Think majority is better	Think minority has nothing to do with his personal life
Encounter	Events force him to confront audism	Forced to focus on his identity as member of minority
Immersion/ Emersion	Denigrate majority and glorify minority	Surround with symbols of Deaf identity and avoid symbols of majority
Internalization	Secure in Deaf identity	Build relation with majority who respect
Internalization/ Commitment	Commitment-proactively recognize and go past oppression	Point of departure to discover universe

Figure 4. Minority Identity Development adapted by Small, A. (Cross, 1992)

## Majority Identity Development

STAGES	VALUES	STRATEGIES
Contact	Lack of awareness of cultural and institutional audism and own privilege	Stereotype
Disintegration	Awareness and guilt, shame, anger, cognitive dissonance	Denial or attempt to change significant other's attitudes, of minority group withdrawal
Reintegration	Pressure to accept status quo	Guilt and anxiety redirected as fear and anger at minority-blame minority for discomfort
Pseudo-independent	Abandon beliefs but may still unintentionally perpetuate system	Actively affiliate with Deaf and/or alienated from hearing who haven't begun to examine their own audism
Immersion/Emersion	Uncomfortable with being hearing, can't be anything else	Seek to learn from hearing anti-audists
Autonomy	Newly defined sense of self	Energized to confront audism/ oppression; can forge alliances because more consistent anti-audist behaviour

Figure 5. Majority identity development adapted by Small, A. (Helms, 1992)

## A Model for Ontario: Attitudinal Evolution

We are in charge of our attitudes. Attitudes evolve and are dynamic – we are not bad or good; audist or not audist – we evolve. Therefore, attitude planning must assume evolution. Ladd (2003, pp 409) points out that the beauty of Deafhood is that it offers the chance for the “community to find out what it might become when the weight of oppression is lifted. [It] not only permits a belief in cultural change that promotes the collective but [also] suggests directions towards which that change might orient itself”. Similarly, anti-audist attitudinal evolution not only permits an escape from a constrained pathological perspective of Deaf students but also suggests a collaborative liberating role to co-promote empowerment. Ladd (2003) challenges us not to view attitudes as dichotomies contrasting bad and good. Similarly the model presented in this article provides an alternative that is evolutionary in nature. We can, in fact, create accepting, additive educational environments that reflect “Deaf cultural space” and then grow into it.

Language is at the heart of language attitude planning. An evolutionary educational context can create a change that is totally transformative and empowering for Deaf students in Ontario. We refrain from providing recommendations for language planning outcomes as that is the purview of another article. There is much that must be examined for proper implementation of empowering language planning. Instead, we conclude with two reflective questionnaires for all personnel in the Deaf students’ environment including teaching staff, support staff and administrators. The Personal Attitude Shift (PAS) Questionnaire (Appendix A) and the System Attitude Shift (SAS) Questionnaire (Appendix B) can be used to begin the reflective process toward constructing empowering school environments for Deaf students.



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## Endnotes

- <sup>i</sup> We use capital "D" when referring to all Deaf individuals. This is not to place a particular identity on particular individuals. Rather it is to indicate that ASL and Deaf culture are the birthright of every Deaf individual by virtue of their having been born Deaf or become Deaf in childhood, whether or not they have been exposed to it. This is in keeping with how authors refer to individuals from other cultural groups such as Black or Jewish individuals regardless of the strength of their identity. We do not make assumptions about each individual's identity for them by determining whether they should have a capital or not. (Pizzacalla and Cripps, 1997).
- <sup>ii</sup> The authors do not address attitude planning regarding Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ) or other sign languages in Canada as we do not operate in these communities or education systems. Our focus is on ASL in the Ontario education system. It is worth noting however that both ASL and LSQ are recognized as languages of instruction in Ontario. The LSQ community and educators will determine the relevance of the ideas put forth in this article as they may or may not pertain to their attitude planning needs.

