1 The native lexicon

Summary 1.1 Core lexicon. – 1.2 Non-core lexicon. – 1.3 Interaction between core and non-core lexicon.

As for languages in general, the lexicon of LIS comprises both signs that have developed naturally among native signers, and forms deriving from processes of borrowing from other languages, which enter the system as a consequence of contact. Signs developed naturally, showing a regular phonological pattern and used by all the members of the community define the native lexicon, whereas signs deriving from the contact with other languages constitute the non-native lexicon, which will be explored in [LEXICON 2].

The present chapter deals with LIS native lexicon, exploring the main properties defining the signs belonging to this category. In the previous chapters, we have seen that signs result from the combination of specific phonological parameters, which constitute their sub-lexical structure [PHONOLOGY 1]. As in all languages, within the native lexicon we find signs which constitute the established lexicon in that they are manifestation of lexemes, and signs resulting from visually-motivated constructions or processes of lexicalisation. We refer to these two groups as core [LEXICON 1.1] and non-core lexicon [LEXICON 1.2], respectively. Often, these two groups overlap and undergo the same processes of lexicalisation and standardisation, but also of modification. The following sections will explore the signs belonging to the core and non-core lexicon of LIS.

1.1 Core lexicon

The core lexicon includes all the signs listed in the mental lexicon of signers.

In general, signs belonging to this category display a lesser degree of iconicity, namely their meaning can be largely unrelated to form, and they are fixed, in that they do not display modifications of their phonological parameters, which are discrete and categorical. The only phonological modification they display is allophonic variation, referring to the possibility of employing two slightly different handshapes for the same sign, with no change in meaning. For instance, in some cases, handshape closed 5 with crossed thumb (a) might be used instead of closed 5 with adducted thumb (b).
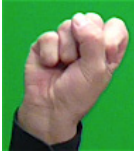
a. Closed 5 with crossed thumb

b. Closed 5 with adducted thumb

Signs belonging to the core lexicon are the result of formational processes starting from real-word observations, visual perception and linguistic knowledge, which combine the sign language-specific formational parameters and results in signs that can eventually become conventionalised, or being abandoned. Conventionalised signs are those found in their citation form within the language dictionary, used by all the members of the linguistic community. Therefore, to the core lexicon of LIS belong those signs whose sublexical structure is made up of the phonological parameters defining LIS phonology, which are: handshape, location, orientation and movement [PHONOLOGY 1].

Signs belonging to the core lexicon can be one- or two-handed signs, which are further divided between symmetrical (a) and asymmetrical signs (b) [PHONOLOGY 1.4].
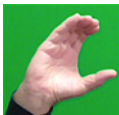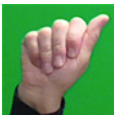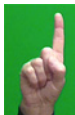
a. HOUSE

b. COLOUR

Symmetrical signs respect the Symmetry Condition, which states that if both hands move independently, they have to display the same handshape and location, the same or symmetrical orientation and the same or alternating movement. Asymmetrical signs, instead, are regulated by the Dominance Constraint, which states that if the hands have different handshapes, then one hand articulates the movement while the other one is passive and displays a handshape that belongs to a restricted set. The handshapes selected for the non-dominant hand in asymmetrical signs in LIS are reported below (see [PHONOLOGY 1.4.2] for further details).

Table 1 Non-dominant handshapes found in asymmetrical two-handed signs in LIS

5	unspread 5	unspread curved open 5	curved closed 5	closed 5	G

Core lexicon signs can also be classified considering their point of articulation: on the signer's body (a) or in the neutral space (b). The two classes of nouns, invariable and inflectional respectively, display different morphosyntactic properties (see [LEXICON 3.1] and [MORPHOL-OGY 4] for further details]).

a. BIRD
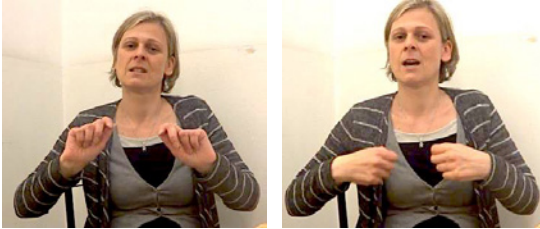
b. SHOE

The signs illustrated so far are simple signs. However, signs belonging to the core lexicon can also be compounds. We provide an illustrative example below (see [MORPHOLOGY 1] for further details).

