Form and discourse function of the pointing toward the chest in Swedish Sign Language

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The object of this study is a sign glossed INDEX-c, a pointing toward the signer's chest, and its use in Swedish Sign Language. The sign has often been referred to as the first person pronoun of Swedish Sign Language, and it has been claimed that INDEX-c is only used for non-first person reference in reported speech (Wallin 1987; Ahlgren 1991; Simper-Allen 1999). In the analyzed material, however, INDEX-c is also used for non-first person reference when the actions and thoughts of a referent are rendered. A closer look also made it clear that there are actually two different forms of INDEX-c, with different distribution, and that there appears to be an indefinite pronoun in Swedish Sign Language. What is presented here is thus an analysis of the use and meaning of two forms of the sign that was initially glossed INDEX-c.

Keywords: Swedish Sign Language, INDEX-c, first person pronoun, non-first person reference, reported speech.

1. Introduction

The object of this study is a sign glossed INDEX-c, a pointing toward the signer's chest, and its use in Swedish Sign Language. The sign has often been referred to as the first person pronoun of Swedish Sign Language, and it has been claimed that INDEX-c is only used for non-first person reference in reported speech (Wallin 1987; Ahlgren 1991; Simper-Allen, 1999). However, this paper reports data in which INDEX-c is also used for non-first person reference when the actions and thoughts of a referent are rendered. A closer look also makes it clear that there are actually two different forms of INDEX-c, with different distribution, and that there appears to be an indefinite pronoun in Swedish Sign Language. What is presented here is thus an analysis of the use and meaning of two forms of the sign that was initially glossed INDEX-c.

2. Previous descriptions of pronominal systems

2.1 Three person distinction

Several researchers have described reference by pointing in signed languages. Regardless of how the signs are glossed, a frequent assumption has been the existence of a three person pronoun system, consisting of signs ascribed meanings equivalent to those of the first, second, and third person pronoun in spoken languages. Accounts with this traditional three person pronoun system are typically based on a canonical dialogue situation, with a speaker, a listener and something/someone spoken of. It is stated that pointing toward the signer means 'I/me', pointing toward the person spoken to 'you', and pointing to another person 'he/him' or 'she/her' (e.g. American Sign Language (ASL): Baker & Cokely 1980; Liddell 1980; Padden 1983; Brazilian Cities Sign Language: Berenz & Ferreira Brito 1990; British Sign Language: Kyle & Woll 1985; Sign Language of the Netherlands: Bos 1990; Swedish Sign Language: Bergman 1981.)

The direction of the signer's eye gaze is sometimes also included in these descriptions. Baker & Cokely in their account of ASL e.g., say that if the signer both points at and looks at A, then the point means 'you', but if the signer looks at B and then points to A, the meaning of the point is 'he/him' or 'she/her'. (1980: 206)

In a more recent description, Berenz (2002) claims that there are grammatical first and second personal pronouns, and a distinction in form between second and third person reference in Brazilian Sign Language as well as ASL.

2.2 One person distinction

Lillo-Martin & Klima (1990), on the other hand, maintain that ASL has only one personal pronoun. In accordance with their theory, this pronoun is assigned an R-index (a referential index) each time it is used, and is interpreted as a pairing of the sign PRONOUN with a discourse referent. The form of the pronominal will be directed toward a referent that is present, otherwise the R-indices will have arbitrary R-loci. The difference between a spoken language, such as English, and ASL is claimed to be that these referential indices are unspoken in English but overtly manifested in ASL.

2.3 No personal pronouns

The fact that pointing signs look the same regardless of whether they refer to people spoken to or spoken of, to things or to places, has been pointed out in accounts of many signed languages (e.g. ASL: Baker & Cokely 1980; Danish Sign Language: Engberg-Pedersen 1993, 1995; Swedish Sign Language: Bergman 1981; Ahlgren 1990).

Ahlgren even takes the argument one step further, claiming that Swedish Sign Language has no special category of personal pronouns based on conversational roles at all: "In Swedish Sign Language persons are deictically referred to by their location, not by their conversational roles." (1990: 167). If true, this would according to Ahlgren put the language in a very special position: "Swedish Sign Language therefore lacks a category that, according to Lyons (1977: 639), is probably present in all languages..." (1990: 168).

2.4 First vs. non-first person distinction

Several of the linguists that discuss pronouns in signed languages seem to have come to agree that there is a distinction between first and non-first person pronouns in the signed languages they describe, but not between second and third person pronouns. Instrumental in this change was Meier (1990), who argues that the set of pointing signs that might be identified as second person in ASL largely overlap the set that would be identified as third person. He also claims that most descriptions of the phonological form of the ASL signs translated as 'you' or 'him/her/it' are phrased in terms of the reference of the signs. According to Meier gaze does not appear to be a grammatical marker of second person, and there is no evidence for any grammaticalized second and third person pronouns in ASL.¹

Similar claims about gaze direction have been made for other signed languages. Engberg-Pedersen states that in Danish Sign Language the gaze is part of the communication event rather than part of a second person pronoun (1993: 135). Wallin clearly dissociates gaze direction from the manual pointing in Swedish Sign Language, claiming that "the gaze direction signals who you are talking to, the manual pointing indicates who the signer is referring to" (1987: 2).

Gradually, differences also in formational characteristics between the first and the non-first person pointing have been noted. Engberg-Pedersen presents a detailed characterization of these pointing signs in Danish Sign Language. According to her, the citation form of the first person pronoun consists of a pointing gesture where "the tip of the index hand makes contact with the signer's chest". The orientation of the hand used for this form is never assimilated. The handshape can, however, assimilate to the handshape of an adjacent sign, and it can be "a very loose index hand and even a handshape where all the fingers and the thumb are extended, but relaxed" (1995: 40–41). As for the non-first person pointing (PRON in Engberg-Pedersen's notation), the orientation assimilates to that of the hand of a preceding sign, but the handshape is never assimilated (1995: 40–41).

1. For a recent account of ASL cf. Liddell (2000), who also distinguishes between first and non-first person reference.

In a recent account of pointings in Swedish Sign Language (Bergman 2002) the pronouns INDEX-c and INDEX-x are described.² According to Bergman INDEX-c means ‘the signer’ (‘the speaker’). It is produced using the index finger and touching the chest, but the handshape can also be assimilated. Gaze direction is not mentioned. An illustration of the sign in the dictionary *Svenskt teckenspråkslexikon* consists of a photo and the following brief description: “Index finger, directed inwards with the palm facing right, contact with the chest.” (1997: 405, my translation). (An illustration is also found at www.ling.su.se/tsp.) INDEX-x is, according to Bergman, a pronoun meaning ‘other entity’ (than the signer) and can be used to refer to persons, things and places. The handshape is always the index finger, but the orientation of the hand can assimilate to the orientation of the preceding sign.

