

On Narrative Discourse and Point of View in Quebec Sign Language

Christine Poulin
Stanford University

Christopher Miller
Université du Québec à Montréal

In this chapter we show that one of the functions of referential shift in Quebec Sign Language (LSQ) is to express a change in point of view on the part of the signer. First, we give a general idea of the notion of point of view as discussed in the literature. We follow with a brief description of referential shift and of its functions in sign languages. Finally, we present data from LSQ showing that the use of referential shift may express a choice of narrative point of view.

We adopt the term *referential shift* to account for the structures where the signer uses a first person pronoun to refer to a third person referent. Indeed, in agreement with Padden (1990), we find that the term *role shift* is ambiguous because it suggests that the structures are accounted for solely in terms of role-taking principles. We find the term *body shift* ambiguous as well because it implies that the structures solely involve shifts of the body, which is not necessarily the case. Thus, the term referential shift, which suggests that the shift expresses essentially a transfer of referential indices appears more accurate.

Our study is based on a series of alternations involving referential shift observed in a videotaped corpus of spontaneous conversations, and supplemented by elicitations from consultants.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Changes in the linguistic form of certain elements of an utterance can affect its semantic content, apparently without affecting its syntactic structure. These changes of form, which are related to a difference in the way an

entity is referred to, appear to reside in a shift of point of view (Cantrall, 1974; Zribi-Hertz, 1989), and include such notions as empathy (Kuno, 1987), attitude parameter (Coppieters, 1982, 1990) and subject of consciousness (Ruwet, 1990). The change of form of a sentence can express either a neutral (objective) point of view or an internal point of view.

Cantrall (1974) elaborates the idea that, in English, when anaphors alternate with pronouns in a similar structural context, choosing one type over the other expresses a different narrative point of view. Furthermore, he argues that when the choice of a third person anaphor or pronominal is not structurally determined, the use of the anaphor is always related to an internal point of view, that is, the discourse actant's point of view in contrast with the speaker's point of view. The selection of the pronoun must be seen as determined by factors over and above Principles A and B of the Binding Theory presented in Chomsky (1981). The sentences in (1a) and (1b) illustrate Cantrall's analysis.

- (1) a. The women, were standing in the background, with the children behind themselves.
- b. The women, were standing in the background, with the children behind them.

Cantrall imagines a situation in which the sentences in (1) describe a picture where the women are seen from their backs. Therefore, the use of *themselves* in (1a) implies that the children must be located behind the women, from the women's point of view, that is behind the women's backs, and in the foreground of the picture. On the contrary, the use of *them* in (1b) suggests that the children are located behind the women, from the speaker's point of view, thus in the background of the picture and actually in front of the women. Furthermore, considering the example in (2), Cantrall observes that with the use of the reflexive form, the speaker seems to empathize with John, as if he was putting himself in John's place, thus expressing John's point of view. In contrast, the use of the simple form implies either objectivity or criticism from the speaker, thus expressing the speaker's point of view.

- (2) a. John, let that log roll too close to himself, before he jumped.
- b. John, let that log roll too close to him, before he jumped.

Along the same lines, Coppieters (1982) explains the difference in meaning between the French third person personal pronoun *il* and demonstrative pronoun *ce* in terms of a difference of point of view, as we see with his examples which are reproduced in (3), (4), and (5).

- (3) Jean se rendait enfin compte qu'il avait tout essayé et tout raté. **C'/il** était un homme pauvre désormais. Pourquoi avait-il eu tant de malchance?
'John finally realized that he had tried everything and failed

everything. Henceforth, he would be a poor man. Why on earth had he been so unlucky?

In (3), the use of *il* implies that John is conscious of his situation and that he realizes that he is a poor man. Under this interpretation, the clause *Pourquoi*... expresses John's anger and despair. On the other hand, the use of *ce* represents the speaker's judgment on John's situation, and under this interpretation the clause *Pourquoi*... becomes a rhetorical question.

If we force the interpretation of an external point of view, that is a judgment on the part of the speaker, the use of *il* becomes unacceptable as we see in (4).