SWEET^SASS(curved open L): 'round'
'Cake'

Signs belonging to the core lexicon display specific morphophonological and semantic properties, which distinguish them from non-core lexicon signs [LEXICON 1.2].

As already mentioned, core signs result from the combination of phonological units, i.e. the phonological parameters, which are discrete and categorical. In other words, each unit is used in an arbitrary and contrastive manner, as described in [PHONOLOGY 1]. It follows that a change in one feature leads to a change of meaning, thus creating a minimal pair. In minimal pairs, two signs share all the phonological parameters but one, resulting in two different signs with two different meanings. In the example below, the two signs differ only in their point of articulation: on the mouth for SPEAK (a), on the upper face for BE_FAMILIAR (b).

a. SPEAK

b. BE_FAMILIAR

Moreover, in core signs the use of space is arbitrary in that it does not represent the real space. In fact, movement and point of articulation are crucial for the realisation of nominal [MORPHOLOGY 4.1] and verbal agreement [MORPHOLOGY 3.1].

As far as meaning is concerned, in core lexicon signs are not directly understandable from their form in that meaning is non-compositional (i.e. the sublexical features forming the sign are discrete units and do not have a meaning on their own). Therefore, core lexicon signs are more arbitrary than non-core lexicon signs. In the majority of signs, there is no clear correspondence between the sign and the shape of the real entity.

Nevertheless, some LIS signs belonging to the core lexicon display a higher degree of iconicity because the selection of the handshape is visually motivated. Unspread 5 usually refers to flat closed surfac-

es. F handshape represents small round entities or the grabbing of a very light and thin object. Closed 5 indicates the grabbing of a bag or suitcase [MORPHOLOGY 5]. Another kind of iconicity is found in signs that display overt semantic relation with their point of articulation: signs articulated near the head generally denote objects that can be put on it (HAT), or refer to activities of the mind (THINK, UNDERSTAND, IDEA, REMEMBER), as we can see in the sign for IDEA.
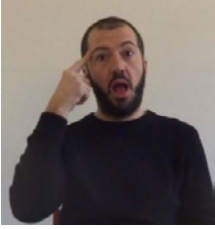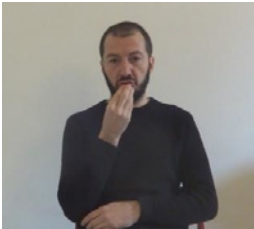

IDEA

Signs articulated near the eyes, ears, mouth and nose belong to the semantic spheres of sight, hearing, speaking or eating and smelling. For instance, in the example (a) below the sign for NOISE is articulated near the ear, whereas we see in (b) that the sign EAT is articulated near the mouth.
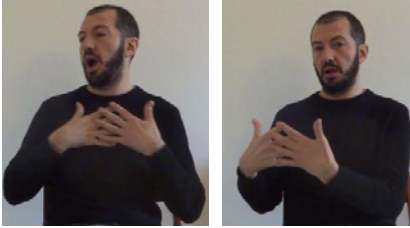

a. NOISE

b. EAT

The same holds true for signs articulated near the signer's chest, which are usually connected with emotions and feelings.

a. LOVE
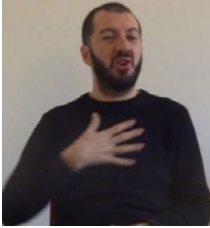
b. SATISFACTION

Signs belonging to the core lexicon undergo specific processes of transformation for ease of articulation, fluidity or historical/cultural changes (for instance, the old sign for 'telephone' has been substituted with the one for 'mobile phone', see [SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 4.4]. To illustrate, centralisation is a phonological process which consists in moving the articulation of signs, which were previously articulated in the corners of the visual plane, towards the centre of the signing space (in front of the signer's chest). The example in (a) shows the way in which the sign SHOE was articulated some time ago; example (b) shows the sign for SHOE as it is used today, displaying a different position for ease of articulation and perception (see [PHONOLOGY 3] for further details).

a. SHOE (old version)

b. SHOE (centralised)

