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## **Sign Language Description: A Deaf Retrospective and Application of Best Practices from Language Documentation**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This presentation will present a short review of sign language description considering the work that has been done, especially from a methodological stance, through the eyes of Deaf signers and the lessons that could be learned. Based on those lessons, I then touch upon three tools that I've used in my own work for language description or rather documentation - ethical considerations as framed by Deaf people themselves ("Sign Language Communities Terms of Reference"), considering representational practices (e.g., minimizing the use of glosses), and "open access" (e.g., Austin Principles of Data Citation). I discuss specific examples in my own language documentation work - both with other signed languages and with my own, American Sign Language. The projects I will discuss include field methods teaching at Gallaudet University, Haitian Sign Language Documentation Project (LSHDoP), SLAAASh and the ASL Signbank, Philadelphia Signs Project, and my newer projects Gallaudet University Documentation of ASL (GUDA), DEAF DIVA, and potentially others.