Grammaticalization is a process by which lexical words become grammatical markers. Sign languages start with gestures (Hopper & Traugott 2003, Johnson & Schemin 2010, Pfeu & Steinbach, 2008).

- Iconic
- Unsystematic
- Stable meaning and form
- Semantic & phonetic erosion
- Grammatical function

Grammaticalization follows lexicalization

### Methodology

- Israeli Sign Language (ISL) is young, ~ 90 years old (Meir & Sandler, 2008)
- 27 spontaneous narratives of deaf ISL signers
- 196 tokens of TIME-PASS identified, (133 from older, 63 from younger signers)
- Three functions of TIME-PASS are coded and distinguished by manual, non-manual behaviour and context (Table 1)

### Results

#### Generational change:
- Gestural episode divider TIME-PASS1 decreases in use
- Lexicalized TIME-PASS3 increases in use
- Grammaticalized TIME-PASS2 persists

### Discussion and Examples from the Data

- Introduces new intonational phrase and new proposition.
- Head up, beginning of intonational phrase (Dachkovsky et al., 2013)
- Followed by time expression (AGE-FOUR), and resultative predicates (change of state)
- Phonetically reduced

**Gestural TIME-PASS1** has a discourse-pragmatic function

- Separates background (circumstantial) information from foreground (main events)
- Comprises its own intonational phrase
- Replicated X 4 (continuative)
- Head thrusts + mouth open

**Lexicalized TIME-PASS2** connects two individual events

- Contains predicate of time expression
- Phonetically reduced
- Specific lexical items emerge after holistic message is broken and re-organized into compositional ARGUMENT-PREDICATE structure

**Lexicalized TIME-PASS3**

- Specific (abstract) meaning
- Placement according to syntax
- Functions as the predicate of ‘hearing aid technology’
- Mouthing of Hebrew word (mitkadem) (advances)
- Lengthened as IP final (Nespor & Sandler, 1999)

### Conclusions

- The process of language emergence is not linear, but dynamic (Meir & Sandler in press)
- In a new language, lexicalization and grammaticalization are interdependent – two facets of the same process
- Lexical and grammatical items are “carved out” of the event structure
- Prosody plays important organizing role in this process

### References