# Appendix A

## Personal Attitude Shift (PAS) Questionnaire

1. What is my “story”? How have I been educated and what has impacted my values? When I look at the Minority/ Majority Identity Development charts (Figures 4 and 5) what values do I hold and what strategies do I use? What stage do I think I am at right now?
2. What situations push my buttons? How do I respond? How could I respond differently?
3. Ask yourself this . . . what is my role in this situation, what is my role in general with Deaf children?
4. Am I practicing audism? I did not know this, but I am ready to change. What can I do to change?
5. What prevents me from signing all the time?
6. I feel strange as a hearing person signing to another hearing person signing. When is the appropriate time to sign or talk?
7. We are in a position of POWER. Children do not have the power per se. We do. We make decisions where they should be placed by the level of their hearing loss. By doing so, we take away the power of language and natural interaction from them thereby making them dependent on the system.
  - If my position is neutral, are children victims of my decision by remaining neutral?
  - No one is ever neutral. By using this term, does this prevent me from confronting the real issues?
  - If my position is CHOICES, what do I see my role with regards to children’s rights?
  - Isolation for any child is the worst thing. For a Deaf child mainstreamed, it is more so. What is my role in this?
8. Have I bothered to understand Deaf history and learn from it in order to prevent a cycle and strengthen relationships? Or do I prefer to rely on “experts” involved in “Special Needs” education who have not walked in Deaf shoes?
9. I have something to learn in order to support an empowering environment for Deaf students. What is it? Be specific. How can I best learn it?
10. I have something to contribute to an empowering environment for Deaf students. How can I contribute?

# Appendix B

## System Attitude Shift (SAS) Questionnaire

Developed by Anita Small, M.Sc., Ed.D. and Joanne Cripps, CYW

1. Do we sign at all times?
2. What prevents us from signing all the time?
3. Are we afraid to make mistakes?
4. Do we have fun improving our ASL skills?
5. Does our system have mentorship for learning/interacting in ASL?
6. Do we have an environment where we are paired with each other?
7. Is there an audism free policy in our school?
8. Identify what you have right now in the language planning areas:
  - Status Planning
  - Corpus Planning
  - Acquisition Planning
9. Identify what you want to have in the language planning areas:
  - Status Planning
  - Corpus Planning
  - Acquisition Planning

Then work out a plan to achieve those.

10. Identify how your school system is doing in the following areas:
  - Do we have a shared vision for creating an empowering environment/ Deaf cultural space for our students? What is it? Why not? What stops us?
  - What skills do we have as a staff?
  - What incentives do we have?
  - What resources do we have?
11. Identify what you feel you need in each area:
  - How can we create an empowering environment that truly reflects “Deaf cultural space”?
  - What skills do we need as a staff?
  - What incentives do we need?
  - What resources do we need?
12. What action plan do we need to develop for each of these? Who will be responsible for each part of the plan, what is the timeline for each component of the plan? How will we all know we are making progress?

## Changing Perspectives

### “Reframing: From Hearing-Loss to Deaf-Gain”

*Dr. H-Dirksen L. Bauman*

The following article, “Reframing: From Hearing-Loss to Deaf-Gain” by Dr. H-Dirksen L. Bauman, gives a new perspective on how we understand deafness and the ways in which we internalize those perspectives. At the same time, Dr. Bauman asks us to reframe those perspectives, to shift our paradigm and consider the ways in which a deaf person can enhance the ways in which we know and understand.



## Reframing: From Hearing-Loss To Deaf-Gain

*By H-Dirksen L. Bauman, Ph.D.*

*Gallaudet University*

# Section A: Framing

**Definition:** “Framing” is a basic means through which we understand the world (Goffman, 1974). Framing is a process of presenting and receiving information which encourages certain interpretations while discouraging others.

**Example:** A common saying in English: Some people see the glass half empty while others see it half full. Same glass of water, but two different frames of reference result in two different sets of interpretation—one optimistic, the other pessimistic.

