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Appendix A: Notation

**SIGN**
Words in capital letters represent English labels (glosses) for ASL signs. A gloss is chosen on the basis of common usage among deaf researchers and informants in giving an English translation for the sign. The gloss represents the meaning of the unmarked, unmodulated, basic form of a sign out of context.

**SIGN-SIGN**
Multitword glosses connected by hyphens are used when more than one English word is required to translate a single sign (LOOK-AT).

**‘meaning’**
Words within single quotation marks indicate the meaning or referent of the words or signs; e.g., ‘tree’ indicates the referent tree, not the English word *tree*.

**W-O-R-D**
Fingerspelled words are represented in capital italic letters with hyphens between letters.

**SIGN**+**AFFIX**
Capital italics joined to a sign gloss by a plus mark indicate sign markers, signlike affixes invented to indicate English grammatical forms (as in **SIGN**+**ING**). Such affixes are not ASL signs but are used in various manual representations of English (in Signing Exact English, for example). Capital ASL. See chapter 9.

Italics are also used for signlike inventions for English function words (the articles A, _AN_, _THE_, for example) and for letters in fingerspelled words.

**SIGN**+**SIGN**
Sign glosses joined by an arc indicate compound signs in ASL. See chapter 9.

**SIGN**
A sign gloss preceded by an arc (but not joined to another sign gloss) represents a bound form in ASL, for example, **RECTANGULAR**. See chapter 10.

**SIGN**+**SIGN**
Sign glosses joined by an inverted arc indicate contractions in ASL.

**SIGN**/**SIGN**
Sign glosses joined by a slash indicate a blend of two signs, as discussed in chapters 5 and 13.
A sign gloss within parentheses indicates that the sign is an indexic sign; that is, it is a pronoun, possessive, or "self" form made with a pointing hand that changes orientation and path of movement to indicate its referent: (ME), (HIS), (THERE), (YOURSELF).

A bracketed symbol following a sign gloss indicates that the sign is made with some change in form associated with a change in meaning from its basic, unmodulated form and thus indicates grammatical changes on signs. The symbol may be followed by a specification of the grammatical category of the process or the meaning of the inflected form. For example, GIVE[n:exhaustive] and GIVE[n:'to each'] are alternative ways of representing the same inflectional process.

A plus mark indicates that the sign is not made in its uninflected form but does not specify what change the sign has undergone.

A form that has undergone indexical change. The meaning is sometimes specified, as in INFORM[x:'me'] or INFORM[x:'me to you'].

A form that has undergone the reciprocal inflection, as in INFORM[x:'each other'].

A form that has undergone inflection for numerosity (number and distributional aspect), as in ASK[n:multiple] or GIVE[n:'to each'].

A form that has undergone modulation for temporal aspect, focus, or degree. The modulation or the meaning of the modulated sign is sometimes specified: SICK[m:predispositional], BLUE[x:'dark'].

A form that has undergone a derivational process. The nature of the process or the meaning of the derived form is sometimes specified: COMPARE[p:nominalization], COMPARE[p:'comparison'].

The sign made is an idiomatic derivative. The meaning is sometimes specified, as in QUIET[in:'acquiesce'].

A sign gloss followed by a subscript symbol indicates that the sign is unusual in some nonregular respect; it may be a regional sign, an invented sign, a stylistic variant, which does not change its intended meaning.

An invented sign.

A stylistic variant, occurring in informal signing styles, for example.

A regional variant.

When one component of a compound sign gloss is followed by a bracketed symbol, that component of the compound has undergone a grammatical operation.
When the compound is itself bracketed, the entire compound has undergone the grammatical operation.

An asterisk preceding a sentence indicates that the sentence is ungrammatical within ASL or English.

With reference to spoken language, a symbol within slashes indicates a phonemic segment (or phonological segment). Within a language, phonemic segments are those sounds that function to distinguish words.

With reference to spoken language, a symbol within brackets indicates a phonetic segment (or allophone).

With reference to American Sign Language, a symbol within slashes indicates a prime value of a sign parameter. Within ASL, the elements of the major parameters—hand configuration (HC), place of articulation (PA), and movement (MOV)—function to distinguish signs.

With reference to ASL, a symbol within brackets indicates a subprime value of a sign parameter. Analysis to date suggests that prime values may be considered as classes or families of related values.

Symbols identifying the separate primes of formational parameters of ASL signs may be found in chapter 2:

Hand Configuration, figures 2.4 and 2.5
Place of Articulation, figure 2.13
Movement, figures 2.15 through 2.19

Names of the major formational parameters of signs are abbreviated: hand configuration as HC, place of articulation as PA, and movement as MOV. For the informal description of manual gestures in general, different terms are used: handshape, location, and either motion or movement (but not abbreviated as MOV). Names of minor parameters (orientation, contacting region, hand arrangement) are not abbreviated.

Special notation used in specific chapters is indicated within those chapters.
Appendix B: Conventions Employed in Illustrations

Because movement of a sign is difficult to represent but essential in the analysis of signs, we have used a number of different ways of displaying temporal properties of signs. Many drawings are modifications of tracings taken from videotape, our essential research tool. Videotape stores images at 16-millisecond intervals (60 fields per second), a convenient rate for sign analysis.

In some figures we display individual selected images of a sign or pantomime (as for GOOD in figure 9.9, shown in four images). The number in the corner of a frame indicates the field number of the image selected.

Strobelike drawings in other illustrations are tracings made from videotaped representations. One line is drawn for each of the 60 images per second: widely spaced lines represent rapid movement, since the hand is traversing greater distances between images; narrowly spaced lines represent slow movement.

Time lines appear in some drawings. Again these are taken from videotaped representations. When time lines are represented by blocks, a white block represents the duration of an initial or final hold; black blocks represent the duration (and number) of cycles of the sign core. Gray blocks represent transitions between signs. Comparative duration is shown in length of line.

Dotted lines between drawings are used when two drawings are necessary to represent a single sign, as in signs with orientation changes, such as MISUNDERSTAND, shown in figure 13.15a. Two drawings separated by a dotted line topped by an arc represent the two distinct parts of a compound (although for other purposes a compound may be represented in a single drawing).

Hands drawn with dotted lines represent the first position of the sign; those drawn with solid lines represent the final position. Solid lines between drawings within a box indicate separate signs; drawings separated by a line that does not touch at top and bottom represent signs in a phrase.

Some signs are represented with accompanying facial expression, carried over from the videotape images. Facial expression plays a multitude of roles in American Sign Language, but we have not focused on that aspect of signing in this book. When the facial expression accompanying a sign is relevant to an issue discussed in the text, this is so noted.

Special conventions adopted for particular chapters are explained in the notes to those chapters.