

A multimodal view on signed interaction – transcribing data from Finnish Sign Language context (English)

In my PhD study, with the title 'English language in the everyday life of Finnish Sign Language people – a multimodal view on interaction,' I examined interactional situations in which the fingerspelling of English words occurred in a Finnish Sign Language (FinSL) context. The aim was to explore, firstly, the multimodality of interaction when FinSL signers fingerspell English words, and secondly, how fingerspelling is modified in such situations. In my paper, I will discuss different ways of transcribing multimodal signed interaction, and how the process of transcribing is interwoven into the methodological choices made in the research and the actual analysis.

The research methodology used in the PhD study, Mediated Discourse Analysis, is ethnographically oriented multi-method approach that focuses on social action more broadly than previous text and discourse studies (Scollon 1998, 2001, Scollon & Scollon 2004). Analytical tools derived from multimodal interaction analysis, social semiotics, and sign language linguistics were employed to suit the data and the purpose of the study (e.g. Norris 2004, Patrie & Johnson 2011, Rainò, 2001, Van Leeuwen 2005).

In this presentation I demonstrate examples of the analysis of three video recordings 'The Aviator,' 'Guitar,' and 'Ultimatum.' The first recordings, 'The Aviator' and 'Ultimatum,' were captured during a video conference that was part of an English course. The third recording is of a 'coffee table' FinSL conversation between two participants. The analysis of the first two situations focuses on the general multimodality of the situations and how the participants select from different communicative modes in order to achieve their goals, as well as the modification of fingerspelling. In 'Ultimatum' the focus of analysis is on ten instances of fingerspelling a proper name 'Jason,' on the modification of the fingerspelled sequences and the mouthing in relation to signing.

My objective is to demonstrate the overall multimodal and multilingual complexity of the analysed situations, discuss the relationship between fingerspelling and other modes available to the actors in those situations and show how the physical place and the technology in the situation rearranges the interaction. The paper also features and discusses transcription methods that were developed for describing and analysing the three video-recorded data.

References

- Norris, S. (2004). *Analyzing multimodal interaction: A methodological framework*. London: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Patrie, C. J., & Johnson, R. E. (2011). *Fingerspelled word recognition through rapid serial visual presentation*. San Diego, CA: DawnSignPress.
- Rainò, P. (2001). Mouthings and mouth gestures in finnish sign language (FinSL). In P. Boyes-Braem, & R. Sutton-Spence (Eds.), *The hands are the head of the mouth* (pp. 41-49). Hamburg: Signum-Verlag.
- Scollon, R. (1998). *Mediated discourse as social interaction : A study of news discourse*. London: Longman.
- Scollon, R. (2001). *Mediated discourse: The nexus of practice*. London: Routledge.
- Scollon, R., & Scollon, S. W. (2004). *Nexus analysis - discourse and the emerging internet*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Van Leeuwen, T. (2005). *Introducing social semiotics*. London: Taylor & Francis Group.