

YOGA INSTRUCTION THROUGH AUSLAN: SHOWING AND TELLING

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1) General:

“Yoga is a centuries-old spiritual tradition, science, and art that proceeds from the knowledge that all life is interconnected” (Farhi, 2006:9). It is taught by a teacher who has themselves been practicing for some time. “In the study of Yoga, the teacher can lead the student only as far as she has gone herself. She can point a light only into places that she herself has been willing to go.” (Farhi, 2006:10). Within a yoga class, the teacher guides the students through a series of yoga poses, breathing exercises and meditations. These are presented with an explanation of how they are to be done, and why.

Yoga teachers communicate with their students in many ways. In a hearing yoga class, the methods include demonstrations (both by the teacher and with students as models), spoken instructions, and physical adjustments. (Farhi, 2006:88). Teaching occurs through demonstration, words or touch.

In Deaf yoga, where the teacher and/or students are Deaf and Auslan is the language of instruction, a number of differences occur. This research is an analysis of the way instruction occurs by two different Deaf yoga teachers, fluent in Auslan (Karli Dettman and Natalie Sandon-Stanhope). Classes taught by the teachers were filmed and analysed. A number of features were noticed, and will be described here. These include how the class and room is set up to best enable visual communication, and which linguistic features of Auslan are frequently used. Discussion is made of which linguistic ‘rules’ are altered in the yoga class, primarily when the teacher is themselves in a yoga pose and must so alter their signing and the accessible signing space. How the teacher is able to both ‘tell’ through Auslan and ‘show’ through demonstration with their bodies is considered. Auslan is a visual-manual language, wonderful at describing visual and spatial features. In a way, students in a Deaf yoga class are being shown the information in a number of different ways. They are being shown explicitly through Auslan, often with simultaneous re-enforcement of movements by the teacher’s body. They then often see the pose demonstrated in real-life by the teacher. The showing is deliberate and explicit, since once the student’s eye-gaze is lost, and they begin to enter the poses themselves, it is hard to regain attention.

Below is a summary of how eye-contact and eye-gaze is important for the visual language, and how touch is used in a Deaf yoga class. How yoga philosophy and terminology is conveyed is described, in addition to instruction in specific yoga poses. This involves looking at communication of the ‘what’, ‘why’ and ‘how’ of yoga poses. Since yoga involves moving and aligning specific body structures, how Auslan indicates different body parts and describes anatomy is also considered.

2) A visual language: how eye-contact and eye-gaze influences room set up, and is utilised in yoga instruction through Auslan.

2.1 Lighting/ambience

To enable visual communication, adequate lighting is needed. The Karli Health Centre Yoga Studio (where filming took place) has large windows through which sunlight enters. This contrasts to many hearing yoga classes, where the lighting is dimmed or provided by lamps, to soften the intensity, promote a sense of peace and calm, and shift the focus to the internal.

Soft instrumental music is often used in hearing yoga studios, but is irrelevant here.

2.2 Mat placement, student numbers/class size, visual distractions.

Line of sight is important; each student must be able to see the teacher. Semi-circular arrangement of mats, with teacher in front-centre. This limits the number of students able to participate in a class to about five.



Karli Health Centre website (karlihealthcentre.com.au)

Visual distraction needs to be minimised behind and on the signer. The yoga teacher needs to wear plain clothing that contrasts with their skin tone. Karli tends to wear black or navy blue. (Napier et al, 2011).

2.3 Eye contact and gaze

This varies depending on the stage of the yoga class or instruction, register, and where the teacher's attention is focused.

The yoga instruction can be broken into content or description of three basic types:

- 1) *Yoga philosophy, history, theoretical basis.*
- 2) *Description of a pose – the 'what' and 'why' - body structures involved, purpose; form and function.*
- 3) *Description of a pose – the 'how' - type of movement, length pose is held, number of repetitions, breathing within the pose.*
 - 3a) *How in a general/textbook form.*
 - 3b) *How – for each individual.*

Register:

Communication is an interactive process between various participants. The amount of information transferred by each party varies depending on the register and context. Register refers to differences in signing style which change according to the level of formality, the familiarity between participants, and the use of specialist jargon. (Napier, et al, 2011).

In a formal register, the communication is often a monologue (one-way), with one person in a more authoritative position than the audience. They convey most of the information and may use technical terms and complex language. Formal register language is often planned in advance.

The yoga teacher is using a more formal register when conveying Content Types 1 and 2; that is when discussing yoga philosophy and the theoretical underpinning of a yoga pose (the 'what' and the 'why').

