

**Differential object marking in sign languages?  
Restrictions on object agreement in German Sign Language**

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Object marking can be found in many typologically different sign languages and seems to be one prevalent grammatical property of the visual-gestural modality. The most prominent example is object agreement, which is either realized by a modification of the phonological movement and/or orientation features of the object-selecting verb or by a specific object marking auxiliary. It is also a well-known fact that object agreement in sign languages is subject to phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic restrictions. Some of these restrictions seem to be modality-specific. Others are very similar to the restrictions on differential object marking (DOM) in spoken languages. Consequently, object agreement and especially (object) agreement markers have been analyzed as an instance of DOM. In this paper, I discuss the relevant restrictions on object agreement in sign language and compare classical syntactic agreement analysis of object marking to recently proposed DOM analyses. The discussion will be embedded in corpus studies and experimental studies on object agreement.