3. Non-first person reference

In general, it is said that a pointing toward the signer is used for first person reference, whereas non-first person reference is characterized as something that can be done with pointing away from the signer. Another way of making non-first person reference, however, is the use of a pointing toward the signer, which has been discussed by many sign linguists. These accounts seem to have one common denominator — the statement that a pointing toward the signer is used about somebody *other* than the signer only in reported speech. The point is made very clear by Engberg-Pedersen, in her account of Danish Sign Language:

Moreover, the first person pronoun 1.p is the only distinguishable form of pointing signs that is used only to refer to senders of communication acts. It is also the only form that can be used to refer to somebody other than the person toward whom the index finger is directed: in reported speech, the first person pronoun 1.p can be used to refer to the reported sender. (1993: 139)

Wallin, on Swedish Sign Language, not only states that gaze direction is an indicator of who the referent for INDEX-c is, but also claims that gaze direction constitutes the difference between two kinds of reported speech: “If you maintain eye-contact with the addressee during the report it is indirect. If not, it is direct...” (1987: 4). Ahlgren, on the other hand, argues that there is no contrast between direct and indirect report in Swedish Sign Language, and that the difference between reported speech, i.e. reporting linguistic interaction, and reporting other kinds of interaction does not seem to be grammaticalized (1990: 173). According to Ahlgren either a noun phrase is used to signal who the agent or the patient is in a narrative, or a system based on choice of

2. PEK-c and PEK-x in the Swedish original.

perspective is used, where gaze direction and the direction of the face signal who the actors are.

Both Ahlgren (1990) and Engberg-Pedersen (1992, 1993, 1995) do allow for the fact that reports of actions, thoughts, and beliefs, are similar to reported speech in Swedish Sign Language and Danish Sign Language respectively. But they still both claim that, in this kind of utterances, a pointing toward the signer is only used in reported speech, i.e. to refer to an original sender.

Several accounts of American Sign Language have stressed the importance of so called 'body shift' in order to make third-person reference with a pointing directed toward the signer possible in ASL: "The shift is signified by a change in the orientation of the signer's shoulders, head, and/or eyes" (Lillo-Martin & Klima 1990: 194). Liddell describes direct speech, stating that the signer changes body orientation and "also changes his pronominal reference so that first-person reference no longer refers to the signer, but to the reported speaker" (1980: 120). According to Liddell, the report can then be made without using the verb SAY. Meier, on the other hand, states that points to the signer which occur during 'role-play' can refer to a quoted signer without body shift, using head position and eyegaze to distinguish the two characters instead, but he too maintains that the point has to refer to the signer of an utterance and thus be part of reported speech (1990: 183).

As a point of departure for this analysis, then, we see that it has been claimed for Swedish Sign Language, as well as for several other signed languages, that there is a distinction between first and non-first person pronouns, and that pointing away from the signer is used for non-first person reference. A pointing toward the signer's chest can be used either for deictic reference to the signer, i.e. first person reference, or for anaphoric reference to the sender in reported speech. When a pointing toward the chest is used for non-first person reference it has been claimed that the signer's gaze must not be directed at the receiver.

4. Material, method and disposition

The main material of the study consists of a video recorded monologue (9 minutes 44 seconds long) where a deaf woman retells the contents of an autobiography she has read — *Livets hjul: En självbiografi i dödens närhet* (original: *Wheel of life*) — written by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. There is a native signer listener sitting by the camera. The material was originally recorded as part of an admission test for the interpreter training program at Stockholm University.

Earlier accounts of Swedish Sign Language discourse have shown that a narrative told by a person who was one of the participants in the events of the story abounds with pointings toward the signer's body, but that these pointing signs are much less

frequent in narratives told by somebody who was not a participant (Ahlgren & Bergman 1994). Even though the narrator of this material did not take part in anything told in the story, there are still a total of fifteen instances of INDEX-c, the form and use of which will be described in detail.

A rough transcription of the whole discourse was made, in order to identify all instances of INDEX-c, and the parts of the discourse containing them was transcribed in more detail and are presented in the following. (Transcription conventions can be found in Appendix 1.) A rough translation into Swedish was also included in the first transcription. During the initial part of the analysis thorough notes were also made of whether INDEX-c was accompanied by any specific mouth movements (and if so what kind). Earlier descriptions of Swedish Sign Language have shown that INDEX-c is sometimes accompanied by a mouth movement resembling that of pronouncing the Swedish word *jag* ('I'). This is especially common when INDEX-c is sentence initial. When INDEX-c is sentence final it is usually not accompanied by any mouth movement at all, or by a mouth movement that is the result of a lengthening of the mouth movement of the previous sign. Since no distinctive pattern was found, mouth movements were not included in the final analysis, and therefore are not given in the transcriptions here. Other nonmanual signals such as use of gaze direction and eyebrows, which often have linguistic meaning in signed languages, were also included initially. No distinctive pattern was found for use of the eyebrows. Gaze direction did, however, prove crucial, and has therefore been included.

One result of the analysis was the observation that there are actually two distinct forms of INDEX-c, which will be discussed below. Detailed descriptions of the form of INDEX-c have not been part of earlier accounts of Swedish Sign Language, only general comments stating e.g. that an assimilated handshape is sometimes used (cf. Bergman 2002, above). In the analysis of the present data a systematic pattern emerged, suggesting a possible difference in meaning related to this difference in form. The possibility that the reference of INDEX-c is the area where the two forms differ will first be considered, starting with the instances used for specific reference and then continuing with the instances used for non-specific reference, which is where the two different forms will first be described. A discussion of whether one or both of the two forms of INDEX-c might be an indefinite pronoun, and also of their discourse function comes next. Then there are some comments on the use of INDEX-c in supplemental material, followed by a discussion of whether logophoricity might be a useful concept for the analysis. Finally, there are some concluding remarks on the results of the study.

5. Reference and form of INDEX-c

5.1 Specific reference

In the data there is one single instance where INDEX-c is used for deictic reference, i.e. the speaker herself is the referent, and it occurs in the very first utterance:

- (1) +C__v+C_____v+C__v+C_____v
 PERF³ INDEX-c READ ONE BOOK BY / WRITE BY / E-L-I-S-A-B-E-T-H
 _____v
 K-Ü-B-L-E-R-R-O-S-S /
 'I have read a book by, written by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross.'