Formal discourse uses an expanded signing space; more precise articulation of handshapes and spatial locations; more explicit discourse markers (for example 'now', and rhetorical questions) to move between topics and sub-topics; more English influence such as the use of lexical conjunctions (eg: 'and' and 'then') and fingerspelling. (Napier et al, 2011)

The student's input to communication here is mainly in the form of affirmation and backchanneling – showing the teacher that they are concentrating, following and understanding. (Johnston & Schembri, 2007).

Here the yoga teacher's eye gaze may focus on a central point or move between the students, watching for the backchannelling from each. It is not directed toward any one individual.

When the teacher moves into Content Type 3, the register changes, particularly in Type 3B. Here consultative register is used. The teacher is the expert and is exchanging information with the students, tailoring it according to their needs. The teacher may need to adjust a pose for an individual student, or a student may express concern or confusion about an element of the pose. The communication here is more two-way between teacher and student (one at a time). The teacher's eye gaze locks with the student affected.

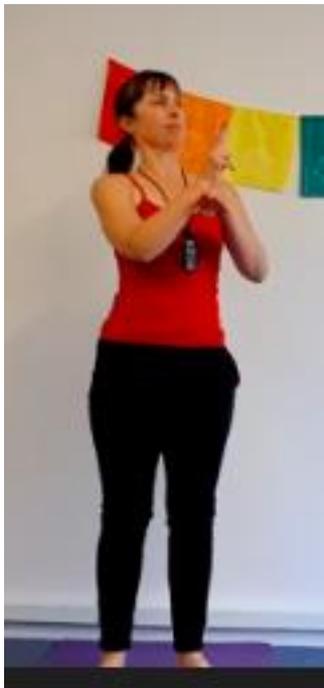
'Show' and 'Tell':

After describing the theory behind a certain pose, its purpose and specific instructions for how to do the pose (both in general and then how it is to be done in the class), the teacher may then demonstrate the pose themselves. Deaf signers tend to 'show' rather than to 'tell' information. In general, this is done through Auslan using role-shift to reconstruct or enact dialogue, thoughts, action, and behaviour from a first person (present) perspective (Napier et al, 2011). Auslan allows for this and it is indicated in particular by non-manual markers. The eye gaze may be directed upwards if the signer is using constructed action to show

characteristics of a child or shorter person. The eye-gaze is a linguistic feature and the 'showing' is being done in a systemic way through constructed action or dialogue.

Depicting signs and classifiers:

'Showing' may also happen in Auslan through depicting signs. Depicting signs are complex lexical items in which each of the units of handshape, orientation, location and movement may have their own meaning. In the context of a yoga class, the depicting signs used are usually classifiers showing spatial arrangement or movement type. For example, the 1-Handshape or the 2-Handshape is often used to show legs. They can show kneeling (with the Bent-2), standing (2-Hand), or indicate the legs going vertically up the wall. (Johnston & Schembri, 2007).



2-Hand: classify for 'legs up the wall' (0:06, Clip 2)



2-Hand: classifier for 'standing' (Master Clip: 19:17)



Bent-2: classifier for 'kneeling' (Master Clip: 19:18)

The B-hand is often used to represent the actions of the feet, wiggling the fingers to indicate wiggling the toes, for example. In this case the hands are oriented to match the orientation of the feet, palms down when the feet are standing, for example.

In this clip, Natalie is describing spreading the toes. She spreads the fingers from the B-Hand into the 5-Hand, using the hand to describe the feet.



Master Clip 47:42.

In these cases the 'showing' is done using specific linguistic features and functions of Auslan. This is seen when the signing yoga teacher is describing why and how to do a yoga pose. As such, the teacher's eye gaze follows the conventions of information giving in a formal or consultative register.

Gaze-dropping:

When the teacher then models the pose themselves their eye-gaze depends on whether they are continuing to provide information or refinement, or whether this has concluded.

Gaze-dropping does not occur if instruction or communication is to continue while the teacher is in the yoga pose. In this case, communication continues via Auslan. Signing may be adjusted to point out a specific part of the body as it is impacted during the yoga pose. In this case the hands move from the neutral signing space, to be located on the teacher's body within the pose. While instruction through Auslan continues, eye-gaze remains to indicate the students must continue to watch. Students never proceed into a pose mid-way through instruction, as they do during a hearing yoga class.

The teacher's eye-gaze drops when they have finished explaining ('telling' through Auslan) and are now 'showing' (modelling with their own bodies). The gaze may focus downward at the abdomen, or the teacher's eyes will softly close. This indicates that they are focused internally, on doing with their body what they have just described prior.