Moreover, sociolinguistic studies analysing LIS lexicon have attested that it is characterised by a very rich variation, mainly due to geographical and age reasons. Specifically, older signers show a tenden-

cy to use more local variants than younger signers, who use the more standardised form of LIS, namely the one used in Rome. The standard variety is also more used by signers coming from central Italy rather than signers living in the north or south. The semantic domains of colour or month names are the ones showing lexical variation to a greater extent. Below we report some variants of the sign for JANUARY. Example (a) shows the most common variant form, (b) shows the variant form used in Brescia, whereas (c) is the one used in Rome.

a. JANUARY (standard)

b. JANUARY (Brescia)

c. JANUARY (Rome)

As for colours, we report here some variants of the sign YELLOW: example (a) shows the one used in Brescia, example (b) is the variant form used in Rome, example (c) reports the variant which is common in Bologna, and (d) shows the sign commonly used in Sicily.

a. YELLOW (Brescia)

b. YELLOW (Rome)

c. YELLOW (Bologna)

d. YELLOW (Sicily)

However, an ongoing process of standardisation seems to suggest that the variety of LIS used in Rome is considered the prestige variety, thus leading signers to conform to that and to consider it as the standard one [SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 4.4].

Manual signs belonging to the core lexicon can be completed with the articulation of mouth gestures displaying lexical, adverbial and syntactic functions [PHONOLOGY 1.5.1] or mouthings [PHONOLOGY 1.5.2], which are mainly employed to disambiguate homonyms and define neologisms.

1.2 Non-core lexicon

To the non-core lexicon belong signs which can be defined as being visually-motivated, in that they exploit the spatial properties of the three-dimensional space for the realisation of concepts. Therefore, they display a higher degree of iconicity despite being fully linguistic, and not gestural, elements. Considering that they usually convey much information simultaneously, they tend to be polymorphemic rather than monomorphemic constructions. Differently from core lexicon signs, which display a fixed form, non-core lexicon signs can be modified in their articulation in order to convey different meanings. The signs typically defining the non-core lexicon are classifier constructions, pointing signs, buoys and other signs whose origin is the result of visual metaphors such as metonymy and synecdoche (poetic devices using words not in their literal meaning but to refer to some other abstract concepts, discussed in [PRAGMATICS 9]). Being visually motivated, non-core lexicon signs exploit the signing space in an isomorphic and non-categorical manner in order to convey spatial descriptions.

Non-core lexicon in LIS is largely built on visual metaphors, in which iconic mapping focuses on semantic features that the source and the target domains share. Specifically, iconic features of sign language metaphors are the expressive manifestation of the blending process that occurs in the minds of the signer and the target. This kind of metaphors can occur both in formal and poetic registers, with a majority of occurrences in poetry. Being metaphors, in order to be understood interlocutors must have a comprehensive cultural knowledge of Deafness and Deaf culture. In LIS metaphors, vision plays a crucial role in that it is conceptualized as a complex tool for elaborating and transforming knowledge, and it is often found in metaphors related to mind and cognition. In general, LIS metaphors are grounded on visual and tactile experiences familiar to deaf people (see [PRAGMATICS 9] for further details).

1.2.1 Classifier constructions

Classifier constructions, as extensively explored in [MORPHOLOGY 5], are morphologically complex structures consisting of a handshape that can be associated to a movement to provide information about location and motion of referents. Classifier handshapes denote both animate and inanimate entities by depicting their external characteristics of size and shape, their semantic category, how they are

handled or manipulated. The handshapes functioning as classifiers in LIS are selected from the phonological inventory of LIS [PHONOLO-GY 1.1]. Classifier constructions can exploit the signing space in an isomorphic manner in order to define spatial information about the referents they denote. In other words, they are used to locate referents as they are in the real word. We provide two examples below. In (a) the classifier conveys the position of one entity in space, whereas in (b) the two classifiers define the position of two entities simultaneously. Specifically, in (b) the non-dominant hand functions as point of reference and of location for the entity denoted by the dominant hand (the right one). The locative function is fulfilled by associating specific loci of the signing space, which correspond to loci in the real space, to the entities involved.

a. WINDOW   CL(unspread 5): 'window_be_located'
'The window is there.'

b. dom: CUP   CL(F): 'cup_be_located'
   n-dom: CL(unspread 5): 'table'
'The cup is on the table.'