The handshape of INDEX-c in (1) is not the index finger usually associated with the citation form of the sign (cf. *Svenskt teckenspråkslexikon* 1997: 405). The sign is produced with a relaxed flat hand instead — the handshape of the immediately adjacent signs, which makes this a possible instance of both perseverating and anticipatory assimilation. The sign has a short, brushing, upward movement, and is produced very quickly, which makes it quite difficult to perceive. The (upward) direction of the movement is also a kind of assimilation, resulting from the previous sign (PERF) which has been produced with a downward movement (mainly of the wrist), and the hand then being on its way up again to produce the next sign (READ) in front of the signer's upper chest (Figure 1). Throughout this first sentence the signer looks at the receiver.

Figure 1. Assimilated form of INDEX-c, with the preceding and following signs

After this first sentence, the rest of the discourse is concerned only with persons other than the narrator and, consequently, any subsequent instance of INDEX-c is used for anaphoric reference. There are three more instances of INDEX-c with specific reference, all of them with reference to the main character of the story, Elisabeth Kübler Ross. They are produced very quickly (the duration is only 2–3 frames), with the same short, brushing, upward movement that was noted for (1). A different handshape than

3. Perfect marker.

the index finger of the citation form is used for these too, viz. that of the following sign, but the signer's gaze is not directed at the receiver (Figure 2). The three instances occur in (2), (3), and (4):

- (2) fdown+C_____v
 INDEX-I SELF STUDY TO DOCTOR INDEX-I /
- Downl_____v+C_____v+C_____v
INDEX-c STUDY / GO-THROUGH / DIVERGE TO /
- downl+C_____v
 INDEX-I STUDY PSYCHOLOGY DIVERGE /
- +C_____vdownl_____v
 GRADUATE PSYCHOLOGY/DOCTOR INDEX-I(?) /
 'She studied to be a doctor, but strayed from that into psychology and became a psychiatrist.'

INDEX-c

Figure 2. INDEX-c with specific reference, (2).

- (3) downr_____+C_____vdownr_____v
 HOSPITAL DET⁴-pl-left / DOCTOR ESPECIALLY / BELIEVE
- _+C_____downr_____v
 INDEX-f STRANGE WEIRD CRAZY LIKE / INDEX-f RESEARCH DEATH /
- forwr_____+C_____v
 PLUS **INDEX-c** RECRUIT VARIOUS PATIENT /
- downr
 WHAT /

4. Determiner.

‘Hospitals, especially the doctors, thought she was crazy to do research on death and to recruit their patients at that. “What!”’

- (4) downr_____+C_____vdownr vdownr_____
 INDEX-f SAY / #SHE-f / THAT-IS-fr
 pause INDEX-f⁵-----

PATIENT PERSON-f-fr INDEX-fr / INDEX-fr

+C_____vdownr_____+C_____vdownr
 WILL GOING-TO DIE / **INDEX-c** LECTURE FINISH ONE-HOUR /
 INDEX-f-----

‘Then she says that these patients are going to die. So, when she has lectured for an hour...’

As was stated above, the handshape used for INDEX-c in (2)–(4) is not the index finger, but the sign has undergone handshape assimilation and the movement of the sign is a quick, brushing one. For all instances the reference is specific, and the referent is Elizabeth Kübler Ross.

5.2 Non-specific reference

Whereas specific reference was only made using one form of INDEX-c, accounted for above, non-specific reference was made using both forms of INDEX-c. One form used for non-specific reference was the same as the one used for specific reference, whereas the other form differs in the movement and handshape used, as well as in whether the signer’s gaze is directed at the receiver or not. In the following, more detailed descriptions will be given of these two forms, which have been tentatively named for their form, rather than meaning or function.

5.2.1 *Reduced INDEX-c*

There are four instances of INDEX-c with non-specific reference that are produced without the signer looking at the receiver. This was in accordance with expectations, since earlier accounts claim that a pointing toward the signer must be produced without eye contact with the receiver when it does not refer to the signer. The handshape used is an assimilated handshape, or simply the relaxed flat hand. These instances with non-specific reference actually look like the ones where INDEX-c has specific reference, which were discussed above. I coined the name ‘reduced INDEX-c’ for this form (abbreviated red-INDEX-c). The instances of red-INDEX-c with non-specific reference are also only 2–3 frames in duration, with one possible exception. In example (6), the sign is held slightly longer, with a duration of 4–5 frames, possibly a result of it

being sentence final; the movement is different, too. It does not have the characteristic “brushing” movement, due to the fact that the hands are already located on the chest to produce the sign SHOCK.

Red-INDEX-c is thus generally characterized by its brief, brushing movement and the assimilation of handshape, and the signer’s gaze is directed away from the receiver (Figure 3). The instances of red-INDEX-c with non-specific reference occur in (5)–(7):

- (5) +C_____upl_____v+Cvdown__v+C_____v
 BECAUSE HOSPITAL DET-pl-left / AGAINST/WORK PERSON-f LIKE /
 Down_____v+C_____v
red-INDEX-c AGAINST / pause /
 ‘Because the hospitals were against her — totally against her.’
- (6) vdownr__+C_____v+C_____v
 TO-BEGIN INDEX-f? / HAVE VARIOUS #STAGE ONE-AFTER-OTHER-x3 /
 Downr__v upr_____v
 TO-BEGIN SHOCK **red-INDEX-c** /
 SHOCK-----
 ‘To begin with they go through various stages. First they are in shock.’
- (7) _____ raised cheeks_____
 +C_____vdownr_____
 MANY DOCTOR ALSO AFRAID APPROACH / **POSS-c** PATIENT
 INDEX-f

red-INDEX-c TRY-TO SAVE LIFE ON **red-INDEX-c** / gesture /
 _____v
 INDEX-f DIE /
 ‘And many doctors are also afraid of approaching patients whose lives they try to save, who then may die.’

Figure 3. The first instance of reduced INDEX-c in (7)

In ex. (5)–(7) red-INDEX-c has non-specific reference: ‘doctors in (the) hospitals’, ‘dying patients’ and ‘many doctors’. The handshape of red-INDEX-c has undergone assimilation, and the movement is a quick brushing one — though one instance is different for reasons given above — and the signer is not looking at the receiver. Whether red-INDEX-c occurs in reported speech, which has been claimed to be a constraint for its use in Swedish Sign Language, or not, is an issue that still remains to be discussed.

5.2.2 *Distinct INDEX-c*

Unexpectedly, the data contains seven instances where INDEX-c is used for non-specific reference, too, but is produced with the signer looking at the receiver. These instances of INDEX-c are not produced with the quick brushing movement of red-INDEX-c described above, but with the hand in distinct contact with the signer’s chest. The handshape used is the index finger of the sign’s citation form, i.e. not handshape assimilation (Figure 4). They are very easy to notice, as some of them are well over 10 frames in duration. These formational differences, compared to red-INDEX-c, combine to make this other form of the sign much easier to discern, and I coined the name ‘distinct INDEX-c’ for it (abbreviated *dist-INDEX-c*). *Dist-INDEX-c* with non-specific reference occurs in (8)–(11):

- (8) downl_____v+C_____vdown_____v
 WHAT INDEX-I SAY/MEAN / #WELL / pause / #WHEN GET-CLOSE
- Forw_____v downr_____vdownr+C_____v
 OFTEN PEOPLE NOTICE/AWAKEN / **dist-INDEX-c** WHO **dist-INDEX-c** /
 ‘What does she mean? Well — that it is when death is getting closer that people
 often wake up, and wonder who they are.’