Teacher is demonstrating a sequence of poses. Throughout she is signing, but her eye-gaze remains downward. She is focused on herself in the poses here, demonstrating or 'showing'. Communication here is solely one-way. She is no longer watching the back-channel. She is demonstrating that the focus and gaze needs to be internal. (Masterclip 24:19). This is very different to most Auslan use, where eye contact is paramount.

Similarly, when the instruction is later given for the students to move into the yoga pose themselves, the teacher's gaze may again drop. This is a signal that the students should each focus their attention internally. They can focus on their own selves and no longer need to be giving attention to the teacher.



Teacher's eye-gaze and hand position indicates disengagement. Eye-contact with students has been broken and hands are held in her lap. This signals that instructions and communication has finished and the student's can now begin practicing what has been described. (Master clip 30:51).

2.4 Regaining attention

As well as serving linguistic features and indicating where attention should be focused, eye-gaze is of obvious importance in a Deaf yoga class, since signers actually have to be looking at each other before any communication can take place. Part of the opening sequence in a signed language includes some means of gaining an addressee's visual attention (Johnston & Schembri, 2007). The teacher must have strategies for bringing the student's visual attention back when it is needed. These include tapping the floor, so vibrations are felt by students, or lightly touching students in a culturally appropriate way.

More so than in a hearing yoga class, in Deaf yoga sequence is clearly spelt out before students go into a yoga pose, given once eye-gaze is lost effort must be taken to regain it. The teacher describes the pose to be done, in what manner and how many times. They then explain how the student's attention will be brought back. This cannot occur spontaneously as in a hearing yoga class, where the teacher can tack on extra information as required while the students are in their poses and their gaze is elsewhere. In Deaf yoga classes it is more explicitly spelt out. This reassures students that they can then drop their own gaze and focus on themselves, and that they are not behaving inappropriately and will not miss vital information.



Here Nat is bringing the student's attention back. Prior to going into this pose she explicitly told them that they would stay for 1minute and that she would tap them to bring their attention back. (Clip 3: 0:06).

A note about touch. Touch is required in a Deaf yoga class for two reasons; to gain attention and for adjustment. As such there are two sets of etiquettes that must be considered. In Deaf culture it is appropriate to touch someone, for example on their shoulder or their elbow, to gain attention. In a yoga situation, these body parts may be quite far away or upside down!, so touch is permitted on other body locations, for example the ankle.

Touch also occurs for adjustment within a yoga pose. Touch is used by yoga teachers as a tool, especially for those students who learn primarily through their kinesthetic sense (yoga teaching p 89). This may be done by adjusting a student in a particular yoga pose, or by drawing their attention to a specific body part through touch. Before this can happen in a class, hearing or Deaf, the teacher must first gain permission from the student. In the Deaf class, this must be done in such a way as not to startle the student. An indication must first be given (eg: through waving the hand, through vibration through the floor, through attention-seeking touch on the shoulder) that the teacher is within the student's personal space. This is especially important if the student's eyes are closed. For a deaf student to close their eyes, they are showing trust and vulnerability. The visual sense is how a deaf person would normally know that someone is close by. If warning is not given that the teacher is approaching, and the teacher suddenly touches the student, when they did not know that they were proximal, this trust will likely be lost and the student will not surrender themselves fully to the pose, by closing their eyes, again in future.

3) Explaining the theoretical underpinning of yoga – Sankrit terms and yogic philosophy

3.1 Sanskrit: the original language of yoga

Sanskrit is an ancient language originating from India. In yoga, Sanskrit plays a significant role. All the ancient yogic texts are written in Sanskrit. As a result, poses and mantras and traditional yoga terminology are in Sanskrit (Joseph, 2011). Indeed, the word ‘yoga’ is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘yuj’ which means ‘to unite or integrate’. The related meaning is ‘to focus attention on’ or ‘to use’. Yoga is all about harmonizing the body with the mind and breath through the means of various breathing exercises, yoga poses (asanas) and meditation. (B.K.S. Iyengar, 2008).

In hearing yoga classes, Sanskrit terminology abounds, and is particularly used for the pose names (the asanas). The Sanskrit asana names appear to be used less in Deaf yoga classes. Important yogic principals or ideas that are encapsulated by a Sanskrit term, are common, however.

3.2 Representing Sanskrit names with fingerspelling, then lexical or depicting signs:

When given, the Sanskrit names are finger-spelt. The equivalent English term may then be finger-spelt, and a lexical or depicting sign may then be given, to stand in for the spelt name through the rest of the class (and often further classes where the same students are present).