- (4) Jean se rendait enfin compte qu'il avait tout essayé et tout raté. **C'/il** était un homme pauvre désormais, et je me sentais plein de pitié pour lui.
'John finally realized that he had tried everything and failed everything. Henceforth, he would be a poor man, and I was full of pity for him.'

On the other hand, we can force the interpretation of an internal point of view, that is, John's inner feelings, and the use of *ce* becomes unacceptable, as we see in (5).

- (5) Jean se rendait enfin compte qu'il avait tout essayé et tout raté. ***C'/il** était un homme pauvre désormais, et il en voulait amèrement à sa malchance.
'John finally realized that he had tried everything and failed everything. Henceforth, he would be a poor man, and he was bitterly angry at his bad luck.'

We have observed that, in French, speakers can choose to refer to an entity from an external or from an internal point of view, depending on which pronoun they use. We show that referential shift in LSQ can be used to express the signer's change in point of view, in much the same way as the choice of *il* versus *ce* expresses a choice of point of view in French.

DESCRIPTION AND FUNCTIONS OF REFERENTIAL SHIFT

In natural languages, it is possible for the speaker/signer to use a first person pronoun to refer to a third person referent (in direct discourse, for example). The way this process is realized in signed languages seems to be modality specific. This phenomenon is abundantly discussed in the literature (Fried-

man, 1976; Lillo-Martin & Klima, 1990; Loew, 1984; Meier, 1990; Padden, 1986, 1990; among others). When a referential shift takes place, the referent of a spatial third person locus can be reassigned to first person locus. Lillo-Martin and Klima (1990) use the term *frame of reference* for the arrangement of the loci associated with their referent. In discourse, the shift of this frame of reference can take the form of a referential shift that is indicated by modifications in the signer's facial expression and body position (i.e., in the orientation of the shoulders, the head, and/or the eyes). As Loew (1984) noted for ASL, in the sentences involving referential shift observed in LSQ, we noticed that the breaking of eye contact with the addressee is the most consistent change to indicate that the signer has entered a referential shift. However, the breaking of eye contact is not sufficient alone to specify referential shifting. It must be accompanied with a change in the facial expression and/or the body position.

When studying referential shifting, it is useful to distinguish indices of several types: referential, spatial, and pragmatic. The letters *i*, *j*, and *k* are referential indices, in the true sense of the term, that are associated with a specific discourse entity. Their realization on a given NP is not affected by discourse factors. However, simply marking actants with referential indices does not sufficiently bring out the various distinct and interacting types of indexing that take place in the structure of referential-shifting discourse.

Some sort of spatial indexing is necessary in order to render agreement morphology explicit for sign languages. The letters *a*, *b*, *c*, and *z* are the spatial indices: *z* (zero) represents the body of the signer and *a*, *b*, and *c* represent locations other than the signer's body. There is not necessarily, however, a one-to-one relation between any given morphological and referential index. For example, a given spatial-morphological locus may simultaneously be associated with more than one referential index by pragmatic association (e.g., an individual and the country with which the individual has been identified) and, by the same token, a given referential index may be sequentially associated with distinct spatial loci either as a side effect of motion verbs or as part of the phenomenon of referential shift, as is seen later in this chapter. Such a distinction between morphological and referential indices has already been proposed in Lillo-Martin and Klima (1990) and Meier (1990).

An independent type of index (the numbers 1, 2, and 3) represents the pragmatic roles of participants in a given interaction or event, centered around what may be termed the *subject of consciousness* or *center of experience*, which we associate with the index 1. The entity with whom the center of experience directly interacts is associated with the index 2. Any other entity present, but marginal to the interaction, is associated with the index 3. Although closely related to the notion of grammatical person, these

indices do not necessarily correspond one-to-one to any given grammatical person. In a referential shift, for example, a referent that is grammatically third person may become associated with a pragmatic index 1 or 2, and similarly for the first person (signer) and second person (addressee). Thus, the pragmatic indices are based on interactions between distinct actants in discourse and their referential value depends on the role assumed by an entity in discourse as a function of the current point of view adopted by the signer.