**Going Deeper:** Yet, if we step back and consider this example, we see that another layer of framing is operating: that is, how we conceive of “emptiness” and “fullness” in the first place. A glass may be empty of liquid, yet it is completely full of oxygen. Our interpretations of the world often depend on what the dominant frame encourages us to value. Frames of interpretation are most successful when they are uncritically accepted as ‘the way things are.’

**Reflection:** What frames do politicians and the media use to shape our ideas? Read the newspaper and identify frames created for public consumption. Consider, for example, “tax relief” which defines taxes as a burden (Lakoff, 2004).



# Section B

## Dominant Frame: Hearing

### **Definition: Normal Hearing**

Deafness only has meaning in comparison with 'normal hearing.' The ear is designed to conduct air-waves and translate them into brain impulses that result in the processing of sound.

**Going Deeper:** *Hearing-oneself-speak* is such a basic aspect of hearing individuals' lives that it is taken for granted. Yet, hearing oneself speak provides hearing people with a sense of full self-presence (Derrida, 1974). In a sense: I hear myself speak, therefore I am. The power of the frame rests in its claim to common sense.

### **Reflection:**

- Name and reflect upon three examples from your life that demonstrate the power of the voice as it relates to perceptions of intelligence, class, power and identity.



# Section C

## Dominant Frame: Loss

**Definition:** The frame of hearing-as-fullness controls the possible meanings associated with deafness: loss, lack, absence, void, deficiency. If intelligence, power, and identity are derived through the full presence of the voice, then deaf people are often seen as less fully present, intelligent and less capable of being agents of their own lives.

**Going Deeper:** The social obligation of a just, technologically advanced society to fix its problems. Since the 19th century, the institutions of medicine and education have been intent to fill the void of hearing loss through speech training, therapy, and medical interventions.

The focus on rehabilitation has often resulted in the campaign to remove sign language from the lives of deaf individuals (Baynton, 1996). The myth that early acquisition of a sign language will hinder the acquisition of a spoken and written language has persisted within medical and educational discourses.

## **Reflections:**

- In the focus on rehabilitating deaf children, what are the unintended consequences of not exposing deaf children to a sign language environment?
- What are the psychological effects of language delay in deaf children?
- What myths of learning would bolster monolingual education over bilingual education?
- What is the current status of sign languages in deaf education?
- How can the irony be explained, that hearing infants are encouraged to learn sign language because of proven cognitive and psychological benefits while deaf children are actively denied access to sign language?
- What sign languages are in threat of language endangerment? Why are these languages in highly technologically advanced countries?

# Section D

## A New Frame: Biocultural Diversity

### Definitions

- **Biodiversity:** the variation of life forms, which serves to indicate the relative health of an ecosystem. The greater amount of biodiversity, the greater health of an ecosystem.
- **Biocultural Diversity:** an “area of transdisciplinary research concerned with investigating the links between the world’s linguistic, cultural and biological diversity” (Maffi 2005). The greater amount of cultural and linguistic diversity, the greater health of humanity.

**Going Deeper:** “Just as with species, the world is now undergoing a massive human-made extinction crisis of languages and cultures” (Terlingua.org). Currently, there are roughly 6000 spoken languages in the world (Ethnologue.org). In 100 years, the number of the world’s languages will be reduced by one half. This amounts to a language extinction at the rate of one every two weeks (Crystal 2002).

### Reflections:

- The 19th and 20th centuries have created the conditions of mass production and standardization. From clothing to transportation, we have been on a powerful drive toward greater normalization. What are the unintended consequences of a drive toward standardization and normalization?
- What is lost when a language and a culture disappear?
- What explains the correlation between bio, linguistic and cultural degradation?



# Section E

## New Frame: Deaf-Gain

### **Definition:**

**Deaf-Gain:** Focuses on what can be learned from deaf people whose visual, spatial, and kinesthetic structures of thought, language, and cultural activities offer new perspectives on traditional ways of knowing. This reframing sees deafness as a form of human diversity with vital contributions to the collective good.

