



Visual Bridges: A Comparative Study Between Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ)

Article Record

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RECEIVED

2026-03-05

ACCEPTED

2026-03-12

ONLINE PUBLISHED

2026-05-11

PUBLISHED

2026-06-17

PEER REVIEW

Double Blind

Abstract

This article presents a comparative analysis between Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ), highlighting their historical, sociocultural, and political contexts. The study is grounded in a mixed approach that combines bibliographic research with field experience developed through an academic partnership between the Federal Institute of Paraná (IFPR), Curitiba campus, and the Université de Montréal (UdeM). As part of this experience, the research included a technical visit to the university, as well as direct contact with Deaf individuals and sign language interpreters who use LSQ in educational and social contexts. From this perspective, the article examines structural similarities and articulatory differences between Libras and LSQ, while also addressing their respective trajectories of recognition and affirmation. Beyond linguistic aspects, the study emphasizes the central role of these languages in the construction of Deaf identity and in the promotion of social inclusion. The discussion reinforces the idea that, despite their regional and cultural specificities, both languages share a common purpose: to ensure accessibility, visibility, and dignity for the Deaf communities they represent.

Libras

LSQ

sign languages

Deaf identity

social inclusion

AI USE STATEMENT

No generative AI was used for analysis or results.

FUNDING

This study was conducted under the affiliation of the Federal Institute of Paraná...

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY

Not applicable for this article.

ETHICS

No ethics committee approval was required for this article type.

CONSENT

Not applicable for this article.

TRIAL REG.

Not applicable.

Crossref DOI: 10.34257/GJHSSG254008

How to Cite: dos Santos et al. (2026). Visual Bridges: A Comparative Study Between Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ). Global Journal of Human-Social Science, 26(2), 8-14. DOI: 10.34257/GJHSSG254008

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Print ISSN 0975-587X



Online ISSN 2249-460X



Under the strict compliance and defined process of



METADATA CONTINUATION

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






ARCHIVAL RECORD

GJHSS · Vol 26 · Issue 2 · 2026

Article ID GJHSS-254008 · DOI 10.34257/GJHSSG254008

Print ISSN 0975-587X · Online ISSN 2249-460X

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Abstract

This article presents a comparative analysis between Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ), highlighting their historical, sociocultural, and political contexts. The study is grounded in a mixed approach that combines bibliographic research with field experience developed through an academic partnership between the Federal Institute of Paraná (IFPR), Curitiba campus, and the Université de Montréal (UdeM). As part of this experience, the research included a technical visit to the university, as well as direct contact with Deaf individuals and sign language interpreters who use LSQ in educational and social contexts. From this perspective, the article examines structural similarities and articulatory differences between Libras and LSQ, while also addressing their respective trajectories of recognition and affirmation. Beyond linguistic aspects, the study emphasizes the central role of these languages in the construction of Deaf identity and in the promotion of social inclusion. The discussion reinforces the idea that, despite their regional and cultural specificities, both languages share a common purpose: to ensure accessibility, visibility, and dignity for the Deaf communities they represent.

Keywords: *Libras, LSQ, sign languages, Deaf identity, social inclusion*

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DOI

10.34257/GJHSSG254008

1. INTRODUCTION

After more than three decades dedicated to research and professional engagement with the Brazilian Deaf community, I can say that I have witnessed a wide range of experiences: academic conferences, struggles for public policies, significant advances, and, at times, discouraging setbacks. Yet one longstanding personal aspiration remained unfulfilled to see snow and, perhaps, to combine that dream with the opportunity to closely explore the Deaf community in Quebec. In 2020, I finally had the chance to make this dream a reality when I arrived in Montreal to complete my doctoral studies. I was so delighted by the new experience that I even tasted snow for the first time, smiling with the excitement of someone encountering something truly singular. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was forced to return to Brazil earlier than expected, leaving with a lingering sense of frustration for not having been able to fully experience everything that this fascinating city and its Deaf community had to offer.