In all cases, 1 is associated with the spatial index *z* (i.e., the signer). However, the referential index associated with 1 varies with the frame of reference adopted by the signer. In a neutral discourse frame of reference, 1 is associated with the signer, 2 with the addressee(s), and 3 with any other entity. In a referential shift, 1 is associated with the entity whose point of view is assumed, 2 with the immediate interactant in the frame of reference (not necessarily identified with the addressee), and 3 is identified with any other entity.

Adopting a set of indices indicating pragmatic roles thus allows referential shifting to be expressed structurally as the reattribution of the pragmatic index 1 to a referent other than the signer.

Referential shifting has been commonly described as being comparable to direct discourse in oral languages, that is, when signers report the words of a third person (for American Sign Language (ASL): Lillo-Martin & Klima, 1990; Loew, 1984; Meier, 1990; Padden, 1986, 1990; for Swedish Sign Language (SSL): Ahlgren, 1990; for Danish Sign Language (DSL): Engberg-Pedersen, this volume). We see an example of reported speech in LSQ in (6). In the transcription, the abbreviation RS stands for referential shift and is followed by a referential index that indicates the actant whose role has been taken. The extended line indicates the scope of the RS.

- (6) INDEX_{1a} HOLIDAY INDEX_{1a} TRIP INDEX_{1a} SON WITH
 "I'm on holiday, on a trip with my son."
 RS₁
 1/2ARREST_{2a} HERE OUT
 "We will arrest you (if you stay) here, out!"

The use of referential shift is not limited to reported speech. In effect, with referential shifting, the signer can also report actions (Ahlgren, 1990; Engberg-Pedersen, this volume; Loew, 1984; Meier, 1990), states (Engberg-Pedersen, this volume; Meier, 1990) or thoughts (Engberg-Pedersen, this volume). The examples in (7), (8), and (9) illustrate, respectively, reports of actions, states, and thoughts in LSQ.

- (7) RS_i
TAKE CHEESE PUT-CHEESE-IN-BARREL
'(She_i) took the cheese and put it in the barrel.'
- (8) RS_i
LANDLORD_i 1_aLOOK-AT_{2*i*} TO-BE-ANNOYED
'The landlord_i looked at him_i he_i was annoyed.'
- (9) RS_i
PANTS HOLE_i INDEX_{3*sd*}PRESENTATIVE ('look at that') IMBECILE INDEX_{3*sd*}
'There is a hole in the pants ... what an imbecile!'

Padden (1990) describes a series of structures in ASL involving referential shifts that are not reported speech, actions, states, or thoughts. These structures consist of pairs of spatial verbs, where the first verb involves a body classifier (e.g., the body which is holding the gun) and the second is a classifier verb involving contact with the body (e.g., GUN-HELD-BY-HAND-TO-HEAD). A shift either may appear or may be absent between the two verbs, which explains the semantic difference between sentences (10a) and (10b) (taken from Padden, 1990), as we can see by the indices on the English translation.

- (10) a. MAN [GUN-IN-HAND]; [GUN-HELD-BY-HAND-AT-RIGHT-TEMPLE]
'The man_i held a gun and a gun was held to his_i head.'
- b. MAN [GUN-IN-HAND]; (shift) [GUN-HELD-BY-HAND-AT-RIGHT-TEMPLE]
'The man_i held a gun and a gun was held to his_i head.'

Other alternations involving referential shifts have been noted by Pizzuto, Giuranna, and Gambino (1990) for Italian Sign Language, and Coerts (1992) for Sign Language of the Netherlands.

This brief description of referential shift and its functions indicates that it is a complex structure that takes advantage of the use of space for different purposes. However, in all cases, all these functions express in one way or another a specific point of view.

Referential Shift and Narrative Point of View

In a narrative, we observe that certain utterances can take two forms. Thus, to describe an event where one or more actants interact, the signer can report the event and refer to the actants by using either referential shift or the unmarked form (i.e., without shift). The possibility for the signer to use one form or the other suggests that a difference exists in the way an entity is referred to. In this section, we show that one of the functions of referential shift in LSQ is to express a change in point of view on the part of the signer,

in much the same way as the alternation between the French pronoun *il* and *ce* and pronominals versus anaphors in certain constructions of English.

