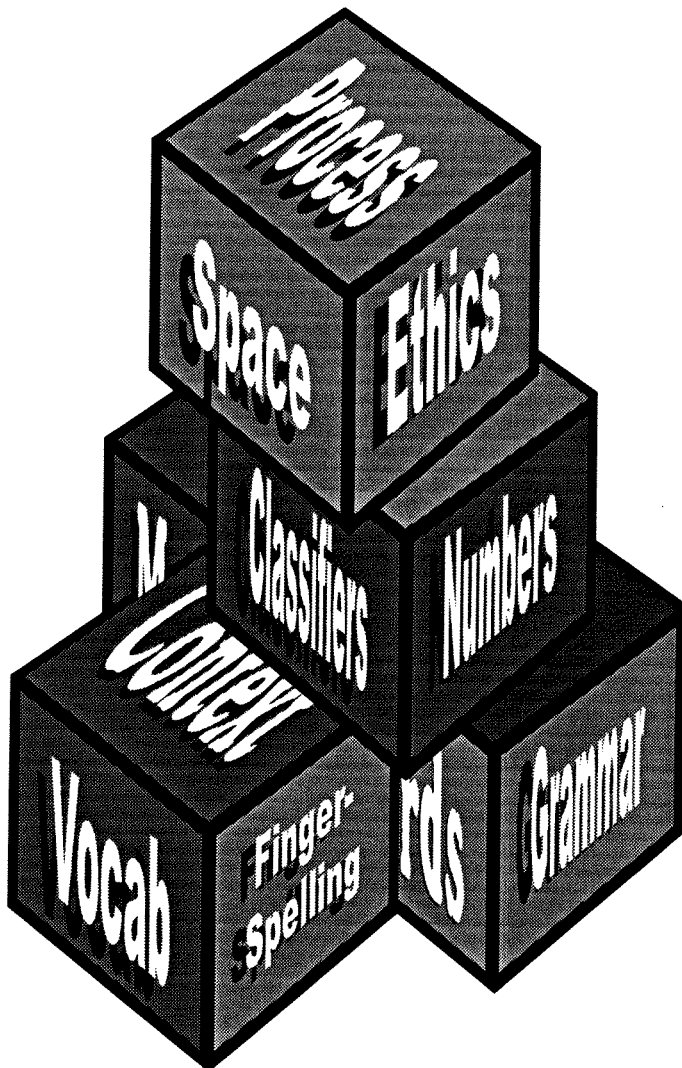
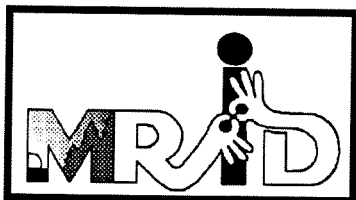




Self-Paced Modules for Educational Interpreter Skill Development

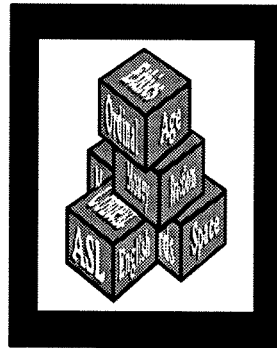


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Minnesota Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf

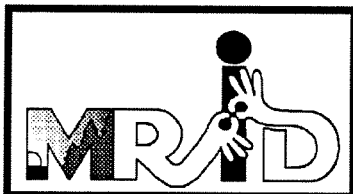
Self-Paced Modules for Educational Interpreter Skill Development



These self-paced learning modules are designed to be tools that educational interpreters can use to enhance their skills in pursuit of certification. Successful completion of this module series does not guarantee the interpreter will successfully obtain certification from the National Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) or any other certifying body, nor does it guarantee employment in an educational setting.

Any interpreter working with these modules must understand that the Minnesota RID, RID and/or Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning are not responsible for an interpreter's success or failure in taking any national certification test or in his or her pursuit of employment.

MRID, 1996



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Grammar

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I. Goals and Objectives

This module will focus on the grammar of American Sign Language. It will highlight:

- grammatical rules for certain sentence types
- grammatical use of facial expression
- sequencing events in chronological order
- directional and inflected verb systems
- use of prepositions in English and in ASL

Because of the focus on ASL grammar, this module is aimed at interpreters whose target language is ASL. Transliterators will find it helpful to have a working knowledge of ASL grammar since many of the features that use space carry over into their work as well. Also see "A word about Transliteration" section of this module.

Marty Taylor, Ph. D., in her research on English to ASL interpretation, noted the most common grammatical errors made by interpreters. They are:

- inaccurate facial grammar
- inaccurate pausing and phrasing
- incomplete structure
- one kind of structure used excessively

This module is designed to address these errors.

As interpreters we need to be aware of proper ASL grammar as well as be attuned to what variations are actually used by the Deaf Community we work in. Educational interpreters are often the language model for deaf youngsters. Because of this, you must strive toward an even higher standard of correctness. The majority of this module deals with prescriptive rules of ASL grammar; the way ASL should be signed. Yet variation and change are always occurring within any language. To account for this we encourage you to work with an ASL language mentor.

