Habituals in Sign Language of the Netherlands: a corpus-based study

van Boven, C.M.J.; Oomen, M.

Link to publication

Habituals in Sign Language of the Netherlands (NGT): A corpus-based study

Cindy van Boven (c.m.j.vanboven@uva.nl), Marloes Oomen (oomen.marloes@gmail.com)

Article
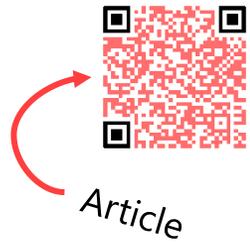
1 Research aims

- Investigate (non-)manual habitual marking in NGT in corpus data;
- Compare the findings to those reported in previous studies [1; 2].

2 Background & Methodology

Previous studies on habitual marking (elicited data):
- [1]: slower **elliptical modulation** of the verb, various NMMs
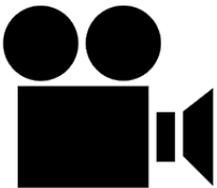- [2]: **reduplication** of the verb, left-to-right body and head movement

Our study: investigate habitual marking in natural corpus data
→ **Corpus NGT** [3]: 106 habitual constructions

3.1 Results: manual markers

	Adverb	No adverb
Reduplication	26.4% → see (1)	19.8%
No reduplication	40.6%	13.2% → see (2)

See pitch video

narrowed eyes
(1) INDEX₃ **ALWAYS ONE TIME PER MONTH ANGRY++**
'He always used to be angry once a month.'

quotative role shift
(2) SAY PAST INDEX₁ CERTAIN
'I used to say "I'm certain [it will forever stay that way]".'

3.2 Results: non-manual markers

Non-manual markers	%
Left-to-right body movement	27.4
Brow raise/lowering	29.3
Narrowed eyes	25.4
Pursed lips	15.1

- **Other NMMs** attested (<10%): back-and-forth body movement, head nod, protruding tongue
- Examples **without any NMMs**: N=28 (26.4%)

4 Discussion & Conclusion

The corpus data display more **variation** than the previously elicited data [1; 2]:
- Reduplication present in fewer than 50% of sentences in a habitual context
- Elliptical modulation not evident in most reduplicated forms (cf. [1])
- Left-to-right body movement not common (cf. [2])

→ Importance of **combining different data types**

References: [1] Hoiting & Slobin. 2001. Typological and modality constraints on borrowing: Examples from the Sign Language of the Netherlands. In *Foreign Vocabulary in Sign Languages: A Cross-linguistic Investigation of Word Formation*, 121–138. [2] Oomen. 2016. The marking of two aspectual distinctions in Sign Language of the Netherlands (NGT). *Linguistics in Amsterdam* 9(2): 30–55. [3] Crasborn, Zwitserlood & Ros. 2008. *The Corpus NGT: A digital open access corpus of movies and annotations of Sign Language of the Netherlands.* https://cutt.ly/rhHAg8C.