Alternation Between the Unmarked Form and the Referential Shift

Consider the sentences in (11), (12), and (13). They are examples of pairs in which the sentences in (a) have referential shift and the sentences in (b) do not. When questioned about their intuition on the existence of a semantic difference between pairs of sentences of the type of (11) to (13), the consultants indicated that using a referential shift is more precise and allows more information to be given as to how the event took place. Furthermore, they indicate that a referential shift expresses the emotional state of mind or the internal feelings of the discourse actant who the signer empathizes with. Thus, signers associate the referential shift form [+RS] to an internal point of view (the signers identify themselves with an actant), and the unmarked form [-RS] to a neutral point of view or that of the signer.

- (11) a. RS_i
INDEX_{3*sd*}IRON (when he_i saw Charlie Chaplin_i) PUT-DOWN-IRON WALK
'He_i was ironing, when he_i saw Charlie Chaplin_i, he_i put down the iron and walked toward him_i.'
- b. INDEX_{3*sd*}IRON (when he_i saw Charlie Chaplin_i) PUT-DOWN-IRON WALK
'He_i was ironing, when he_i saw Charlie Chaplin_i, he_i put down the iron and walked toward him_i.'
- (12) a. RS_i
INDEX_{3*sd*}NEW ANNOUNCE HOLD-MICRO UP HOLD-MICRO WITH INTERPRETER
'She_i took the microphone to make an announcement formally, with the help of an interpreter.'
- b. INDEX_{3*sd*}NEW ANNOUNCE HOLD-MICRO UP HOLD-MICRO WITH INTERPRETER
'She_i took the microphone to make an announcement formally, with the help of an interpreter.'
- (13) a. RS_i
LANDLORD_i 1_aLOOK-AT_{2*i*} TO-BE-ANNOYED
'The landlord_i looked at him_i, he_i was annoyed.'
- b. LANDLORD_i 1_aLOOK-AT_{2*i*} TO-BE-ANNOYED
'The landlord_i looked at him_i, he_i was annoyed.'

Furthermore, when asked to describe an event using a referential shift, the two consultants reacted differently. Spontaneously, one of them established empathy with the agent/experiencer (14a), whereas the other one

identified herself with the patient/beneficiary (14b). However, they both accept either form.

- (14) a. $\text{THIEF}_i \text{ INDEX}_{3ai} \text{ MAN}_j \text{ INDEX}_{3bj} \text{ 1a HIT-WITH-STICK}_{2bj}$
 'The thief hit the man with a stick.'
 b. $\text{THIEF}_i \text{ INDEX}_{3ai} \text{ MAN}_j \text{ INDEX}_{3bj} \text{ 2ba HIT-WITH-STICK}_{1ai}$
 'The man was hit with a stick by the thief.'

The possibility of choosing the actant of the event on which the referential shift focuses, allows the signer to describe an event from the point of view of the subject or from that of the object. In this respect it has the same function that passive has, namely to change the focus from the agent to the patient, as we see in (14b).

Scope of the Modifier

The nonmanual component has among other functions, that of modifying a sentence or a constituent (Baker & Padden, 1978). If we consider examples (15) through (17), we observe that the nonmanual component (more precisely, the signer's facial expression) has different effects on the meaning of the sentence depending on whether it is realized in a [+RS] or [-RS] form.