II. Equipment and Materials

Equipment

- √ audio tape recorder/player,
- √ VCR and video camera.

Materials

The following materials are used extensively in this module for demonstration and for practice.

Readings:

Baker, Charlotte and Dennis Cokely. 1980. American Sign Language: A Teacher's Resource Text on Grammar and Culture. Silver Spring, MD, T.J. Publishers.

Humphries, T. and Carol Padden and T.J. O'Rourke. 1980. A Basic Course in American Sign Language. Silver Spring, MD, T.J. Publishers.

Valli, Clayton and Ceil Lucas. 1992. Linguistics of American Sign Language: A Resource Text for ASL Users. Washington, D.C. Gallaudet University Press.

Humphrey, Janice and Bob Alcorn. 1995. So You Want To Be An Interpreter. Salem, OR. Sign Enhancers.

Videotapes

American Sign Language: A Teacher's Resource Text on Grammar and Culture. Part 1 Silver Spring, MD, Sign Media, Inc.

American Sign Language: Student Text-Units1-6 and Unit 8. Silver Spring, MD, Sign Media, Inc.

ASL Grammatical Aspects: Comparative Translations. Salem, OR. Sign Enhancers. (*Accompanied by workbook and CD-ROM*).

The Face of ASL Tapes 1-4. Silver Spring, MD, Sign Media, Inc.

Valli, Clayton and Ceil Luca. Linguistics of American Sign Language. Videotape. Part Four on Syntax. Washington, D.C. Gallaudet University Press.

Valli, Clayton. 1991. The Linguistics of ASL. Waubonsee Community College. Teleconference.

III. Time

This module is not intended to be an introduction to ASL grammar. It is the assumption of the authors that you already have a working knowledge of ASL. This module is intended to give you a review of various grammatical features of ASL. It is hoped that it will also provide you with a framework for incorporating future findings in the field of linguistic research. To that extent this module is a lifelong work. For the immediate future, you should plan to spend two to three weeks going through this module. It is hoped that you will be reexamining your interpreting work on a daily basis and trying to incorporate a variety of new grammatical features.

A a B b C c D d E e F f G g H h I i J j K k L l M m N n

Pre-Test

IV. Pre-Test

A. Sentence Types in English

Because this module focuses on interpreting from English into ASL, it will be important for you to be able to identify different types of sentences. Identify the following English sentences by placing the letter corresponding with the type in the space provided :

Conditional	C	Yes/No Question.....	YN
Wh Question	WH	Declarative	D
Negative.....	N	Imperative	I
Topic-Comment.....	TC		

- ___ 1. I am an interpreter.
- ___ 2. That's not the shirt I want.
- ___ 3. Dogs? I love dogs!
- ___ 4. Go to your room!
- ___ 5. Are you sick?
- ___ 6. That woman knows me.
- ___ 7. He doesn't like spinach.
- ___ 8. Who was the second president of the U.S.?
- ___ 9. He bought a Mercedes?
- ___ 10. Come over here!
- ___ 11. How did you get so dirty?
- ___ 12. If it doesn't rain, the grass will die.
- ___ 13. Do you think she'll go to Yale if she gets an acting scholarship?

Answers: 1. D, 2. N, 3. TC, 4. I, 5. YN, 6. D, 7. N, 8. WH, 9. YN, 10. I, 11. WH, 12. C, 13. C.

B. Sentence types in ASL:

1. Make an audio tape of the above sentences.
2. Videotape yourself interpreting these sentences into ASL.
3. As you work through this module check your interpretation to see if it includes:
 - correct identification of sentence type
 - the appropriate non-manual markers
 - complete structure
 - proper phrasing

C. Prepositions

Identify the prepositional phrase(s) in the following sentences. Put a box around the preposition and circle the prepositional phrase.

1. I put carrots, potatoes, and celery in the soup.
2. The cat ran into the bushes.
3. Mary can't get her shoes on yet, she's only two.
4. Please put the vase of flowers on the table.
5. Seven birds sat along the fence.
6. When he doesn't know the answer, he crawls under his desk.
7. John sat next to the windows for half the semester and now he's by the door.
8. Sally went into the cafeteria but I haven't seen her come out.
9. The teacher made us sit in alphabetical order. Because my last name is Smith I was always at the back of the class. Betsy Ross was in front of me and Ted Turner sat behind me.
10. This is the area for Science, over there the students work with computers.

V. Overview and Activities

A. General Comments on Language

A few words need to be said about the dynamic nature of language. All languages are continually changing. In English we create new words almost daily, many of these words are in new and growing fields of technology i.e. computer science, genealogy and aerospace. While our vocabulary is constantly changing, we rarely have a new sentence type. We rarely develop a new way to modify verbs. One new structure that has come to light is the sarcastic response 'NOT!' Saying 'NOT!' effectively negates the aforementioned facts of a sentence. This is hardly a widespread change in the use of our standard negation rules of English. We will probably see this construction fade from usage in a few years.

