


Interpreter Discourse:

English to ASL Expansion
ASL to English Compression
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English to ASL Expansion **ASL to English Compression**

Expansion features are:

- Contrasting
- Faceting
- Reiteration
- Utilizing 3D Space
- Explaining by Examples
- Couching
- Describe And Do

Compression features are:

- Contrasting
- Faceting
- Reiteration
- Utilizing 3D Space
- Explaining by Examples
- Couching
- Describe And Do

EXPANSION

There are specific applications of language use and language phrasing in ASL that do not occur (or do not occur with the same frequency) in spoken English. There is a need for a better understanding of how concepts are presented in ASL. These specific applications are unique to ASL and are what is called **Expansion features**. ASL is a “spatial, time-oriented language based on visual perception and the visual conveyance of ideas, information, and feeling concepts”. Unfortunately, beginning interpreters often resort to using a linear (undeviating) presentation, i.e., a sequential delivery of signs in neutral space, as opposed to using ASL which includes location, space, height, and depth: in other words, a full and rich use of signing space. ASL does not require more information than English, but by its very nature, it uses space and presents information befitting a visual modality (method). ASL gives an equivalent message using a different format.


Expansion features are:


- Contrasting
- Faceting
- Reiteration
- Utilizing 3D Space
- Explaining by Examples
- Couching or scaffolding
- Describe And Do.

1

Contrasting

From English to ASL
ASL to English




Contrasting (English to ASL) 

This feature highlights one idea by contrasting two opposite ideas in order to emphasize the one.

For example, in English we might say, “I wasn’t scared because I was with a group of people.” In ASL, that could be signed using the **contrasting feature**, “I wasn’t scared because I was with a group of people. I would be scared if I were alone, but not if I were with a group.” With the addition of this contrasting idea, the original premise is emphasized. Sometimes this feature is used by stating the positive, then the negative (i.e. what something is followed by what it isn’t).

Other times, the reverse occurs (i.e. a negative followed by a positive). In other examples, the premise, either positive or negative has its contrast “sandwiched” between the repeated premise. i.e.: “it’s cold, not cool, cold”. The **contrasting feature** differs from a text that is comparing two ideas; in the following case, two types of adaptive phone devices used by Deaf people are being compared. (The old TTY’s were big, clunky and noisy whereas the new TDD’s are compact, lightweight and portable.) Again, the contrasting feature **emphasizes one idea by talking about both what it is and what it is not.**

Some examples in ASL are shown below: (the feature is seen in bold print). 


English: Lenin’s tomb is somber.
_____nod topic neg
ASL: fs-LENIN GRAVE **PLAIN. FANCY** // NOT.

English: I could barely stay on the horse.
_____stress
ASL: SCL: “rider **struggling to stay on a horse at a gallop.**”
_____q/t neg
“PERFECT” SCL: “graceful rider at a gallop,”// NOT.
_____stress
SCL: “rider **struggling to stay on a horse at a gallop.**”


2

Faceting

From English to ASL
ASL to English




■ Faceting (English to ASL)



- **Faceting** describes a feature whereby several different signs are signed sequentially to express one idea more clearly. Although **several signs are used, this feature actually narrows a concept to a more exact or specific image**. The use of faceting seems to cluster around the use of adjectives or adverbs.
- **Faceting** differs from a practice sometimes used by interpreters who, unfamiliar with the appropriate lexical choice, sign several choices and leave the consumer to pick the right one (i.e.: *NO, NONE, NOTHING*). The multiple signs used in faceting, however, all serve to guide the viewer in a particular direction.

For example, to express the idea of being **'burned-out'**, a faceted rendition might look like this:




puff cheeks _____ nod
FULL// WORN-OUT// GIVE fs-UP


Other examples include:
English: a *sparklingly* clean window
 topic oo nod
ASL: WINDOW // SHINE, BRIGHT, CLEAN*. WOW*.

English: an *easy* test
 topic _____ neg _____ mm nod
ASL: TEST // IT'S-NOTHING. EASY, WRITE FAST.

■ Sample English Sentence:




ENGLISH: *She's a brilliant student.*




Faceting

ASL: topic
INDEX STUDENT INDEX GIRL//VERY SMART VERY-KNOW VERY KNOWLEDGEAGEL WOW

I just finished a heart wrenching novel.




Faceting (English to ASL)




Practice Sentences

Instructions:
 Read the sentence - sign it. Check your interpretation against the video.


He is SO tall.



I heard that teacher is great.




■ Faceting (ASL to English)



Faceting describes a feature whereby **several different signs are signed sequentially to more clearly express one idea**. Although several signs are used, this feature actually narrows a concept to a more exact or specific image.