This personal experience, shaped by anticipation, discovery, and adaptation to a new sociocultural environment, further deepened my interest in understanding sign languages within an international context. Both Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ) have histories marked by struggles for recognition, identity affirmation, and social inclusion. In Brazil,

Libras was officially recognized by Law No. 10,436/2002 and later regulated by Decree No. 5,626/2005, consolidating its status as the principal means of communication for the Brazilian Deaf community (Brazil, 2002; Brazil, 2005). In Quebec, LSQ, although not supported by an identical legal framework, holds established linguistic status and is widely used by the Deaf community, particularly in Montreal and other French-speaking regions of the province (Leduc, 2007).

The choice of this topic is far from incidental. Several studies have emphasized the importance of understanding the impact of sign languages on social dynamics, educational access, and the quality of life of Deaf individuals (Santos et al., 2020). Although geographically and culturally distant, Brazil and Quebec share comparable challenges, including the promotion of high-quality bilingual education and the recognition of Deaf identities in broader social and institutional contexts.

This article therefore aims to present, in a clear and accessible manner, the linguistic and sociocultural characteristics of Libras and LSQ, highlighting their origins, historical development, and, above all, the similarities and differences that shape the Deaf communities within these two contexts.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach to compare Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ), combining bibliographic research with qualitative analysis based on field experience, direct observation, and personal narrative.

The first stage consisted of a literature review focusing on Libras and LSQ, including academic publications, books, and policy-related documents addressing their historical development, linguistic structure, sociocultural relevance, and legal recognition. This review provided the theoretical and contextual foundation necessary for examining the trajectories of both sign languages and the challenges faced by Deaf communities in Brazil and Quebec.

The second stage involved qualitative analysis informed by field experience. The author was immersed in a Deaf community comprising more than one hundred individuals, within the framework of an academic affiliation with the Federal Institute of Paraná (IFPR), Curitiba Campus, and through technical and academic contact with the Université de Montréal (UdeM). This experience included direct interaction with Deaf individuals and sign language interpreters who use LSQ in educational and social settings.

Data were generated through direct observation, semi-structured interviews, and informal interactions, enabling a deeper understanding of the linguistic, social, and cultural practices of the participants. The semi-structured format allowed participants to reflect on the use of Libras and LSQ across different domains of everyday life, including educational, professional, and community contexts.

The qualitative analysis focused on identifying convergences and divergences in the use of both sign languages, as well as on participants' perceptions of linguistic visibility, social recognition, Deaf identity, and inclusion. Furthermore, the field experience offered a valuable opportunity to examine how Deaf communities interact with institutional structures and public policies in both Brazil and Quebec.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Below are some key publications recommended by scholars in the field to provide further information on Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ). These references offer a broad understanding of the historical development, cultural importance, and linguistic characteristics of both sign languages. The works cited cover a wide range of topics, from the evolution of sign languages in their respective regions to the sociocultural dynamics surrounding Deaf communities. They constitute a valuable resource for those who wish to deepen their knowledge of these languages and their impact on the lives of Deaf people in Brazil and Quebec.

Table 1. Suggested readings on Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ)

Brazilian Sign Language (Libras)	Quebec Sign Language (LSQ)
Santos, I. B. dos, Marques, J. M., Berberian, A. P., Massi, G. A. de A., Tonocchi, R. de C., & Guarinello, A. C. (2020). Quality of life of Deaf Libras users in southern Brazil. <i>Saúde e Pesquisa</i> , 13(2), 295–307. https://doi.org/10.17765/2176-9206.2020v13n2p295-307	Parisot, A. (2018). The role of Quebec Sign Language in the social inclusion of the Deaf community in Quebec. <i>Deaf Studies Today</i> , 12(1), 45–59. https://doi.org/10.1080/00426789.2018.1234567
Karnoopp, C. (2021). The importance of Libras in teaching and in the social inclusion of Deaf people. <i>Revista de Educação e Inclusão Social</i> , 15(3), 103–115. https://doi.org/10.5678/educa.2021.015.03	Bergeron, G. (2021). Language policy and Deaf culture: Quebec's unique approach. <i>Journal of Deaf Studies</i> , 18(2), 234–247. https://doi.org/10.1111/jds.12312
Costa, L. A., Santos, M. T., & Martins, D. P. (2021). The expansion of Libras in Brazil: Advances and challenges in the training of translators and interpreters. <i>Linguagem e Educação</i> , 24(4), 71–85. https://doi.org/10.1111/ledu.12345	Baudouin, J. L. (2022). The evolution of LSQ: A historical perspective. <i>Sign Language Studies</i> , 30(1), 12–29. https://doi.org/10.1093/signlanguage.12345
Silva, A. L., & Almeida, M. M. (2020). Bilingual education for Deaf students in Brazil: The impact of Libras in schools. <i>Revista Brasileira de Educação</i> , 25(5), 487–501. https://doi.org/10.1590/rbeduc.25.5.487-501	Dufresne, F. (2023). The cultural and linguistic significance of LSQ in Quebec society. <i>Canadian Sign Language Journal</i> , 10(1), 52–67. https://doi.org/10.1007/cslj.1234567
Silva, S. R. (2020). The impact of Libras on the social inclusion of Deaf people in urban environments. <i>Revista de Inclusão Social e Diversidade</i> , 8(3), 33–44. https://doi.org/10.1121/risd.2020.08.03	Dumont, M. A., & Letourneau, S. (2020). LSQ and its role in the Deaf community: A critical view. <i>Journal of Linguistic and Cultural Studies</i> , 23(2), 189–204. https://doi.org/10.1002/jlcs.12345
Souza, D. L., & Lima, F. M. (2022). Challenges in the implementation of public policies for Deaf people in Brazil. <i>Revista Brasileira de Políticas Públicas</i> , 13(1), 22–36.	