Because English has been studied for many centuries a lot is known about the rules of English. Analysis of spoken languages date back to 1600 B.C. In dramatic contrast, ASL has been studied since 1960, when William Stokoe first published a paper describing ASL as a true, rule-governed language, not just a random system of gestures. Because of the incredibly short amount of time linguists have focused on ASL, we don't know as much about it. Much of what we do know about ASL grammar is still being debated and revised. Some of what you learn in this module may be new information and may be different from what you have previously learned. Try to be open to new observations and discoveries in this field. After you are certified, keep up with ASL research to see what they uncover next!

B. Grammar is...

First we must begin with a definition of grammar. Grammar is a set of rules that governs a particular language. Every language has its own, unique grammar. While the grammatical rules of ASL may not be obvious to us, they are known by native signers. By applying the appropriate grammatical rules correct ASL sentences are produced. When not followed, unacceptable sentences are created. When we say a person 'knows' a language, we mean that they know and use the grammar of that language. Most of the time this knowledge is subconscious or at the 'gut level.' As native speakers of English, we may not know which rule is being applied, but we have an 'ear' for a correct English sentence. Likewise we are jarred when we hear an ungrammatical sentence.

C. Prescriptive vs. Descriptive Grammar

Linguists who study grammar take two approaches: one prescribes the rules that a language group should be using. For example in English we are taught to say 'John and I went to the store,' not 'John and me...' 'I' is the correct pronoun to use in the subject position. Grammar books teach prescriptive grammar. This module will prescribe the correct rules of ASL grammar.

We hear people say 'John and me went to the store,' or 'John and myself went to the store' or even 'I went to the store and John came with.' Even though these sentences break the rules of English, we can understand them. Linguists who study how language is actually being used are called descriptive grammarians. Because rules are broken all the time in English and in ASL, you will have to be a keen observer of what forms of language are actually being used.

D. Non-Manual Features

When Stokoe first identified the parts of a sign he identified the handshape, movement, and location as each having a critical role in determining the composition of a sign. Very soon he realized that facial expression was also a key element of some signs. When we use the term 'facial expression' to talk about ASL we mean more than emotional states. All languages use smiles and frowns to help convey meaning but they are not a grammatical part of the language as they are in ASL. Signers generally use the top part of the face, brows and eyes, to convey grammatical information such as sentence type. The lower half of the face, the lips and mouth, have specific sets of movements that provide descriptive information. But facial expression is only part of the features linguists call 'non-manual features.' In other words ASL is more than just what the hands are doing. The non-manual features that accompany certain signs are as important as the hands in conveying meaning. ASL uses non-manual features to a much greater degree than English does. For these reasons you will note that all the modules emphasize attention to facial expressions and other non-manual behaviors: body shifting, head tilts and pausing to name a few.

However, this creates a dilemma for writers. It is very difficult to describe facial expression in written English. Since facial expression is not crucial to the comprehension of English, the language doesn't have many ways to talk about facial expression. Because of the limitations of English, we often recommend watching a videotape to observe the facial expression and other non-manual behaviors. This may be frustrating at times but, a picture is worth a thousand words in this case!

E. Word Order

Many of us learned to sign from the A Basic Course in American Sign Language text by Tom Humphries, Carol Padden and Terrence J. O'Rourke, first published in 1980. While this book takes a grammatical approach to teaching sentence types and includes descriptions of accompanying facial expressions, it's beginning to show it's age. For example, the repetition of the pronoun at the end of a phrase is not as prevalent as once thought. A Basic Course... taught us that ASL had a flexible word order. According to current research, ASL word order is Subject -Verb-Object (SVO). (English is also an SVO language.) In Topic-Comment sentences the Object is signed first. But this occurs in a rule-governed, predictable way called a transformation. It is not the underlying or basic form of the language as was once thought (Liddell, 1980).

Even though ASL is technically comprised of 'signs' the term 'word order' will be used through this module. OK let's move on and see what rules are currently thought to be out there and how they are thought to work.

F. Sentence Types

In this section we will be looking at some of the most common sentence types in ASL: declaratives, imperatives, negatives, yes/no questions, wh-questions, topic-comments, conditionals, and rhetorical questions. The conventions for 'writing' ASL for demonstration purposes will be explained as they occur. These are fairly standard in ASL linguistics.

When discussing each sentence type, we can focus on three features:

- word order
- facial expressions and other non-manual behaviors
- phrasing or timing

In addition we will discuss how common each type of sentence is in ASL as compared with English.

How to use videotapes for this section:

It is strongly recommended that you watch either The Face of ASL videotapes by Sign Media, or the ASL Grammatical Aspects: Comparative Translations by Sign Enhancers, as you go through this section on sentence types.