- **Faceting Compression Strategies:**
 The number of descriptive adjectives in ASL can often be reduced in the target language of English; they can be replaced with adverbs vocal intonation, and idiomatic English. Use of idiomatic **English often narrows a concept in the same way faceting narrows a concept in ASL.**

Faceting (ASL to English) 

ASL:
topic
MY NIECE, PAST FAT, NOW, **SLIM-DOWN THIN SKINNY**

Inadequate **English** Interpretation:
My niece used to be fat, but she has really reduced; she's thin now, really skinny.


Effective **English** Interpretation:
My niece used to be overweight, but she has really slimmed down.


Faceting Example: (ASL to English) 



ASL: MARY BABY CUTE-VERY BEAUTIFUL-VERY//EYES EYE-SASHES-LONG BLUE-VERY //RED RINGLET//CUTE-VERY BEAUTIFUL-VERY WOW+++

ENGLISH: *Mary's baby with the blue eyes and curly red hair, ahh, is the cutest baby I have ever seen.*


Practice 1 




Faceting (ASL to English)

Practice Sentences


Instructions:
Voice the video – then check your interpretation with the text in the notes.


Practice 2 

Practice 3 

3


Reiteration
From English to ASL
ASL to English



■ **Reiteration (English to ASL)** 

■ **Reiteration** refers to signs that are repeated in a text exactly the same way as they were initially stated. That is, a sign or signs are used again, reiterated, within a passage. It appears that **reiteration implies emphasis**: that something is important to the storyline, has cultural significance, or has high emotional impact to the signer. For the purpose of emphasis, it seems that adjectives and adverbs are used and repeated.

■ In contrast, if a noun is repeated, it becomes plural. If a verb is repeated through inflection, information about time (frequency or duration) or distribution, (to which individuals, to or from each in a group, etc.) is included. Repeating adjectives, however, is one of the most common ways to show emphasis.

Examples of **reiteration** 

English: *Maybe his parents are deaf.*

____neg ____nod
ASL: MOTHER FATHER DEAF. DON'T-KNOW. MOTHER ____nod
FATHER DEAF SEEM.

Sometimes **reiteration** occurs when a sign or signs are repeated consecutively. Other times, **reiteration** occurs as “bookends” or brackets, sandwiching text between the repeated signs.

English: *You always lose one sock (to the dryer).*
ASL: LOST ONE SOCK. LOST ONE SOCK

English: *It was my job.*



____neg ____nod
ASL: MY DUTY. NOT WIFE. MY DUTY, RESPONSIBILITY.

English: *I waited in a long line forever.*

____puff cheeks ____puff cheeks
ASL: PCL:4 “long line”. WAIT++. PCL:4 “long line.”
(for a long time)

▪ Sample English Sentence:


ENGLISH: Calculus class is so boring; the teacher just goes on and on.

Reiteration

ASL: topic
ME TAKE CLASS CALCULUS **BORING**//SIT TEACHER
“mimic teacher talking blah blah blah” ME LOOK-AT//**VERY-BORING**

I'm doing everything I can to learn ASL, but it's really hard.





Reiteration

Practice Sentences


Instructions:
Read the sentence - sign it. Check your interpretation against the video.

Oh, I had my heart set on milk and cookies, but then there was no milk.


▪ **Reiteration (ASL to English)**

▪ **Reiteration** refers to signs that are repeated in a text the same way as they were initially stated, sometimes occurring one after another, repeating verbatim a sign or signs consecutively. Other times, reiteration occurs as “bookends”. Sandwiching text between the repeated signs. It appears that reiteration implies emphasis: that something is important to the storyline, has cultural significance, or has high emotional impact to the signer.



▪ **Reiteration Compression Strategies:**
Reiteration in ASL serves to emphasize. English has a number of ways of accomplishing this same goal. The reiterated word can be voiced twice for emphasis. Two different lexical items can be chosen to show emphasis. The reiterated word can be said once with the use of a qualifier such as “really” or “very”. A stronger word can be chosen to convey the concept once. Most of these strategies would also be accompanied with a change in vocal inflection as a form of emphasis.



ASL: topic
ME SHOCK, PAPER, A-on-paper, SHOCK ME



Inadequate **English** Interpretation:
I was shocked when I found I got an 'A' on my paper. I was shocked!

Effective **English** Interpretation:
I was quite shocked to find I'd gotten an 'A'.


Reiteration Example: (ASL to English)

ASL: **IMAGINE**//RUTH STUDY
NOTHING//SAME GOT-AN=A//**IMAGINE**

ENGLISH: Can you believe Ruth didn't study at all and she still got an “A”?

Practice 1




Reiteration (ASL to English)



Practice Sentences

Instructions:
Voice the video – then check your interpretation with the text in the notes.

