



WORD-LEVEL STRUCTURES



Notes



In the previous lesson, you learned about the manual and non-manual components of a sign. In this lesson, you will learn how signs can be combined in different ways to make new signs with new meaning. This lesson will also provide you with the scope to understand why it is important to know the ISL grammar rules to combine signs to make a new sign meaningful.



OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, learner:

- demonstrates an awareness of complex structures within ISL signs
- identifies word-level components of ISL signs
- list some examples of different types of word-level structures in ISL

9.1 WAYS TO COMBINE ISL SIGN

There are many ways through which ISL signs combine to create a new word with a new meaning.

1. Combination

E.g. THREE (3) + YEAR (Y) = 3 Y (1 SIGN)

2. Repetition of sign \Rightarrow Meaning changes

F (1 time) is 'F' Alphabet

F (2 times) is 'Friday'

Structure and Grammar of ISL



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3. Use of fingerspelling alphabet and a sign

PM + BOSS is 'Prime Minister'

CM + BOSS is 'Chief Minister'

Now, we will see how ISL word structure works and how signs combine to create new words. This is part of ISL grammar.

If signs are not combined properly as per ISL rules, they will not make any sense.

For any learner of ISL, it is important to understand how ISL signs can be combined meaningfully to create new words.

It is not enough to only learn ISL vocabulary; it is essential to learn how to make new words in ISL as per the ISL grammar rules.

Hopefully as you get better at this, you will realise how equal ISL is to any spoken language.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.1

1. Give two examples the of combination of two signs to create a new sign.
2. Cite two examples where repetition of a sign changes its meaning.
3. Give three examples of the use of finger spelling in signs.

9.2 ISL WORD-LEVEL STRUCTURES

We will look at three examples the of ISL word-level structures

1. Sign families
2. Question signs
3. Time signs

9.3 SIGN FAMILIES

There are male and female related signs.

E.g. FEMALE + SIBLING = SISTER

MALE + SIBLING = BROTHER

FEMALE + BORN = DAUGHTER

MALE + BORN = SON

MALE + MARRY = HUSBAND

When we compare with English, we see that in English there is only one word. In ISL, two signs are combined.



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Figure-9.1: MALE + BORN = SON

9.4 QUESTION SIGNS

Face + Question = WHO

Place + Question = WHERE

Time + Question = WHAT TIME (WHEN)

Day + Question = WHAT DAY (WHEN)

When we compare with ASL (American Sign Language), WHO/WHERE etc. have a single sign, but in ISL we have two signs combined.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.2

1. Fill up the blanks -
 - a. Female + Sibling =

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- b. Male + Sibling =
- c. Face + Question =
- d. Day + Question =
- e. Place + Question =

9.5 TIME SIGNS

Number + Year

3 + Year = 3-Years (Single Sign)

Number + Month

4 + Month = 4-Months (Single Sign)

Number + Hour

2 + Hour = 2-Hours (Single Sign)

9.6 CHANGE THE MEANING OF A SIGN

It is possible to change the meaning of the signs, by changing:

- Towards / away from
- Repetition
- Movement

Moving Towards / away from –

HELP – I help you / You help me

TEACH – I teach you / You teach me

When comparing with English, it is important to mention who is helping who, but in ISL – this is clear just by a single sign: help towards the signer or away from the signer (depending on the meaning).

Repetition–

FRIDAY++ : When we sign ‘F’ again and again, it refers to every Friday.

ASSOCIATION GO FRIDAY++ (I go to association every Friday)

CLASS GO FRIDAY++ (I go to class every Friday)

PASS++

12th PASS

COMPETITION PASS

SEE++

MOVIE SEE++: I have seen this movie many times.

DEAF MEET SEE++: I have met this deaf person multiple times.

CHILD++ (Children)

CLASS CHILD++: Students

TEACHER TEACH CHILD++: Teacher is teaching learners

Movement

Opposites:

PASS vs. FAIL

GO vs. COME

LIGHT ON vs. OFF

Here, the handshape is the same but with the change in movement, the meaning is opposite.

9.7 SIGNS COMBINED WITH FINGERSPELLING

1. Related to time
2. Fingerspelled letter plus another sign
3. Signs with a fingerspelled letter as the handshape

1. Related to time

A + HOT = APRIL

D + COLD = DECEMBER

S + CLOSED = SUNDAY



Notes

Structure and Grammar of ISL



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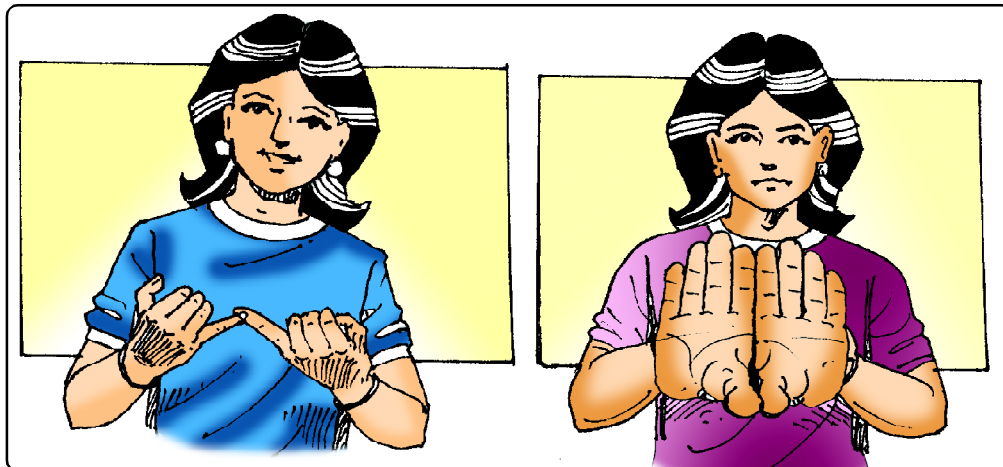


