Chapter 8

Exclusive pronouns in American Sign Language

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This chapter examines the distribution of inclusive/exclusive marking among spoken and signed languages, particularly American Sign Language (ASL). Pronominal systems of signed languages are often taken to be fully indexic — that is, signed pronouns ‘point to’ their referents. The results of this study show distinct exclusive marking in ASL. An exclusive pronoun need not be indexic as other ASL pronouns are. Furthermore, results also show the context-dependent nature of exclusion in ASL compared to spoken languages. While most spoken languages with this distinction can include/exclude only the addressee, ASL can use one exclusive marking to exclude any salient discourse participant. This chapter highlights the importance of including signed languages in language typologies, to ensure accurate generalizations about the world’s languages.

Keywords: sign language, ASL, modality, exclusive, indexic, person

1. Introduction

In the last few decades, considerable progress has been made in establishing American Sign Language (ASL) and other signed languages as linguistic systems comparable to any spoken language. However, in attempting to prove that signed languages are indeed languages, it seems that, until recently, linguists may have overstepped the bounds in claiming that signed languages are structured exactly the same way as spoken languages are. Signed and spoken languages are produced in two very different modalities: the first in the visual/gestural modality, the second in the auditory/oral modality. Surely we should expect some differences between signed and spoken languages due to modality.

Researchers have shown that there are obvious modality effects at the phonetic/phonological levels (Brentari 1998, Liddell and Johnson 1989, Sandler 1993). Likewise, other research has suggested that there are minimal modality effects at the level of syntax (Lillo-Martin 2002, Neidle et al. 2000, Petronio 1993). Modality effects at the morphological level are not so clear. We know that signed languages mark many of the same types of morphological categories that occur in spoken languages. For example, signed languages have rich aspectual marking and number marking; many spoken languages mark these categories as well. But how similar are these morphological categories across modalities?
In this chapter I focus on the distribution of one particular morphological feature - inclusive/exclusive marking - in spoken versus signed languages. This is one feature that has not been mentioned frequently in the literature on signed languages. I present the results of a study that identifies several pronominal forms in ASL that are used to indicate first-person plurals. The results of this study also show a distinct exclusive form for one type of pronoun in ASL.

Section 2 is an overview of the inclusive–exclusive distinction in spoken languages, and includes information on the distribution of this feature and related markedness patterns. Section 3 includes an overview of the ASL pronominal system and first-person pronouns in ASL, followed by a detailed description of exclusive pronouns in ASL and related markedness patterns. In Section 4, I discuss the possibility that inclusive–exclusive distinctions may exist in other signed languages. Section 5 includes further discussion of inclusive/exclusive marking in ASL and of the differences between inclusive/exclusive marking in speech versus sign.

2. Inclusive/exclusive pronouns in spoken languages

Before we look more closely at inclusive/exclusive pronouns, we need to look at the category of first-person plural, since the inclusive–exclusive distinction in spoken languages is traditionally considered within this category.²

2.1. First-person plural pronouns in spoken languages

The first-person plural category is somewhat anomalous. The English first-person plural pronoun ‘we’, for example, is not plural in the same sense as an English plural noun. ‘I’ refers to the speaker, but ‘we’ does not generally mean ‘more than one speaker’. Benveniste (1971: 202) notes: “‘We’ is not a multiplication of identical objects but a junction between ‘I’ and the ‘non-I’, no matter what the content of this ‘non-I’ may be.” This is not only true of English, but of other languages as well.³ Because first-person plurals indicate the speaker plus other non-specified participants, the reference of a first-person plural is often quite vague. This potential ambiguity may be one reason why some languages encode information within the first person other than just the inclusion of the speaker - e.g. information about whether the addressee is included. This is generally what has happened in spoken languages that have separate categories for inclusive and exclusive pronouns.