In so doing, classifier constructions are visually motivated. However, it is important to stress that classifier constructions are not pantomime, rather, their use is regulated by linguistic constraints. Indeed, classifier handshapes combine with verbs of motion or location and the resulting predicate depends on the classifier handshape selected (see [SYNTAX 2.1.1.5] and [MORPHOLOGY 5.1] for details).

1.2.2 Pointing

Pointing signs are widespread in the LIS lexicon and occur in several contexts, with different morphosyntactic functions: as pronouns [LEXICON 3.7], determiners [LEXICON 3.6], demonstratives [SYNTAX 4.1.2], locative adverbials and agreement markers [LEXICON 3.3.4]. Even though they fulfil a wide range of functions, they have two properties in common: i) the handshape G, which can be oriented towards different directions, and ii) the fact that they associate specific points of the signing space (called *loci*) to the referents of the discourse, whatever the function they have in that specific context. Therefore, the signing space, namely the space around the signer in which signs are articulated, is crucial for the articulation of pointing signs. The signing space comprises both the signer's body and the space around her/him, in which signs are associated to loci more or less distant from the signer. The feature [+/- proximal] defines the signer [+ proximal], indicating a point on the signer's body), and the addressee [- proximal], indicating a locus of the signing space, in general in front of the signer). The feature [+/- distal] indicates a locus far from both the signer and the addressee, which is usually associated to the third person.

As we saw in the previous sections, the space can have both grammatical and topographic functions, depending on the way in which points of articulation are exploited: if they are associated to thematic roles or convey plurality, space has a grammatical function in that it allows the realisation of verbal and nominal agreement [MORPHOLOGY 3.1] and [MORPHOLOGY 4]; if loci are used to indicate the position of entities, space has a topographic function. The same holds for pointing signs: those functioning as pronouns, determiners and demonstratives associate grammatical features to the loci in space; those functioning as locative markers exploit the topographic nature of space. Below, we provide some examples of pointing signs used as determiner (a), personal pronoun (b-c), and locative marker (d).

a. TEACHER   IX(def)$_a$

'The teacher'

b. IX_1
'I'

c. IX_3
'She/He'

d. dom: $IX(loc)_a$
   n-dom: $CL(L):$ 'corner'$_a$
'In the corner'

1.2.3 Buoys

LIS, as other sign languages, shows peculiar strategies to keep track of the referents during the discourse, thanks to its visual-gestural nature. Besides classifiers, LIS can also employ buoys [PRAGMAT-ICS 2.2.3], constructions in which the non-dominant hand remains in a stationary configuration while the dominant hand continues to sign. Therefore, the two hands are used independently and articulate two different pieces of information simultaneously. In LIS, we find several kinds of buoys, which are explored in [PRAGMATICS 2.2.3]: list buoys, pointer buoys, theme buoys and fragment buoys.

Here we provide an example of list buoy, which can be used to describe a small set of referents through a list. In the example below, the signer introduces his three brothers by listing their jobs. Specifically, the non-dominant hand keeps track of the list ensuring a co-referential link to the discourse referents, which are introduced and described with the dominant hand.

IX$_1$ BROTHER THREE EXIST
dom: IX$_{[thumb]}$ LAWYER IX$_{[index]}$ DOCTOR IX$_{[middle]}$ TEACHER 🖐
n-dom: THREE---
'I have three brothers, the first is a doctor, the second a lawyer, and the third a teacher.'

Within the discourse, the signer may refer back to one item of the list by pointing to the finger of the non-dominant hand which were previously associated to that referent.

1.3 Interaction between core and non-core lexicon

Even though it is important to distinguish between core and non-core lexicon, these two systems strongly interact in the LIS lexicon and within the discourse. Therefore, we often see processes of lexicalisation affecting the non-core lexicon to enter the core lexicon, and items from the core lexicon undergoing modification so that they behave like non-core lexicon.

1.3.1 Lexicalisation processes

Lexicalisation processes include those strategies leading to the creation of new signs starting from existing ones. The crucial point is that the semantic and formal properties of the final sign do not fully retrieve those of the constituent elements, because it has undergone a process of standardisation. These processes include compounding, conversion and derivational affixation. We provide an example for these and other strategies below.

