

# Deaf Support

## Level 3 British Sign Language 2017 Handout resources







### 1 SIGN PHONOLOGY

Phonology is sign patterns

Sign patterns are made with: handshape, placement, movement, direction, orientation and non-manual features (nmf)












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## Handshapes for People and Objects

Handshape indicates who or what is the topic of conversation. Certain Handshapes that represent people, parts of the body and objects are known as CLASSIFIERS AND PROFORMS.

For example:

<u>Items</u>	<u>Description</u>	
PERSON, BOSS FACE-TO-FACE HIM, HER, IT	Index finger	
PEOPLE, DRESS DISLIKE, FREE	Full hand digits apart	
LEGS, VIDEO, AGAIN (fingers downwards)	Index and middle fingers	
EYES, GLASSES BOTH	Index and middle finger slightly apart	
VEHICLE, FISH, MIRROR LIKE	Flat hand	
TELEPHONE AEROPLANE, KETTLE	Thumb and little finger up	
MOBILE, OURS, MINE CHURCH, COLD	Fist shape	
Small round objects e.g. NEEDLE, BUTTON, COIN CUP, CRISPS, MATCH	'O' with thumb and index finger	
CAKE, BUILDING, PLACE, ROCK CLOUDY	Claw shape	

## There are 3 types of classifiers:

**Entity** – the whole (entire) hand

Used to represent flat objects, e.g. VEHICLE, TABLE, BOOK, SHEET-OF-PAPER



**Handling** – shape used to pick up or handle something

e.g. used for OPEN-JAR, carrying a thick book  
PEN, NEEDLE, PICK-UP-CUP



**Tracing** – trace the shape of an object e.g. one finger

PICTURE, ROOM; two fingers CORRIDOR, RIVER



## References

Brien, David editor (1992) *Dictionary of British Sign Language/English* Faber & Faber  
London pages 46 - 48

Rachel Sutton-Spence and Bencie Woll (1998) *The Linguistics of British Sign Language* Cambridge University Press pages 47 -50

## Placement

The important area for signing is the space on and in front of the body, from just below the waist to just above the head and from just outside the left side of the head shoulder and arm to the right head, shoulder and arm. Placement must be used for pointing, eye gaze and body shift.

### POINTING AND REFERENTS

Handshapes are used to refer to people, animals and objects as pronouns are used in English. Pointing is used quite frequently to show where a person has been placed



LADY



point



WALK



FALL-OVER



A Lady was walking along and suddenly fell over



GIRL



point



RICH



point again

That girl is rich.



LONDON



point



PEOPLE



LIVE



HOW-MANY



point?

How many people live in London?

### Reference

Miles, Dorothy (1988) *British Sign Language A Beginner's Guide* BBC Books. Book and accompany DVD page 53, 88-9, Programme 6

## EYE GAZE

1. Look upwards for God/heaven, sun, rainbow; down to floor, ground



2. Locate people/things in space for he/she, you, ball in air



3. Indicate role shift for looking at conversational partner or character



4. Turntake, look at conversational partner or a group member for feedback



5. Look to the side to indicate past, looking ahead or down to indicate the present, looking up for the future



Reference: Sutton-Spence R & Woll B (1999) *The Linguistics of British Sign Language* Cambridge University Press chapter 5 pp 95-96

# ROLE SHIFT

(Head and body movement)

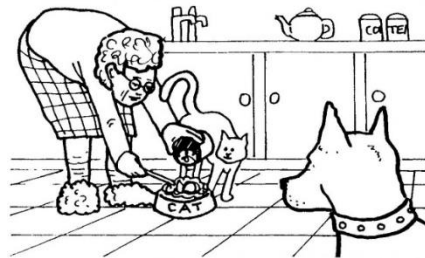
The signer acts as the adult and the baby (2 role shifts)

## The Baby



The signer shows the characters in the picture by moving head and body of the lady, cat and dog in the picture (3 role shifts).

## The Cat and Dog



Signer becomes cat; bends as lady feeding cat; cat eats from bowl.



Signer becomes dog looks at food

Picture the baby, *Picture this* by Karen Denis and Jim Hay.  
Picture cat and dog from CACDP.

## Movement

Information is given in the speed of movement: **aspect** shows the timing of events; **manner** the intensity and how things are done.

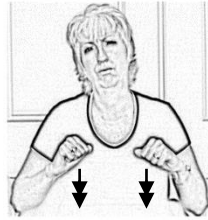
### ASPECT

Aspect is the timing of events (tenses in English).

Something happening for a long time; repeat the sign:



LOOK-FOR-A-LONG-TIME



WAIT-FOR-A-LONG-TIME

Separate signs show aspect



OFTEN



ALWAYS



FREQUENTLY



NORMALLY



BEEN

I have eaten



EAT...