Languages that have an inclusive–exclusive distinction in the first person have separate first-person plural forms that indicate whether the addressee is included (‘we including you’) or excluded (‘we excluding you’). Many languages, such as English, do not have this distinction. Thus, English has only one first-person plural form: ‘we’⁴ which is not specified for inclusive or exclusive. In contrast, Tagalog (Austro-nesian) has a first-person plural inclusive form kamí meaning ‘we including you’, and a first-person plural exclusive form tayo meaning ‘we excluding you’.
Forchheimer (1953) surveys the person systems of 71 languages, classifying them according to person, number, complexity of morphological marking and inclusive/exclusiveness. Of those 71 languages, 45 have a distinction between inclusive and exclusive. This introduces the question: what determines whether or not a language has an inclusive–exclusive distinction?

2.2. Distribution of inclusive/exclusive across spoken languages

According to Nichols (1992), there is a strong correlation between the inclusive/exclusive opposition and geography. That is, the frequency of languages that have the inclusive–exclusive distinction varies greatly across continents, with the greatest frequencies in the languages of the Pacific. There is also a strong genetic correlation; the inclusive–exclusive distinction tends to occur within entire language families. Despite the strong genetic correlation, as Nichols points out, the inclusive–exclusive distinction can be spread outside a language family within a particular area. Therefore, the main correlation here is areal rather than genetic.

Other hierarchies arise when breaking down the inclusive–exclusive distinction by grammatical number rather than geography. Combining the number and inclusive/exclusive data from Forchheimer (1953) and Ingram (1978) results in the hierarchical pattern shown in Table 1. Inspection of Table 1 reveals that, in general, if a language marks the inclusive–exclusive distinction in the dual, it will also mark inclusive and/or exclusive in the plural (cf. Types 6, 7 and 8). Language universal 1490 from the Universals Archive (Filimonova and Plank 1996–2002, Sokolovskaya 1980) states the same generalization. Likewise, if a language marks the inclusive–exclusive distinction in the trial, it will also mark inclusive and/or exclusive in the plural (cf. Types 9 and 10). Thus we may propose the following hierarchy for number in languages with the inclusive–exclusive distinction: Plural < Dual, Trial. This same hierarchy follows from language universals 1489 and 1490 from the Universals Archive (Filimonova and Plank 1996–2002, Sokolovskaya 1980).

2.3. Markedness

Hierarchical patterns often bring up questions regarding markedness. Which value is more marked among spoken languages, inclusive or exclusive? Here I adopt Croft’s (1990) notion of markedness which is based on the notion of grammatical asymmetry across languages. Croft refers to several different criteria for markedness which were based on the work of Greenberg (1966). One is a structural criterion for markedness, in which “the marked value of a grammatical category will be expressed by at least as many morphemes as is the unmarked value of that category” (Croft 1990: 73). Another is the distribution criterion, which states that “if the marked value occurs in a certain number of distinct language types… then the unmarked value will occur in at least the language types that the marked value occurs in” (Croft 1990: 83). A third is the neutralization criterion, in which neutralization of an opposition
Table 1. Distribution of the inclusive/exclusive distinction among spoken languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Sg..</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Trial</th>
<th>Languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td><em>Indo-European:</em> English, Latin; <em>Sino-Tibetan:</em> Chinese (Pekinese); Japanese; Sumerian; <em>Afro-Asiatic:</em> Shilh; <em>Na-Dene:</em> Tlingit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>we-incl we-excl</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td><em>Austronesian:</em> Malay, Tagalog; <em>Niger-Congo:</em> Ful, Nkosi; <em>Dravidian:</em> Tamil, Telegu; <em>Altaic:</em> Ordos Mongol, Tungus; <em>Algic:</em> Algonquian; <em>Afro-Asiatic:</em> Somali; <em>Sino-Tibetan:</em> Garo, Purik, Balti, Chitkuli; Melanesian Pidgin English (Tok Pisin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>we-incl-ltd we-incl-gen we-excl</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>Mixe-Zoque: Sierra Popoluca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>we-2</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td><em>Indo-Iranian:</em> Sanskrit; <em>Na-Dene:</em> Carrier; <em>Penutian:</em> Maidu; <em>Eskimo-Aleut:</em> West Greenlandic, Eskimo; <em>Uralic:</em> Ostyak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>we-2-incl we-2-excl</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td><em>Sino-Tibetan:</em> Lower Kanauri; <em>Penutian:</em> Coos; <em>Niger-Congo:</em> Ewe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>we-incl we-excl</td>
<td>we-2-incl</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>Uto-Aztec: Southern Paiute Siouan: Lakota, Winnebago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>we-incl we-excl</td>
<td>we-2-incl we-2-excl</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td><em>Sino-Tibetan:</em> Kanauri; <em>Austronesian:</em> Hawaiian; <em>Uto-Aztec:</em> Shoshone; <em>Penutian:</em> Chinook, Siuslawan, Yokuts; <em>Iroquoian:</em> Mohawk; <em>Austro-Asiatic:</em> Mundari; <em>Oto-Manguean:</em> Otomi; <em>Australian:</em> Dyirringan, Kamilaroi, Saibalgal; <em>Trans-New Guinea:</em> Bongu, Kunimaipa; <em>Kiowa Tanoan:</em> Kiowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I-incl I-excl</td>
<td>we-incl we-excl</td>
<td>we-2-incl we-2-excl</td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td><em>Austronesian:</em> Rotuman*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>we-incl-ltd we-excl</td>
<td>we-2-incl we-2-excl</td>
<td>we-3-incl-gen</td>
<td><em>Niger-Congo:</em> Kele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>we-incl we-excl</td>
<td>we-2-incl we-2-excl</td>
<td>we-3-incl we-3-excl</td>
<td><em>Austronesian:</em> Nogogu; <em>Australian:</em> Worora</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Referring to Churchward (1978[1940]), Forchheimer (1953) mentions one language with the inclusive/exclusive distinction in the singular: Polynesian Rotuman (Type 8). According to Churchward (1978), the form he calls "inclusive singular" may have an interpretation similar to a 3rd person indefinite, meaning something like “someone” or “one”. Churchward also notes that this form may be used in the same context where an English speaker would use the first person singular. “But even in this case it carries with it an ‘inclusive’ implication, such as ‘and so would you (or anyone else) if placed in the same position’” (Churchward 1978: 145).
results in the unmarked category. I will look at each of these criteria in turn.