Practice 2



Practice 3



■ **Utilizing 3D space**

Space is probably the most obvious of all the expansion features, the most complicated and, perhaps, the most studied. A lot has been written in the literature about space. Because ASL uses a modality foreign to most students, their facility in using space is limited. **The way space is used by native ASL users, however, is multi-faceted.** Because of the gestural nature of the language, space is employed the moment a signer lifts his/her hands. **Space is utilized in setting up nouns that later get replaced with pronouns (referential space) and also used to describe proximal relationships (topographical space).** Moreover, because Deaf people view the world primarily through their eyes, visual description and detail is an important component of ASL discourse. **Classifiers are one way visual information is conveyed.** Additionally, when looking at a whole utterance, space is used meaningfully creating cohesion in the text (spatial mapping).

These aspects of **3D space** are:

Referential Space

Space can be used referentially to represent people, places and things. After being established in a location in space, these nominal are replaced by pointing to the location and reinforced in a variety of ways. The reinforcement comes in the form of directional verbs, eye gaze, classifier predicates and role assumption (also known as characterization or constructed speech and reported action). These reinforcements are used liberally throughout the discourse.

Topographical Space

Space can also be topographical. That is, the signer's space can be used to represent how objects look in the real world. More specifically, the signer can present information from different perspectives. To help us better understand how space is used, linguistics have identified 3 categories:

- 1) a **miniature** view whereby the referents are made to be models of the real world using semantic classifiers,
- 2) a view that is of **natural**, or "life-size" using role assumption and body classifiers
- 3) a view that uses space and **objects shared** in the environment by both the signer and his/her audience. In this case, the signer may point or gesture to references in common space: e.g. *that gentleman over there.*

Spatial Mapping

Studies have also looked at the use of space throughout a text. Through spatial mapping, a location is created in the signing space by a signer re-refer to the location and evoke the same mental representation of the entity that was created initially. Additionally, spatial mapping contributes to the overall cohesion of a text.

Classifiers

It is not possible to discuss space without talking about the use of classifiers. Smith, Lentz and Mikos (1988) divide classifiers into several categories in their book, *Signing Naturally*. Their categories include:

- descriptive classifiers** which are used to describe an object or a person,
- locative classifiers** which are used to represent objects in a specific location and sometimes indicating movement,
- semantic classifiers** which are used to represent a category of nouns,
- body classifiers** which are used to enact the verb of a sentence and usually require role shifts,
- instrumental classifiers** which are used to show how hands manipulate an object,
- body part classifiers** which are used to represent a specific part of the body doing an action and finally,
- plural classifiers** which are used to indicate a specific or non-specific number of people, animals, or objects.

The use of classifiers not only brings an ASL text to life, it takes advantage of the spatial qualities of the visual/gestural modality: examples include using visual description and detail, animating verbs, and incorporating adverbs and prepositions. When students and interpreters omit the use of classifiers, visual interest and vital information is missing.

Descriptive Discourse

In descriptive discourse, the signing space must be used creatively. In addition to the space directly in front of the chest, the signer can incorporate a potential hemisphere of space, including the areas in front of and to either side of the body, and above the head. **Utilizing space** requires a good visual memory and the ability to "see" scenes in the "minds' eye". The signer "paints a picture" of a scene replete with visual details. More than that, the signer or interpreter describes the scene from a variety of perspectives by including classifiers, role assumption, reported or constructed action, eye gaze, and body agreement.



Additionally, body and facial agreement must complement the composite: squinting one's eyes to support the concept "as far as the eye could see", or curling up the upper torso in some of the poses for the sleepy lions and closing one's eyes momentarily to represent sleeping. This would be an example of topographical space [relationship between how objects are related in the real-world] with some co-occurrence of referential space if one points to an area already set up in space, e.g.: the trees. The layout of the trees, when referred to again, gives referential information and confirms where the trees are located, which adds cohesion to the text.

The use of **3D space** is complex. Creating a visual representation is such a major component of a "Deaf-thought world" that an interpreted text without the use of space and the use of classifiers is not an accurate presentation in ASL. Interpreters must visualize what they hear and attempt to recreate the vision using the space around them. Not only will this allow them to keep their references clear, it will also make their interpretation interesting to the listener.

■ **The use of space** is a salient feature in ASL. It takes advantage of the three-dimensional physical space around the signer's body. This space can be used to represent people, places, and things; to represent how objects appear in the real world and present them from different perspectives; to create cohesion in ASL discourse; and to set the visual scenes. This use of space can be accomplished in ASL through the use of space can be **accomplished in ASL through the use of or combination of some of the following: pointing, placed signs, fingerspelling, directional verbs, classifiers, role assumption, reported or constructed dialogue, prosody (patterns of stress and intonation in language), body shifting, and eye gaze.**

Example English Sentence:

ENGLISH: The Frisbee came out of nowhere and hit me in the head.