Many of the yoga poses have animal names. Often in Deaf yoga classes the lexical Auslan animal sign is used for the poses. Where two poses use the same animal name, the less common is indicated by further description, usually depicting signs.

Sanskrit	English	Auslan
<i>Adho Mukha Śvānāsana</i>	Down-face dog pose	DOG (lexical sign)
<i>urdhva mukha</i>	Upward-facing dog pose	FACE (lexical) gaze-lifts-upward (depicting sign, 2 hand as classifier for eyes) DOG (lexical)
<i>Bhujāṅgāsana</i>	Cobra	SNAKE (lexical)

Never are poses introduced or described by their Sanskrit name only. Furthermore, the Sanskrit word ‘asana’ for ‘pose’ is not commonly used in Deaf yoga classes, as it is in hearing classes. Instead the English word ‘pose’ is finger-spelt.

Fingerspelling either a Sanskrit or an English word is lexical borrowing from other languages. Fingerspelling is a form of indirect borrowing. It is not a direct representation of the original borrowed language, but rather a manual representation, using the English lettering system (Johnston & Schembri, 2007).

The Sanskrit or their English translations form the ‘jargon’ of yoga. When this is being used the register of the teacher is formal (as described above). The Sanskrit may be used when giving Content Type 1 and 2 described above; that is theory or philosophy and the ‘what’ and ‘why’ of a yoga pose.

After the Sanskrit and English words are finger-spelt, meaning will be given. This may be by lexical or depicting signs.

3.3 Example of the strategies used to describe a yogic principal: Sthira Sukham Asanam

In her introduction to the class, Natalie explains that she wants to remind the students of two things from yoga philosophy S-T-H-I-R-A S-U-K-H-A-M A-S-A-N-A-M

Which 'MEANS' 'STATUE/STILL' (lexical sign for 'STATUE' while mouthing 'STILL'). The body won't move in the P-O-S-E, but not 'DETERMINED/FORCED' (lexical sign for 'DETERMINED'). It needs to be without effort, it must be comfortable. Not 'WORKING-YOUR-LEGS-SO-HARD-THAT-THE-MUSCLES-SHAKE' (show by depicting signs – the 1-Handshape on each hand, oriented so the fingers point down, like legs: 2.53). The legs need to be soft and not strained (legs shown again with entity classifiers). This is what is 'RIGHT' (emphasised with size of movement and non-manual features).

Not straining shaking legs (depicting sign with entity classifiers) or determined/forced intention (lexical). Non-manual features indicate that this is situation is not what is wanted – negation.

When done with the right level of intensity (return after negation to the correct/wanted situation is indicated by relax of non-manual features), you can be adjusted. Lexical: 'CAN' 'ADJUST'

'FOLLOW' 'ME' (lexical). 'NO' (lexical and strong negation through non-manual features). 'FOLLOW WHAT COMFORATBLE FOR YOU'. English word order, due to formal register. Two handed signing allows pointing at each student, emphasising individuals need to follow what is right for them.

Here Natalie utilises a number of linguistic features. She is in the formal register, utilising specific jargon through fingerspelling, and following quite an English structure to her sign. She explains the meaning using both lexical and depicting signs. She ensures meaning is understood by showing both what is wanted and what is not. She contrasts the two extremes, using her non-manual features to indicate which is right and which is wrong. She references the two students individually, when using two hands to sign 'YOU', emphasising that each are different. She has taken a philosophical concept (sthira-sukham) and explained its meaning. She has also demonstrated how it is applied, depicting leg muscles working in two contrasting ways (forced and shaking verses soft), and explained why it is important (so you can make adjustments while in the yoga pose).

4) Describing Yoga Poses

Content Type 1 (philosophy, history and theory) often serves as an introduction to Content Type 2 (the 'what' and 'why' of a yoga pose). The linguistic features and register used for both content types are similar. As above, a specific pose's name may be finger-spelt in Sanskrit, before being finger-spelt again in English. A lexical sign (often an animal) will then be allocated and used to represent the pose in future.

Information about how the pose is to be done (Content Type 3) is then given. This includes a description of the general or textbook form of a pose, the types of movement that are involved in the pose, the length of time the pose is to be held, the number of repetitions to be completed, and a description of breathing within the pose.

