Annotating Real Space Depiction

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What is Depiction?

Depiction is the representation of events, settings, objects using components within one's conception of the immediate environment, or Real-Space.

The images above capture a depiction of a person colliding with another person. Depiction on the page (did the person see the event, or is only the event being described?) is a code E or G depiction.

Real-Space Blending: A Review

Conceptual blending analysis (Fauconnier & Turner 1984) was first applied to depict in ASL by Liddell (1995). Concepts associated with the entity being depicted are blended with Real-Space elements. For example, the setting, patient, and agent of an event can be integrated with the Real-Space signer, a portion of physical space, and the current setting, resulting in lagenti, patient, and lsettiing. These elements exist within a third mental space, the blend.

Real-Space Blending: Recent Developments

Dudis (2007) demonstrates that it is possible to describe depiction with greater precision when additional Real-Space elements and cognitive abilities are considered. These are:

Cognitive Abilities: blending, selective projection, compression, expansion, partitioning, schematization.

In our investigation, we have estimated that there are between 12 to 20 types of depiction (12 are identified in the flowchart below). To aid coding and analysis of depiction, we have been developing depiction identification procedures. The flowchart is one product of our ongoing efforts.

Orange squares are associated with subject blends. In the flowchart we identify five such blends. A - C appear to be what Morgan (1999:30) calls Shifted Referential Space (SRS), which "is mainly used to describe dialogue, actions, and thoughts of protagonists." Blends of type D and E have at least two distinct visible blended elements. Since these elements exist within a single viewer blend (Emmorey & Faller 1990), they have a specific topographic relationship with each other, and it is obvious to the viewer of the sign whether a tapping of a shoulder can be depicted from the perspective of the patient. What is visible is the patient's lagenti and the hands of the other person; however, the elements that "share the same scale", they can interact in this way.

C-E are possible in part due to the cognitive ability of body partitioning (Dudis 2004). In D, the manual articulator(s) are partitioned off to depict an extension of the lagenti. As a result, lagenti and lsettiing must be in sync. For example, in a depiction of a car driver stopping suddenly, both the visible lagenti (produced using the ASL SRS) and the blocked is visible; lsettiing must make sudden forward movements. In E, the manual articulator(s) are in sync. In E, the cognitive ability to depict a variety of psychological events. An example of this type of depiction is one in which something is individual bumping into another.

Fixed Referential Space (FRS) is "used for scene setting involving topographic space (e.g., movement of referents through proper nouns)." While the two examples given for type F are possible only through a FRS in addition to a SRS, it is possible to create a type F depiction in a SRS where a FRS does not appear to be possible. In these cases, the manual and non-manual elements must be viewed as a whole.

ELAN Annotation

We are developing an ELAN template to annotate depiction. The template currently has 10 tiers that pertain to depiction. Four of these tiers are the general types of depiction: subject, event, setting, and abstract. The rest of the tiers annotate the use of the paragraphal zones of the body (Dudis 2004) so that we can contribute to describing the manual articulator(s) can be partitioned independently of each other). We use 109 codes to depict different types of depiction. For example, a manual articulator(s) of E-grade (and undefined) attempts at annotating depiction using ELAN. The image on the left annotates an 80-second portion of a conversation. The right is an annotation of "One Stunt" text, an ASL play by Clayton Valli. It is the case that the annotation captures with reasonable precision our observations about depiction in both the conversation and the poem. The poem, depiction (unpredictably) is found in both discourse types, and the poem utilizes depiction at a slightly higher frequency. We have also observed a tendency of depiction in the conversation to be shorter in duration than those in the poem. Another difference is found in the tendency of reactivating previously produced blends, which occurs more frequently in the poem.

The figure above illustrates a diagram format being developed to visually represent the type, duration, and frequency of depiction occurring in discourse. It is inspired by both ELAN and Morgan's (2000) Dynamic space transcription. Here the diagram represents a 48-second portion of an ASL interview discussing bilingual issues within an university. Diagrammatic spaces are represented by small squares; viewer spaces by larger squares. The length of depiction is represented by the length of each of the squares. Note that each of the squares representing general depiction types are embedded into another square. The orange square represents a lagenti and is embedded into lsettiing, which represents temporality. Both squares are embedded into a blue square, which represents lsettiing. This embedding reflects a conceptual dependency: a subject necessarily exists within time and space, and the time of an event necessarily exists as a setting.

References


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