Figure 4. The first instance of distinct INDEX-c in (8).

- (9) +C_____v+C-down+C_____
 INDEX-f-up(?) HARD INDEX-on-l-INDEX-x2 BE /
 on lap_____INDEX-up_____
 upr_____v+C_____
 TOO ACCEPT INDEX-fup /
 Down_____+C_____vdownr_____v
 OF-COURSE RELATIVE **dist-INDEX-c** / INDEX-fr WILL DIE INDEX-fr /
 +C_____v +C-v downr
 HARD ACCEPT **dist-INDEX-c** / HARD /
 +C_____downr_____v +C_____vdownr_____
 THEN(?) MEET-c-f / MUST **dist-INDEX-c** ACCEPT /
 ‘That is what is hardest, to make others accept it. And of course, as a relative of
 someone who is going to die it is hard to accept that, very hard. But you have to
 face it and accept it.’
- (10) r_____forw+C_____v +C_____
 #IF INDEX-f SAY / ONE PATIENT/PERSON SICK PERSON DIE
 on lap_____PATIENT/INDEX-f_____
 downr_____v upr_____+C_____v
 INDEX-on-l / HAVE-A-FEELING **dist-INDEX-c** SUMMON-fl-c /

 +C_____v+C_____v
 #NOW MEET-c-f / #NOW /
 ‘Let’s say you have a dying patient, who feels that now is the time to meet
 somebody.’

- (11) downr____v+C_____
 PLUS MANY PERF BECOME HELP DURING TIME LIKE(?) /
 upr v upr-downr____v+C____vdownr____+c____
 GET-IMPRESSION-f-c AHA **dist-INDEX-c** / HOW IN-BODY /
 ‘Many have also been helped during her lectures, and realized who they are.’

In (8)–(11) **dist-INDEX-c** has non-specific reference: ‘people who are going to die’, ‘relatives of people who are going to die’, ‘a dying patient’, and ‘many people’. In all instances the index finger handshape of the citation form of the sign is in distinct contact with the chest, and the signer’s gaze is directed at the receiver.

In the analyzed material both forms of **INDEX-c** are used for non-specific reference. There thus seems to be an interesting difference between the use in Swedish Sign Language and Engberg-Pedersen’s (1993) claim for Danish Sign Language that the first person pronoun can only be used deictically or in reported speech, which are both uses where it has specific reference.

6. An indefinite pronoun?

The use of the two forms of **INDEX-c** in Swedish Sign Language shows interesting similarities to the anaphoric use of an indefinite pronoun in spoken Swedish. Andersson (1972) discusses two different uses of the Swedish indefinite pronoun *man* — anaphoric use and general use:

- “1. *Man skall inte tro allt som sägs på TV.*
 One/You should not believe everything that is said on TV.
2. *På TV har man fått en ny chef.*
 On TV they have got a new boss.” (1972: 17)

According to Andersson, what we see in (1.) is an example of the general use — a statement regarding what people in general should (not) do. But (2.) is an example of anaphoric use “because the constituent *On TV* functions as an antecedent to the pronoun. In this sentence the set of people working on TV is the universe of discourse” (1972: 17, author’s underlining).

Summarizing his description, Andersson claims that whereas a sentence with the general use of the indefinite Swedish pronoun *man* has the set of all individuals as its universe of discourse, *man* used anaphorically has a subset of the set of all individuals as its universe of discourse (1972: 18). He also states that *man* can refer to a group of people that does not include the speaker. If we compare his description of

5. This pointing sign on the non-dominant hand is co-referential with **INDEX-c** (as is **INDEX-f** and **#SHE-f** occurring on the dominant hand).

the anaphoric use of *man* to the anaphoric use of INDEX-C with non-specific reference in the material of this study — regardless of which form is used — the noun phrases used as antecedents are: PEOPLE, RELATIVE, SICK PERSON, MANY, HOSPITAL DET-pl-l, SICK PERSON-fl-f (which occurs before transcribed example (6) begins) and MANY DOCTOR. They all refer to non-specific groups of people, which are a subset of all individuals, and do not include the speaker. So, in these examples the anaphoric use of INDEX-C resembles the anaphoric use of *man*, and maybe what we see is anaphoric use of an indefinite pronoun in Swedish Sign Language.⁶ If that is the case, INDEX-C seems to function like an indefinite pronoun with two forms, and the two different forms may be phonologically motivated, cf. discussion below.⁷ More material would, however, have to be analyzed to make such claims.

7. Discourse function

Looking only at the instances of INDEX-C with non-specific reference, the use of INDEX-C as an indefinite pronoun in Swedish Sign Language could be seen as the answer to how the sign is used. But this would still not account for the use we see when instances of red-INDEX-C have specific reference in the data. Thus, since red-INDEX-C is used for both specific and non-specific reference, a systematic difference in the use has to be found elsewhere. One possible area of interest is the discourse function of the sign.

7.1 Perspective

Discussing perspective in Swedish Sign Language, Simper-Allen describes the difference between what she refers to as textperson's perspective and descriptive discourse. According to her, textperson's perspective is marked by the use of expressive elements, the gaze direction being directed away from the receiver, etc., whereas in descriptive discourse the gaze is directed at the receiver (1999: 26). In the discourse of the present study the signer frequently switches between talking about people and things from what I will term 'narrator's perspective', and telling the story as if saying and doing

6. An alternative analysis could be that the nominals having non-specific reference set up a mental space (in the sense proposed by Fauconnier), as has been suggested to me by Elisabeth Engberg-Pedersen. Though thought-provoking, an analysis within that framework would take the discussion well outside the scope of the present study.

7. INDEX-C was chosen for glossing the sign, since it is the gloss traditionally used in accounts of Swedish Sign Language (written in English). The new insights regarding the form and use of the pointing toward the chest resulting from this study will probably make it necessary to choose one or more new glosses.

things from a ‘textperson’s perspective’. This contrast between, and the switching between, narrator’s perspective and textperson’s perspective is an important part of the narrative structure of Swedish Sign Language.

