

# SLAAASh Project ASL Annotation Conventions

Deborah Chen Pichler and Julie A. Hochgesang (Gallaudet University) and Diane Lillo-Martin (University of Connecticut)

## Introduction

These conventions have been developed by a team of researchers at Gallaudet University and the University of Connecticut (GUC). The primary purpose is for the annotation of longitudinal spontaneous production data from Deaf children of Deaf parents and from bimodal bilingual hearing children of Deaf parents. Data collection and annotation is on-going.

## Current data set

Group	#	Ages	# sessions	# annotated (sign)	# annotated (speech)
D/D	4	1;05-4;02	224	169	N/A
H/D	10	0;11-8;06	609	81	177
D/D (CI)	6	0;9-8;09	362	14	87

Annotation conventions take into consideration our analysis goals, and our attempt to use a format as consistent as possible with both common sign language annotation symbols and those used in CHILDES (MacWhinney 2000). The initial annotation passes focus on ID glossing of signs and words as well as translations. We are working toward use of an ID Gloss lexicon.

## Adapted from Poster for Digging into Signs workshop March 2015

SLAAASh shares many conventions with the BiBiBi research project but there are a few differences. This poster is adapted from the poster for that with SLAAASh-specific conventions and comments here.

## Annotator responsibilities

We aim to ask annotators to do as little analysis as possible. Our intention is to include basic information in the sign tiers, with additional details about use of space, non-manuals, etc. left to subsequent analysis passes. This principle guides our decisions. Annotators should use ID glosses and use the translation tier for further information about their interpretation of each utterance.

## Capitalization

Capitalization systematically represents a conventionalized sign (e.g., SIGN) or type of sign (e.g., DS (for depicting sign) or FS (for fingerspelling)). Lower case signifies that additional information is presented. For conventionalized signs, the lower case portion that follows the capitalized gloss indicates something about its form when distinguishing between variants (SOONnose, SOONchin). For information enclosed in parentheses following codes, aspects of the meaning expressed by the sign is presented in lower case. From a human-readability perspective, this allows the user to perceive patterns in the data just from scanning. Non-sign communicative acts (when annotated) use lower-case (e.g., show(toy)).

## Partly/non-lexical material

Following our principles, upper-case codes identify the type of sign, with lower-case information added, or supplementary information in additional tiers. For example, the annotation for a depicting sign indicates its category (DS), and the additional information conveys a rough approximation to meaning: DS(car-goes-down-street). Pointing signs are annotated using IX(referent). Further analysis takes place independently on separate tiers.

## References:

Chen Pichler, D., Hochgesang, J.A., Lillo-Martin, D., & de Quadros, R. (2010). Conventions for sign and speech transcription in child bimodal bilingual corpora. Languages, Interaction and Acquisition, 1(1), 11-40.

MacWhinney, B. (2000). The CHILDES Project: Tools for analyzing talk. 3rd Edition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

ELAN - WIZexampleSLAAASH.eaf

File Edit Annotation Tier Type Search View Options Window Help

Grid Text Subtitles Lexicon Comments Recognizers Metadata Controls

Child English

Nr	Annotation	Begin Time	End Time	Duration
17	I wanna be a Star Wars	00:14:25.920	00:14:28.263	00:00:02.343
18	I want my sword	00:14:29.121	00:14:30.956	00:00:01.835
19	No	00:14:31.287	00:14:31.595	00:00:00.308
20	oh there it is	00:15:36.738	00:15:38.157	00:00:01.419
21	I know	00:15:49.113	00:15:50.037	00:00:00.924
22	I know	00:16:00.861	00:16:01.356	00:00:00.495
23	shut eyes	00:16:11.718	00:16:12.411	00:00:00.693
24	shut eyes again	00:16:15.051	00:16:16.305	00:00:01.254
25	I cooking in here	00:20:00.672	00:20:02.322	00:00:01.650

English conventions mostly based on CHILDES CHAT conventions.

00:14:27.416 Selection: 00:00:00.000 - 00:00:00.000 0

Child free translation [3] I want to play with my Star Wars sword. I want my sword. No, now!

Child NMS [1] i(no)

Child ASL right hand [11] DS\_S(hand-wielding-long-object) YYY NOW

Child ASL right hand ph [1] same hs as previous s

Child ASL left hand [1] NOW

Child ASL left hand pho [0]

Child English [33] I wanna be a Star Wars I want my sword YYY - definitely a sign or word but indecipherable

Child comments [0]

Adult1 free translation [4] FS - fingerspelling (word) NS - name sign (name) XXX is used to identify productions that are not visible to the annotator Yeah... Oh, a sword? You want to play with your sword Okay, later, yeah.

Adult NMS [1] i(yes) IX - index(referent)

Adult1 ASL right hand [10] FS(Star-Wars) NS(Darth-Vade) XXX SWORDshake IX(WIZ) WANT PLAY SWORD LATER[+] YES[ ]

Adult1 ASL right hand p [0]

Adult1 ASL left hand [3] NS(Darth-Vade) i - interjection (meaning) Sign variants are distinguished by brief form descriptions in tags after gloss WANT PLAY [+ ] repetition or lack of [ ] held signs

Adult 1 ASL left hand p [0]