WORK

I have finished work



FINISH

Repetition fast or slow e.g. REMIND/BE- REMINDED:



REMINDE-YOU



REMINDE-YOU-AGAIN



REMINDE-ME

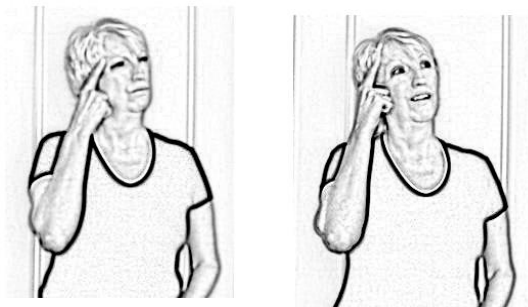


REMINDE-ME-AGAIN

Pace of sign, fast or slow holding sign e.g. LOOK, LOOK-HARD



Sign made smoothly and interrupted with fast sign e.g. THINK



Sign can change and increase in speed e.g. SWIM, FAST, FASTER



Signs used to show completion e.g. BEEN EAT



WORK FINISHED



## References

Brien, David editor (1992) *Dictionary of British Sign Language/English* Faber & Faber London pages 23 - 24

Sutton-Spence R & Woll B (1999) *The Linguistics of British Sign Language* Cambridge University Press chapter 7 pp 123 – 124



## MANNER

In BSL how things are done is known as MANNER. Intensity and degree is shown in manner. For example: how cheerfully, miserably, humorously, confidently or secretly. Variation of speed of movement is used.

Examples of manner are:



LIKE



LIKE (point)  
I like him/her/it



THINK



THINK-HARD



CYCLE



CYCLE-FAST



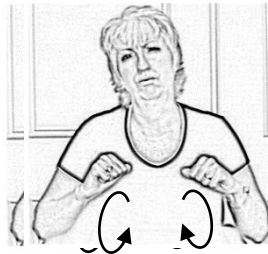
RESEARCH



RESEARCH-FOR-AGES



LOOK-FOR-A-LONG-TIME



WAIT-FOR-A-LONG-TIME



GOOD (nod yes)



BORING (nod no)



BUSY (puff cheeks)

### Reference

Sutton-Spence R & Woll B (1999) *The Linguistics of British Sign Language*  
Cambridge University Press chapter 7 pp 124 – 125

## Direction

The direction in which a sign moves carries meaning: in time and verbs. There are timelines that symbolise past, present and future; there are verbs that show how and where actions take place.

### TIME LINES

**Time Line A:** Backwards over shoulder for past or front of hand forward for past. Frontwards for future



LONG-TIME-AGO



RECENTLY



FUTURE

**Time Line B:** Along the arm



LAST-WEEK



NEXT- WEEK



LONG-TIME

**Time Line C:** In front of the body



CONTINUE



NOW



FOREVER

**Time Line D:**

GROW-UP



# AGREEMENT/DIRECTIONAL VERBS



HELP-ME



HELP-YOU



LOOK-AT-ME



LOOK-AT-YOU



RAINBOW LOOK-UP



DOG LOOK-DOWN



PAY-ME



PAY-YOU



TELL-ME



TELL-THEM



## Orientation

This relates to the direction of the palm and fingertips, whether the palm is up, down, facing left or right. Orientation carries information.

For example:



TOMORROW



YESTERDAY



MINE



HIS/HERS



ME



YOU



LOOK-AT-YOU



LOOK-AT-ME



LIBRARY



WHERE?



FLOOR



TURN-LEFT

### Reference

Brien, David editor (1992) *Dictionary of British Sign Language/English* Faber & Faber London pages 26 - 28

## Non-Manual Features

Manual means using hands. Non Manual Features (NMF) means using face and body. Appropriate facial expression must accompany signs to make them meaningful. When answering with 'yes' or 'no', the nod or shake of head includes a matching smile or screwed nose.

When asking questions, use the appropriate facial expression, usually with eyebrows furrowed when the answer is not known and eyebrows raised if the answer is expected such as asking a child, 'where's mummy' when mother is in the room.



WHICH?



WHY?



WHERE?



WHEN?



WHAT?



WHO?



HOW -MANY?



HOW MUCH?



WHAT-TIME?



HOW- LONG?

Facial expressions show the mood or attitude of the signer



Happy



unhappy



not much



a lot



surprising



boring

Illustrations from: Brien, David editor (1992) *Dictionary of British Sign Language/English* Faber & Faber London page xxiv – xxvi

## MOOD

MOOD shows the attitude of the signer.

Examples of mood are:



You? I doubt it



Not happy about it



Not pleasant



SURE



NOT SURE



KNOW



DON'T KNOW



Like very much (one hand)



Like very much (two hands)



Don't like very much

References:

Sutton-Spence R & Woll B (1999) *The Linguistics of British Sign Language* Cambridge University Press chapter 7 pp 125 – 126

Miles, Dorothy (1988) *British Sign Language A Beginner's Guide* BBC Books. Book pages 124 – 125, accompany DVD programme 8

## Notes on phonology

Phonology means the way a language is produced.

**Spoken languages** are produced using speech organs: larynx/voice box, air passes from lungs to vocal cords to mouth where tongue and lips move to make different frequencies of air waves producing vowels and consonants in sound sequence. The vibrating air/sounds are received by the ears passing from outer to middle to inner ear and then to the brain. The sounds are processed in the brain and recognised as speech and language with meaning.

**Sign languages** are produced using: hands which can be orientated palms up, down, sideways; body movements; and facial movements to form signs which move simultaneously (not in sequence as sound) in space. The signs are conveyed through light waves, received by the eyes, through the cornea, pupil, lens and iris to the retina which processes light and colour, at the back of the eye. The images which are 3 dimensional pass to the brain, are processed in the brain and recognised as visual patterns with meaning.

These handouts are designed by Sandra Dowe and Linda Squelch and are used by Linda for teaching British Sign Language at level 3 and can be found on the Deaf Support website [www.deafsupport.org.uk](http://www.deafsupport.org.uk) click on 'resources'



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