An analysis of the use of different perspectives in the data makes it clear that both red-INDEX-c and dist-INDEX-c are used when something is told from a textperson’s perspective. The signs are used for reference to that textperson, sometimes for specific reference (to the main character of the story) and sometimes for non-specific reference. Interestingly, though, the textperson is not the sender of a communication act. Both variants of INDEX-c are used anaphorically, when the signer is showing a person’s actions or rendering a person’s inner monologue, rather than actually quoting what the person is saying.

One of the examples containing red-INDEX-c, example (2), is repeated here, and for the convenience of the reader, with the new gloss red-INDEX-c. In this example red-INDEX-c has specific reference, as the signer is talking about the main character of the book — Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. The two first instances of INDEX-l can be translated ‘she’, and the signer uses them to talk about Kübler-Ross from a narrator’s perspective. The direction used for these pointing signs (left) has been marked for reference to Kübler-Ross previously in the text. After producing INDEX-l (‘she’) the second time, the signer briefly switches into textperson’s perspective and one single instance of red-INDEX-c is used with the same woman as referent, followed by the verb STUDY. Note also that the gaze is directed away from the receiver precisely during those two signs. Finally, the signer switches back into narrator’s perspective, using INDEX-l for reference to that woman again. This sudden use of red-INDEX-c thus changes the perspective, but not the referent, who continues to be Elisabeth Kübler-Ross:

- (2) fdown+C_____v
 INDEX-l SELF STUDY TO DOCTOR INDEX-l /
- Downl_____v+C_____v+C_____v
INDEX-c STUDY / GO-THROUGH / DIVERGE TO /
- downl+C_____v
 INDEX-l STUDY PSYCHOLOGY DIVERGE /
- +C_____vdownl_____v
 GRADUATE PSYCHOLOGY/DOCTOR INDEX-l(?) /
- ‘She studied to be a doctor, but strayed from that into psychology and became a psychiatrist.’

In the instances where red-INDEX-c is used for non-specific reference, perspective but not referent is changed, too. In (5) HOSPITAL DET-pl-l (‘hospitals’) is used (more precisely for the doctors in them) and then red-INDEX-c refers to such doctors. In (6) ‘patients with cancer’ have been introduced and associated with the direction ‘for-

ward' before the transcribed example begins, and then red-INDEX-c is used about such cancer patients. In example (7) 'many doctors' is introduced with a nominal, but not associated with any direction. The sign POSS-c ('my') is the first indicator that the story is told from the participants' (many doctors') perspective, and then red-INDEX-c is used twice to refer to such doctors from this changed perspective.

If we look at the instances where non-specific reference is made with dist-INDEX-c, beginning with (9) repeated below, the non-specific referent is introduced with the sign RELATIVE, signed from a narrator's perspective. On three different occasions during this sequence the signer changes her gaze direction to look at the receiver, and uses dist-INDEX-c for reference to these non-specific relatives from their perspective. The dying patients that were mentioned earlier in the discourse are now twice referred to with INDEX-fr ('they'), from the perspective of the relatives:

- (9) +C_____v+C-down+C_____
 INDEX-f-up(?) HARD INDEX-on-l-INDEX-x2 BE /
 on lap_____ INDEX-up_____

 upr_____v+C_____
 TOO ACCEPT INDEX-fup /

 Down_____+C_____vdownr_____v
 OF-COURSE RELATIVE **dist-INDEX-c** / INDEX-fr WILL DIE INDEX-fr /

 +C_____v +C-v downr
 HARD ACCEPT **dist-INDEX-c** / HARD /

 +C_____downr___v +C_____vdownr_____
 THEN(?) MEET-c-f / MUST **dist-INDEX-c** ACCEPT /
 'That is what is hardest, to make others accept it. And of course, as a relative of
 someone who is going to die it is hard to accept that, very hard. But you have to
 face it and accept it.'

For the other instances where dist-INDEX-c has non-specific reference, the situation is similar. In (8) there are two instances of dist-INDEX-c used for reference to 'people who know they are about to die', introduced by PEOPLE, and dist-INDEX-c is then used twice for reference to them. Example (10) contains one instance of dist-INDEX-c used for reference to 'a person/persons who knows he/they is/are going to die', introduced with the phrase SICK PERSON. And finally in example (11) 'many persons in an audience' are introduced by MANY, and then dist-INDEX-c is used once for reference to them.

So, both dist-INDEX-c and red-INDEX-c are used for non-specific reference to persons who are not the signer. The use of INDEX-c sometimes marks the beginning of a changed perspective, and sometimes is a continuation of an already changed perspec-

tive, but it does not change the referent.

It could thus be claimed that we see instances of ‘shifted reference’, which Engberg-Pedersen characterizes as “the use of pronouns and nominals from a quoted sender’s point of view, in particular the use of the first-person pronoun *1.p* to refer to a quoted sender” (1992: 203). But since they are not instances of reported speech they do not entirely conform to her claim for Danish Sign Language that “Shifted reference is only found in reported speech” (1992: 203). A similar claim has been made for Swedish Sign Language, too (Ahlgren 1991). What we see in the present data is not reported speech, but reported action or thoughts/feelings. The use of INDEX-c changes the perspective, but not the referent. We know who the referent is (even though it may be a non-specific referent), since it has been introduced with a noun phrase. We are then told what the referent does, thinks or feels instead of what s/he says. In her article on deictic pronouns, Ahlgren states that: “The reference made by head movement and gaze direction is not restricted to reports of speech; it can be used for reports of action as well.” (1990: 173) But in the Swedish Sign Language data of the current study, it seems that not only head movement and gaze direction can be used for reported action, but INDEX-c too.

7.1.1 *Perspective and gaze direction*

The instances of red-INDEX-c are all produced without the signer looking at the receiver, regardless of whether there is specific or non-specific reference. This is in accordance with Wallin’s statement regarding Swedish Sign Language: “If there is no eyecontact when using INDEX-c the pointing refers to the referent whose point of reference the gaze is directed from” (1987: 6), as well as with claims that lack of eyecontact marks textperson’s perspective. My data would thus support these claims — if it were not for the instances of dist-INDEX-c. All instances of dist-INDEX-c, however, are produced with the signer looking at the receiver. In e.g. (9) above, the signer’s gaze is directed at the receiver each time dist-INDEX-c is produced, even though the signer looks in different directions during the rest of the sequence, and despite the fact that dist-INDEX-c is used from a textperson’s perspective.

It is thus clear that whether the signer’s gaze is directed at the receiver or not is not an indicator of whether something is told from a textperson’s perspective or not. Considering the systematic use in this data, the matter of gaze direction still seems to be of importance, though.