Lexicalisation through compounding [MORPHOLOGY 1] is a process whereby a new sign is created by combining two already existing signs. Crucially, the meaning of the resulting compound is not directly derived from the meaning of the two components, namely it is non-compositional.

ELECTRICITY^CL(5): 'type'
'Computer' (recreated from Santoro 2018, 51)

Conversion is a lexicalisation process by which an existing lexical item is assigned to a different grammatical category without displaying changes in form. This is the case with some noun-verb pairs in LIS which are homophonous (or only slightly different). The only way to identify the category of the sign is to rely on the syntactic distribution. The unmarked order in LIS is SOV [SYNTAX 2.3], therefore in the example below we distinguish the noun TAILOR, in subject position, from the verb SEW, which follows the object CLOTHES.

TAILOR CLOTHES SEW CREATE
'The tailor sews and creates clothes.'

Derivation is a lexicalisation process which allows to derive a new lexical sign from an existing one by addition of an affix. Crucially, affixes in LIS, and in sign languages in general, are mostly simultaneous and consist of dedicated non-manual markers and/or manual modifications rather than manual sequential segments (see [MORPHOL-

OGY 2] for details). A very common process is the derivation of action verbs from object nouns. In LIS, this process can exploit morphological strategies such as the articulation of dedicated non-manual markers combined with the modification of the movement component of the sign. In the examples below, we see that the verb DRIVE (a) displays a longer movement with respect to the noun CAR (b), whose movement is shorter and restricted. Moreover, the verb occurs with the non-manuals lips protrusion (lp) and puffed cheeks (pc) which are usually found with verbs (see [LEXICON 3.1.1.] and [MORPHOLOGY 2.1.2.1.] for further details).

$$\overline{\text{lp}}$$
$$\overline{\text{pc}}$$
a. DRIVE

b. CAR

New signs can also be created *ad novo*. For instance, the sign for NETFLIX (a modern streaming service) was created after a discussion on Facebook among LIS native signers. Several signs were proposed and ultimately the one illustrated below, which resembles the first letter of the word 'Netflix', was chosen.

NETFLIX

Numbers also play a role in the formation of signs. For example, the sign WEEK (Ita. *settimana*), is a two-handed sign combining 5 and L handshapes, which taken together correspond to the number seven (Ita. *sette*). The combination of these two handshapes results in a new sign with independent meaning, i.e. 'week'.

WEEK
(based on Bertone 2011, 86)

The aforementioned processes of lexicalisation can also involve signs belonging to the non-core lexicon.

Very productive is the process of conversion leading classifiers to become fully lexical signs. For instance, the sign for SUITCASE or BAG origins from the correspondent handling classifier displaying the closed 5 handshape. Now this very same handshape is the lexical sign for 'bag' or 'suitcase'. In the example below, the sign is two-handed because it refers to two suitcases.
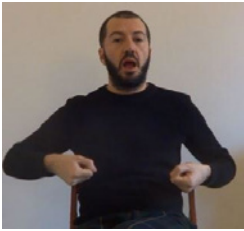
dom: SUITCASE
n-dom: SUITCASE
'Two suitcases'

The G handshape has become the lexical sign for some objects with a narrow shape like KNIFE and TOOTHBRUSH.

TOOTHBRUSH

The same lexicalisation process of conversion can also affect pointing signs, which gain an independent meaning and become lexical signs. The most common process regards deictic pointing signs which are the lexical signs for NOSE (a), MOUTH (b), and EYES (c).
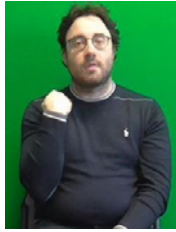
a. NOSE

b. MOUTH

c. EYES
'Eyes'

The same happens for time adverbs such as TODAY (a), YESTERDAY (b), and TOMORROW (c).

a. TODAY

b. YESTERDAY

c. TOMORROW

The lexicalisation process affecting classifier constructions and pointing signs bring them to conform to the morpho-phonological requirements of the language, and the outcome is usually a mono-syllabic sign, with an independent meaning.

