Signs of the arctic: Typological aspects of Inuit Sign Language

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Notational conventions

SIGN Signs are glossed in English small caps. In examples taken from other sources, glosses may be slightly adapted to fit the conventions used throughout this dissertation. This will be mentioned whenever appropriate.

SIGN-SIGN A hyphen is used when a single sign gloss consists of more than one English word (e.g. LONG-AGO).

SIGN^SIGN A circumflex is used to indicate a sequential compound, e.g. COLLAR^PRAY ‘priest’.

SIGN₁/SIGN₂ A subscript is used to indicate that a sign is inflected for location (cf. Chapter 4). The numbers 1, 2 and 3 represent first, second and third person agreement, respectively; e.g. GIVE₂ ‘give to you’. Subscript letters refer to a location, e.g. GOₐ ‘go to locationₐ’.

PRO₁ Pointing signs representing a personal or possessive pronoun are glossed as PRO, as Inuit Sign Language does not phonologically distinguish between these two functions. The subscript indicates which person is referred to. In some instances, PRO.PL is used, indicating that the pointing sign includes a sweeping movement thus referring to a plural referent.

INDEX-LOC The sign glossed as INDEX-LOC is a pointing sign towards an actual location. When the location is clear, a subscript specifies the location, as in INDEX-LOC_{Ottawa}. One should keep in mind that IUR makes use of absolute reference (see Chapter 4).

INDEX₃ There are very few instances in the IUR data where a pointing sign neither refers to a person nor to an actual location. These are glossed as INDEX. In examples taken from the literature, however, INDEX₃ may also function as a pronoun. The subscript refers to a location in signing space.

ECᵥ EC refers to an entity classifier, i.e. a handshape morpheme that combines simultaneously with a verb root and that specifies shape characteristics of a referent. In the gloss, the classifier is separated from the root by a colon (e.g. MOVE:ECᵥ); the subscript indicates which classifier is used (see Chapter 4 for more information).

HCᵥ HC refers to a handle classifier, i.e. a handshape morpheme that combines simultaneously with a verb root and that specifies how an object is handled or manipulated. In the gloss, the classifier is separated from the root by a colon (e.g. GIVE:HCᵥ); the subscript indicates which classifier is used (see Chapter 4 for more information).

SIGN A line above a gloss indicates the scope (i.e. onset and offset) of a particular non-manual marker. These markers can fulfil grammatical (i.e. phonological, morphological, or syntactic) or affective functions. Below, a list of abbreviations is given. Occasionally, a non-manual marker appears
without an accompanying small-cap gloss; this means that no manual sign accompanies the non-manual marker.

--hold Indicates that the sign is temporarily frozen, while either the other hand continues signing, or a non-manual marker continues.

++ Indicates reduplication of a sign (e.g. in aspepcual modulation).

Non-manual markers (in terms of form):

hs     headshake
hn     headnod
ht     headtilt
fr     frowned: including brows and mouth
ec     eyes closed, then opened with emphasis
to     tongue out
ch.in  cheeks sucked in
ch.pf  cheeks puffed
blow   pouted mouth, exhaling, like blowing out candles
sad    If a non-manual marker is emphatic and/or affective, it is described with the most appropriate emotion.

Spoken language glossing

The glossing of an example taken from the literature may contain slightly different abbreviations than in the original publication. Johns (2007), for instance, uses POSS instead of POSV. I have taken the liberty of changing the abbreviations for consistency.

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