

# Is there disruption in the sign language interpreting profession?

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# Context...



## Deaf sign language users

- 70 million deaf sign language users in the world (WFD)
- 138 sign languages listed on Ethnologue

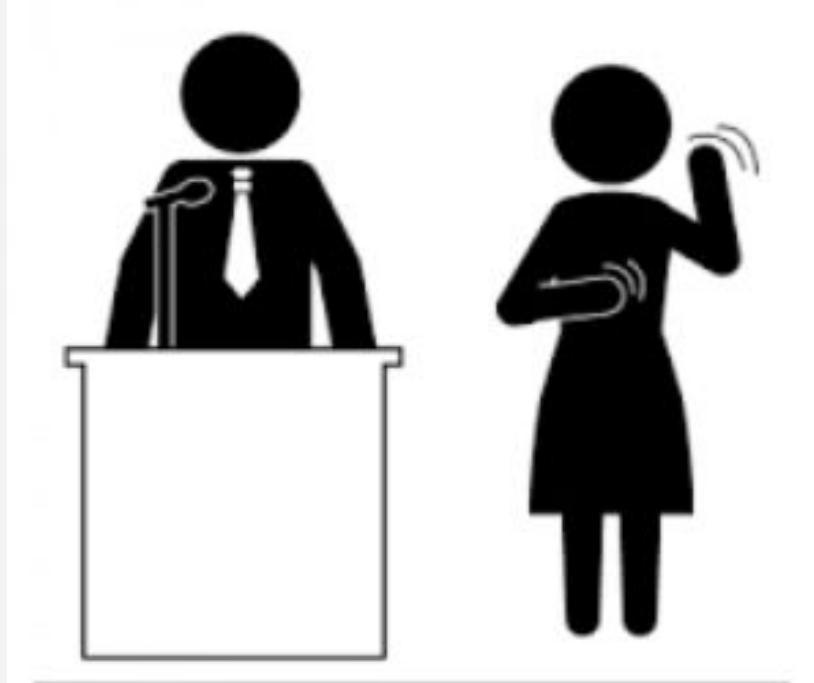
## How many sign language interpreters worldwide?

26,000-30,000??



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# Professionalisation of sign language interpreting

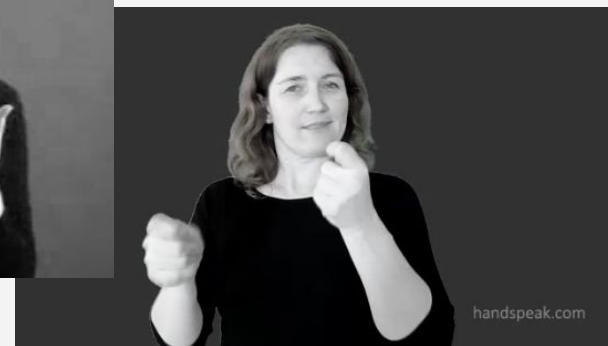


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# Disruption

**Dis.rupt.ed, dis.rupt.ing,  
dis.rupts**

1. To throw into confusion or disorder
2. To interrupt or impede the progress of
3. To break apart or alter so as to prevent normal or expected functioning



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# Outsiders looking in...

## Key issues in the US

(Many previous Street Leverage  
presentation themes)

- Lack of deaf heart
- Lack of trust
- Lack of SL fluency
- Who is the public 'face' of the community & profession
- Deaf-hearing tensions
- Loss of Deaf community gatekeeping role
- Disempowered Deaf community
- Lack of transparency in standards
- Language shaming
- Hearing privilege



# Disruption: Another way of looking at it



**Keywords:** complication, **complicated**, complex, complicate, confuse, jumble, mix up



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# The bigger picture.... What is causing disruption?



## Changes in:

- Sign language acquisition
- Sign language recognition
- Deaf identities (intersectionality)
- Deaf education
- Deaf community boundaries (transnationalism)
- Migration patterns (translanguaging)
- Technologies



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# Disruption? Or change?



“Be the change that  
you wish to see in  
the world”

— Mahatma Gandhi



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