

Language Policy Proposal: American Sign Language

Background: American Sign Language (ASL) is a natural language used by many Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals in the United States. It is a complete language with its own grammar and syntax, and it is the primary means of communication for many Deaf individuals. Despite this, ASL is not widely recognized and valued as a language in many contexts, including education, employment, and public life.

Purpose: The purpose of this language policy proposal is to recognize ASL as a legitimate language and to promote its use and recognition in various settings. This policy proposal seeks to achieve the following goals:

1. Raise awareness about ASL and its status as language
2. Promote the use of ASL in various contexts, including education, employment, and public life
3. Encourage the development of resources and programs to support the learning and use of ASL.
4. Increase recognition and respect for Deaf culture and the Deaf community.

Policy Recommendations: In order to achieve the goals outline, we propose the following policy recommendations:

1. **Recognition of ASL as a language:** We recommend that ASL be officially recognized as a language in all contexts where language proficiency is required, such as education, employment, healthcare, and government services.
2. **Promotion of ASL use:** We recommend that ASL be promoted and encourage for use in various contexts, including but not limited to:
 - **Education:** ASL should be recognized as a language of instruction and be offered as a foreign language option in schools and universities.
 - **Employment:** Employers should recognize ASL proficiency as a valuable skill and should consider it in hiring and promotion decisions.
 - **Public life:** ASL should be made available in public settings, such as government offices and events, to ensure access and inclusion for Deaf individuals.
3. **Development of resources and programs:** We recommend the development of resources and programs to support the learning and use of ASL, including
 - **Teaching training program:** Programs should be developed to train interpreters in ASL interpretation and to promote professional standards in interpreting.
 - **Online resources:** Online resources should be developed to provide accessible and affordable ASL instruction to a wider audience.
4. **Recognition and respect for Deaf culture:** We recommend that efforts be made to increase recognition and respect for Deaf culture and the Deaf community, including:
 - **Incorporation of Deaf culture in education and curriculum:** Schools and universities should incorporate Deaf culture into their curricula to promote understanding and respect for the Deaf community.
 - **Promotion of Deaf-led initiatives:** Efforts should be made to promote Deaf -led initiatives and organizations to increase visibility and respect for the Deaf community.

- Increased representation: Efforts should be made to increase representation of Deaf individuals in various contexts, including media, government, and public life.

Implementation: In order to implement this language policy proposal, we recommend the following steps:

1. Dissemination of information: Information about policy proposal should be disseminated widely to relevant stakeholders, including educators, employers, and government officials.
2. Consultation with the Deaf community: The Deaf community should be consulted and involved in the development and implementation of this policy proposal to ensure that it is responsive to their needs and priorities.
3. Allocation of resources: Resources should be allocated to support the development of programs and resources to promote ASL use and recognition.
4. Evaluation and review: The implementation of this policy proposal should be evaluated and reviewed regularly to ensure that it is achieving the intended goals and make adjustments as necessary.

The proposed language policy aims to acknowledge and endorse ASL as language, thereby securing equal access and opportunities for the Deaf community in the United States. Adopting the measures presented in this proposed can facilitate the preservation and flourishing of ASL as both language and a culture. It is imperative to take action towards this policy to promote equality and inclusivity for the Deaf community.