

## The Grammaticalization of Perspective-taking in ASL Clauses

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Studies on grammaticalization in signed languages have shown many similarities to those of spoken languages with the exception that gestural sources can be seen as leading to grammatical material in certain constructions (Janzen 1999; Janzen and Shaffer 2002; Wilcox 2007). In this study, I explore the grammaticalization of the signer's embodied, viewpointed stance that participates in verb constructions in ASL.

In ASL verb constructions, lexical material is articulated largely within the space in front of and surrounding the signer but at the same time, the signer has an inherent view on this space, with several potential effects. For example, in constructed action (similar to reported speech), the signer depicts characters' actions and utterances as if she herself were part of the scene, thus with her own body orientation and eye-gaze she enacts a character perspective on the scene. But at times, the signer may use so-called "token space" (Liddell 1990), where the signer is not part of the scene, but views the space from outside the scene. In this case, the signer's body and eye-gaze on the space are immaterial and not part of the linguistic construction. Other cases are more problematic. It appears possible, for example, to combine these two orientations, such that token-sized entities and actions are being described, and yet the signer's bodily, viewpointed presence appears to be part of the scene, and therefore part of the structure of the linguistic construction.

In each of these cases, the signer still maintains a view on the space, which leads to questions regarding the status of the signer's body and viewpoint in terms of the construction itself, and whether or not this might be considered as contributing to the construction in a linguistic or gestural sense. In this talk I examine the status of perspective-taking first as a more global gestural element in discourse, not confined to signed language, but taking into account that spoken language users have the same viewpointed body and conceptualize scenes and their participation in them with the same cognitive tools as do signers. However, given that signed language users have regularized gestural elements in both lexicalization and grammaticalization processes (Janzen 2012), I explore the possibility that perspective-taking may be grammaticalized in certain ASL constructions given its regularization patterns and subsequent role in at least some of these constructions, with examples to support this claim taken from conversational and narrative ASL data. Critical to this analysis is Lanacker's (2002) idea of the subjective self as either on- or off-stage, and how this determines construction choices speakers make in expressing their thoughts.

### References

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