7.2 Story line

Thus it is not a case of the two forms of the sign being used for different kinds of reference — because in the data dist-INDEX-c can be used for non-specific reference, and red-INDEX-c can be used for both non-specific and specific reference. What we see is

not a case of *dist-INDEX-c* and *red-INDEX-c* being used to indicate that something is told from different perspectives — because, in the data, they can both be used to tell something from a *textperson's* perspective. Further, if what we see is not gaze direction used to indicate a difference in what perspective is used either, because something can be told from a *textperson's* perspective using *INDEX-c* both with the signer looking at or not looking at the receiver, then where do we look for a difference?

7.2.1 Narrative repetition

The one difference in use between the two forms of *INDEX-c* that has manifested itself seems to be related to a distinction between continued “story line”, and what will be referred to as “narrative repetition” of verbs. Looking at the examples that contain instances of *red-INDEX-c*, what is told from a *textperson's* perspective has already been told — but from a narrator’s perspective — and is then repeated again from a *textperson's* perspective. In (5) repeated below, it is the sign *AGAINST*, meaning something like ‘being totally opposed to something/somebody’, that is repeated from a new perspective. First the signer uses narrator’s perspective to tell us that the hospitals have gone against/opposed the work of the main character, and the signs *red-INDEX-c AGAINST* are then used from those *textpersons'* ((the staff of) the hospitals) perspective:

- (5) +C_____upl_____v+Cvdown__v+C_____v
 BECAUSE HOSPITAL DET-pl-left / AGAINST / WORK PERSON-f LIKE /
 Down_____v+C_____v
red-INDEX-c AGAINST / pause /
 ‘Because the hospitals were against her — totally against her.’

In (2), *STUDY* is repeated from a new perspective. When the example begins, the signer talks about the main character signing *INDEX-1 STUDY* (‘she studied’), she then breaks eyecontact and uses *red-INDEX-c* about the same referent followed by a repetition of the sign *STUDY*. Immediately afterwards eyecontact is resumed, and the story continues. In (3) it is the sign *RECRUIT* that is repeated from a different perspective. The sequence where *RECRUIT* is first used occurs immediately before the sequence transcribed in (5) and consists of the following signs: *DIFFICULT INDEX-f RECEIVE-f-c RECRUIT MORE DIE PATIENTS* ‘It is hard for her to find more dying patients...’ In (6) it is *TO-BEGIN* that is repeated from a different perspective and, finally, in (4) the same is true for *LECTURE*.

One possible exception to the idea that it is narrative repetition of the verb that determines which form is used can be found in (7) (repeated below), where *red-INDEX-c* is used with non-specific reference. This sequence does not quite look like a repetition of something already told, despite the fact that *red-INDEX-c* is used. Here, one clause contains two instances of *red-INDEX-c*, the second instance is a copy of the first one,

which is the subject. The clause tells us the thoughts of the ‘many doctors’ from whose perspective the signs INDEX-c TRY-TO SAVE LIFE ON INDEX-c are used. The perspective has been changed already, though, with the use of the personal pronoun POSS-c (‘my’) and the non-manual signal ‘raised cheeks’, something that might affect the use of red-INDEX-c:

- (7) raised cheeks _____
 +C _____ vdownr _____
 MANY DOCTOR ALSO AFRAID APPROACH / **POSS-c** PATIENT
 INDEX-f
-
- red-INDEX-c** TRY-TO SAVE LIFE ON **red-INDEX-c** / gesture /
-
- _____ v
 INDEX-f DIE /
 ‘And many doctors are also afraid of approaching patients whose lives they try to save, who then may die.’

So, for all instances of red-INDEX-c, with the possible exception of the two in (7), we see that regardless of whether there is specific or non-specific reference, something that has already been told is told again, but from another perspective — viz. a text-person’s perspective. Red-INDEX-c is thus mainly used with narrative repetition of the verb.

Repetition of verbs in signed languages, and especially in narrative discourse, has been discussed by several linguists. Bergman & Dahl (1994) discuss the possibility of certain kinds of repetition of verbs in Swedish Sign Language being ideophones. According to them: “Typically, what happens is that a situation is first described by ordinary linguistic means, and then an ideophone is added to give concretion to the narrative” (1994: 415).

Fischer & Janis (1990) refer to a similar type of verb repetition in ASL as ‘verb sandwiches’. The transcriptions of examples in their article contain only glosses for signs in American Sign Language, which makes it difficult to draw any parallels with the results of the current study and its data. There is, however, one passage in their text that is of particular interest in connection with the current study:

If we examine these constructions closely, they are at least sometimes marked by a shift in eyegaze after the object or adjunct, signaling the assumption of the subject role by the signer. /.../ yet another reason for the necessity of sandwiches is to maintain discourse continuity by keeping the same verb while being able to show the shift in perspective (1990: 291–292).

It is impossible to draw any firm conclusions from their account, but it would seem that there are similarities with the present data that are worth looking into. It could perhaps be claimed that the “discourse continuity” Fischer & Janis discuss consists of not only keeping the same verb, but also keeping the same referent as subject, only switching into a more lively narrative style by using a textperson’s perspective. Maybe the “concretion” suggested by Bergman & Dahl (1994) is actually a narrative technique.

7.2.2 *The story line continues*

For the instances of *dist-INDEX-c* in the data, it can be claimed instead that the story line continues. Example (8), repeated below, begins with a rhetorical question from the narrator’s perspective, translated ‘What does she mean?’. Then the signer/narrator continues the story by saying that it is when death is getting closer that people wake up and start to wonder who they are. That last part (wondering who one is) is expressed in the form of inner monologue (a *wh*-question with no apparent receiver), with the subject *INDEX-c* followed by the sign *WHO* and a repetition of the sign *INDEX-c*. So, the first instance of *dist-INDEX-c* in this example continues the story by telling us the reaction of people who know they are going to die, whereas the second one is a copy of that subject (held longer than the first instance, possibly because it is sentence final):

- (8) downl_____v+C_____vdown_____v
 WHAT INDEX-I SAY/MEAN / #WELL / pause / #WHEN GET-CLOSE
 Forw_____v downr_____vdownr+C_____v
 OFTEN PEOPLE NOTICE/AWAKEN / **dist-INDEX-c** WHO **dist-INDEX-c** /
 ‘What does she mean? Well — that it is when death is getting closer that people
 often wake up, and wonder who they are.’

Example (9) contains three instances of *dist-INDEX-c* and the whole of the (long) sequence continues the story line, with no repetition of content already mentioned. In (10) a hypothetical situation is described, saying ‘Let’s say you have a dying patient, ...’. Then, the (possible) feelings/reaction of that patient are shown, beginning with *dist-INDEX-c*, which is then followed by the signs *SUMMON-fl-c* #NOW *MEET-c-f* #NOW, and the story thus continues with something that is translated: ‘... who feels that **now** is the time to meet somebody’. The last example containing *dist-INDEX-c* is (11). This is also an instance where the story line is continued and *dist-INDEX-c* is part of describing what people think (realizing who they are), which does not repeat something that has already been told.