Watch the Face of ASL videotape to observe correct non-manual grammar and timing used for each sentence type. Try copying the signers. Watch the sentence type descriptions on ASL Grammatical Aspects: Comparative Translations and videotape your own interpretation before watching the ones on the tape. As you work through each sentence type look at the video you made during the pretest. If your non-manual behaviors are not present, or are not the correct ones for that sentence type, pay special attention to that section. The Humphries book offers practice sentences in written form. Videotape yourself signing these sentences and then watch it checking for accuracy. You may want to do some of these activities with a colleague, we can easily overlook our own shortcomings.

1. Declarative

A declarative sentence states a fact, it simply puts forth information. Declarative sentences are very common in both ASL and in English. The following are examples of declarative sentences in English:

I am an interpreter.

John has two dogs.

ASL is the fourth most commonly used language in the U.S.

When we sign declarative sentences in ASL the word order is Subject-Verb-Object. The accompanying facial grammar is:

- direct eye contact with addressee
- head-nod at end of sentence

Examples of declarative sentences in ASL:

WOMAN SHE KNOW ME

I WANT CAR I

CAT IT HUNGRY IT

(From Humphries, lesson 3 and 4)

2. Imperatives or Commands

Imperatives or commands tell the addressee to do something. Examples of imperative sentences in English are:

Give him his toy!

Go to your room!

Sit down and eat!

The command in ASL includes:

- direct eye gaze at addressee, possible frowning
- absence of the subject
- sharp, tense movement of the verb or
- a slow, deliberate movement of the verb to show even more emphasis.

Sometimes a sentence can be signed with just the verb. For example: GO!, or SHUT-UP! The subject is indicated through eye contact, or sometimes by using a pronoun after the verb. Imperatives are used infrequently in both languages. Examples of imperatives in ASL:

(The symbol * is used to indicate an imperative. To indicate a sign with the eye-gaze directed in a particular direction the symbol__ is used.)

SIT

SHUT-UP__YOU

gaze down, __ rt

*FINISH*__YOU TEASE-TO rt CAT, *FINISH*__YOU

(examples from Baker and Cokely)

3. Negative

Negative sentences occur as frequently in ASL as they do in English. Examples of negative sentences in English are:

We don't have a dog.

I don't know.

He doesn't like spinach.

I can't remember your name.

Negative sentences in ASL have the following features:

- shaking the head from side to side throughout sentence
- possible frowning or squinting (eyebrows squeezed together)
- optional use of negation term: NOT, NEVER, NONE, CAN'T, DON'T, WON'T, etc. often at the end of the sentence, or verb that incorporates the negative: DON'T-WANT, DON'T-LIKE, DON'T-KNOW

The negative sentence in ASL often does not include a separate sign to create the negation. This is quite different from English where we always add a word or more to create a negation. Because of this, you will want to be sure and allow enough processing time so you are not fooled by a sentence like:

“To create new jobs while maintaining our current level of production and profit would be impossible.”

Since the negation occurs at the very end of the sentence you won't have had the negative head shake throughout if you were following the English too closely.

More examples of comparative sentences demonstrating the difference in negation between English and ASL are:

_____neg
 (_____ is the convention for noting that the facial grammar indicative of negation is occurring while the over lined signs are being produced. —' is used to indicate that the over lined signs are done with the facial grammar indicative of a topicalized sentence — more on that in a while!)

Eng: I am not happy.

_____neg
 ASL: HAPPY, NOT

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Eng: I can't find my money.

ASL: _____^t _____^{neg}
MY MONEY, FIND CAN'T

Eng: Don't hit your brother!

ASL: _____^t _____^{neg}
YOUR BROTHER, HIT_HIM, DON'T



1. To practice negation see the exercises on the videotape ASL Grammatical Aspects: Comparative Translations by Sign Enhancers and do the exercises in the accompanying work book.
2. See the section in The Face of ASL by Sign Media on negation and do the exercises provided on the tape.
3. For more practice of negation see ABC of ASL lesson 4, exercises 4.1, 4.2, and 4.5.

4. Topic-Comment

a. English to ASL

The last two examples above set off the initial part of the sentence i.e. created a topic, and then made a comment about that topic. This is the process called topicalization. ASL uses this feature much more than English does. In fact when topicalization occurs in English sentences, it is strictly for emphasis or to clarify the subject under discussion. For example:

Drugs!? I've never touched them in my life!

Babies? No babies are allowed at this theater!

Topicalization occurs in ASL when the object of the sentence is signed first then commented on. The characteristics of this kind of sentence are:

Topic Segment:

- eyebrows raise
- slight head tilt forward
- last sign identifying topic is held longer (creating a short pause before the comment)

Comment Segment:

- signed as usual — remember it could be a statement or a negative or a question.

Examples of topic-comment sentences in ASL:

(Please note the comma after the topic represents the pause in the phrasing.)

Eng: I detest homework!

ASL: _____t
HOMework, I DETEST

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Eng: I can't go to the movie.

_____t _____neg
ASL: MOVIE, I_GO CAN'T

Eng: Do you want milk?