Use of Space

ASL: topic
F-R-I-S-B-E-E//KNOW FRISBEE ME STANDING “me not paying attention: CL:B “sails through air hits me in head” OUCH!

The wok I got from Mary last Christmas was the perfect recyclable gift for my mom this year.



Use of Space

Practice Sentences

Instructions:
Read the sentence - sign it. Check your interpretation against the video.


Printing and editing paperwork for me means climbing the stairs time and again between the first floor copy room and my third floor office.

I was born and raised in Rochester, went to school in Philadelphia and, when I got a job in Tennessee, made it my home.





Utilizing 3D Space (ASL to English)



“The use of space is a salient feature of ASL. ASL takes advantage of the three-dimensional physical space around the signer’s body. This space can be used to represent people, places, and things; to represent how objects appear in the real world and present them from different perspectives; to create cohesion in ASL discourse; and to **set a visual scene**”. This use of space can be accomplished in ASL through the use of or combination of some of the following: pointing, placed signs, fingerspelling, directional verbs, classifiers, role assumption, reported or constructed dialogue, prosody(patterns of stress and intonation in language), body shifting, and eye gaze.




ASL:
topic
MY GARAGE HAVE THREE CL:3+++ , MINE PARK IF MY HUSBAND
PARKctr, R-V PARKrt

Inadequate **English** Interpretation:
My garage has three parking slots. I park my car in the left space, my husband parks in the middle space, and we park our RV in the right space.


Effective **English** Interpretation:
We have a three-car garage that fits my car, my husband’s car and our RV.

Utilizing 3-D Space




A particular challenge to the ASL/English interpreter is in the interpretation of referential space. When using referential pronouns in ASL, the gender of the noun can often go unstated; for example, terms such as *neighbor, teacher, friend*, imply no particular gender in ASL or English. In ASL, they can be kept gender neutral through the use of referential pronouns (pointing in a specific location to represent the noun). English would typically replace the noun with the pronoun *he* or *she* after it has been introduced. Interpreters must predict whether the gender of the person will have relevance to the story and ask the signer for the gender if deemed necessary or take a stand regarding the gender and hope it doesn’t have relevance later in the discourse.

Utilizing 3-D Space



The second challenge relates to the establishment of *figure/ground* relationships. “In any language, the object that is given focus is called the *figure*. It is usually expressed in terms of its relationship to an already referenced object called the *ground*. In English, the figure usually occurs first in a sentence...English primarily uses prepositions to express this relationship...In ASL, the order for expressing figure and ground is reversed...the mechanism for expressing the relationship between figure and ground in ASL is the placement of classifier handshapes in the signing space”.

Use of 3D Space (ASL to English)




For example, in the ASL sentence below, the figure (the object of focus) is the box. This is stated *after* the establishment of the ground (OFFICE, COMPUTER-If, DESK-rt) In the English interpretation, the figure is stated before the ground, and the amount of information that is supplied in describing the ground is limited.

ASL:

MY O-F-F-I-C-E YOU ENTER COMPUTER INDEX(lf) D-E-S-K
topic
 INDEX(rt) BOXES UNDER THAT-ONE BRING

ENGLISH: *Could you get me the boxes under my desk?*



Utilizing 3D Space (ASL to English)



The use of space is a salient feature in ASL, ASL takes advantage of the three-dimensional physical space around the signer's body. This space can be used to represent people, places, and things; to represent how objects appear in the real world and present them from different perspectives; to create cohesion in ASL discourse; and to set the visual scene.

This use of can be accomplished in ASL through the use of our combination of some of the following: pointing, placed signs, fingerspelling, directional verbs, classifiers, role assumption, reported or constructed dialogue, prosody, body shifting, and eye gaze.


Utilizing 3D Space Example:


ASL: MY O-F-F-I-C-E// YOU
 ENTER//COMPUTER INDEX//D-E-S-K
topic
 INDEX // BOXES UNDER THAT-ONE//BRING

ENGLISH: *Could you get me the box under my desk?*

Practice 1




3D Space (ASL to English)




Practice Sentences

Instructions:
 Voice the video – then check your interpretation with the text in the notes.

Practice 2




Practice 3



5 Explaining by Examples


From English to ASL
 ASL to English

Pets



dog fish cat bird

Pets



Explaining by Examples
 In English, if a term needs to be explained, the initial approach used by many is to define the word. Resources are available to assist with definitions. Unfortunately, this is not true for ASL. Typically, students ask native signers for the meaning of a sign. Most Deaf signers give examples which often include several short pictures of how the sign is used. **Example, the concept of "pets" is conveyed as DOG CAT FISH ETC.** Often this is done when the term that needs explanation is a noun. One grouping of nouns is called *superordinates*.