Jacobsen (1980: 211) notes that, in Tübatulabal (Uto-Aztecan) and Yokuts (Penutian), the “inclusive formation contains fewer morphemes than does the exclusive”. Also, many Australian languages have a simple form *ŋali* for first-person dual inclusive and an augmented form of this pronoun for first-person dual exclusive (Dixon and Blake 1983). Thus for these languages, the exclusive form is more morphologically complex than the inclusive form; this satisfies Croft’s (1990) structural criterion for markedness.6

Universal 1484 from the Universals Archive states that if a language has a special form meaning ‘we-exclusive,’ then it also has a special form meaning ‘we-inclusive’ (Filimonova and Plank 1996–2002). This tendency holds for the data in Table 1, which show that languages that have either inclusive or exclusive categories (but not both) invariably express inclusive, not exclusive (cf. Types 6 and 9). That is, no language among Forchheimer’s (1953) 45 languages marks exclusive without also marking inclusive. Thus the exclusive category also satisfies Croft’s (1990) crosslinguistic distribution criterion for markedness described above.

Finally, Jacobsen (1980: 222 referring to Anderson 1975, 1977) notes that “if a language loses this [inclusive/exclusive] distinction, it will be the inclusive form that remains to take over the combined first-person plural reference”. Again this supports exclusive as the marked category since this is consistent with Croft’s (1990) neutralization criterion, i.e. neutralization of an opposition results in the unmarked (inclusive) category. Together, these observations suggest that inclusive is unmarked while exclusive is marked in terms of crosslinguistic distribution.7

To summarize, the distribution of the inclusive–exclusive distinction among the world’s spoken languages is largely areal. Some number categories are more likely to show the distinction than others — specifically, the plural category is more likely to show the distinction than the dual or trial categories. Finally, in terms of markedness, inclusive is generally crosslinguistically unmarked while exclusive is marked.

3. Inclusive/exclusive pronouns in ASL

So far we have focused on the inclusive–exclusive distinction in spoken languages. However, in order to determine if the marking of this distinction is influenced by language modality, it is also important to examine this distinction in signed languages. In fact, inclusive–exclusive distinctions do exist in signed languages, although there is very little discussion of this in the sign literature, as was noted earlier. In this section I will examine the pronominal system and exclusive marking in ASL.