4.1 Linguistic features utilised to describe yoga poses:

This information is conveyed using a number of linguistic features. Signs may be modified to show number, direction or orientation. Signs may be modified to show aspect, manner and intensity (Johnston & Schembri, 2007). Depicting signs may be used. Representations of entities (classifiers) may be used to show specific body parts, for example the feet, legs, head or vertebrae of the spine. Movement or orientation of these specific parts can then be shown. Classifiers are often used to represent body parts that are outside of the signing space, or parts that are in motion (Pyers, 2006). Movements being demonstrated with classifiers may be reinforced by a full body movement. For example, the body may twist or bend from the waist at the same time the hands are showing spinal movement using classifiers (S-Handshapes representing vertebrae). The fists outline the spine and then move relative to each other to show bending or twisting (the non-dominant hand remains as the lowest/sacral vertebrae – a stationary reference point. The dominant hand moves up, outlining the spine, and then moves relative to the reference point, to show bending or twisting). At the same time the signer's body is mirroring this movement on a real-life scale, bending or twisting from the waist. This is an example of combining 'telling' (through Auslan with classifiers) and 'showing' (with body movements).

4.2 Example of the linguistic features used to teach a yoga sequence (kneeling sun salutation):

What follows is a description of how these different linguistic strategies are used by Karli in a section of her yoga instruction.

Karli introduces that she is going to 'TEACH WHAT?'

'Kneeling' (shown with entity classifier – Bent-2-Handshape 'kneeling' on her left palm) 'SUN' 'SALUTE' (lexical signs). S-U-N S-A-L-U-T-A-T-I-O-N is finger-spelt. The Sanskrit name is finger-spelt, but Karli then comments that you do not need to know this spelling.

Contrast is made between the 'kneeling' sun salute and the more textbook 'standing' version. This is done using the 2-Handshape as an entity for legs – they are shown 'standing' or 'kneeling' (bending the knuckles) on the left palm.

Explanation is given of why the kneeling sequence will be done, explaining the Yogic principal of 'Sthira Sukha'. Intensity of movements is emphasised by non-manual features (including clenching jaws, furrowing eyebrows) and the type of movement undertaken by the hands (slow, rigid holding of handshape, shaking to indicate effort).

How the spine moves through the sequence is shown. The spine is described using two S-Handshapes. The left is held low (the sacral reference point), the right moves vertically

upward, tracing a column between the two. The top hand then moves to indicate movement of the spinal column. Karli shows backward and forwards movement.



(Masterclip: 20:29)

She then negates lateral movement indicating that this is not involved. 'NOT', 'LATERAL' (hands move down the sides of the trunk, while she mouths the word 'lateral'). A depicting sign is then used. The right (dominant) arm is used to represent the upper body, the forearm as the trunk, the closed fist as the head. The elbow is grounded on the back of the left hand (the left forearm, held horizontal, is a reference for the ground). The right forearm then pivots side to side (left to right) on the back of the left hand, depicting a side to side (lateral) movement of the body. Karli mirrors this movement in real size with her body. She uses her non-manual features (mouthing 'no' while shaking her head) to negate what is happening. She is demonstrating what is not to be done.



(Masterclip: 20:31)

Explanation is then given. Karli again sets up the spine, tracing a vertical column between her fists. She then switches handshape on both hands, using the Irish-H-Handshape to more accurately show the shape of each vertebrae. The slight and fast twisting movement at the wrists, as her hands move vertically apart, illustrates that the spine is made of lots of small separate vertebral bones. She is using depicting signs to show the spinal structure. She then twists her wrists slightly more while mouthing 'flexibility'. She is explaining that the back and forward spinal flexion will improve spinal flexibility, the movement between each vertebra that makes up the spine.

After explaining the reason why, the movement wanted is gain repeated. She uses the lexical sign 'BACK', then moves her spine backwards – both the 'spine' she has described using depicting signs and her own body (mirroring the movement). The same is done for the forward direction. A lexical sign 'FORWARD' followed by movement with her hands (depicting) and body. To reinforce, she mouths 'back' and 'forward'.

4.3 Breathing:

As well as the arrangement and movement of body parts, yoga teachers also need to describe breathing patterns. Breathing is indicated in a number of ways. The instruction to inhale or exhale is done using lexical signs.



Karli signing first an exhalation (showing the breath moving from her body) and then an inhalation (the breath moving into her body). (Masterclip 25:15).