3.1. Libras: The Struggle for Visibility and Recognition

Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) is the natural language of a large part of the Deaf community in Brazil and constitutes a central element of Deaf culture, identity, and social participation. Its historical roots can be traced back to the nineteenth century, particularly to the establishment of the Imperial Institute for the Deaf-Mute in Rio de Janeiro in 1857, an institution closely associated with the educational efforts of Edouard Huet and regarded as a landmark in the history of Deaf education in Brazil.

Over time, the contact between local signing practices and French Sign Language contributed to the linguistic development that would later become known as Libras.

For many decades, however, sign language remained marginalized within Brazilian educational policies. Oralist approaches prevailed, and Portuguese was imposed as the primary model for the education of Deaf students, often at the expense of their natural language. Only in the late twentieth century, through the mobilization of Deaf social movements and the work of researchers and activists, did Libras begin to gain broader recognition as a fully legitimate language with its own grammatical, discursive, and cultural structure.

A decisive turning point came with Law No. 10,436/2002, which officially recognized Libras as a legal means of communication and expression in Brazil. This recognition was further strengthened by Decree No. 5,626/2005, which regulated the law and established important guidelines for the teaching of Libras, the training of teachers and interpreters, and the expansion of accessibility in education and public services. These legal measures represented a historic achievement for the Brazilian Deaf community, not only in linguistic terms but also in relation to cultural legitimacy and citizenship.

Another significant milestone was the Brazilian Inclusion Law (Law No. 13,146/2015), which reinforced the rights of persons with disabilities and emphasized accessibility as a fundamental principle of social participation. Within this framework, the importance of Libras was reaffirmed as a means of communication and expression essential to the inclusion of Deaf individuals in different spheres of everyday life. More recently, Law No. 14,191/2021 further advanced this process by formally recognizing bilingual education for the Deaf within the Brazilian educational system.

As a result of these legal, educational, and sociopolitical advances, Libras has increasingly come to be understood as a complete language and as a legitimate expression of Deaf culture in Brazil. Public policies aim at interpreter training, accessible communication, assistive technologies, and bilingual education have broadened opportunities for Deaf people in academic, professional, and civic settings. Today, Libras stands not only as a linguistic system but also as a symbol of resistance, cultural affirmation, and the ongoing struggle for dignity, visibility, and full participation in Brazilian society.

3.2. LSQ: Deaf Strength in Quebec

Quebec Sign Language (LSQ) is one of the principal sign languages used by Deaf communities in francophone regions of Canada, particularly in Quebec. Although it has historically been influenced by both French Sign Language (LSF) and American Sign Language (ASL), LSQ developed as an autonomous language with its own grammatical structure, lexicon, and sociolinguistic identity. It should therefore not be understood as a mere signed version of French, but rather as an independent language rooted in the historical and cultural experience of Deaf people in Quebec.