_____t _____y/n ques.
ASL: MILK, WANT_YOU

b. ASL to English

This structure: topic-comment, is not used often in spoken English. When an interpreter carries the grammatical structure of ASL into the English interpretation, the speaker sounds more casual and may be perceived as 'talking down' to the audience. Interpreting the meaning of a sentence rather than the grammatical structure will help the interpretation sound more natural.



To practice topic-comment sentence see:

1. Sign Enhancers video and workbook section on Topic-Comment.
2. Face of ASL video.
3. Exercises in Humphries book Lesson 6: 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3. (These exercises also provide practice in directional verbs.)

5. Questions

There are two basic question types: those requiring a Yes or No answer and those requesting an answer to a Wh-question. In English we use a rising intonation to ask yes/no questions such as:

Are you going to the movies?

Is it raining, again?

He bought a Mercedes?

Notice in the last example, “He bought a Mercedes?” it is only by the rising voice inflection that we signal a question. If we spoke the same words with falling intonation the sentence would be a simple declarative. While voice inflection plays an important role in adding meaning to English words, facial expressions are crucial to determining meaning in ASL. Facial expression is not optional, it is part of the grammatical structure of a sentence. In yes/no questions in ASL, the following occur along with the signs:

- raised eyebrows, eyes widened
- head or body tilted forward
- sometimes the pronoun or the sign glossed as HUH or ‘???’ is added at the end of the sentence
- the last sign is held longer
- sometimes the movement of the last sign is repeated

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Look at these two sentences in ASL:

(frown) nodding
ASL: J-O-H-N BECOME ANGRY

Eng: Yes, John is really angry. (declarative)

ASL: J-O-H-N BECOME ANGRY^q

Eng: Is John angry? (question)

(^q) is the symbol used to represent the non-manual features listed above that accompany a yes/no question.)

As you can see the presence of the appropriate facial grammar is the only thing that changes the meaning of the sentence from a statement to a question. As you will see throughout this module ASL and English both convey the same kinds of information (questions, declaratives, commands, etc.) but often in very different ways. It is important to notice the order of the signs and how they may differ from the order of the words used in English. When interpreting we need to be sure to allow time to hear and process the entire thought before we begin our interpretation. It is also crucial that we use the appropriate non-manual signals as well. These can be a facial expression, a tilt of the head or a body posture.

The other kind of question requests specific information such as: who, what, when, where, why, how, etc. These are called Wh-questions. Examples of these kinds of questions in English are:

What is your name?

When is the last day of school?

Who told you about the party?

How did you get so dirty?

In ASL, these type of questions use different word order than English does. In English, we place the question word before the verb and our voice goes down at the end of the sentence. In ASL, 'wh-word' signs are generally at the end of the sentence, although they can sometimes occur at the beginning of a sentence. In addition to word order changes the following non-manual signals must accompany a wh-question in ASL:

- eyebrows are furrowed or eyes are squinted
- head tilts downward
- body may lean slightly forward, with the shoulders raised
- direct eye gaze at addressee
- last sign held — waiting for a response

(These non-manual features are represented by the symbol. ^{wh-q})

Examples of Wh-questions in ASL:

^{wh-q}
MAN WHERE

Eng.: Where is the man?

^{wh-q}
BUY NEW CAR WHO

Eng.: Who bought a new car?

^{wh-q}
MAN BUY WHAT

Eng.: What did the man buy?



A. To practice Wh-question in ASL:

- Watch Sign Enhancers video and study workbook.
- Watch Face of ASL videotape, do the practice exercises.
- See Humphries book Lesson 8, 8.1 and 8.2.

B. To practice declarative statements, negative statements, and questions

1. Videotape yourself signing the following sentences three ways:

- as declaratives
- as negatives
- as questions

(Make an audio tape of the sentences and work from that.)

1. Betty came home with a friend.
2. School will begin late today.
3. The teacher stood on the desk.
4. World War II ended in 1945.
5. Paul has six siblings.
6. They want recess now!
7. Take your seat!

2. Review your videotape and see if you are using the appropriate non-manual features for each type of sentence.

6. Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions aren't really questions in that we don't expect an answer from the addressee. They provide a way for the speaker/signer to add more detail on a subject. In English we don't use rhetorical questions very much. When we do they sound like:

Guess what I got for my birthday? A car!

English uses rhetorical questions in certain discourse styles such as preaching or political speaking. For example you could hear a politician say:

Why are there no new jobs in our small towns? I'll tell you why, it's because of the high taxes!

But this would sound unusual during normal conversation. It's more common for English speakers to use other grammatical devices to convey the same information. For example:

I got a new car for my birthday.

There are no new jobs because of high taxes.

You can tell me when we get there.

I think Hawaii is where I'll go on my next vacation.

I'm tired because I studied all night.