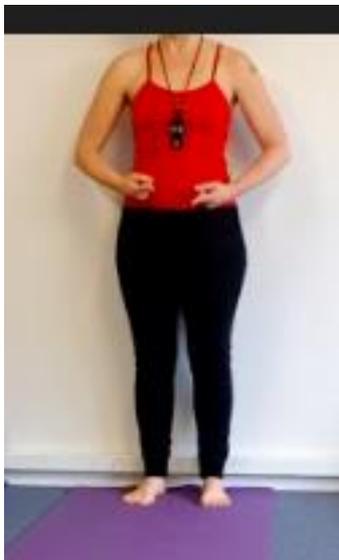
Auslan lends itself well to describing the breath in more detail. Natalie asks the students to rest their hands, one over the sternum and one over the abdomen, as they observe their normal breathing pattern. She then explains that a deep breathing activity will follow

'NOW' 'WILL' 'DEEP' 'BREATHING' 'WILL' (lexical signs)

Where in English the teacher would have to describe “breathe so you first fill the abdomen, then the lower chest, then the upper chest, counting from one to three”, Natalie is able to modify signs for location and number.

4.4 Sign modification for location and number:

A depicting sign is used to indicate inhalation (a 5-Handshape is held over the chest, moving forwards as the chest expands with an inhalation). This is then moved, changing location to the abdomen, to indicate that this is where the expansion due to the breath should occur (modification for location). The hand is then moved progressively upwards, showing expansion of the lower then upper chest. To reinforce and to show timing, Natalie uses both hands (probably so the student on either side of her can see) to count upwards, ‘1’, ‘2’, ‘3’. The number signs are also modified for location. ‘1’ occurs at the abdomen, ‘2’ at the lower ribs, ‘3’ high on the chest. This reinforces the order – breathe first into your abdomen, then your lower chest, then your upper chest. Count one, two, three as you do so.





Modification of signs – number and location – Clip 3.

4.5 Explanation through ‘show’ and ‘tell’:

As well as using their body as a reference point for location, the teacher will also use their body to fully demonstrate a yoga pose or sequence. They give information through Auslan (‘tell’) then ‘show’ using a demonstration. The instruction is given ‘WATCH-ME’ ‘FIRST’, and the teacher then proceeds into the pose(s).



(Master clip 24:10).

While in the pose (and if possible, eg: the hands are not weight-bearing), the teacher may give further information. In a sequence of poses, (eg: the sun salutation), Karli signs when to inhale and exhale, using the lexical signs.



(Masterclip: 24:31)

'INHALE' (lexical) – (note that this is signed while she is in a pose).

While in the hands and knees position (a transition point), Karli uses the lexical sign for the next pose in the sequence



Signing 'CAT': Masterclip: 24:47

Before demonstrating herself.

She 'tells' first using Auslan, then 'shows' using her body.

After the full sequence of poses is told and shown, Karli explains to do one more full breath (an inhalation and an exhalation) in the final position. She then signs 'FINISH', before telling each student that they may now practice what she has explained.

4.6: Changes to the signing space when in a yoga pose:

Signing while in a yoga pose allows the teacher to reach parts of their body that would normally be outside the signing space. Normally the legs are outside of the signing space, and are indicated using classifiers (the index fingers of each hand in the 1-Handshape if right and left legs are to be indicated separately, or the 2-Handshape if they are to operate as a pair, showing walking, jumping, kneeling etc). The linguistically acceptable signing space normally extends from just above the signer's head to the waist (pyers p287). Sometimes when the teacher is signing while in a yoga pose, however, they have access to different body parts.

For example, when Natalie is lying supine on the floor, she signs 'WHICH', then lightly hits the tops/thighs of both legs twice, the left hand hitting the left leg and the same on the right. The legs are hit lightly with the palms in the B-Handshape.



(Masterclip: 14:57)

When signing while in a pose, if the dominant hand is involved in the pose, the signer switches hands. For example, when Natalie is raising her right arm in a pose, she signs with her left.

Signing while in a pose is not always possible. When it is and it does occur, it alters the signing space that the Deaf person has access to. Adjustments are made to location and allowances may be made for using the non-dominant hand. With this flexibility, it is possible for the teacher to both 'tell' (explain elements of a pose) while also showing in (through demonstration).



Karli signing 'DOG' (for downward-facing dog pose) while in the pose itself (Masterclip: 24:39).

4.7 Detail in instruction:

The explanations that the teachers give must be very detailed because then cannot be finetuned or added to once the students start entering the pose themselves (once eye gaze is broken).

Furthermore, Auslan tends to provide a greater level of detail in describing objects, people and events. Deaf signers tend to give and expect more (and sometimes different) detail about visual aspects than English speakers do. This is why classifier signs are used to convey very specific detail about appearance, position, and motion. The same may not be included in an English version of the same basic idea. (Napier et al, 2007). By both telling (especially using depicting and classify signs) and showing (through demonstration), the teacher conveys as much information as possible to the student about how to do the pose, before they commence the practice themselves.

