Research group Sign Language Grammar & Typology

Aboh, E.O.; Boers-Visker, E.M.; van den Bogaerde, E.M.; Kimmelman, V.; Klomp, U.; de Lint, V.; Oomen, M.; Pfau, R.

Creative Commons License (see https://creativecommons.org/use-remix/cc-licenses): Unspecified

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

Download date: 22 Jan 2020
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.

**NGT Grammar**
- 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.

**Sign Language Acquisition**
- 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
  - Mixed signs and words are produced simultaneously, but content differs, e.g.
    - signs: HUGGING........
    - words: you sweet rabbit
    - Both signs and words are necessary for complete message.

**Body-Anchored Verbs**
- How does iconicity (form-meaning relation) affect sign language structure?
- Body-anchored verbs:
  (examples from NGT)
  - 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

**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?

---

*This project is part of the project “The SIGN-HUB: preserving, researching and fostering the linguistic, historical and cultural heritage of European Deaf signing communities with an integral resource”, funded by European Commission Horizon2020 grant no. 693949.

#This project is carried out in collaboration with the Deaf Studies research group at the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht.

---

**Sign Language Grammar & Typology Research Group**

---

**Body-Anchored Verbs**

- How does iconicity (form-meaning relation) affect sign language structure?
- Body-anchored verbs:
  - 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

---

**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?

---

*These projects are part of the project “Argument structure in three sign languages: typological and theoretical aspects”, funded by the Dutch Science Foundation (NWO), grant no. 360-70-520.

---

**Sign Language Acquisition**

- 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
  - Mixed signs and words are produced simultaneously, but content differs, e.g.
    - signs: HUGGING........
    - words: you sweet rabbit
    - Both signs and words are necessary for complete message.