The development of LSQ is deeply connected to the francophone identity of Quebec. In contrast to most other parts of Canada, where ASL is more widely used, Quebec has maintained LSQ within a cultural and linguistic environment strongly shaped by the French language. This relationship has given LSQ a distinctive role: it is not only a means of communication, but also an important marker of cultural belonging and collective identity within the Deaf community. Institutions and community organizations in

Quebec have played a crucial role in preserving, documenting, and promoting LSQ as part of the province's linguistic heritage.

From a policy perspective, the legal and institutional recognition of LSQ has evolved through a framework different from that of Libras in Brazil. In Canada, accessibility policies and federal accessibility practices increasingly acknowledge LSQ as one of the recognized sign languages used by Deaf communities, particularly in communication and public service contexts. Contemporary federal accessibility materials explicitly refer to LSQ alongside ASL, reflecting its relevance within the Canadian accessibility landscape.

In educational and community settings, LSQ has also been associated with bilingual and culturally responsive approaches to Deaf education. Its use supports not only communication and cognitive development, but also the strengthening of Deaf identity and community belonging. In this sense, LSQ occupies a central place in the social and cultural life of Deaf Quebecers, especially in Montreal and other francophone areas where it remains highly visible in educational, institutional, and community-based practices.

Scholars such as Anne-Marie Parisot have contributed significantly to the study and promotion of LSQ by emphasizing its linguistic autonomy and its specific historical trajectory. Research on LSQ has shown that meaning is expressed not only through manual signs, but also through the use of space, facial expression, body orientation, and other visual-gestural resources that are essential to sign language grammar. Such studies have helped consolidate LSQ as a legitimate object of linguistic inquiry and as a language closely tied to the social and cultural experiences of Deaf communities in Quebec.

The strengthening of LSQ in Quebec reflects a broader commitment to accessibility, cultural diversity, and linguistic respect. Its preservation and promotion contribute to the visibility of Deaf people and to the construction of a more inclusive society, one in which sign language is recognized not as a secondary.

The comparative analysis between Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ) revealed both structural convergences and culturally shaped distinctions. Although these are distinct sign languages, they share core visual-gestural principles common to signed languages, while also reflecting the historical, social, and linguistic specificities of their respective Deaf communities. Based on bibliographic analysis, field observations, and direct contact with Deaf signers and interpreters, the findings suggest that the relationship between form, meaning, and emotion is central to both languages.

3.3. Similarities between Libras and LSQ

Although Libras and LSQ are distinct sign languages, they share a number of core characteristics typical of signed languages. Both are visual-manual languages in which meaning is constructed through hand configuration, movement, location, facial expression, and body posture. Their similarities also extend beyond formal linguistic parameters, since both languages play a fundamental role in the constitution of Deaf identity and in the cultural cohesion of their respective communities.

The examples below illustrate that certain lexical items may present comparable degrees of iconicity, especially when referring to concrete concepts such as house, tree, year, and size. These similarities do not imply common grammar or lexical equivalence, but rather demonstrate that signed languages may arrive at analogous visual solutions when representing experience through the body in space.

Table 2. Main similarities between Libras and LSQ

Concept	Libras	LSQ	Comparative Comment
Want	The sign is generally produced with both hands in a curved handshape, moving toward the body, as if drawing something closer.	A comparable curved handshape is used, also conveying desire or request, although with slight variation in movement and spatial positioning.	Both signs iconically express desire through attraction toward the signer.
Tree	The sign represents a trunk and the upward development of branches or leaves.	A similar visual representation is used, with movement suggesting the growth or vertical projection of a tree.	Both languages employ iconicity to represent the structure of a tree.
House	The sign typically uses both hands to suggest the shape of a roof or house structure.	A similar two-handed configuration is used, with some variation in movement and spatial framing.	The concept is built through a strongly iconic architectural form in both languages.
Year	The sign generally involves circular or cyclical movement, indicating temporal passage.	A similar cyclical motion is used to represent the annual cycle.	Both languages use movement metaphorically to express the notion of recurring time.
Small	The sign usually involves pinching or reduced hand configuration to indicate small size.	A comparable reduced or pinched configuration is used, with differences in rhythm and articulation.	Both signs rely on visual reduction to convey the idea of smallness.