5) Anatomy

As well as yogic principals and breathing patterns, another important element in yoga poses is anatomy – the form and function of body structures – how these operate in a yoga pose - the parts of the body to be utilised and how.

Analysis of the Deaf yoga teachers reference to anatomical structures, and comparison with the findings of an ASL study, show that Auslan has a systematic way to reference and describe different body parts.

5.1: Depicting signs:

In Karli's description of the kneeling sun salute above, she described the spine. She used depicting signs to show its structure (separate vertebral bones arranged vertically in a column) and how it was to move in the pose (forward and back bending).

Later in describing the same sequence, she describes the shoulder joint, again using depicting signs. To show the ball and socket, she has her left hand as a fist (the ball), rotating within a case (the socket), made by her right hand.



Depiction of the ball and socket shoulder joint (Masterclip: 20:44).

5.2: Indicating body parts (consistency with ASL):

A 2006 analysis of how American Sign Language (ASL) indicates different body parts made a number of general findings. The study showed that through regular phonological contrasts, ASL is able to systematically categorise the body. General distinctions are made based on body part size, whether the structure is internal or external (inside or outside), and whether the body part is proximal or distal (close to the core of the body, or far down a limb). The system of indicating structures is far more complex than simply pointing. Body parts are

indicated by reduplicating the movement toward the indexed body part, mouthing the English body part term, or supplementing the index with the finger-spelled English term. (Pyers, 2006). In analysing the footage of Karli and Natalie, similar findings were made.

When indicating a body part, the phonological elements handshape, location, movement and orientation are used. In Auslan, there are very few body structures that have set or locked lexical signs, that is signs that would appear in standard dictionaries, and would be signed consistently by different signers. Many of those that exist appear to have come from tracing the body part, for example, tracing the back of the hands ('HANDS') or tracing around the face ('FACE').

5.3: Classifiers and mapping:

Classifiers are used to refer to body parts outside of the signing space or body parts in motion. We have seen above that the signing space changes in yoga instruction, depending on what pose the signer is in (we saw Karli and Nat refer to knees and thighs, by tapping them with the B or bent B handshape, because they were in a yoga pose and had access to them). When standing normally, however, signers deal with the constraints of signing space by mapping body parts that are beyond the sign space onto body parts within the sign space. In many instances the hand from the wrist down can be used represent the foot from the ankle down. There is a one-to-one mapping between wrist and ankle, hand and foot, as well as fingers and toes. For example, a signer can refer to her toes by wiggling her fingers, as long as she has preceded the sign with an indexical point towards her feet.



Nat indexing her feet (1-Handshape since these are far from her core). (Clip 2: 0:43)



Nat mapping her feet onto her hands. The B-Handshape held in the same orientation as the feet. Her hands can show orientation of the soles (towards the ceiling) and movement (wiggling of the toes). (Clip 2: 0:44).



Karli wiggling her fingers which are mapped as her toes (she is also mirroring the real movement with her feet). (Masterclip: 36:34).

5.4: Indicating distance of the body part from the core:

Indicating body parts outside the signing space is also done by pointing (with the 1-Handshape). "Body parts outside of the linguistically acceptable signing space are indexed with a point towards the general location of the body part. To disambiguate multiple body

parts the signer typically follows the point with the fingerspelled English word for the corresponding body part. For example, the sign FOOT is made by pointing downwards, towards the signer's own foot and then spelling F-O-O-T. " (Pyers, 2006).



Pointing with 1-Hand to indicate body part far outside signing space – feet. Context or topic is given first (lexical sign: 'FOUNDATION'), so no further clarification (fingerspelling or depicting sign) is needed. Since shoes are not worn in yoga, Natalie is able to emphasise where she is pointing (by raising and wiggling her toes) also. This is similar to the full-body movement mirroring that has been mentioned previous, using the full or real body to emphasise what is being discussed. (Master Clip 47:29).



Karli indicating her shoulder. Note her non-manual features – her facial expression indicates closeness (to the core). (Masterclip 20:43)



Note of exception to indicating. Normally the feet are indicated by pointing. Here in a yoga pose, and as a demonstration of her flexibility, Karli refers to her feet by actually touching them. This is possible only in the context of a yoga class and would not occur in general signing. After touching them (rather than pointing), Karli does put her hands into the

orientation of her feet (mapping her feet onto her hands) and follow by fingerspelling F-E-E-T (Masterclip 34:31).

