

Deaf annotators' associations with 'head forward' in Austrian Sign Language



Andrea Lackner
Nikolaus R. Kankkonen
Christian Stalzer
Christian Hausch
Isabel Graf
Laura Theuermann
Elisabeth Scharfetter

INTRODUCTION

Sign language research shows 'head forward' ('hf') can be indicator or part of the nonmanual configuration in interrogatives, conditionals and other constructions. The actual study is based on corpus data, annotated by Deaf natives focusing on clause-like units (CLUs) and nonmanuals (NMs). In central stage of this study is informed evaluation on 'hf', that is, the Deaf annotators understanding of 'hf' und its function/s is analyzed.

APPROACH

2. Determining the function/meaning associated with 'hf' occurring in this particular signed context

by using **functional domains** such as **contrast, illocution, modality, reference** etc. as guiding principle i.e. selecting along a template one or more possible functions associated with

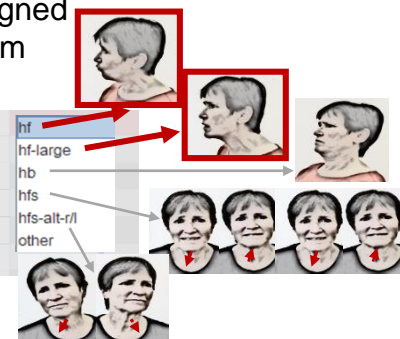
- each 'hf'
- each identified CLU

1. Determine 'hf's within given signed discourse by selecting them from given sets of parameters



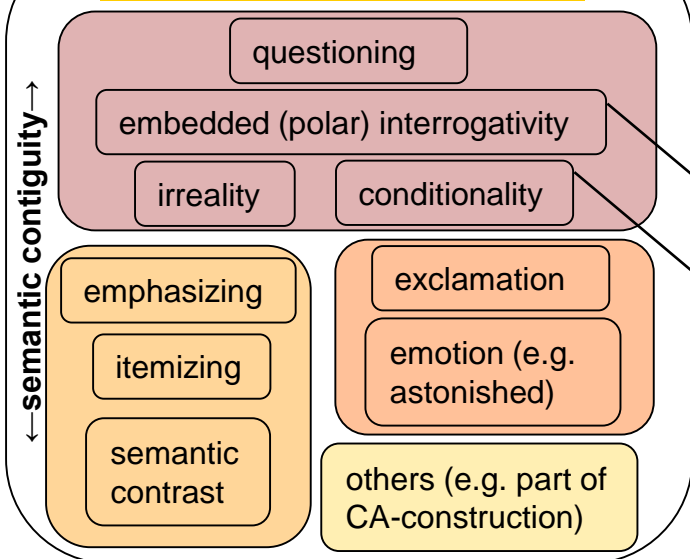
Deaf annotators tasks are:

S1 Kopf vor/zurück | head f/b
S1 Kopf auf/ab | head cu/cd
S1 Kopf Nicken | head nods
S1 Kopf drehen | head turn r/l
S1 Kopf neigen | head tilt r/l
S1 Kopf Sonstige | head other



3. Determine CLUs and annotating the propositional-semantic information associated with each identified CLU

Functions associated with 'hf'



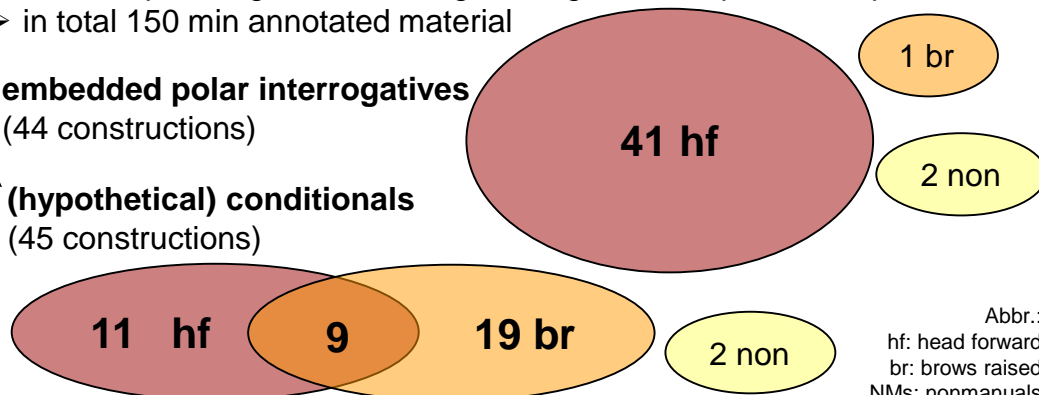
Statistics with 'hf'

Analyzed material:

- a choice of signed texts of the corpus, focusing on videos with themes about expressing wishes, thoughts, negative and positive experiences
- in total 150 min annotated material

embedded polar interrogatives
(44 constructions)

(hypothetical) conditionals
(45 constructions)



Abbr.:
hf: head forward
br: brows raised
NMs: nonmanuals
CLU: claus-like unit

ANALYSIS

FUTURE – EXPECTATIONS

A) Analysis on language status

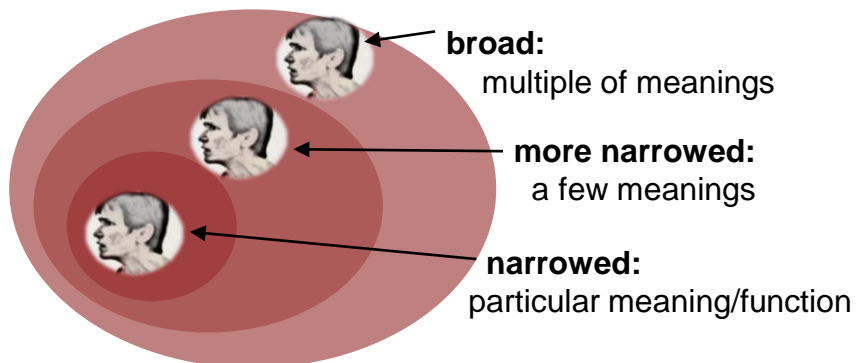
Based on criteria of

- a) systematic recognition of forms
- b) systematic association of meanings/functions
- c) well-formed evaluation regarding co-occurrence of NMs
- d) replacement/alternation of particular NMs in each CLU
- e) subjective awareness of rules of usage by SL-users

We expect to gain information

- on **acceptability** and **variation**
- on how strongly particular elements are **grammatically integrated into the signed structure**

B) Modal of functional/semantic interpretation of nonmanuals



References:

- Dotter, F. (2018) Most characteristic elements of sign language texts are intricate mixtures of linguistic and non-linguistic parts, aren't they? In: Colloquium: New Philologies, 3-1, 1-62.
Hodge, G. (2013) Patterns from a signed language corpus: Clause-like units in Auslan. PhD thesis.
Lackner, A. (2017) Functions of head and body movements in Austrian Sign Language. De Gruyter Mouton.
Lehmann, C. & Maslova, E. (2004) Grammaticography. In: Booij, G. et al. (eds.) Morphologie. Ein Handbuch zur Flexion und Wortbildung. (HSK 17/2) Walter de Gruyter, 1857 – 1882.