

Language Policy Concerning Russian Sign Language in Moscow

Lera Dushkina and Lena Pasalskaya
HSE

September 23, 2019

Multilingual Urban Space: Policy, Identity, Education

1. Research question
2. Methodology
3. Laws and governmental programmes
4. Results of the questionnaire
5. Discussion
6. Conclusions

Research question

What changes, if any, have happened in Moscow Deaf community after RSL's official recognition.

The two-way view study:

1. To describe existing laws and governmental programs.
2. To collect opinions about changes that may have happened after the recognition of RSL.

Methodology

3 blocks:

- questions about self-identification,
- knowledge about governmental social programs,
- RSL official status

Questionnaire: participants

- 20 participants – RSL signers:
 - 8 – younger than 25 y.o.
 - 8 – between 25-55 y.o.
 - 4 – older than 55 y.o.

Questionnaire: participants

- **20 participants – RSL signers:**
 - 8 – younger than 25 y.o.
 - 8 – between 25-55 y.o.
 - 4 – older than 55 y.o.
- **Representatives of conventional group:**
 - 8 Deaf of Deaf parents,
 - 4 Deaf of hearing parents
 - 4 hard-of-hearing from Deaf family
 - 1 hard-of-hearing from hearing family
 - 1 CODA
 - 1 late-onset hearing loss
 - 1 hearing who are tightly connected with Moscow Deaf community

Laws and governmental programms

How this law is implemented in Moscow?

- the government hardly improved the situation with providing the RSL interpretation: free service — 40 hours per year

How this law is implemented in Moscow?

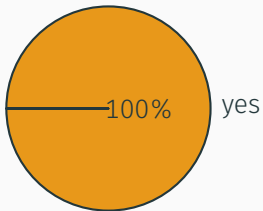
- the government hardly improved the situation with providing the RSL interpretation: free service — 40 hours per year
- 1 university, where RSL interpreters can get BA

How this law is implemented in Moscow?

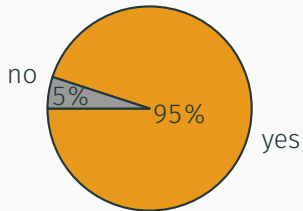
- the government hardly improved the situation with providing the RSL interpretation: free service — 40 hours per year
- 1 university, where RSL interpreters can get BA
- Moscow museums have special excursions for Deaf people in RSL (private initiative)

Results of the questionnaire

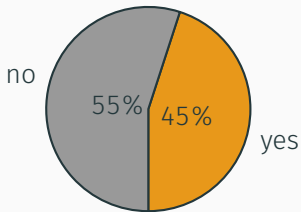
RSL
is as a natural language



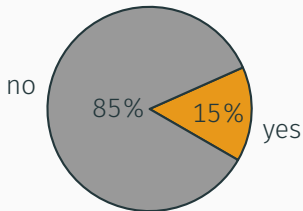
Spoken Russian
is essential to know



Hearing community
is more opened-minded



Official status for RSL
obtained changes



Results of the questionnaire

- The main aspects that became more available
 - education
 - art (including museums and cinemas)
 - services

Results of the questionnaire

- The main aspects that became more available
- Government services that are provided
 - interpreters
 - pension
 - free transport
 - subtitles

Results of the questionnaire

- The main aspects that became more available
- Government services that are provided
- Changes in Deaf community
 - job opportunities in the arts
 - improving interest in RSL from hearing community

Results of the questionnaire

- The main aspects that became more available
- Government services that are provided
- Changes in Deaf community
- The main change is
providing an interpreter in a university

Discussion

“Evaluate the changing that are connecting with RSL in the last 6 years” vs “Did you notice the changing in your life/ in Deaf community after official recognition of RSL?”

“Evaluate the changing that are connecting with RSL in the last 6 years” vs “Did you notice the changing in your life/ in Deaf community after official recognition of RSL?”

- changes are happened due to the Deaf community identity, but not due to the government

“Evaluate the changing that are connecting with RSL in the last 6 years” vs “Did you notice the changing in your life/ in Deaf community after official recognition of RSL?”

- changes are happened due to the Deaf community identity, but not due to the government
- not so many changes caused by the official recognition: interpretation services

“Evaluate the changing that are connecting with RSL in the last 6 years” vs “Did you notice the changing in your life/ in Deaf community after official recognition of RSL?”

- changes are happened due to the Deaf community identity, but not due to the government
- not so many changes caused by the official recognition: interpretation services
- Deaf themselves started to participate in public life too

Conclusions

- The formal duty of the government is connected with interpretation services only

Conclusions

- The formal duty of the government is connected with interpretation services only
- The main tendencies in Moscow Deaf community:
 - all participants are feel confident being Deaf
 - even those who does not know about the official status of RSL noticed the changes
 - changes are happening due to the Deaf community's identity
 - according to UN Convention on the CRPD more changes must be provided

1. Fisher, R. and Lane, H. (1993). Looking Back: A Reader on the History of Deaf Communities and their Sign Languages. Signum Verlag.
2. Quer, J. and Quadros, R. (2015). Language policy and planning in deaf communities. In A. Schembri C. Lucas (Eds.), Sociolinguistics and Deaf Communities. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P. 120-145.
3. Voskresenskiy A. (2002). Nepriznannyy yazyk (Yazyk zhestov glukhikh i komp'yuternaya lingvistika) // Trudy Mezhdunarodnogo seminarara «Dialog-2002». P. 100–106.