Research group Sign Language Grammar & Typology
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We study aspects of the grammar of natural sign languages, their acquisition and diachronic change, and in how far sign languages differ from each other in various grammatical domains.

**SIGN LANGUAGE GRAMMAR & TYPOLOGY RESEARCH GROUP**

**GRAMMAR & DESCRIPTION**  
Enoch Aboh, Vadim Kimmelman, Ulrika Klomp, Vanja de Lint, Marloes Oomen, Roland Pfau

- Project: Descriptive grammar of Sign Language of the Netherlands (NGT). Implementing previous research & conducting original research, e.g. on conditional clauses:
  
  - What are nonmanual markers of conditionals in NGT?
  
  - Results:  
    1. Raised eyebrows seem optional (unlike in other sign languages);
    2. Head movement and/or tilt seems obligatory;
    3. When a manual marker is present, nonmanual markers are used less frequently.

**NGT GRAMMAR**

- BODY-ANCHORED VERBS
  
  - How does iconicity (form-meaning relation) affect sign language structure?

  - Body-anchored verbs:  
  
    Examples from NGT:

    | Verb |  
    |------|  
    | Love |  
    | Relieved |  
    | Eat |  

  - Result: only first person subject ('I') can be dropped due to iconic associations:

**CLASSIFIER PREDICATES**

- Classifier predicates: verbs of movement/location; the handshape classifies an argument

- Research on ASL: systematic connection between argument structure and classifier type

- Results: classifier predicates in Russian Sign Language & 4 other sign languages have complex event/argument structures

**SIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**  
Eveline Boers-Visker, Beppie van den Bogaerde

- How do deaf mothers and their deaf and hearing children combine spoken and signed language?

  - Results: utterances can consist of following combinations:
    
    - Fully signed and fully spoken
      
      Signs: YOU WALK TO CAMP^FIRE (NGT or NL word order)
      
      Words: you walk to campfire
    
    - Mainly signed, with words produced simultaneously
      
      Signs: YOU WALK TO CAMP^FIRE (usually NGT word order)
      
      Words: fire
    
    - Mainly spoken, with signs produced simultaneously
      
      Signs: WALK CAMP^FIRE (usually NL word order)
      
      Words: you walk to campfire

**BIMODAL BILINGUALISM**

- How do deaf mothers and their deaf and hearing children combine spoken and signed language?

**SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

- How do adults who acquire a sign language as a second language learn to use the signing space to express grammatical relations?

  1. Case studies (n=2, longitudinal)

  2. Elicitation study (n=14, longitudinal) into classifiers and agreement verbs

  3. Intervention study (2018) - does explicit instruction help?