Figure-9.2 : S+Closed = Sunday

2. Fingerspelled letter plus another sign

P + TOP = PRINCIPAL

T + TEACH = TRAINING

L + BOOK = LIBRARY

M + BOSS = MINISTER

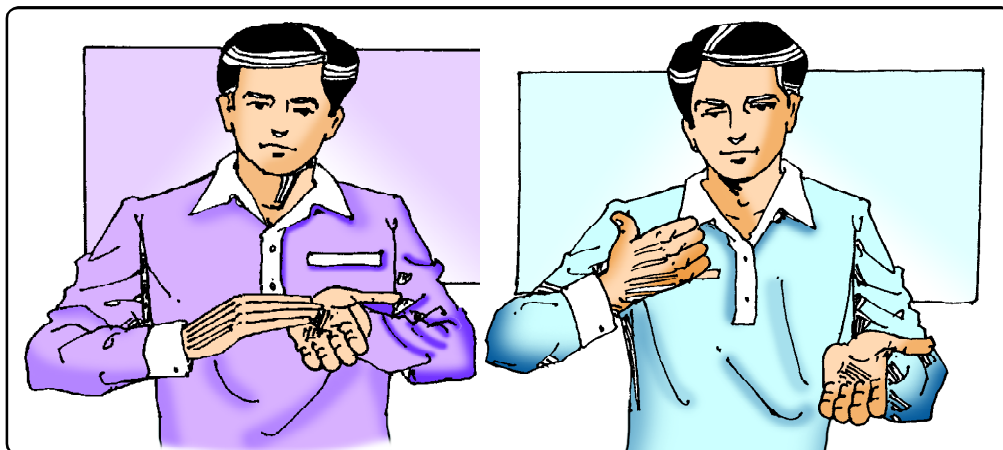


Figure-9.3 : M + Boss = Minister

3. Signs with a fingerspelled letter as the handshape

LANGUAGE

LOGIC

LESSON

LOAN

COLLEGE

COMPLAIN

URGENT

USE



INTEXT QUESTIONS 9.3

1. True/False
 - a. It is possible to change meaning of the sign by changing movements.

(True/ False)

Secondary Course

- b. Handshape is not important in ISL. (True/ False)
- c. Fingerspelling is very important in ISL. (True/False)
- d. ISL grammar has various components. (True/ False)
- e. Learning only ISL vocabulary is enough. (True/ False)



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- There are many ways through which ISL signs combine to create a new word with a new meaning.
- Signs can be **combined, repeated or finger spelled along with a sign** to create new signs.
- Family related signs, question signs and time signs can also be created by meaningfully combining two signs. They may look like a single sign but in fact are two signs.
- ASL usually has one sign for these words. E.g. brother, sister, where, who, three years, four months etc.
- Meaning of signs can also be changed by changing the movement of the sign towards or away from the body (I help you/you help me). Repeating the same sign can also change the meaning. Alphabet F repeated twice becomes Friday. Similarly a Sign's upward or downward movement too changes the meaning e.g. upward Thumb is Pass and downward thumb is fail.
- New signs can also be created by combining a finger spelled letter with a sign. E.g. A (finger spelled)+Hot= April, M+Boss=Minister
- Signs of certain words LIKE LANGUAGE, LOAN, COMPLAINT and USE are made by using the fingerspelled first alphabet as a handshape.



TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. List three ways how new words can be created in ISL.
2. Give one example each:
 - a) Combination of signs
 - b) Repetition of a sign
 - c) Sign Families



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Structure and Grammar of ISL



Notes

3. What are question signs?
4. How does the meaning of signs change when we change the following (explain with example):
 - a. Moving towards/ away from
 - b. Repetition of the movement
 - c. Opposite movement
5. Share at least 3 examples of signs combined with fingerspelling.
6. ISL signs can be created in many ways what is your understanding about this statement?
7. How would you explain the word-level components of ISL signs?
8. How would you justify the awareness and your understanding about complex structures within ISL Signs?
9. What is finger spelling? Give some examples of Signs combined with finger spelling.



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

1. FIVE YEARS ; TWO HOURS
2. 'M' & 'MONDAY' ; 'G' & 'GOVERNMENT'
3. D + BOSS = Director ; A + HOT = April ; M + BOSS = Minister
4. Fill up the blanks

a. Sister	b. Brother
c. Who	d. When
e. Where	
5. True/False

a. True	b. False
c. False	d. True
e. False	