Classifiers and pointing signs can also be involved in the formation of compounds. In (a) we show the sign for 'smart', which is formed by the sign HEAD (i.e. a lexicalised pointing sign), and the Y classifier handshape conveying the concept of a large amount; in (b) we provide the sign for SCHOOL, which consists of two meaningful parts: the sign WRITE and the entity classifier denoting a piece of paper. The two compounds are the result of a lexicalisation process in that the two classifier handshapes have lost their independent meaning, resulting in a single lexical unit with a stable and specific meaning.

a. HEAD^CL(Y): 'a_lot'
'Smart' (recreated from Battaglia 2011, 198)

b. WRITE(h1)^CL(unspread 5): 'paper'(h2)
'School'

Buoys can undergo lexicalisation as well. Recall that buoys associate different referents with the fingers of the non-dominant hand, thus allowing to make lists (among other functions). This is reflected in the LIS signs HOW_MANY (a) and LAST (b), which most likely represent the lexicalisation of list buoys. These are illustrated below.

a. HOW_MANY

b. LAST

1.3.2 Modification of core lexicon signs

The previous paragraph has listed the processes, affecting both core and non-core signs, leading to lexicalisation, which implies i) non-compositional meaning; ii) a lesser degree of iconicity; iii) standardisation.
    The present section, instead, concerns a different process affecting LIS lexicon that can be considered the reverse of lexicalisation. This is referred to as 'delexicalisation' and indicates the possibility for core-lexical signs to display modifications typical of non-core lexical signs, such as exploiting the topographic function of the signing space or being more visually-motivated. Since these mechanisms are widespread, it is important to identify them in order to isolate the citation form of the sign. We provide some explanatory examples of delexicalisation processes in LIS below.
    The most common process of delexicalisation concerns the use of the signing space with a topographic function [PRAGMATICS 8.1.2]. Specifically, signs articulated in the neutral space can be displaced to convey information of localisation and spatial distribution. In so do-

ing, the signing space represents how entities are localised in the real word, thus the points of articulation of signs are isomorphic to the positions of the referents. In the example below, the signer displaces the sign BOX in order to convey the position of the three different boxes.

box$_a$ box$_b$ box$_c$
'A box on the right, one in the middle, and one on the left.'

Core-lexical signs can also change to include specific information such as size and shape. As we can see in the examples below, the articulation of the sign TIE, provided in (a) in its citation form, can be modified to specify size, as illustrated in (b). Specifically, big size is conveyed by modifying the handshape and articulating specific non-manual markers consisting in furrowed eyebrows (fe) and teeth on the lower lip (tl). For further details see [MORPHOLOGY 2.2.1].

a. TIE (recreated from Petitta et al. 2015, 160)

$$\frac{\text{tl}}{\text{fe}}$$
b. TIE
'Big tie' (recreated from Petitta et al. 2015, 160)

Name signs [LEXICON 3.1.2] are a special kind of delexicalisation since the lexical signs selected as name signs are devoid of their semantic content to become proper names identifying specific individuals

(or classes of individuals) rather than classes of entities. One very common example in LIS is the sign for FLOWER, which often becomes the name sign of women called *Margherita* 'daisy', thus referring to a specific individual rather than a flower.
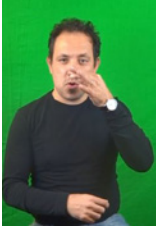
MARGHERITA

One further process of delexicalisation is the metaphorical use of core-lexical signs, typically found in poetry and narrative. In such instances, the meaning of the sign is extended to more abstract interpretations. The example in (a) below is an excerpt of the poetry *Grazie* 'Thanks' by Rosaria and Giuseppe Giuranna (2002). The sign PERCEIVE is signed higher, in correspondence of the forehead (a), rather than in front of the signer's eyes as in its citation form (b), to convey the meaning 'to perceive with mind's eyes'. In so doing, the metaphor maps the domains of vision and cognition, which are often related in LIS metaphors. Sign language metaphors build on the shared cultural and linguistic knowledge of the Italian Deaf community. The reader is referred to [SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND 2.3] for details about metaphors in poetry and narrative.

a. PERCEIVE$_{[high]}$
'To perceive with mind's eyes' (recreated from Giuranna & Giuranna 2002, *Grazie*)

b. PERCEIVE (citation form)

It is important to distinguish the instances above from core lexical signs whose meaning originates from a metaphor [LEXICON 1.3.1]. For instance, in LIS we find many signs originating from the metaphor of the mind as a container. For this reason, signs referring to the domain of cognition such as KNOW, UNDERSTAND, IGNORANT, FORGET, LEARN are signed near or on the forehead. We provide an example below for clarity.