In ASL rhetorical questions are posed, then answered by the same person. The question word is often held, sometimes with the movement repeated. The non-manual behaviors that accompany the sign are much different than those for wh-questions:

- brow is raised (not squeezed together as in wh-questions)
- head is tilted
- head may shake slightly

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Rhetorical questions in ASL are structured so the non-manual behavior occurs only while the question word is signed, followed by a pause then the response. The response is signed with a neutral facial expression. For example:

TODAY LUNCH-ME WHERE, CAPITOL^{rh}

To see examples of these kinds of sentences watch:

- American Sign Language: A Teacher's Resource Text on Grammar and Culture. Chapter 6.
- American Sign Language: A Student Text Unit 1-9
- Humphries and Padden, Lesson 20, exercises 20.2

7. Conditional

Conditional sentences are common in English and in ASL. They include two parts: the condition and the result. Conditional sentences present an 'if this..., then that' framework. Here are some examples of conditional sentences in English:

1. If Brian agrees, we will leave at 8.
2. If it doesn't rain, the tomatoes will die.
3. If you want to improve, study hard!
4. If she hates traffic, why does she live in New York?
5. If they serve meat, he won't eat there.
6. If you like stores and rides and restaurants, you will love the Mall of America.

As you can see the condition can be stated in the affirmative as in sentences 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 or in the negative as in sentence 2. The result can be a statement that is in the affirmative such as sentence 1, 2, and 6, or it can be a negative statement like sentence 5. The result can also be a command like sentence 3, or a question like sentence 4.

ASL allows for all these same constructions. In the condition segment the phrase can begin with the sign glossed as SUPPOSE , or the fingerspelled variant of #IF. In either case the conditional part of the sentence MUST be accompanied by the proper non-manual behavior. The facial expression is so important to the conditional type sentence that no manual signal is even necessary. The required facial expression for the conditional part of the sentence is:

- head moved to side
- eyebrows raised

This facial expression is held throughout the entire condition. The last sign in the condition may be held slightly longer than normal, thus creating a pause between the segments. If the condition is a lengthy one, the head may nod in addition to the above facial expression.

The non-manual behaviors that accompany the result part of the sentence depend on what kind of phrase it is. A nod accompanies an affirmative statement, a head shake goes along with a negative statement, etc. See sections F. 1 - 5 do this module for the complete description of the non-manual features.

In ASL the condition must be signed before the result. In English the word order is more flexible, we can say:

Eng.: If it snows tomorrow, I'll go skiing.

or

Eng.: I'll go skiing, if it snows tomorrow.

But in ASL, the conditions must be stated before the result:

ASL: t cond. nod
TOMORROW, SUPPOSE SNOW, (me)GO SKI

To see conditional sentences watch:

- The Face of ASL - "Conditional Sentences," Sign Media.

For practice with conditional sentences see:

- Humphries, Lesson 20, 20.1.
- Sign Enhancers video and workbook, section on conditional sentences.

G. Time Sequencing

English and ASL differ in the way each language reports a sequence of events. In English the sequence is not that important provided that we have phrases that join the events and describe them in relation to one another. For example we can say:

I got off the train before it jumped the track. or

The train jumped the track minutes after I got off.

The Sign Enhancers workbook states:

“An ASL user will very often give information in the same order in which it actually occurred.”

Notice how the following sentences handle the sequence of events differently.

Eng.: I eat dinner after I work out.

ASL: EXERCISE, FINISH EAT DINNER

Eng.: I am tired because I got up so early this morning.

ASL: THIS MORNING, EARLY, GET-UP (me), NOW, TIRED

1. To see more examples of this kind of sequencing, watch the videotape : **ASL Grammatical Aspects: Comparative Translations** by Sign Enhancers. Try doing the exercises in the accompanying workbook.
2. To practice this concept get an action packed article from the paper. (a police chase, a sports event, etc.)
 - Read the article and identify the sequence of events.
 - Write these sentences in English and make an audiotape of them.
 - Videotape yourself interpreting them into ASL.
 - Watch your video noting how you handle the sequencing of events — if you are having trouble in this area, try repeating this exercise next week with a different article. Or trade audiotapes with a colleague who has done the same exercise.

When interpreting from ASL to English it is most useful to fully understand the sequence of events before beginning an interpretation. As you know the structure of English often places the end result first and then goes on to provide the precipitating events. An English interpretation that does not include the variety of time sequencing structures sounds artificial and, frankly, boring.

H. Prepositions

Prepositions are used in English to show relations between objects in a sentence. Maybe you remember the definition of a preposition being: "anything an airplane can do to a cloud" over, under, into, through, on, in, by, etc., etc. For example the following sentences each contain a preposition:

The class went to the zoo.

The teacher stepped out of the room.

There are 15 children on the jungle gym.

Her pencil fell under the desk.

In addition the words 'of,' 'for' and 'with' are prepositions in English, as they also show relationships. For example:

The book of Mary's.

Every year we eat cranberries with our turkey.

He got a new horn for his bike.

Other languages express these ideas in different ways. ASL does not use prepositions the same way English does. This is not to say that an ASL user cannot express the same kinds of relationships, they can. ASL utilizes classifier predicates to represent some of the objects in these kinds of sentences and then uses the signing space to manipulate these objects or indicate how they are interacting. For example:

ASL: ROAD BUMPY(CL) CAR-VEHICLE-DRIVE-DOWN
(jerkily)

Eng.: The car bounced along the rough road.