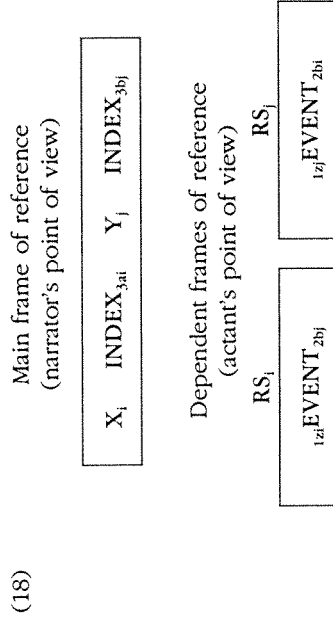
- (15) a. $\text{THIEF}_i \text{ INDEX}_{3ai} \text{ MAN}_j \text{ INDEX}_{3bj} \text{ 1a HIT-WITH-STICK}_{2bj}$
 'Angrily, the thief hit the man with a stick.'
 b. $\text{THIEF}_i \text{ INDEX}_{3ai} \text{ MAN}_j \text{ INDEX}_{3bj} \text{ 3aa HIT-WITH-STICK}_{3bj}$
 'To my great anger, the thief hit the man with a stick.'
 (16) a. $\text{STUDENT}_i \text{ INDEX}_{3ai} \text{ TEACHER}_j \text{ INDEX}_{3bj} \text{ 1a ASK-A-QUESTION}_{2bj}$
 'Nervously, the student asked the teacher a question.'
 b. $\text{STUDENT}_i \text{ INDEX}_{3ai} \text{ TEACHER}_j \text{ INDEX}_{3bj} \text{ 3aa ASK-A-QUESTION}_{3bj}$
 'To my great nervousness, the student asked the teacher a question.'
 (17) a. $\text{CHILD}_i \text{ INDEX}_{3ai} \text{ FRIEND}_j \text{ INDEX}_{3bj} \text{ 1a THROW-THE-BALL}_{2bj}$
 'Joyfully, the child threw the ball to his friend.'

- b. $\text{CHILD}_i \text{ INDEX}_{3ai} \text{ FRIEND}_j \text{ INDEX}_{3bj} \text{ 3ai THROW-THE-BALL}_{3bj}$
 'To my great joy, the child threw the ball to his friend.'

In effect, a facial expression in a [-RS] form expresses a judgment, a criticism, or an emotion on the part of the signer with respect to the event described, whereas the same facial expression realized in a [+RS] form instead expresses the internal feelings of the discourse actant who the signer identifies with. These observations on the scope of the modifier with regard to referential shift support the idea of a different point of view expressed by the signer, depending on whether or not a referential shift is used to refer to an entity.

Toward a Representation of Referential Shift

In this section, we propose a representation of referential shift in terms of referential domains or frames of reference, as illustrated in (18).



In an utterance, the main frame of reference establishes the base referential domain. It is a permanent frame of reference where the elements are referentially located in space and in time. This is where the different indices (referential, spatial, and pragmatic) are associated with their referent. For example, in (18), the actants X and Y are located in the main frame of reference and are associated, respectively, with the referential indices i and j . The main frame expresses the narrator's point of view. It can contain an event (e.g., an action), but it is not obligatory. From this main frame, the signer can decide to change frame of reference, in order to express the point of view of a particular discourse actant. Consequently, the interpretation of this new frame of reference depends on the establishment of the referents in the main frame of reference. The signer can refer to the different actants of the discourse by alternating between their respective frames of reference, and the referential indices will thus be associated with different spatial and pragmatic indices.

Let's now consider the two LSQ equivalents of the sentence *The thief bit the man with a stick* given in (19), where (19a) contains a referential shift

and (19b) does not. The change of form suggests that a difference exists in the way the signer refers to the discourse actants.

- (19) a. THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj} 1₂HIT-WITH-STICK_{2bj} RS_i
 'The thief hit the man with a stick.'
 b. THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj} 3_{ai}HIT-WITH-STICK_{3bj}
 'The thief hit the man with a stick.'

Adding a comment that is neutral with respect to the content of the event or directly involved with the content of that event has different effects, depending on whether it follows a [+RS] or a [-RS] form. Thus, considering sentences (20a) and (20b), we observe that adding INDEX_{3ai} POLICE ARRIVE SCARED ('He was scared the police would arrive'), whose content is emotionally related to the content of the event described, has no unusual effect following a [-RS] form, as we see in (20a). When added to a [+RS] form, it is anomalous if signed inside the referential shift in (20b).