UNDERSTAND

1.3.3 Simultaneous constructions and use of the non-dominant hand

As we have seen in [PHONOLOGY 1.4] and [LEXICON 1.1], signs belonging to the core lexicon of LIS can be one- or two-handed. As far as two-handed signs are concerned, some of them are the result of lexicalisation [LEXICON 1.3.1] or simultaneous compounding [MORPHOLOGY 1.1.2]. We provide an illustrative example below.

TEA

As we can see in the example above, the sign for TEA is the combination of two entity classifiers: the non-dominant hand (right hand) represents the cup, whereas the dominant hand (left hand) encodes a handle classifier indicating the dipping of the tea bag. The meaning of this two-handed sign is not 'dipping a tea bag into the cup'. This is because this simultaneous construction is lexicalised, and the final meaning 'tea' is derived from the combination of the two parts.

However, these signs must be distinguished from other simultaneous two-handed constructions, which are active in LIS beyond the lexicon. Specifically, in these constructions the two hands encode two different referents or fulfil two different syntactic functions. We discuss these constructions below.

One very typical kind of simultaneous construction involves classifier handshapes. Specifically, we consider to classifier predicates [MORPHOLOGY 5], which refer to different entities simultaneously providing information about their motion or location within the signing space. Example (a) below shows a complex simultaneous construction in which the dominant (right hand) and non-dominant hand (left hand) refer to two different entities (a child and a fence, respectively) and the non-manual markers convey information about the way in which the action of climbing over the fence is happening, namely 'with difficulty'. The movement applied to the dominant hand shows how the child moves to climb over the fence. In (b), instead, the two hands encode the location of two different entities, a lamp (right hand) and a library (left hand). The position of the hands in space indicates that

the two entities are positioned closed to each other. Here, non-manuals (squinted eyes 'sq' and wrinkled nose 'wrn') convey proximity of the two entities [MORPHOLOGY 2.2.3].

$$\overline{\hspace{7cm}}^{\text{sq}}$$
$$\overline{\hspace{7cm}}^{\text{tp}}$$
a. dom: CL(curved open V): 'person_climb_over'
   n-dom: CL(4): 'fence_be_located'
'(The child) climbs over the fence with difficulty.'

$$\overline{\hspace{5cm}}^{\text{sq}}$$
$$\overline{\hspace{4cm}}^{\text{wrn}}$$
b. dom: CL(G): 'lamp_be_located'
   n-dom: CL(unspread 5): 'bookcase_be_located'
'The lamp is next to the bookcase.'

Another very common process concerns the possibility of using the two articulators independently, similarly to what happens in buoys [LEXICON 1.2.3]. In these constructions, the non-dominant hand maintains the referent in the background, while the dominant hand keeps signing. In the example below, the non-dominant hand (left hand) maintains the sign BRICK, while the dominant hand (right hand) articulates the verb SEE. Despite the simultaneity with which the two signs are articulated, the resulting construction is not a two-handed lexical sign, but rather a complex simultaneous construction.

dom: SEE
n-dom: BRICK
'The brick is visible.'

Other illustrative examples of simultaneous two-handed non-lexical constructions are cases in which the two manual articulators encode two different syntactic functions [SYNTAX 4.1.1.2]. In the example below, the noun and its modifiers are expressed by the dominant hand, whereas the definite article is simultaneously expressed by the non-dominant hand.

$$\overline{\text{re}}\ \overline{\text{sq}}\ \overline{\text{rs: child}}$$

dom: CHILD$_a$ HAIR BLACK WALK DAD GO
n-dom: IX$_a$---------------------- WALK   🖐

'The kid with black hair left whining and went to his dad.'

Information on Data and Consultants

The descriptions in this chapter are based on the references below. For information on data and consultants see the references. The video clips and images exemplifying the linguistic data have been produced by LIS native signers involved in the SIGN-HUB Project.

Authorship Information

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