ASL: TABLE INDEX -rt ^t BOOK CLASSIFIER-PREDICATE-for-
BOOK (on) TABLE

Eng.: The book is on the table.

Interpreters must recognize when a preposition is used in English, and listen until the whole relationship between the objects is established before we begin interpreting. To learn more about classifiers see the module on Classifiers and the module on structuring space.

I. Verbs

1. Subject-Object Agreement Verbs

This section will address two processes that affect verbs in ASL: subject/object agreement and aspect. In ASL certain verbs move in space to show agreement with the subject and/or the object of a sentence. Early researchers called these 'directional verbs,' but we now know that they move to specific locations that have been previously established specifically as subject and/or object. There are three categories of these kinds of verbs as explained by Valli and Lucas:

"1. Simple sentences with agreement verbs and no separate signs for the subject and the object. The gloss of the English sentence I give you. is an example of this structure. The sentence could be signed as follows:

GIVE
PRO.1 PRO. 2

(PRO.1 and PRO. 2 represent two locations that have been identified as pronouns. 1 = the first person pronoun I, me, we, or us; 2 = the second person pronoun singular or plural you.)

And the structure of the sentence could be described as follows:

VERB
subject object"

That means that the verb can move about in space in a fairly unrestricted way. This structure is used for verbs glossed as: GIVE, ASK-QUESTION, SEND, LOOK, MOVE, FLY, COME, GO, DRIVE, etc. to name a few. A sub-group of these verbs work in the opposite direction: beginning at the object location and moving toward the location that is identified as the subject.

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For example the sentence "I choose you," would be signed like this:

CHOOSE
PRO.2 PRO.1

Even though 'I' is the subject, the initial part of the sign agrees with the location identified as 'you.' Another verb in this category is SUMMON. Let's look at the sentence The principal called me to his office. In ASL it would look like:

_____t
PRINCIPAL SUMMON
 PRO.1 PRO.3

The signing of the verb begins in front of the signer's body and moves outward. Even though 'the principal' is the subject of this sentence, the movement of the verb is towards the location previously identified as 'principal.' Other verbs in this category include: INVITE, TAKE-OUT, etc.

Again according to Valli and Lucas, a second possible structure is one where:

"2. Verbs that allow or require a separate sign for the subject. TELL is one of these verbs, the English sentence, "He tells me," would be signed as follows:

PRO.3 TELL
 pro.1

HE (the third person pronoun) would be represented with the index finger, while the information about the object, me, would be in the location part of the verb." (1992)

This structure is used for ASL verbs: TELL, SEE, INFORM, etc. Notice that the production of these signs is anchored on the signers body.

A third type of sentence structure allows for the subject pronoun to be signed after the verb. If this occurs, there is a head nod that accompanies the pronoun. For example the sentence, "I give to you," can be signed:

nod
 GIVE PRO.1
PRO.1 PRO.2

It is important to be aware of how different types of verbs operate and to sign them with correct subject and object agreement. To see these sentences signed, watch the videotape that accompanies the Valli and Lucas book.

For additional practice on this see:

- 1. Sign Enhancers workbook and video on use of space.**
- 2. Humphries book Lesson 15, but note they don't distinguish between verbs that begin at the subject location and verbs that begin at the object location.**

2. Aspect

Certain verbs can be signed along a specific path to modify the meaning of the verb. You may have learned these variations as inflections, they are also called temporal aspects of a verb. In English we don't change our verbs to show temporal aspect, instead we add adverbs or adverbial phrases that describe how the action is performed. For example:

He watched TV *all day long*.

The dog is *continually* barking at squirrels.

The children played in the sandbox *for hours*.

For hours, the children would play in the sand.

In ASL a verb can be signed repeatedly to show a repeated action. One verb that takes this inflection is the sign glossed as TELL. By signing the verb repeatedly, along a certain path the meaning becomes something like: 'I tell him repeatedly,' or 'I have told him 'til I'm blue in the face.' The difference between these two English sentences, both signed the same, is in the accompanying non-manual behaviors. These are different than the facial expressions that denote sentence types in that usually the lower half of the face is involved.

Baker and Cokely (pp.404), list several other inflections for temporal aspect:

- over time (for a while)
- long time (for a prolonged period of time)
- over and over again (prolonged, repeated focus)

They confirm that not all verbs can be inflected for all aspects, but here is a list of verbs that can inflect for the aspects mentioned above:

GO-TO	ASK-TO	FORCE
RUN-TO	HIT	BAWL-OUT
THROW-AT	GIVE-TO	BOTHER
INSULT	INFORM	TELL LIE
SEND-TO	LOOK-AT	PLAY
PREACH-TO	TEACH	WRITE
PICK-ON	TEASE	ANALYZE
MAKE-FUN-OF	TTY-CALL	TO-STUDY
BLAME	TELL-TO	MEETING

Because in English these descriptions of temporal aspect can occur at a variety of places in sentences, we must be sure to use enough processing time when interpreting from English to ASL. The interpreter needs to hear how an action is performed: with what degree of regularity and with what mental attitude, before deciding how to inflect the verb. Otherwise the interpretation would contain more separate signs and would closely follow English word order. When that happens we are actually transliterating and no longer interpreting. There is new research into how aspect is shown through inflecting verbs in ASL, but little is published. Keep up with current literature for the latest information.

