

Part I

Socio-historical background

This Part aims at providing background information about the historical and the socio-cultural context in which LIS has been developed. Overall, it is structured in four chapters.

The first chapter [SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 1] deals with the history of LIS and the history of the Italian Deaf community. This knowledge may help the reader in further understanding the historical development of the language in the Italian context.

The second chapter [SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 2] describes the characteristics of the Italian Deaf community and explains the concept of signing community. A special attention is paid to Deaf culture and the education of the Deaf.

The third chapter [SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 3] provides a brief overview of the current linguistic status of LIS in Italy. In particular, it deals with the current legislation adopted across the country, language planning, language policies, and language attitude (i.e. the way in which signers and non-signers perceive LIS).

Finally, the fourth chapter [SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 4] sums up previous linguistic studies conducted on LIS. In particular, it provides an overview of the main studies on the grammar and the lexicon of the language. It also summarises the main corpora studies conducted to investigate socio-linguistic variation.

Overall, this Part on the historical and socio-cultural context provides a general introduction to LIS as well as its users. This knowledge represents the basis for a comprehensive understanding of this language and its grammar.