Superordinates are a category of words that group concrete objects together e.g.:furniture, tools, vehicles, etc. (This has also been referred to as noun-listing or noun classification.) ASL has few superordinate signs but does have a "rule-governed" means for expressing these concepts. There's a special kind of compounding called superordinate compounding. This rule-governed approach has "three or four signs strung together followed optionally by a sign ETC...do[es] not have a fixed sign order nor are the particular signs chosen...the same each time...". **Explaining by Example** is a variant of this.

A superordinate compound is not always being formed however. Concepts such as a *self-sufficient society, a balanced diet or demographics* might be explained via examples. In these cases, **a list of three or four signs are grouped together to describe a concept.** These concepts nonetheless, do not attempt to capture a broad category. They instead 'define' the concept.


An example of the **Explain by Example** is:

_____ topic _____ head nod
BABY CLOTHES // UNDERPANTS, SOCKS, PANTS // ETC


Other examples include:
English: *TTY's (telecommunication devices for the deaf)*
 _____ topic + head nod
ASL: **KNOW TTY, fs-MODEL 28, 15, 19 //ETC**

English: *The Middle East*

ASL: **KNOW+ //ISRAEL, fs-JORDAN, fs-SAUDI ARABIA**
 _____ topic + head nod
ETC. // THAT AREA //ETC




■ Sample English Sentence:
ENGLISH: Don't forget to bring your art supplies to the next class.




Explaining by Example

ASL:
 "hey"-sweep++//REMEMBER YOU-ALL NEXT CLASS BRING-TO//COLOR PENCIL, PAPER, topic
RULER VARIOUS//BRING-TO



My company's benefits package had a recent upgrade to the dental plan.




Explaining by Example



Practice Sentences

Instructions:
 Read the sentence - sign it. Check your interpretation against the video.

I donated my old winter clothes to Goodwill.




The computer store had a great sale on peripherals.

Explaining by Example (ASL to English)

"A list of examples is sometimes used in ASL to define or explain a term. This *explaining by example* feature may result from the fact that ASL does not have a specific lexical item for the term being explained". A variant or subset of this feature is the noun classification. This term, identified as superordinate compounding consists of three to four signs strung together, often followed by the ETC. sign to express a specific English noun. Examples of this include the terms *tools* (HAMMER, SAW, SCREWDRIIVER, ETC) or *fruit* (APPLE, ORANGE, BANANA, ETC.)




ASL:
 rh-q
 ALL-DAY SATURDAY MY HUSBAND DO DO **MOW PULL W-E-E-D-S TRIM-WITH-CLIPPERS**,YARD CLEAN, LOOK NICE

Inadequate **English** Interpretation:
All day on Saturday my husband was busy mowing the lawn, pulling weeds, and trimming the bushes. The yard looks really cleaned up now. It's very nice.

Effective **English** Interpretation:
My husband spent all day Saturday sprucing up the yard. It looks great.




"Explaining by Example: Example:




ASL: LONG-TIME-AGO RESIDENTIAL-SCHOOL EXPERT ME TRACK//220 (RUN AROUND THE TRACK 2 TIMES)//SECOND (STICK POLE IN GROUND-JUMP)//GHIRD (JUMP FAR)//AND SO ON// EXPERT ME

ENGLISH: In high school I participated in a number of track events and I was quite good.



Practice 1




Explaining by Example (ASL to English)

Practice Sentences


Instructions:
Voice the video – then check your interpretation with the text in the notes.

Pets
dog fish cat bird

Practice 2




Practice 3




6

Couching

From English to ASL
ASL to English



- **“Couching” or “Scaffolding”**
Perhaps due to a lack of a single specific lexical item in ASL, a series of signs are grouped together to form a concept. This series of signs adds background or contextual information to a concept to make it clear. Couching as “defining an object or phenomenon by description, analogy or function instead of by label”. Termed **“couching”** or **“scaffolding”**, it occurs by virtue of the differences between the two languages.
- One way ASL can expand vocabulary is to **explain an item or give foundation or support to a concept**. This can be done in a **variety of ways** that may include **3D space, explaining by example, contrasting or by simply explaining the concept**. An introductory “set-up” is needed to ensure the listener has a shared schema or frame to understand the upcoming discourse. In subsequent references however, the “set-up” is reduced: i.e. when referring to the concept later on in the discourse, the whole explanation is not repeated because the connection has already been made.
- **Couching or scaffolding** is probably one of the hardest features to identify in an ASL text because the idea is presented in a way natural to ASL. It is often only when one focuses on how that same concept would be presented in English that we can identify the discourse as **“couched/scaffolded.” It may be clearer to explain by using an example.**




To get to the idea of *sewer pipes*, the following is signed:


ASL: _____ q/t
KNOW TOILET FLUSH // ECL: “water/waste is carried off”

_____ slight nod
lx-dir: “through sewer” **DCL:** (2h)CC “big sewer pipe”
ECL: “sewage flows”

English: *corral*
ASL: **FENCE++ (four sides)// HORSE SCL:** (2h) “horses standing”++.