### **Going Deeper:**

#### ***Deaf-Gain and Cognitive Diversity***

- *Language:* Sign languages of Deaf communities have fundamentally altered our understanding of the nature of language.
- *Visual Learning:* While Deaf people do not see better than anyone else, they have pushed the limits on the uses of the visual processing of information (Bahan, 2008).

#### ***Deaf-Gain and Creative Diversity***

- *Deaf Space:* Architectural designs and urban planning from a Deaf perspective may create environments that would be a good design for all;
- *Sign Language Literature/Drama:* Deaf performers do what many hearing authors/performers wish to do—for texts to embody visual images.
- *Film Language/Sign Language:* The structure of sign languages bear homological similarities to film.

#### ***Deaf Gain and Cultural Diversity:***

- *Collectivist Ways of Being:* At a time when sociologists note the isola-

tion of modern culture, Deaf culture promotes sustained eye-contact and reciprocal altruism when engaged in simple acts, such as walking together (Sirvage 2009).

- *Transnationalism*: Historically, Deaf people have been connected in a transnational context, with visual language allowing greater understanding across language barriers (Murray, 2008).

## Reflection

- If deaf people had been eradicated in the eugenic drive toward perfection, how would our knowledge and society be different?
- What other specific examples of Deaf-Gain can you think of?
- Given that gesture has been proven to enhance learning (Goldin-Meadow 2003), how can deaf education take the lead in visual learning techniques? How could deaf education reawaken the fundamental role of the hand and gesture in thought?
- What Deaf-space design principles can you imagine would be good design concepts for everyone?
- What innovations in film may arise from a culture that uses a cinematic-like language everyday?
- Might there be ways that we can learn from and emulate a more collectivist way of being?
- How would human communication be enhanced through more sustained eye-contact and circular social and physical arrangements?
- How does the notion of the transnational connections of Deaf people contrast with the popular image of Deaf people as being isolated and insular?
- Consider the phrase: "Deaf people can do anything except hear." Is this a product of the Frame of Loss or the Frame of Gain?

## Final Thoughts

### What are the implications of Deaf-Gain on Deaf Education?

- Do we teach to deaf people's strengths? Do we let them know of their vital contributions not in spite of being Deaf, but because of being Deaf?
- Do we teach within the Frame of Hearing Loss, which automatically places Deaf people at a deficit, or do we teach Deaf children through a Frame of Gain, which values the human diversity inherent in Deaf Ways of Being?
- Have we begun to prepare Deaf people for careers, which would benefit from Deaf ways of being?

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This workbook is based on an article originally written with Dr. Joseph Murray entitled, "Deaf Studies in the 21st Century: Deaf-Gain and the Future of Human Diversity" published in Marshark and Spencer, *Oxford Handbook on Deaf Studies, Language and Education*, Vol 2. Oxford UP, forthcoming.

## Additional Resources

### Resource Books on Anti-Audism and Anti-Abelism

Bauman, H-Dirksen L., ed. 2007. *Open Your Eyes: Deaf Studies Talking*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Bauman, H-Dirksen L. 2004. Audism: Exploring the Metaphysics of Oppression. *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education*. 9:2.

Hehir, Thomas. 2005. *New Directions in Special Education: Eliminating Ableism in Policy and Practice*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

### Ministry of Education Reports

[edu.gov.on.ca](http://edu.gov.on.ca)

Ministry of Education. April 2009 *Realizing the Promise of Diversity: Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy*. Toronto, ON.

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Ministry of Education. 2005. *Education for All. The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6*. Toronto, ON

## **Related Ontario Human Rights Commission Policy and Guidelines**

### **ohrc.on.ca**

Ontario Human Rights Commission. June 2005. Policy and Guidelines on Racism and Racial Discrimination. Toronto, ON.