- (20) a. THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj} 3_{ai}HIT-WITH-STICK_{3bj} INDEX_{3ai}
 POLICE ARRIVE SCARED
 'The thief hit the man with a stick. He_i was scared the police would arrive.'
 b. * THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj} 1₂HIT-WITH-STICK_{2bj} INDEX_{3ai}
RS_i
 POLICE ARRIVE SCARED
 'The thief hit the man with a stick. He_i was scared the police would arrive.'

It might be argued that the anomaly of (20b) is due solely to structural factors (i.e., that there is a clash in the indices referring to the thief, 3_{ai} versus 1_{2i} in the referential shift). However, other data in our corpus indicate that such apparently incompatible doubling of indices is acceptable within a referential shift, as is shown by sentence (21).

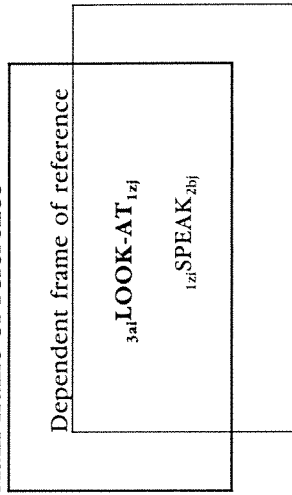
- (21) nm RS_i
 or
 dh 3_{ai}LOOK-AT_{1_{2i}} ----->AFTERWARD 1_{2i}SPEAK_{2bj} WAIT
 ndh HOLD-IT UH-UH ----->
 '(The teacher_i) looked at me_i and said, "hold on, uh-uh, it's not important, it's no problem ..." I'll speak to you, later (about it).'

In (21), we observe a simultaneous construction where several lexical elements are simultaneously realized.¹ The signer signs 3_{ai}LOOK-AT_{1_{2i}} ('he

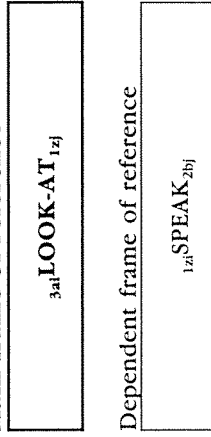
¹In (21), *nm*, *or*, *dh*, and *ndh* stand for respectively, "nonmanual component," "oralization," "dominant hand," and "nondominant hand." The French words oralized by the signer *pas grave*, *pas problème* can be translated in English by 'not important, no problem.'

looked at me'), holds this sign and, at the same time, enters a referential shift where he identifies himself with the teacher. (21) is represented in (22). The main frame contains the event '3_{ai}LOOK-AT_{1_{2i}}.' The dependent frame (which corresponds to the referential shift executed from the main frame of reference) contains the event 'HOLD-IT UH-UH AFTERWARD 1_{2i}SPEAK_{2bj} WAIT' (represented by 1_{2i}SPEAK_{2bj}). Because the sign 3_{ai}LOOK-AT_{1_{2i}} is maintained during the shift, both the main and the dependent frame of reference share the same space, as we see in (22a).

(22) a. **Main frame of reference**



b. **Main frame of reference**



In (22a), we observe that the spatial index *z* is linked with two distinct referential indices, *i* and *j*, and that the referential index *i* is linked with two different spatial indices *a* and *z* (we observe the same thing for index *j*, which is linked to *b* and *z* at the same time). What seems to be a clash in the indices referring to the teacher and to the signer is acceptable because the two frames of reference (the main frame and the shift) share the same space. If we consider the two domains separately, as in (22b), we observe that in each domain, each pragmatic index and each spatial index are associated with only one referential index. Thus, sentence (21) is grammatical.²

²The fact that the sign LOOK-AT is held, instead of simultaneously realized with the referential shift, might have an effect on the grammaticality of the doubling of the indices. Further research is necessary on this question.

Let's now consider the ungrammatical sentence (20b), which is represented in (23) by the main frame of reference 'THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj}' and the dependent frame '1_{2a}HIT-WITH-STICK_{2bj} INDEX_{3ai} POLICE ARRIVE SCARED,' (represented by 1_{2a}HIT-WITH-STICK_{2bj} INDEX_{3ai} in (23)).

