Assessing Language Dominance in Mexican Deaf Signers with the Bilingual Language Profile (BLP)

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Abstract : Assessing language proficiency is a major issue in psycholinguistic research. There are multiple tools that measure language dominance and language proficiency in hearing bilinguals, however, this is not the case for Deaf bilinguals. Specifically, there are few, if not none, assessment tools useful in the description of the multilingual abilities of Mexican Deaf signers. Because of this, the linguistic characteristics of Mexican Deaf population have been poorly described. This paper attempts to explain the necessary changes done in order to adapt the Bilingual Language Profile (BLP) to Mexican Sign Language (LSM) and written/oral Spanish. BLP is a Self-Evaluation tool that has been adapted and translated to several oral languages, but not to sign languages. Lexical, syntactic, cultural, and structural changes were applied to the BLP. 35 Mexican Deaf signers participated in a pilot study. All of them were enrolled in Higher Education programs. BLP was presented online in written Spanish via Google Forms. No additional information in LSM was provided. Results show great heterogeneity as it is expected of Deaf populations and BLP seems to be a useful tool to create a bilingual profile of the Mexican Deaf population. This is a first attempt to adapt a widely tested tool in bilingualism research to sign language. Further modifications need to be done.

Keywords : deaf bilinguals, assessment tools, bilingual language profile, mexican sign language **Conference Title :** ICSLA 2022 : International Conference on Sign Language and Acquisition **Conference Location :** Toronto, Canada

Conference Dates : June 16-17, 2022