- **Sample English Sentence:**
ENGLISH: My parents are Russian immigrants.




Couching

ASL: topic
MY PARENTS//BORN RUSSIAN MOVE TO HEAR AMERICA



When I sat down with my lawyer to draft my will, he asked me who my beneficiary was.




Couching



Sentence Practice

Instructions:
Read the sentence - sign it. Check your interpretation against the video.


You really should avoid last minute cramming for tests.



Jill's makeup always looks so nice. She is so put together.





Couching (ASL to English)



Perhaps due to the lack of a single specific lexical item in ASL, several signs are grouped together to form a concept. This series of signs, defined as couching, **adds background or contextual information to a concept to make it clear.** Interpretation of couching is “defining an object or phenomenon by description, analogy or function instead of by label”.

Couching Example (ASL to English)





ASL: _____ topic
 LAST NIGHT MY FRIENDS GROUP PLAN go-to-in-a-group
 BAR A-L-L DRINK+++ ME (raise hand) **ME WILLING DRINK**
NONE, ME SOBER, YOU-ALL DRINK+++ HAVEFUN, ME
DRIVE

Inadequate **English** Interpretation:
Last night my friends and I planned to go to a bar. I willingly agreed not to drink and remain sober and let my friends have fun. That way I could drive them home.


Effective **English** Interpretation:
I agreed to be the designated driver when my friends and I went out on the town last night.

Couching Example: (ASL to English)





Topic
ASL: RICHARD//SOMETHING WRONG
 BRIAN//NEED GO SEE **DOCTOR INDEX//FIELD BRIAN**
KNOW-A-LOT INDEX

ENGLISH: *There is something not quite right about Richard. He needs to see a psychiatrist.*



Practice 1




Couching (ASL to English)


Practice Sentences

Instructions:
 Voice the video – then check your interpretation with the text in the notes.

Practice 2



Practice 3



7


Describe, Then Do

From English to ASL
 ASL to English

... AND ACTION!



Describe, Then Do (English to ASL)



One of the most salient features of ASL is its narrative nature. There is often much “action” in ASL discourse. We see signers acting out stories or parts of stories in ASL. What seems to be occurring is the repetition of the verb, once in its simple form and then again acted out. A verb sandwich where a verb is repeated, the second time adding information which can include adding aspect, plurals, handle classifiers, attitude or affect, making it different from the first verb. **Sometimes, with a shift in eye gaze, the signer assumes the role of the subject or, in other words, does a role shift and acts out the verb.**

Both reported dialogue and reported action are features of ASL discourse. Reported speech is a creative replay of dialogue that is generally not a verbatim retelling of another’s words. **Likewise, reporting of events is a creative representation of actions.** These actions used to be called “role playing” which is described as “assum[ing] the posture and actions of a character ‘and imitate(s) them, either as mime or while signing about the character.” **“Describe, then do” enacts or reports the action of the utterance.**

Describe, Then Do (English to ASL)

“Describe, then do” can be observed when the signer shifts a narrative style of discourse to direct style of discourse or from narrator to character.

An example is:
English: *I called a friend.*
 _____ **nod**
ASL: ME TO-CALL FRIEND. ICL: “pick-up-phone-put-on-TTY” TYPE++.

Describe, Then Do (English to ASL)

When English speakers talk about something or describe something, they do so by stating a fact i.e.: “The porters were called to help in the search.” ASL signers, on the other hand, personalize information by first stating what is going to happen and then showing it happening.

For example:
 _____ **topic** _____ **nod**
PORTER // SUMMON++ HELP*. // SPREAD-OUT SEARCH.
 eye gaze searching ‘here and there’
 ,
 <RS: (2h alt) SEARCH++. (2h alt) lx+++ “looked here and there” >
 (Body shift left to right)


Describe, Then Do (English to ASL)

A variation of this feature is the enactment of the verb without description. Signers, on occasion, will go directly to the enactment without first ‘describing’ the action.

An example of this is:
English: (describing skydiving)
If something happens to the main chute, you must activate the emergency chute.
ASL: MUST DISCONNECT fs-MAIN fs-CHUTE IX-back of signer.
 eg @ pack nod
 HAVE BEHIND EMERGENCY DCL: “pack on midriff.”
 BCL: “pull string” // BCL: “push pack to upper chest”.

■ **Sample Sentence: Describe, Then Do**

ENGLISH: I lost his test and could not find it anywhere.