3.1. The ASL pronominal system

A personal pronoun in ASL normally takes the form of a pointing sign (index finger extended and other fingers closed) directed toward a distinct location or loca-
tions in space. By using a pointing sign, the signer associates the pronoun with this distinct location; the association between signs and locations in space is referred to as indexing. Subsequent signs that point to this previously established location are interpreted as being coreferential. If the referent is physically present (e.g. the addressee or a non-addressed individual), the signer points to the location of that referent. In the case of self-reference (i.e. the pronoun ME), the signer points to his/her chest. If a referent is not physically present, the signer simply chooses a location in neutral space for that referent.8

This same principle of indexing applies to plural pronouns that refer to addressees or non-addressed individuals. To refer to more than one addressee, the signer uses a pointing sign with a sweeping motion that refers to all the addressees, as shown in Figure 1a. Likewise, to refer to more than one non-addressed person, the signer uses a pointing sign with a sweeping motion that refers to all the non-addressed individuals, as in Figure 1b.

3.1.1. First-person plural pronouns in ASL
Before identifying the forms of first-person plurals in ASL, it may be helpful to look at what form they take in spoken languages. According to Forchheimer (1953), some languages morphologically modify the first-person singular pronoun for the plural (e.g. Chinese uo ‘I’ vs. women ‘we’). Other languages use an entirely separate lexical item for the plural (e.g. Korean na ‘I’ vs. uri ‘we’). Still other languages have what Forchheimer refers to as ‘composite plurals’, that is “pluralic forms that are composed of two or more simple elements” (1953: 40). He cites as an example Melanesian Pidgin English (Tok Pisin), which has the composite plural form jumi ‘you plus me’.

Similar forms for indicating more than one referent exist in ASL. ASL allows all three types of plural formation mentioned above: lexical, morphological and composite. For example, previous ASL literature (e.g., Baker-Shenk and Cokely 1981) has identified separate lexical signs for first-person plurals, similar to the Korean example above, such as the dual two-of-us, and the number-incorporated signs...
(three-of-us, four-of-us, etc.). The dual form two-of-us indexes the locations of two individuals (i.e. the signer and one other person); see Figure 2. The number-incorporated pronouns (e.g. three-of-us, four-of-us, and five-of-us) indicate a specific number of referents (Baker-Shenk and Cokely 1981); see Figure 3.9

ASL also has a general first-person plural form we (and its possessive equivalent our); see Figures 4 and 5. The citation form (dictionary form) for the sign we is a pointing sign that begins with contact on one side of the signer’s chest and ends with contact on the other side of the signer’s chest. This pronoun is produced at the center of the signer’s chest, so that the two points of contact are equidistant from the signer’s midline (i.e. the imaginary line that runs down the center of the body from head to toe). The signs we and our do not specify the number or locations of their referents in any direct way. Meier (1990) notes that these forms are idiosyncratic since in both signs the hand contacts the chest twice. Thus, he claims, the form of these signs cannot be predicted based solely on what might be called a “plural marker” in other signs - that is, the sweeping horizontal movement across the signing space (e.g. you vs. you-pl; he/she/it vs. they). The sweeping movement in these
plurals could be considered to be morphemic, resulting in plural forms that are morphologically derived from singulars (i.e. singular pronoun + sweeping movement) similar to plural formation noted for Chinese above. However, with its idiosyncratic form, it is not clear that ASL WE is in fact morphologically derived from the singular first-person pronoun ME.

In addition, there are alternate ways of expressing plurality. For instance, a signer may point individually to each of the included referents (Baker-Shenk and Cokely 1981). I call this form we-comp, because it is similar to the composite forms that Forchheimer (1953) describes (recall Melanesian Pidgin English yumi “you plus me”). Also, reference to all members of some specific set can be expressed by the sign ALL-OF-US, a fingerspelled loan sign (Baker-Shenk and Cokely 1981). This sign can be used to mean “all of us”. These signs are shown in Figures 6 and 7.

