

Reflections on the integration of gestural and linguistic elements in enactment structures

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Co-speech gestures are discussed as having various different functions (Cassell & McNeill, 1991) and that these can be analyzed as part of various different points of view that the speakers assume. These points of views are identified as that of a narrator, an observer, or a character (Parrill, 2012). Moreover, similar gestures are found in enactment structures (also known as roleshift or constructed action) where signers reconstitute remarks, actions and thoughts of others in their signed discourses (Cormier *et al.*, 2015). The enactment structures are highly gestural since they allow the signers to incorporate the attitudinal behaviours of the characters while their remarks or actions are reconstituted in signed discourses (Quinto-Pozos, 2007). Within the enactment structures, the signs, as lexical material, are seen to be tightly interwoven with the gestures (or non-conventional expressions) where such characters are visually represented by signers' bodies in signed discourses (Ferrara & Johnston, 2014).

The objective of this paper is to address the theoretical issue where lexical (conventional) and gestural (non-conventional) structures are tightly integrated to form enactment structures in signed language discourses using the same physical articulators. In this presentation, we analyse two different approaches which offer different hypotheses concerning the nature of enactment structures in sign languages grammar: i) the Generative Grammar perspective which proposes a syntactic description, and ii) the Cognitive Grammar perspective which focuses on its symbolic nature.

The simultaneous incorporation of negation in linguistic structure is highlighted as problematic by Kremers (2012) for the generative approach. Examples are found in LSQ which distinguish the role of an headshake which is analyzed as linguistic, such as negation which intervene in the semantic construction of a VP, or as gestural, denoting a form of disbelief on the part of the character reconstituted in enactment structure, which is produced in parallel to the VP. In Cognitive Grammar, the conventional and non-conventional expressions are constructed as a symbolic unit, which contains a semantic structure with its own phonological structure (Langacker, 1991, 2008). Such units can be combined in a recursive manner with both linguistic and gestural structures into a complex structure. This allows the construction of a headshake to associate itself with the VP or with the construction of enactment structure. Furthermore, this approach corresponds to the nature of enactment structures which allow the interdependence between these two types of structures in signed discourses.

We conclude that enactment structures show a high degree of interdependence of conventional and non-conventional expressions (Wilcox & Xavier, 2013). These structures are highly uniform in term of frequency across LSQ signers whereas their corresponding iconic gestures representing characters exist in Laurentian French, but they are less frequent and used without uniformity (Parisot & Saunders, in preparation).

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