Ontario Human Rights Commission. September 2004. Policy and Guidelines on Accessible Education. Toronto, ON.

Ontario Human Rights Commission. November 2000. Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate. Toronto, ON.

Ontario Human Rights Commission. The Opportunity to Succeed: Achieving Barrier-free Education for Students with Disabilities. Consultation Report. Toronto, ON.

## **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Resources**

### **mcss.gov.on.ca**

Ministry of Community and Social Services. 2005. About the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Toronto, ON.

Ministry of Community and Social Services. December 2007. 2007 Annual Report: Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005). Toronto, ON.

## **The Canadian Hearing Society Position Papers**

### **chs.ca**

The Canadian Hearing Society. November 2007. The Canadian Hearing Society Position Paper on Discrimination and Audism. Toronto, ON.

The Canadian Hearing Society. April 2007. The Canadian Hearing Society Position Paper on Accessibility and Accommodation. Toronto, ON.

The Canadian Hearing Society. November 2007. The Canadian Hearing Society Position Paper on Alarms and Emergency Notification Systems. Toronto, ON.

The Canadian Hearing Society. October 2008. The Canadian Hearing Society Position Paper on Noise Pollution. Toronto, ON.

## Glossary

**Ableism:** Discrimination (in belief or practice) based on a person's abilities, whether developmental, learning, physical, psychiatric or sensory. Ableism is a form discrimination that devalues and disregards people with disabilities.

**Access:** The creation of an environment where people, regardless of their disability, can communicate clearly and participate actively.

**Accommodation:** Adjustments or modifications that remove any barriers to full communication and participation by persons with disabilities.

**Audism:** A form of discrimination based on a person's ability to hear or behave in the manner of one who hears, including the conveyance of beliefs that a hearing person or a deaf person who behaves in a manner more similar to a hearing person, in appearance, communication and language use, and/or function, is more intelligent, qualified, well-developed, and successful than another individual who may be culturally Deaf and/or have a preference for the use of a signed language or a communication mode dissimilar to that used by hearing people.

**Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART):** A communication support in which there is a simultaneous translation of spoken language into a visual display of the written form of that language. CART includes stenographic and laptop computer technology and a captioner types simultaneously what is spoken and this transcript is displayed on a laptop, computer monitor or projected to a large screen.