All of these signs are among those that the informants in the current study produced. More thorough descriptions of the phonetic forms of these signs are given below in §3.2.

3.1.2. Two-person system for ASL k

As described above, Meier (1990) notes that the first-person plural form WE is idiosyncratic and does not point to its referents in the way that other pronouns do. Although the first-person singular form ME does follow the general pattern of a point to the referent (specifically, a point to the signer’s chest), Meier also notes that this sign does not invariably refer to the signer. In the discourse strategy known as role shift, which can function as a method of direct quotation, a point to the self refers to the person whose role the signer is assuming (i.e., the person being quoted), not the signer him/herself. Thus, a point to the self does not always indicate the signer. Meier therefore proposes a two-person system: first person and non-first person. According to this analysis, there is no grammatical distinction between second and third person.

Although on the surface this may seem quite different from pronominal systems of spoken languages, this two-person analysis for signed languages actually follows
the claim set forth by Lyons (1968: 278) about spoken languages that “the primary distinction [within pronominal systems] is between ‘first’ (+ego: ‘plus ego’) and ‘not first’ (-ego: ‘minus ego’) and that the distinction of second and third is secondary.”

Thus a two-person system alone is not enough to argue for modality differences.

3.2. Description of inclusive/exclusive pronouns in ASL

In order to determine whether any first-person plural forms in ASL have inclusive or exclusive forms, I designed a study using videotaped data elicited from four deaf informants. All informants were native signers raised in signing households. A questionnaire was devised to elicit different forms of first-person pronouns. The informants were asked to translate English sentences — each with a specific context — into ASL. The sentences all used the English pronouns we, us, or our; since English does not have an inclusive–exclusive distinction, the informants had to rely on the context to determine the appropriate form of the ASL pronoun (see Appendix for excerpts from questionnaire).

In the context given with each sentence, the number of referents was manipulated so as to elicit the following forms: dual inclusive, dual exclusive, trial inclusive, trial exclusive, plural inclusive, and plural exclusive. The inclusive contexts included the addressee; the exclusive contexts excluded the addressee. For the dual and trial forms, the context specified two and three referents, respectively. For the plural forms, the context specified either ‘ten or more’ or an indefinite ‘many’ referents. Furthermore, since the physical location of discourse participants is so crucial to how indices are set up in the signing space, a set of props was used to help the informants imagine real-world discourse situations. These props were placed in front of the participants to represent where the referents were located with respect to the signer. The props were occasionally moved from right to left and vice-versa to see what effect the location of the referents had on the location of the pronoun.

Each data collection session was videotaped with an 8mm video camera. I coded the data from each session by recording the following information for every pronoun produced by each participant: a gloss for the pronoun, the location of the pronoun (right of the signer’s midline, left of the midline, or at the midline), whether the context was inclusive or exclusive, and the location of the props (right of the signer’s midline, left of the midline, or at the midline). Further details were also coded, such as the handshape of the pronoun and any nonmanual behaviors (such as body leans and eye gaze) that may have co-occurred with the pronoun.

3.2.1. Classifying the pronouns

Results from the study revealed six different forms of the first-person plural pronoun in ASL, including one possessive form (see Tables 2 and 3). Of these six forms, four of them were often produced at or near the center of the signer’s chest. Each of these forms had a variant that could be displaced to the signer’s left or right side, near the shoulder, as in Figure 8. I will refer to these forms as lexical plurals because
Table 2. Lexical plural pronouns coded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of first person plural</th>
<th>Variants</th>
<th>Phonetic Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First person plural (we):</td>
<td>we-central</td>
<td>Produced at or near the center of the signer's chest; the signer's midline is the axis of the arc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We-displaced</td>
<td>Produced slightly left or slightly right of the signer's midline on the chest; typically involves rotation of the forearm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number-incorporated first</td>
<td>3/4/5-of-us-central</td>
<td>Produced at or near the center of the signer's chest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person plurals (three/four/five-of-us): Signs made with 3, 4 or 5 handshape (palm up) with small circular motion</td>
<td>3-4-5-of-us-displaced</td>
<td>Produced on either the signer's left or right side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First person plural possessive (our): Signs made with bent-B handshape, starting with thumb-side of hand near or contacting chest with arcing forearm rotation so that pinky-side of hand ends near or contacting the chest</td>
<td>our-central</td>
<td>Like we-central, produced at or near center of the signer's chest such that signer's midline is axis of arc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>our-displaced</td>
<td>Like we-displaced, produced slightly left or slightly right of signer's midline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universally quantified first</td>
<td>all-of-us-central</td>
<td>Produced at or near center of signer's chest; signer's midline is axis of arc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person plurals (all-of-us):</td>
<td>all-of-us-displaced</td>
<td>Produced slightly to left or slightly right on the signer's midline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs made with A-handshape moving outward, opening to L-handshape</td>
<td>Not to be confused with ALL, produced with flat hand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
they do not index (i.e. point to) the locations of individual referents; thus, these signs are lexicalized with respect to location. The lexical plurals are described in Table 2.