The handshape that does the indicating to the body part shows proximity (or closeness) of that body part to the torso. Evidence from the video shows consistency between Auslan and the findings in ASL. “The 1-Handshape indicates only distal joints such as the elbow and wrist, which are not next to the torso. Proximal joints, which are adjacent to the torso, e.g. shoulder and hip joints), are not designated using the 1-Handshape but using the Bent-B-handshape. This distinction shows that ASL uses the hierarchy of joints as a relevant category to guide phonological choices. Alternatively, one could argue that the 1-Hand is used with distal joints because they are smaller than the joints proximal to the torso, thus respecting the size constraints discussed above.” (Pyers, 2006).

5.5: ‘Bending’ lexical rules while in a yoga pose:

Kneeling on the mat during part of her instruction, Karli indicates different joints by tapping them twice with Bent-B shaped hands. She does this for shoulders, hips and knees. Note that while kneeling, Karli has access to joints outside the normal lexical signing space (her knees) and these are closer to the core than they would be if she were standing. It is likely that if she were standing, she would refer to her knees by pointing downwards with the 1-Handshape and then use either finger-spelling or a depicting sign to clarify that she wants to draw attention to her knees.

5.6: Size of the body part

“The 1-Handshape in ASL is used to label small body parts as well as distal joints. Large body parts and proximal joints are distinguished from the small body parts and distal joints by a change in handshape; instead of an index finger, signers use the whole hand, either the Bent-B handshape or the Open-B handshape.” (Pyers, 2006).

A body part with large surface area is generally indicated with the Open B.



Nat indicating head. Reduplicated movement, making contact with the head, using the B-Handshape. (Clip 2: 0:58).



Karli tracing her abdomen with 5-Handshape. (Masterclip: 35:02).

5.7: Internal structures:

Body structures (for example bones, muscles, organs) that lie below the surface are indicated either by reduplicated touching with the bent B shape (as above for joints) or tracing over the area with the bent B). Where it is not clear which internal structure is being indicated, the trace is followed by fingerspelling or depicting signs.



Karli tracing along her back muscles. Further clarification about which internal structure she means is not needed, because the context has been which muscles to activate. (Masterclip: 35:12).



After indicating her hips with the Bent-B-Handshape, Karli uses depicting signs to show their orientation. (Masterclip: 36:09)

5.8: The beauty of Auslan for yoga instruction: ‘Telling’ through depicting signs emphasises what is being ‘shown’ through demonstration and what must be actually done with the student’s body:

A note about the beauty/conciseness/clarity of Auslan – the visual/manual language for describing spatial and manual elements. Karli references ‘hips’ (reduplicated movement with a Bent-B for proximal joint). She then gives a depicting sign to show how she would like the hips oriented and the pelvis to tip. In hearing yoga classes, a common description is of the pelvis as a bowl, and the need to either lower the tailbone or lift the front hip crest. This is so efficiently conveyed in Auslan with a single twisting of the hands in a cup shape, individually representing the hips and together representing the pelvis. The twist of the hands shows the orientation needed in the pose.

This is a beautiful demonstration of how Auslan is used to both show and tell yoga instruction. The teacher is able to use the Auslan linguistic features, while also sitting in the yoga pose and mirroring the movement with her own body. Showing is happening both through the visual language and through use of the teacher’s own body.

Conclusion:

The original intention of this research was to consider how yoga instruction is provided by both ‘telling’ and ‘showing’. The assumption was that ‘telling’ occurred through Auslan, and ‘showing’ when the teacher was demonstrating with their own body. This research has demonstrated that these two occurrences often both occur at the same time, though each to a greater or lesser extent. In a Deaf yoga class the room must be set up, conventions of eye-gaze must be maintained, and means of establishing when attention can shift from the teacher or must be brought back are established. This is so the students can have necessary visual contact with the teacher when communication is happening.

The teacher may sign, and utilises linguistic features of Auslan to convey information, the specific features dependent on the content and register. Signing often occurs while the teacher is in a yoga pose, and this may alter the acceptable signing space. In a way, this adjustment to some of the linguistic rules (access to body parts normally outside the signing space) means that they can ‘show’ while also ‘telling’. The teacher can point to or model on their actual body while they are explaining. They can mirror movements being shown by depicting signs with their full bodies. This may be considered ‘showing’ while ‘telling’.

The teacher may also demonstrate poses. Before so doing, they explicitly tell students not to start the pose themselves, and to maintain eye-gaze until told that the sequence and instruction is complete. Even when ‘showing’ a yoga pose by demonstration, the teacher may continue to sign. In this case, the ‘telling’ may continue while they are ‘showing’.

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