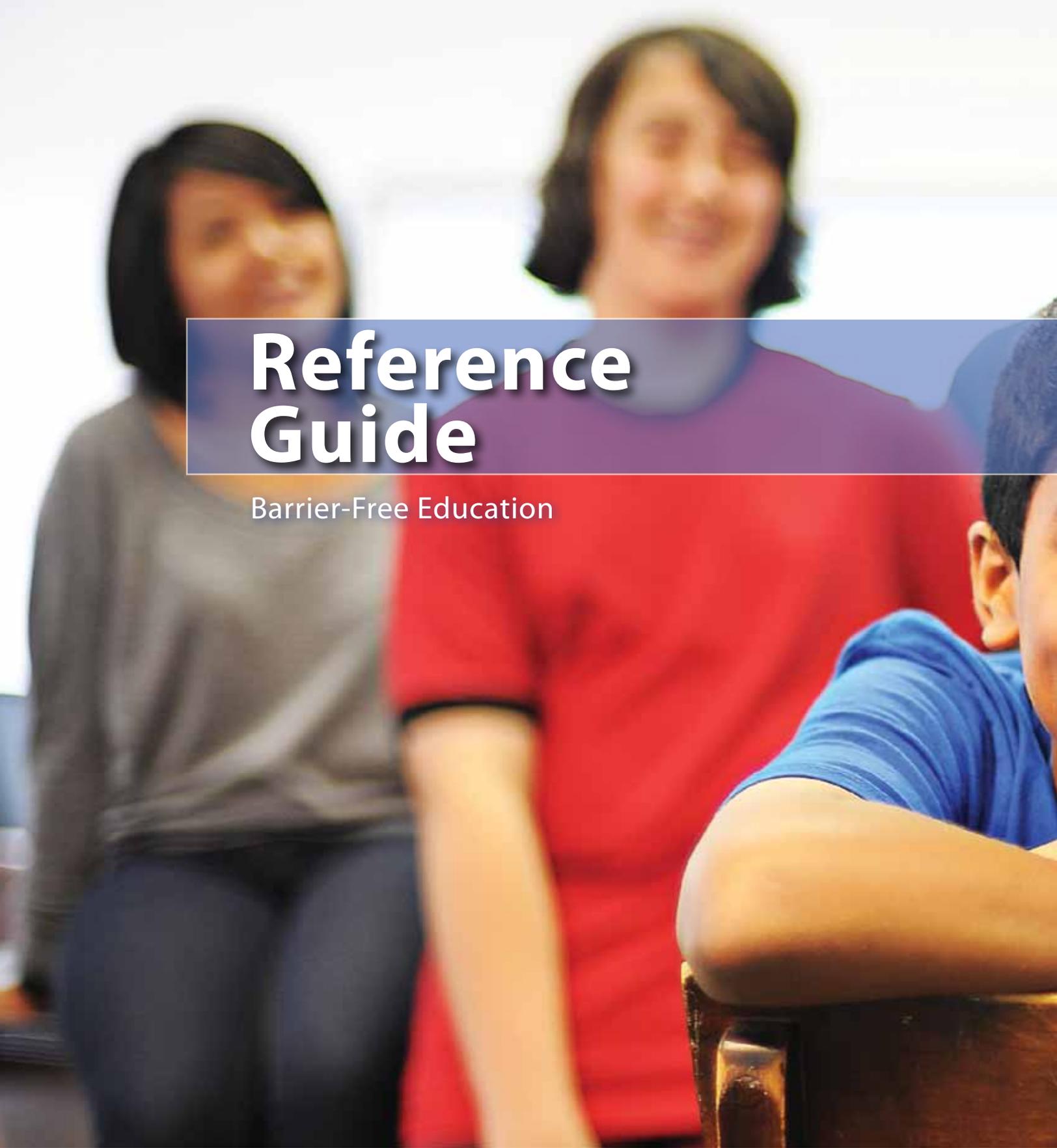
**Deaf culture:** The celebration of a signed language (in Canada, ASL and LSQ) and other values, traditions, and behaviours specific to the Deaf community. Deaf culture offers a strong sense of belonging and takes a socio-cultural point of view of deafness, rather than a pathological perspective.

**Deafhood:** An existential state of Deaf being in the world. Deafhood is not a finite state but a process by which Deaf individuals come to actualize their Deaf identity and construct their identity as Deaf people (i.e., a Deaf collective existence).

**Interpreters:** (American Sign Language (ASL) – English, Langue des signes québécoise (LSQ) – French) Professional interpreters are knowledgeable in the language and culture of Deaf and hearing people and provide communication in both a signed language and a spoken language (e.g., ASL and spoken English), ensuring that the message is interpreted in a culturally appropriate manner.

**Speechreading:** A communication support in which an individual watches a speaker's lips, teeth and tongue, along with many other cues, such as facial expressions, gestures, context and body language. When used alone, the effectiveness of speechreading varies since more than half the movements involved in sound formation occur within the mouth and cannot be detected by the eye. 40 to 60 percent of English words are homophenes (i.e., words which look identical on a speaker's face) and there is not a single sound that has a distinct lip/jaw movement/position of its own.

**Notetakers (Manual and Computerized):** Written or typed notes summarizing (not a word-for-word transcription) classroom instruction and discussion. Notetakers allow students who are using communication devices, speechreading, and/or interpreters, to concentrate fully on those supports so vital information is not missed.



# Reference Guide

Barrier-Free Education