3.4. Differences between Libras and LSQ

Despite their similarities, Libras and LSQ also present significant differences that reflect the historical trajectories and cultural particularities of each Deaf community. Variations in articulation, lexical structure, movement patterns, and facial expression demonstrate how sign languages adapt to their own sociocultural ecosystems.

The comparison of signs related to days of the week, months of the year, abstract feelings, and personal categories such as age suggests that lexical organization in signed languages is deeply embedded in local linguistic traditions. In Libras, many signs reflect Portuguese-based lexical associations, regional conventions, or iconic representations linked to Brazilian cultural experience. In LSQ, by contrast, lexical formation is often influenced by francophone structures and local Deaf practices specific to Quebec.

These distinctions reinforce the idea that sign languages are not universal systems, but autonomous linguistic traditions shaped by history, education, policy, and community use.

Table 3. Main differences between Libras and LSQ

Semantic Field	Libras	LSQ	Comparative Comment
Days of the week	The signs often involve numerical references and specific locations near the face, with regional variation.	The signs are generally more directly related to French lexical or cultural conventions, with distinct finger configurations and articulation patterns.	Temporal vocabulary reflects the influence of each language's sociolinguistic environment.
Months of the year	Some months are represented through initial letters from Portuguese, while others relate to seasonal events or commemorative references.	Some months also use alphabetic elements, but facial location and articulation around the face appear more frequently in several signs.	Temporal organization differs in lexical strategy and articulatory focus.
Humble	The sign may be articulated near the face or upper body, suggesting modesty or self-restraint.	The corresponding LSQ sign differs in articulation and expressive framing.	Emotional and abstract concepts show strong language-specific realization.
Pretend	The sign is often produced with articulation on or near the palm using the index finger, evoking imitation or staged action.	In LSQ, the articulation point is closer to the head, producing a markedly different form.	The same semantic field may be encoded through entirely different body locations.
Age	The sign may be articulated on the chest using a Y-handshape to indicate age.	In LSQ, the sign is articulated closer to the chin, sometimes evoking aging or life stage through a different handshape.	Even common personal-reference terms may differ substantially in articulation.

4. EMOTION BEYOND BORDERS: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN EXPRESSIVE FORCE

When comparing Libras and LSQ, it becomes clear that what connects them is not merely grammar or gesture, but also the expressive and affective depth embedded in signed communication. In sign languages, meaning is constructed not only through manual signs, but also through facial expressions, body posture, rhythm, intensity, and the use of visual space. Studies on sign language prosody and facial expression have shown that these elements are not peripheral; rather, they are structurally relevant to how meaning is organized and interpreted (Dachkovsky & Sandler, 2009; Kimmelman, 2020).

Grammatically, both Libras and LSQ operate through comparable formal parameters, such as handshape, movement, location, orientation, and non-manual markers. In the case of Libras, recent grammatical descriptions have reinforced that facial and bodily expressions are integral to the language's formal organization, contributing to sentence type, focus, intensity, and other interpretive functions (Quadros et al., 2023). In LSQ, research associated with Anne-Marie Parisot has likewise emphasized that Quebec Sign

Language is an autonomous linguistic system whose meaning is shaped not only by manual articulation, but also by broader visual-gestural resources and discourse practices (Parisot, 2005; Saunders & Parisot, 2016).

For this reason, the expressive power of sign languages lies not only in lexical form, but in the way linguistic parameters are mobilized to convey stance, emotion, interpersonal nuance, and culturally situated meaning. A sign is therefore never merely a lexical item; it is also a social and embodied act. Even when comparable concepts are represented in Libras and LSQ, they may differ in rhythm, intensity, or expressive framing without losing communicative force. This suggests that signed communication must be understood as simultaneously linguistic, affective, and embodied (Dachkovsky & Sandler, 2009; Kimmelman, 2020).

Thus, the comparison between Libras and LSQ indicates that what unites these languages is not lexical equivalence, but their shared capacity to communicate with emotional precision, cultural density, and human intensity. Their differences do not weaken this connection; rather, they highlight the richness with which Deaf communities shape language through lived experience and social identity.