It thus seems as if the story line of the discourse is an area where we can find a difference in use between the two forms of *INDEX-c*. With *dist-INDEX-c* the story line continues, and with *red-INDEX-c* something that has already been said is repeated from a different perspective, using narrative repetition of the verb. This narrative

repetition could be seen as a kind of redundancy, the retelling of something, and it is done with the reduced version of the sign. Red-INDEX-c is, as mentioned earlier, somewhat difficult to perceive, which might have less serious consequences for the ability of the receiver to follow the story when the sign is only used in retelling what has already been told. Maybe redundancy in context is what motivates use of the reduced form.

8. Discussion

Apart from the distinction in use discussed above, we have seen that both forms of INDEX-c are used for reference to somebody other than the signer, even when this person is not the sender of a communication act. Both forms are used for reported thoughts as well as reported actions. All instances of dist-INDEX-c have non-specific reference, and are produced with the signer's gaze directed at the receiver, whereas red-INDEX-c is produced without eyecontact with the receiver, regardless of type of reference.

Both forms of INDEX-c are used to tell something from a textperson's perspective. The referent is introduced with a nominal, using the signer's (narrator's) perspective. The subsequent use of one of the forms of INDEX-c switches perspective into a textperson's perspective (in some instances the perspective may already have been switched by using e.g. POSS-c) but it does not change the referent.

When reference is made to a non-specific textperson, both forms of INDEX-c seem to function like the Swedish indefinite pronoun *man* in its anaphoric use, referring back to an earlier nominal with non-specific reference, suggesting that there might be an indefinite pronoun in Swedish Sign Language.

The two different forms of INDEX-c accounted for above have previously not been part of descriptions of Swedish Sign Language and, to the best of my knowledge, nothing similar has been described for other signed languages either. In an effort to see whether what was found in the analysis is specific for the data in the study, or whether it is general usage, a purely narrative discourse was analyzed for comparison. That discourse consists of a signed version of H. C. Andersen's children's story *The Steadfast Tin Soldier* (SDR Video, 1993), which is eighteen minutes long. It is not of the same, high, technical quality as the main material of the study, and consequently it is sometimes difficult to be certain of whether there is eyecontact or not, etc. The signer switches between narrator's perspective and textperson's perspective, as the signer does in the main material of this study, but there are no instances of reference directly to the signer. This additional material was not transcribed in full. Looking through the text a couple of times, instances of INDEX-c were identified, transcribed and analyzed.

Four instances classified as *dist-INDEX-c* have been analyzed from this additional material. They are produced with the signer's gaze directed at the receiver, and with the index finger handshape and distinct contact with the chest that served as criteria for *dist-INDEX-c* above, but the duration of the sign here is shorter. They are all used with the main character of the story as referent, i.e. for specific reference. In the main data, whereas *red-INDEX-c* was used for both specific and non-specific reference, *dist-INDEX-c* was only used for non-specific reference. With the additional data we now also have instances where *dist-INDEX-c* is used for specific reference. The additional data can thus be claimed to help fill a gap in a system, where the use of *dist-INDEX-c* for specific reference was "missing" in the main data of the study. It is also a further indication that specific or non-specific reference is not what distinguishes the use of the two forms of *INDEX-c*.

In the following example two of the instances of *dist-INDEX-c* occur:

- (12) fr _____ v+C _____ fr _____ +c _____
 LOOK-AT-EACH-OTHER-fh-c / WANT **dist-INDEX-c** WE-TWO MARRY /
 LOOK-AT-EACH-OTHER-c-fh

 BECAUSE INDEX-fr ONE #LEG pm-BENT-LEG /
 BECAUSE INDEX-fr _____ pm-STRAIGHT-LEG
 _down _____ +c _____ v
dist-INDEX-c CUT-OFF-LEG-on-leg /

 'They looked at each other. He wanted to marry her, since they both stood on
 only one leg.'

Dist-INDEX-c is used to change perspective into a textperson's perspective (or when the perspective has already been changed), but not change the referent, in the additional data, too. The textperson is not quoted saying something, but we are told what he (the tin soldier) is thinking as he is looking, from a distance, at the doll he wants to marry. Despite the fact that *dist-INDEX-c* is used from a textperson's perspective, all of the instances are produced with the signer's gaze directed at the receiver/camera, which is consistent with what was seen in the main data of the study. As further corroboration of the findings of the main data of the study, the story line is continued with the phrase or sentence that contains *dist-INDEX-c* in *The Steadfast Tin Soldier*, too.

The use of *red-INDEX-c* in this additional material is also in accordance with that of the main material. The four instances analyzed are produced with the assimilation of the handshape and the quick movement that are criteria for *red-INDEX-c*. (In one instance it is not possible to see the hand at all (it is behind the signer's arm), but it is clear that the sign is produced with the typical "brushing" movement.) The main

character of the story is the referent for all instances of red-INDEX-c, i.e. there is specific reference. In one example, however, the sign used might possibly be a variant of the sign *WE*, without the horizontal movement that usually distinguishes *WE* from *INDEX-c*. Whether this is the case is hard to tell without doing a more thorough syntactic analysis, but the ‘we’ in question would in that case include the soldier. The signer’s gaze does not seem to be directed at the receiver; this will be discussed below.

In the following example one of the instances of red-INDEX-c occurs:

- (13) downl_____+C_____vdownl_____v
 HOLD-RIFLE / WANT HELP HOLD-RIFLE /

 downl_____+C_____vdownl_____v
 BUT **red-INDEX-c** PATIENCE / HOLD-RIFLE /
 ‘He wanted to help, but had to continue to stand on guard.’

Red-INDEX-c is used to change perspective into a textperson’s perspective (or when the perspective has already been changed) without changing referent in this additional material. The textperson is not quoted saying something, but we are told what is being thought/done. The signer is not looking at the receiver, but for two instances, in the same example separated by only one sign, the quality of the video recording makes it hard to see the gaze direction properly. For all instances the phrase or sentence containing red-INDEX-c repeats something that has already been said, but from another perspective, supporting the findings in the main material indicating that red-INDEX-c is used for narrative repetition.

9. Logophoricity

The fact that the material contains various kinds of reported actions and thoughts brings the issue of logophoricity to mind. Could it be that Swedish Sign Language, and possibly other signed languages, has a logophoric pronoun? Trask (1993: 164) defines logophoric pronouns as “a specialized pronominal form occurring always and only embedded under a verb of saying, thinking or perception and referring to the person whose speech, thoughts or perceptions are reported.” Logophoricity is mentioned by Fischer & Janis (1990: 292), in their discussion of ‘verb sandwiches’ and shifting perspectives (cf. above): “While this shift is somewhat subtle in English, it is very marked in ASL, including pronoun shifts, where “she” effectively becomes “I”. This is not direct quotation; rather it is closer to *logophoricity* (Clement, 1975) or *style indirect libre* (Kurod, 1973).” Lillo-Martin & Klima (1990) also discuss logophoricity, and its similarity to what they term ‘ASL shifting reference’.