Describe Then Do


ASL:
 topic
 HIS TEST//ME LOST ME SEARCH-FOR++ “pull out drawer” “look through things on upper shelf” “look all around”//“embarrassed”

That soup was so hot I couldn't even eat it.

Describe Then Do

Practice Sentences
Instructions:
 Read the sentence - sign it. Check your interpretation against the video.

Saving Private Ryan was a good movie but the war scenes were so graphic it was hard to watch. 

I was shocked when I saw my best friend's husband kissing another woman. 

Describe, then Do (ASL to English)

■ One of the most salient features of ASL is its narrative nature. In using the describe, then do feature of ASL, signers enact or report the action of an utterance.

Described, then do usually involves a short description followed by an action or enactment of the description. This can happen in two ways. It may take the form of the “verb sandwich” where the verb in a sentence or twice, once in its simple form and then again acting-out the verb, or in the use of reported dialogue or reported action in which the signer assumes the posture and actions of the character.

■ A second modification of the describe, then do feature involves only the action itself, without the initial describe feature.

The following example includes reported dialogue.

ASL: topic
 YESTERDAY MEETING MY DEPARTMENT VOTE NEW POLICY
 ESTABLISH, ME (raise hand) "DISAGREE ME", CHAIRPERSON,
 "WE PROCEED, VOTE NOW", ME "BUT ME DISAGREE, ME WANT
 DISCUSS", CHAIRPERSON, "LAST WEEK DISCUSS, SORRY", GROUP
 PROCEED VOTE, ME DISGUST

Inadequate **English** Interpretation:
At my department meeting yesterday we voted on establishing a new policy. I told my chairperson 'I disagree.' He said, 'We are going to vote now.' I told him again, 'I disagree, I would like further discussion.' He said, 'Sorry, we are going ahead with the vote, we discussed it last week.' They went ahead and voted and I was really disgusted.

Effective **English** Interpretation:
At yesterday's department meeting we voted on a new policy. I was opposed to it and voiced that to the chair but I was told that given the discussion last week that the vote would proceed. I was quite annoyed.

The **describe then do** can also take the form of the verb sandwich with reported action. Reported action in ASL explains an action and then shows an action, often with an accompanying shift in perspective. The following ASL example sentence illustrates this.

ASL: MAN, HE WALK, CL:1 weave++. LOOK-LIKE DRUNK.

We are first told that the man walks, and then more explicit information of *how* he walks is included in the use of the classifier for walk, completing the verb sandwich.

The change in perspective occurs while signing the classifier. In addition, the non-manual signals of the signer will likely take on the features of a person who appears drunk. In an English interpretation of this type of sentence, the verb repetition will not appear, nor will the change in perspective. An effective English interpretation might be, "The man walked as if he were drunk."

Describe, then Do Example:

ASL: HOLLOWEEN//PARTY MY FAVORITE
 topic RHQ
 GAME//WHAT//KNOW YOU APPLES "placed in front of
 signer hands behind back, grab apples with teeth" MY
 FAVORITE

ENGLISH: My favorite Halloween party game is bobbing for apples.

Practice 1

Describe, Then Do (ASL to English)

Practice Sentences

Instructions:
 Voice the video – then check your interpretation with the text in the notes.

Practice 2

Practice 3


CONCLUSION 8

In this workshop, We discussed **7 expansion features**. There is little doubt that there are more patterns that are as yet unidentified. It is only when we compared how the two languages differed in expression and how interpreting students struggled to execute "good ASL" that these differences between English and ASL began to become apparent.

Expansion appears to be one of the missing links in acquiring native-like competency in ASL. By isolating the features of expansion the ASL student and ultimately the student of interpretation may gain the facility to produce a more natural form of ASL discourse that is not only more accurate but also allows a Deaf consumer the ease of understanding the message in a more native-like form.

The expansion features identified have significant implications for interpreting. Recognizing the differences in discourse features between ASL and English will greatly assist the sign language interpreter in effectively incorporating **compression** features in **ASL to English** interpreting. Recognizing their use in the source message, avoiding the common interpretation weaknesses associated with them, and delivering an appropriate, natural sounding English interpretation leads to a effective, linguistically appropriate and equivalent interpretation. A focus on compression features can assist the sign language interpreter in interpreting meaning while dropping form. Linguistic and cultural competence will assist the interpreter in determining when to appropriately use these strategies.

Carolyn – Model Interpreter



Voice to ASL

- You can click in the "time indicator track at the bottom of video clip" to advance or review a precise point in the video.
- Carolyn Transcript in NOTES. This will help you to see the two languages side by side.


This footage shows "where" 4 of the 7 ASL Expansion happened in the 5 min video test.

- 1) Contrasting
- 2) Reiteration
- 3) Describe, Then Do
- 4) Utilizing 3-D Space

Carolyn uses 3 other ASL markers that are not taught in THIS workshop – but they were noted.