(23) Main frame of reference

THIEF _i INDEX _{3ai} MAN _j INDEX _{3bj}

Dependent frame of reference

1 _{2a} HIT-WITH-STICK _{2bj} INDEX _{3ai}
--

In this sentence, we observe that in the domain of the referential shift, the person referred to by the referential index *i* is linked to two different pragmatic indices (1 and 3), and to two different spatial indices (*z* and *a*). We would expect this doubling of indices to be grammatical as we saw with examples (21) and (22). However, (20b), which is represented in (23), is unacceptable. In contrast with (22), where there is no clash between the indices as a result of the domains sharing the space, in (23), index *i* is linked with two different pragmatic indices in the same domain, resulting in a clash in the indices referring to the thief. This accounts for the ungrammaticality of (20b). Furthermore, (24), where the third person pronoun is not realized, is quite acceptable. The fact that INDEX₃ is not realized might imply that a relation of coordination exists between the two sentences, which is a closer relation. In this respect, LSQ resembles pro-drop languages.³

- (24) THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj} 1_{2a}HIT-WITH-STICK_{2bj} POLICE ARRIVE
RS_i
SCARED

'The thief_i hit the man with a stick. He_i was scared the police would arrive.'

Now, if we turn to (25), we observe that adding the comment INDEX_{3ai} FROM MONTREAL ('He is from Montreal'), which is neutral with respect to the content of the event, is anomalous if signed inside the referential shift. In (25a), the

³Karen Emmorey pointed out to us that if, following Lillo-Martin's (1986) analysis of null arguments in ASL, null arguments in LSQ are *pros*, it is not clear why nonovert pronouns eliminate the clash in (24), as both nonovert and overt pronouns are classified in the same way in the binding theory. Poulin (in press) addresses this question for similar data in ASL, and argues that empty categories in ASL are in fact variables and not *pros*. This could also be true for LSQ.

6. DISCOURSE AND POINT OF VIEW IN LSQ

ungrammaticality is explained by the conflict that exists between the indices (3*at* vs. 1*zt*), as we have seen with (20) through (24). However, the anomaly in (25b) can only be attributed to the incongruity of the comment's neutral subject matter with the signer's personal involvement and not to structural factors. Hence, this sentence is not ungrammatical, but rather semantically unacceptable (which is represented with a #), because it is structurally well formed.

- (25) a. * THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj} 1_{2a}HIT-WITH-STICK_{2bj} /INDEX_{3ai}
FROM MONTREAL RS_i
'The thief_i hit the man with a stick. He_i is from Montreal.'
- b. # THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj} 1_{2a}HIT-WITH-STICK_{2bj} FROM MONTREAL
RS_i
'The thief_i hit the man with a stick. He_i is from Montreal.'

In contrast with (25), (26) shows that the same comment, INDEX_{3ai} FROM MONTREAL added to a [+RS] form is quite acceptable if it is signed outside the referential shift.

- (26) THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj} 1_{2a}HIT-WITH-STICK_{2bj} INDEX_{3ai} FROM MONTREAL
RS_i
'The thief_i hit the man with a stick. He_i is from Montreal.'

We saw with (24), reproduced here in (27a), that a comment directly involved with the content of the event such as INDEX_{3ai} POLICE ARRIVE SCARED ('He was scared the police would arrive') is acceptable, when signed inside the referential shift.

- (27) a. THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj} 1_{2a}HIT-WITH-STICK_{2bj} POLICE ARRIVE
RS_i
SCARED
'The thief_i hit the man with a stick. He_i was scared the police would arrive.'
- b. ?THIEF_i INDEX_{3ai} MAN_j INDEX_{3bj} 1_{2a}HIT-WITH-STICK_{2bj} INDEX_{3ai} POLICE
ARRIVE SCARED
'The thief_i hit the man with a stick. He_i was scared the police would arrive.'

However, in contrast with (27a), (27b), where the comment is signed outside the referential shift, appears to be less natural to the consultants, in the sense that they prefer a sentence of the type of (27a).