Engberg-Pedersen (1995), in her article on reported speech in Danish Sign Language also discusses ‘free indirect style’, but concludes that since third person nomi-

nals are not used to refer to the originator of the quotation/thoughts in these constructions, it is not a case of free indirect style. Logophoric expressions are, according to Stirling (1994), almost always third person, with second person forms appearing in a few languages. The sign in Swedish Sign Language that would be a candidate for being a logophoric pronoun has earlier been treated solely as a first person pronoun.⁸ The results of the present study suggest that it can be used for non-first reference and as an indefinite pronoun as well. As both forms of INDEX-c are used anaphorically for reported thoughts and actions in the data, though, it cannot be said that there is one specialized form indicating report of speech, thought or action.

According to Stirling (1994: 2304), the logophoric context is frequently introduced by a 'report opening' complementizer, which is often homophonic with and historically derived from the verb *say* (cf. also Trask's definition above). This does not seem to be the case for Swedish Sign Language, though. If there are any further generalizations to the range of logophoric contexts in a language, Stirling claims that they follow an implicational universal hierarchy: "Logocentric verb hierarchy: communication > thought > psychological state > perception." Much more material would have to be analyzed in order to see if this hierarchy is also valid for an account of Swedish Sign Language.

The antecedents of the logophoric pronoun are, according to Stirling, arguments of the logophoric verb or the verb immediately preceding the report opening complementizer and almost always the subject of its clause. It may be some other argument though, "provided this argument is the 'source' of the speech or of the mental, emotional, or experiential content being reported, or the protagonist from whose perspective it is being presented" (1994: 2304). The obvious similarities between her account and the kind of construction in signed languages that we have looked at in this study opens up an interesting comparison. All antecedents in Stirling's examples are proper names or pronouns, whereas the antecedents in the data of this study also include descriptive noun phrases.

Discussing whether the speaker can choose freely between using a logophoric expression or an ordinary personal pronoun in a logophoric context where there is co-reference with the logocentric NP, Stirling claims that it is possible in many languages, and that it is then associated with a meaning distinction of a consistent kind. If the speaker uses the ordinary pronoun, it indicates that the speaker has assimilated the proposition being reported and accepts its truth and/or approves of its content. But if the logophoric expression is chosen, the speaker has not assimilated the proposition and does not necessarily accept its truth or approve of its content. This makes it possible for the speaker to express her attitude to the truth of what she reports. There are

8. The results of this study make it clear that it may not be correct to describe the pointing toward the chest as a first person pronoun, as kindly pointed out by Östen Dahl (personal communication).

too many things we do not know about the possible existence of logophoric pronouns in Swedish Sign Language to have a discussion along these lines yet.⁹

10. Conclusion

The findings of the present study, though based on limited data, add to our knowledge regarding reference in narrative sequences in Swedish Sign Language, showing that pronominal reference to a non-first person can be made using INDEX-c, and not only with a pointing in a direction away from the signer. Pointing away from the signer is mainly used for reference to somebody (or something) from the narrator's perspective, whereas INDEX-c is used from a textperson's perspective, irrespective of type of reference. Both forms of INDEX-c can be used for specific reference as well as non-specific reference to a non-first person. The use of INDEX-c in this material also suggests that it might have a function similar to that of an indefinite pronoun. As pointed out to me by Elisabeth Engberg-Pedersen (personal communication), this could then be a case of a sign extending its use to related contexts, from deictic reference to anaphoric reference to nominals with specific and non-specific reference.

The one systematic difference in the use of two forms of INDEX-c in this material seems to be related to the story line. Whereas dist-INDEX-c is used when the story line continues, red-INDEX-c is used for narrative repetition. One issue that remains to resolve is whether what we see is two different lexical units, or whether the one (red-INDEX-c) is a reduced form of the other (dist-INDEX-c), with different distribution. Since repetition might be seen as redundancy per se, and red-INDEX-c is used for narrative repetition, which could also be regarded as a kind of redundancy, one might argue that using the reduced version of the sign is to use the "redundancy version" of the sign.

Another area where the present study gives new insights into Swedish Sign Language is with regards to whether eyecontact signals perspective or not. In the main material of the present study dist-INDEX-c is used from a textperson's perspective, and the signer is clearly looking at the receiver, despite earlier claims to the contrary.

Finally, one of the most striking results of the present study is the fact that the use of a pointing toward the signer with somebody other than the signer as referent is not confined only to reported speech in Swedish Sign Language. Among all of the instances of INDEX-c in the present study there is in fact not a single one that is used in reported speech. Whereas Engberg-Pedersen in her account of Danish Sign Language

9. The effect achieved by logophoric pronouns can be achieved by the use of distinctive verb forms instead (Trask 1993), and possibly the narrative repetition of verbs discussed above is actually a logophoric construction.

claims that “the first person pronoun 1.p is a symbol with a stable meaning, ‘the sender’” (1993: 139), this clearly cannot be said about INDEX-c in Swedish Sign Language. The data of the present study contain instances of somebody else’s thoughts as well as somebody else’s actions being reported in this way. INDEX-c is used in a change of perspective — from telling something from a narrator’s perspective, into telling it from a textperson’s perspective — without changing the referent whose thoughts or actions are reported.

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Appendix 1: Transcription conventions

First line:

Gaze direction is indicated either with "forw" (forward), "l" (left), "r" (right), "down" or "up", and combinations of those, or with "+C" (indicating that the signer's gaze is directed at the receiver).

"___" indicates continuation of a specific gaze direction

"v" indicates eyeblinking.

Second line:

RELATIVE words in capitals represent signs (produced with the right or both hand/s), words linked with hyphens are used to capture the meaning of one single sign

AGAINST/WORK compound sign

DET-pl-l 'pl' = plural, 'l' = the direction the sign is performed in

RECEIVE-f-c a sign that moves from in front of the signer's body (forward) to the area immediately in front of the signer's chest

R-O-S-S fingerspelling (of e.g. names)

#SHE fingerspelled sign

(?) indicates that it is difficult to see whether there is actually a sign or not

/ is used to indicate major boundaries in the examples

Third line:

contains information regarding what the left hand does, indicated both by glossed signs and by writing other information like 'on lap' with lower-case letters (cf. second line).

Below each example is also an English translation of what the example means in the context it was taken from.

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