Check your own interpretation against this video.

Jean – College instructor (VOICE ONLY)



English to ASL Test


The Text Practice (See/Print NOTES for transcript of the video clip) provides an opportunity to incorporate *Expansion* features at the discourse level. In the *Sentence Practice* section, you were given an opportunity to view and practice the *Expansion* features in isolation.

In this section we suggest you to take the opportunity to incorporate various *Expansion* features by **video record yourself** as you play this video while you give an interpretation of it.

This particular text lends itself to the use of *Expansion* features; try to use as many of the features as possible.

- Practice the *Expansion (English to ASL)* features you have learned in this workshop by interpreting this 5 min video of Jean a college instructor. Teach on the topic of "Time Management".

Carolyn - Model Interpretation



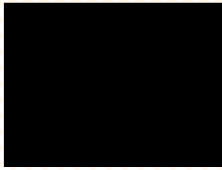
English to ASL Expansion Features

- Contrasting
- Faceting
- Reiteration
- Utilizing 3D Space
- Explaining by Examples
- Couching or scaffolding
- Describe, Then Do

Meet Carolyn our "Model Interpreter" as she models the ASL Expansion techniques taught in this workshop.

Print the transcript of this discourse and make notes of where the Expansion features were used.

Ken



ASL to Voice (voice replaced by text)

- This video was slowed down to help you to "see" where ASL expansion took place. The voice has been removed. Text notes the location of the ASL expansion.
- In NOTES – see glossed video (text). This will help you to see the two languages side by side.
- You can click in the "time indicator track at the bottom of video clip" to advance or review a precise point in the video.

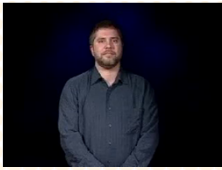
This footage shows "where" 5 of the 7 ASL Expansion happened in the 4 min video test.

- 1) Utilizing 3-D Space
- 2) Reiteration
- 3) Contrasting
- 4) Faceting
- 5) Describe, Then Do

Ken uses 2 other ASL markers that are not taught in THIS workshop – but they were noted.

Check your own interpretation against this video.

Ken



ASL to English Test

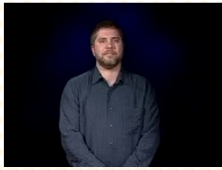
The Text Practice (See/Print NOTES for transcript of the 4 min video clip) provides an opportunity to incorporate *Compression* features at the discourse level. In the *Sentence Practice* section, you were given an opportunity to view and practice the *Compression* features in isolation.

In this section we suggest that you **video record yourself** while you give a voice interpretation of this video. Use the opportunity to incorporate various *Compression* features.

This particular text lends itself to the use of *Compression* features; try to use as many of the features as possible.

- Practice the *Compression (ASL to English)* features you have learned in this workshop by interpreting this 4 min video of Ken talking about going to the dentist office the first time.

Ken with Linda's VOICE



ASL to English Compression Features

- Contrasting
- Faceting
- Reiteration
- Utilizing 3D Space
- Explaining by Examples
- Couching or scaffolding
- Describe, Then Do

Meet Linda our VOICE Interpreter as she models the ASL Compression techniques taught in this workshop.

Print the "gloss transcript" of this discourse (in the notes) and "note" where the Compression features were used.

Transcription Conventions

ALL CAPS ASL gloss representing an ASL sign

f- fingerspelled word

++ repetition of sign

-- ((IT'S-NOTHING) represents a single sign

* (CLEAN*) sign is stressed

** ("push back to upper chest") indicates a gesture-like sign

(2h) indicates 2 hands are used when normally a one-handed sign is used

(2h)alt indicates both hands move in alternating pattern

ix-dir pointing to indicate direction or trace a path

ix- Indicates pointing at referent

Non-Manual signals used

___neg negative head shake (negation)

___nod positive head nod (assertion)

___topic topic portion of statement

___RHQ rhetorical question

___Q? yes/no question & topic at the same time

<RS> role shift

// indicates a short pause

___oo small or emphasized

___mm normal or with regularity

puff checks a lot, many or emphasized stress marked for intensity

Symbols for Classifiers

DCL: " ___ " Descriptive classifier with description inside the quotation marks

LCL: " ___ " Locative classifier with spatial or locative information inside the quotation marks

SCL: " ___ " Semantic classifier with information about the movement or placement inside the quotation marks

BCL: " ___ " Body classifier with information about the action inside the quotation marks

ICL: " ___ " Instrumental classifier with the action inside the quotation marks.

PCL: " ___ " Plural classifier with specific or non-specific number inside the quotation marks.

ECL: " ___ " Elemental classifier with information about the motion of the 'element'