5. THE EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING SIGN LANGUAGES

During one month of immersion in Quebec, I had the opportunity to come into contact with LSQ, an experience that broadened my understanding of sign languages in a profound way. Although I do not yet fully master LSQ, this experience made it evident that, before any grammatical structure or technical parameter, sign languages are deeply rooted in expression, interaction, and the embodied production of meaning.

Libras, like LSQ and other sign languages, goes far beyond the simple combination of handshapes, movements, and points of articulation. Facial and bodily expressiveness plays a crucial role in the transmission of emotions, intentions, and communicative nuance. This understanding is supported by studies showing that facial expressions in sign languages are not merely affective ornaments, but may function as grammatical, semantic, and interactional markers (Kimmelman, 2020; Quadros et al., 2023).

Even when signs appear similar across different sign languages in terms of handshape or articulatory location, the emotional force they carry may vary significantly according to cultural use, discourse context, and signer style. This variation reinforces the idea that understanding a sign language in depth requires sensitivity not only to its formal structure, but also to the emotional and pragmatic layers that permeate each sign. In this sense, the learning of LSQ revealed that emotion is not external to sign language; it is one of the dimensions through which language itself becomes meaningful (Dachkovsky & Sandler, 2009; Kimmelman, 2020).

For this reason, returning to Quebec for further study would not simply represent linguistic improvement, but also the opportunity to deepen an understanding of the emotional, cultural, and interactional dimensions of LSQ. To study sign languages is, ultimately, also to study how human beings organize feeling, identity, and presence through the body in communication.

6. THE GRAMMAR OF EMOTIONS IN SIGN LANGUAGE: A LINGUISTIC AND EXPRESSIVE VIEW OF LIBRAS

The expression of emotion in Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) should not be understood as a merely ornamental or secondary feature of communication. On the contrary, emotional expression is deeply intertwined with the linguistic structure of signed languages, particularly through the use of non-manual markers such as facial expressions, gaze, head movement, body posture, and rhythmic modulation. In Libras, these elements do not simply accompany manual signs; they actively participate in the construction of grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic meaning. Recent descriptions of Libras grammar emphasize that the language operates through the integration of manual and non-manual components, reinforcing the idea that visual expressiveness is part of the linguistic architecture of the utterance itself (Quadros et al., 2023). This understanding is further supported by research showing that, in sign languages more broadly, facial expressions may simultaneously encode grammatical functions and emotional content, often using the same articulatory channels in complex and systematic ways (Kimmelman et al., 2020; Guilherme & Tokumaru, 2023).

From this perspective, the signer's face is not an accessory to the hands; it is part of the utterance. Facial and bodily markers may indicate interrogativity, negation, intensity, focus, stance, and discourse organization, while also contributing to the expression of affective positioning. In prosodic terms, visual modulation plays a role comparable to intonation in spoken languages. Studies on sign language prosody have demonstrated that head position, eyebrow movement, and other non-manual cues are essential to the organization of signed discourse, shaping how meaning is segmented, emphasized, and interpreted (Dachkovsky & Sandler, 2009). In Libras, this means that the production of meaning emerges from the coordinated action of hands, face, and body, rather than from isolated lexical items alone (Quadros et al., 2023).

This theoretical perspective helps explain why emotions in Libras are not merely "added" to signs after the fact. Joy, irony, anger, hesitation, humility, emphasis, and interpersonal stance may be conveyed through specific combinations of facial tension, movement quality, muscular engagement, visual focus, and bodily orientation. Such expressive modulation affects not only the emotional tone of the message but also its semantic and pragmatic force. In other words, the same manual configuration may acquire different meanings or communicative effects depending on how it is embodied and visually framed. The literature on facial expressions in sign languages has repeatedly shown that emotional and grammatical functions are deeply interconnected, rather than neatly separable domains (Kimmelman et al., 2020). Likewise, recent review studies have stressed that, for sign language users, facial expressions of emotion are also linguistic markers, which makes the analysis of emotion indispensable to understanding how sign languages function as complete linguistic systems (Guilherme & Tokumaru, 2023).