To summarize, we have seen with the examples presented in (21) to (27) that adding a comment to a [+RS] form has different effects, depending on whether it is neutral or involved with respect to the content of the event described, and that the acceptability of the utterance varies depending on whether the comment is signed inside or outside the referential shift. We observed that a neutral comment is unacceptable inside a referential shift, whereas an involved comment is acceptable. This supports the hypothesis that a [+RS] form expresses an internal point of view whereas a [-RS] form expresses a neutral point of view.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank Denis Bouchard, Jules Desrosiers, Colette Dubuisson, Karen Emmorey, Ed Klima, Linda Lelièvre, Michel Lelièvre, Dominique Machabée, Judy Reilly, Peter Sells, and Linda Uyechi for language consultation and useful comments on preliminary versions of this chapter. We are especially grateful to Dominique Pinsonneault for discussions that have greatly contributed to the development of this paper. This research was supported in part by SSHRC grant 410-92-0766 to Denis Bouchard, Department of Linguistics, UQAM, Montréal, QC; by SSHRC grant 410-91-1016 to Colette Dubuisson, Department of Linguistics, UQAM, Montréal, QC; and by NIH grants R01 DC00201; R01 DC00146; R37 HD13249; P01 NS19632 to Ursula Bellugi, The Salk Institute for Biological Studies, La Jolla, CA. This research was carried out while both authors were at the Department of Linguistics, Université du Québec à Montréal.

REFERENCES

- Ahlgren, I. (1990). Deictic pronouns in Swedish and Swedish Sign Language. In S. Fischer & P. Siple (Eds.), *Theoretical issues in sign language research I: Linguistics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Baker, C., & Padden, C., (1978). Focusing on the nonmanual components of American Sign Language. In P. Siple (Ed.), *Understanding language through sign language research*. New York: Academic Press.
- Cantrall, W. (1974). *Viewpoint, reflexives and the nature of noun phrases*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Chomsky, N. (1981). *Lectures on government and binding*. Dordrecht: Foris.
- Coerts, J. (1992). *Nonmanual grammatical markers: An analysis of interrogatives, negations and topicalisations in Sign Language of the Netherlands*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Amsterdam.
- Coppieters, R. (1982). Descriptions and attitudes: The problem of reference to individuals. *Studies in Language*, 6(1), 1-22.
- Coppieters, R. (1990). *Individual, thematic roles and semantic interpretation*. Unpublished manuscript, Pomona College.
- Friedman, L. (1975). Space, time, and person reference in American Sign Language. In C. Li (Ed.), *Subject and topic*. New York: Academic Press.
- Kuno, S. (1987). *Functional syntax: Anaphora, discourse, and empathy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lillo-Martin, D., & Klima, E. S. (1990). Pointing out differences: ASL pronouns in syntactic theory. In S. Fischer & P. Siple (Eds.), *Theoretical issues in sign language research I: Linguistics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Loew, R. (1984). *Roles and reference in American Sign Language: A developmental perspective*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota.
- Meier, R. (1990). Person deixis in American Sign Language. In S. Fischer & P. Siple (Eds.), *Theoretical issues in sign language research I: Linguistics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Padden, C. (1986). Verbs and role-shifting in ASL. In C. Padden (Ed.), *Proceedings of the fourth national symposium on sign language research and teaching*. Silver Spring, MD: National Association of the Deaf.
- Padden, C. (1990). The relation between space and grammar in ASL verb morphology. In C. Lucas (Ed.), *Sign language research: Theoretical issues*. Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.
- Pizzuto, E., Giuranna, E., & Gambino, G. (1990). Manual and nonmanual morphology in Italian Sign Language: Grammatical constraints and discourse processes. In C. Lucas (Ed.), *Sign language research: Theoretical issues*. Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.
- Poulin, C. (in press). Null arguments and referential shift in American Sign Language. *MIT working papers in linguistics* 17, Cambridge, MA: MITWPL.
- Ruwet, N. (1990). En et y: Deux clittiques pronominales antilogophoriques, *Langages*, 97, 51-81.
- Zribi-Hertz, A. (1989). Anaphor binding and narrative point of view: English reflexive pronouns in sentence and discourse. *Language*, 65(4), 695-727.