

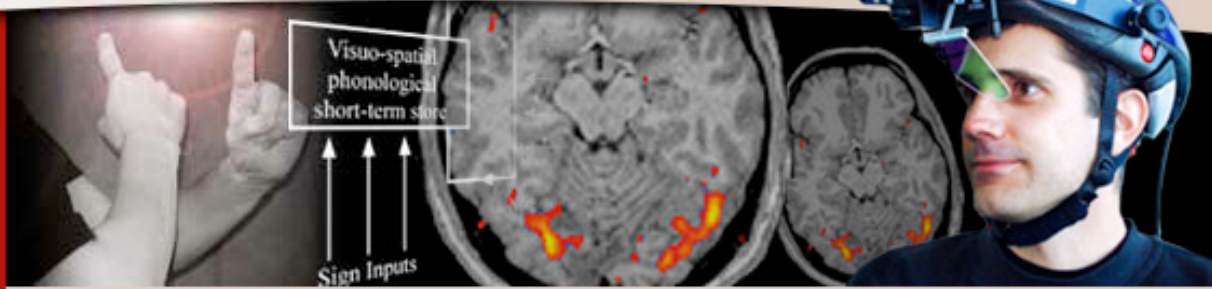


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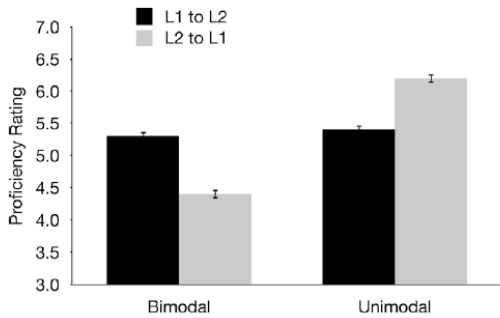
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Different preferences for spoken language and sign language interpreters



Self-reported proficiency ratings for bimodal ASL-English interpreters and unimodal spoken language interpreters (various language pairs). 1 = not proficient, 7 = highly proficient.

Unimodal (spoken language) interpreters often prefer to interpret from their non-dominant (L2) language into their dominant (L1) language, but bimodal (sign language) interpreters often express the opposite bias, preferring to interpret from L1 (spoken English) into their L2 (ASL). We confirmed this preference with a large survey (N = 1,359) of unimodal and bimodal interpreters. The L1 to L2 direction preference was stronger for novice than for expert bimodal interpreters, but novice and expert unimodal interpreters did not differ from each other. The different direction preferences cannot be explained by differences in work or training experiences that is, these differences are not just practice effects.

Interestingly, interpreters who indicated that ASL was their L1 (most Codas) were much more likely to express no direction preference for interpreting. We suggest that modality and language-specific features of sign language

drive the directionality preference for interpreters for whom ASL is their L2. Specifically, we propose that fingerspelling, transcoding, and the linguistic variability in the Deaf community influence the preference for bimodal bilinguals to work into their L2 (ASL).

Nicodemus, B. & Emmorey, K. (2013). Direction asymmetries in spoken and signed language interpreting. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 16(3), 624-636. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1366728912000521>

Learning ASL changes how you gesture when speaking English



Because the hands are used to sign ASL and to gesture, we investigated whether just one year of academic ASL instruction changes the rate and nature of co-speech gestures. A survey study revealed that 75% of ASL learners but only 14% of Romance language learners (French, Italian, Spanish) felt that they gestured more after one year of language instruction. A longitudinal study of ASL and spoken language learners confirmed this perception. We filmed students re-telling a cartoon story before and after one year of language instruction. Only the ASL learners increased their gesture rate, produced more iconic gestures, and increased the variety of handshapes used in their gestures. A few of the ASL students produced at least one ASL sign when re-telling the cartoon to a non-signer

(e.g., producing the sign TRAIN). We suggest that learning ASL may (1) lower the neural threshold for co-speech gesture production, (2) pose a unique challenge for language control (i.e. signs, but not words, can “slip out”), and (3) have the potential to improve cognitive processes linked to gesture.

Casey, S., Emmorey, K., & Larrabee, H. (2013). The effects of learning American Sign Language on co-speech gesture. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 15(4), 677-686. doi:10.1017/S1366728911000575

THANK YOU! None of our studies could happen without the contributions of hearing signers like yourselves. We would like to take the opportunity to thank each of you who have generously given your time. For more info, please contact Jennie Pyers at **this conference**, or email Dr. Karen Emmorey at kemmorey@projects.sdsu.edu