1. Watch the videotape that accompanies the Baker and Cokely ASL a Teachers Resource Text on Grammar and Culture, part 1 Chapter 13, sentences 5A-5D, 6A-6D, 7, 8, 9, 10 (gross!), 11, 12, and 13.
2. From the Baker and Cokely student text video watch Unit 8, Temporal Aspect.
3. Humphries and Padden, Exercise 18.1 and 18.2

3. ASL to English

When interpreting from ASL to English inflected verbs pose a different challenge. Many interpreters make the mistake of saying something like, "So I watched TV and watched and watched." This sounds awkward to an English speaker and says nothing about how the TV was watched. Work on developing more natural sounding expressions in English; this is a good place to try including idioms in your interpretation.

J. A Word About Transliteration

When transliterating these various sentence types and various aspects of verbs, the interpreter follows English word order more closely. Interpreters still need to incorporate the facial grammar in the upper portion of the face i.e. the sentence type markers, when transliterating. The facial grammar on the lower half of the face may be replaced by mouthing the English source text. Although the word order of a transliterated message may follow English structure, other elements like facial grammar, temporal inflections and the use of space for subject/object agreement will help the visual message be clearer. To see examples of each sentence type transliterated and compared to ASL, watch the Sign Enhancers tape, ASL Grammatical Aspect: Comparative Translations.

The RID describes what grammatical features and vocabulary choices should be included in transliteration in the "Report on the National Testing System" (Views, February 1996, pp.24). They are:

- Use of space for role taking (characterization)
- Use of space for subject-object agreement and verb inflections
- Conceptually correct sign choices (based on meaning rather than on form)
- Some amount of "initialization" but only to the extent that initialization is used by deaf adults (not to the extent of Manual English Codes)

K. Deaf Language Mentor

In this and other modules we mention the term Deaf Language Mentor. We urge you to establish a working relationship with a Deaf person who can serve as an ASL consultant to you. By discussing grammatical features with a native ASL user you can increase your understanding of the subtle differences between signs. A native signer will also be more likely to use proper non-manual grammar and facial expression, therefore strengthening your overall language skills!

The Department of Human Services Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services Division has provided training to some Deaf persons on how to be a language mentor. These mentors understand your goals as an interpreter and are trained to assist you in improving your ASL skills.

How Do I get a Deaf Mentor?

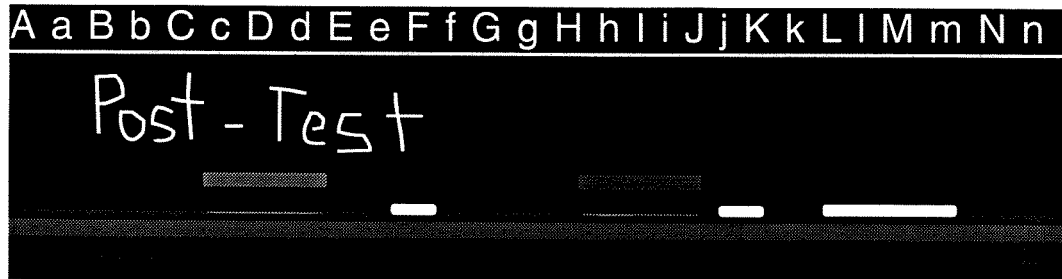
If you cannot find a trained mentor in your area you could approach a native Deaf signer and see if he or she would be willing to work with you. It would be a good idea to select a Deaf person who attended a residential school or someone who is in contact with other Deaf adults. You may want to post an ad at the local Deaf club or in the RSC's newsletter. Expect to pay this person, they are providing you a valuable service. Or you could barter and offer an exchange of services. Before you begin you will need to discuss your expectations of one another. Talk with each other about what you expect to do, how you plan to meet your goals, and set a beginning and end date for your sessions.

What do we do?

You could consult your mentor if you have a question about a sentence type or verb inflection. Avoid asking for a direct translation from an English sentence. You will get a more natural response and learn more about the sign if you provide a context for the conversation. Let's say you want to see the non-

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manual behaviors that accompany conditional sentences, you may want to strike up a conversation about the possibilities of different candidates winning an election. Discussing what you would do if you won the lottery is another enjoyable way to observe and practice using conditional sentences! Be creative and strive to observe natural samples of ASL rather than translations from English.



VI. Post-Test

1. Using the audiotape you made for the pre-test, part B, videotape yourself interpreting the same sentences.
2. Watch the new tape and make sure that the correct non-manual features are present for each sentence type.

VII. Bibliography

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