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.

**Body-Anchored Verbs**

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

**Body-anchored verbs:**

- 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?

**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.

**Bimodal Bilingualism**

- 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.............
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Both signs and words are necessary for complete message.