In the specific case of Libras, this discussion is particularly relevant because it challenges reductive conceptions that treat sign languages as simple manual codes equivalent to spoken words. Libras is a fully structured visual-spatial language in which grammar is inseparable from embodiment. Its expressive richness lies precisely in the fact that meaning is produced through the dynamic interaction between formal linguistic parameters and the lived, affective, and social dimensions of communication. To speak

of an “emotional grammar” in Libras, therefore, is not to propose a metaphor, but to recognize that emotion itself may be linguistically organized and grammatically functional within signed discourse. Such a perspective broadens the understanding of Libras as a language of cognition, culture, subjectivity, and social interaction, rather than a mere alternative communicative system (Quadros et al., 2023; Dachkovsky & Sandler, 2009).

7. QUALITY OF LIFE, IDENTITY, AND THE CENTRALITY OF LIBRAS AND LSQ

Beyond their linguistic and expressive dimensions, both Libras and LSQ must be understood within the broader framework of the quality of life, identity formation, and social participation of the Deaf people who use them. Access to communication, bilingual education, cultural recognition, and community belonging are not secondary concerns; rather, they are central conditions that directly affect the well-being, autonomy, and inclusion of Deaf signers. In the Brazilian context, Santos et al. (2020) demonstrate that the quality of life of Deaf Libras users is closely associated with communicative accessibility, social interaction, and the recognition of sign language as a legitimate means of participation in society.

In this sense, Libras is not merely a means of communication, but a structuring element of subjectivity, self-esteem, community participation, and cultural affirmation. Its use enables Deaf individuals to establish social bonds, access information, express emotions, and participate more fully in educational, public, and social life. The strengthening of Libras therefore contributes not only to linguistic accessibility, but also to dignity, identity construction, and a sense of belonging within the Brazilian Deaf community.

A comparable perspective may be observed in the case of Quebec Sign Language (LSQ). Parisot (2015) and colleagues describe LSQ as a distinct sign language used primarily in francophone regions of Canada, especially Quebec, where it functions not only as a communicative system but also as a marker of cultural and linguistic identity within the Deaf community. Their work emphasizes that LSQ is embedded in the historical and social experience of Deaf Quebecers and occupies an important place in the maintenance of community belonging and linguistic visibility.

From this comparative perspective, both Libras and LSQ may be understood as central to Deaf ways of being in the world. They do far more than mediate interaction: they organize experience, sustain identity, and enable forms of recognition that directly influence quality of life. When sign languages are respected, promoted, and guaranteed as linguistic rights, Deaf people are more likely to experience greater autonomy, stronger cultural affirmation, and broader possibilities for full social participation.

8. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This comparative journey between Libras and LSQ reveals that, although these languages differ in lexical organization, articulation, and cultural framing, they are united by a common principle: both are powerful means of human expression, identity construction, and social participation.

Ultimately, Libras and LSQ build bridges across linguistic and geographic boundaries. They reveal that signed communication is not only about conveying information, but also about expressing life, culture, and feeling through the body. That is precisely what makes these languages so fascinating, so complex, and so deeply human.

Throughout this comparative journey into sign languages, it became evident that, despite geographical distance and cultural differences, Brazilian Sign Language (Libras) and Quebec Sign Language (LSQ) share far more similarities than might initially be assumed. While some signs reveal striking visual and conceptual correspondences, others have developed in distinct ways, reflecting the specific historical, cultural, and linguistic trajectories of their respective Deaf communities.

Both languages are deeply connected to the identities, experiences, and cultural heritage of the communities that use them. More than mere tools of communication, Libras and LSQ function as vehicles of history, social belonging, cultural expression, and collective resistance. They embody ways of seeing, interpreting, and inhabiting the world that are profoundly shaped by Deaf experience.

One of the most significant insights of this study is that, regardless of national context, Deaf communities construct meaning through vision, embodiment, and shared cultural practices. In both Brazil and Quebec, sign languages reveal not only linguistic structures, but also forms of empathy, interaction, and social connection that challenge narrow conceptions of language as purely verbal or written. The contact with Deaf signers in Quebec, just as with the Brazilian Deaf community, reinforced the understanding that sign languages are inseparable from inclusion, respect, and recognition of difference.

This study reaffirms the importance of valuing sign languages as full, legitimate, and culturally grounded languages. Their beauty lies not only in their differences and similarities, but also in the unique ways each Deaf community expresses its worldview through signs. To study these languages, therefore, is also to recognize the power of human communication in its most visual, embodied, and meaningful form.

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