



Signs of globalisation: What is ASL doing in NZSL?

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Context

NZSL is related to BSL & Auslan, but we observe an increase in ASL-concordant signs filling lexical gaps and co-existing with older local variants. Does this lexical change reflect more hybrid SL repertoires linked to digital & personal mobility, and ASL's presence in global Deaf space?

Research questions

- Contact induced variation:** To what extent is ASL influence present in NZSL repertoires?
- Linguistic ideology:** Do signers identify ASL-concordant signs as foreign? Is SL borrowing perceived as threat or resource to NZSL?

1. Linguistic landscape scan

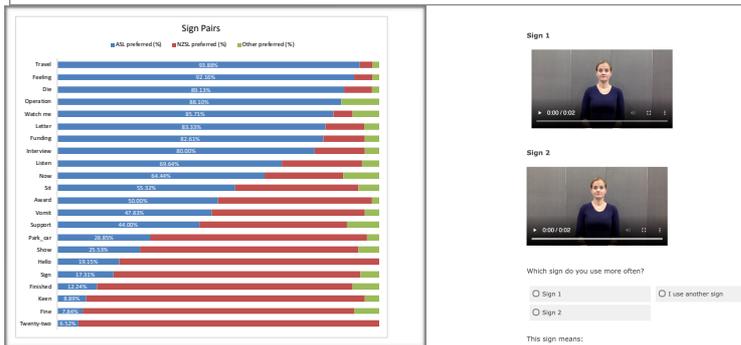
Lexicon: in 52 online NZSL texts found 305 ASL-concordant signs
Phonology: ASL h.s. in initialised signs; unmarked NZ h.s. replaced by marked ASL h.s. (eg FEEL); ASL FS alternated with 2-h FS

2. Online survey of variant use and ASL contact awareness

117 responses (99 complete). 60 % in NZSL sector roles - teachers, interpreters, deaf services ('influencers')

Survey Task 1: Variant preference

10 randomised pairs of ASL/NZSL variants



ASL & NZSL signs in a sentence (Deaf Aotearoa newsletter)

(they)-INFORM-me (ASL)	(I)-ALERTyou-all (NZSL)
SPECIFIC (ASL, NZ hs)	SYSTEM (ASL)
NAME (NZSL)	TITLE (ASL)

Presentation style change (2 signers in an issue of community e-newsletter)

HELLO	EVERYONE
'Traditional' (+ mouthing, relaxed hs & mvt)	
'Modern' (no mouthing, firm hs & mvt, ASL forms – salute, honorific address)	

Results

Of 22 pairs, ASL-concordant form preferred by **52.39%** (mean). **NZSL** form preferred by **42.36%**. Indicates change in progress.

Survey Task 2: Sign origin awareness



Results

Overall low identification of ASL-concordant signs: 47% (mean) of ASL signs attributed to NZSL; 14% (mean) of ASL signs attributed to

3. Interviews: Language ideology

- Empirically low perception of ASL influence in NZSL: 'naturalisation' of borrowed elements.
- NZSL-ASL variant pairs explained as having different semantics or age usage - not contrasting national origin.
- Some stated resistance (in principle) to foreign loans vs local innovation: value on local 'agency' in developing, protecting NZSL.
- Spontaneous borrowing from other SLs seen as a normal way to expand NZSL (= vitality). National language boundaries not salient in language practices/beliefs of NZSL community. Hybridity supports global deaf connection & mobility.

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