The central variant of the first-person plural pronoun WE may or may not have a large arcing motion; if not, the signer merely touches with her index finger two points in the same horizontal plane at the center of her chest. Baker-Shenk & Cokely (1981) claim that the variant with large arcing motion is used when the referents are present, while the variant without this arcing motion is used when the referents are not present. However, some of my participants claimed there is no difference between these forms; therefore for some signers these variants may be in free variation. Figure 9 shows these two variants of WE-CENTRAL.

There were two other pronominal forms that do not seem to be lexicalized vis-à-vis location in the way that lexical plurals are. I refer to these pronouns as ostensive pronouns, because in general they transparently point to the location of each referent. Table 3 shows descriptions of these two forms.

We-comp is a sign consisting of several pointing signs that refer exhaustively to each member of some set (cf. composite pronouns from Forchheimer 1953). This form differs from a simple concatenation of pointing signs in that the pointing signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3. Ostensive plural pronouns coded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of first person plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite first person plural (we-comp): Series of pointing signs that point to each member of some set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual (two-of-us): Signs made with K handshape where arm or wrist moves between locations associated with signer and some other referent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of we-comp are produced in quick succession, with dampened movement (i.e. each path movement is shorter than the one before it) and sometimes with alternating hands (e.g. right hand, then left, then right, etc.).

For dual forms, the sign TWO-OF-US is used. This sign is classified as an ostensive pronoun because the hand moves between the locations associated between the two referents and thus clearly indexes both referents. However, unlike the pointing handshape of WE-COMP, the dual form has a K-handshape. To produce the K-handshape, the index and middle fingers are extended, and the thumb contacts the base of the middle finger. The use of this handshape here is idiosyncratic; one might expect either an index handshape pointing to each of the two referents, as with WE-COMP, or possibly a 2-handshape, given the handshapes of the other number-incorporated signs. For instance, other signs that incorporate the number two (e.g. TWO-MONTHS) use a 2-handshape rather than a K-handshape.

In addition to the manual features of ASL signs, facial expression and body position are also important elements of ASL; these elements are referred to collectively in the literature as nonmanual signals (NMS). NMS are important for grammatical as well as affective marking. Some of the more prevalent NMS that the signers produced were: cheek-to-shoulder (CS), body shift, body lean and eyegaze. All of these signals may act as grammatical markers; some may additionally indicate affect. Each of these NMS and their use with exclusive pronouns are described in the Appendix.

While these NMS and others (e.g. raised eyebrows, furrowed eyebrows, head nods and head shakes) were used extensively by the informants in this study, none were used reliably to mark inclusive or exclusive. This may be due to the fact that these NMS are used quite frequently for other grammatical and affective reasons (e.g. topic marking, affect for doubt, affirmative marking, and negation); they were used in this study for these purposes.

3.2.2. Spatial displacement of pronouns
In order to determine if the displacement occurring with the lexical plural pronouns was due to inclusive/exclusive marking, I examined the distribution of each pronoun location (at the center, displaced to the right, or displaced to the left) in terms of whether the context was inclusive (i.e. including the addressee) or exclusive (i.e. excluding the addressee).

In inclusive contexts, lexical pronouns tended to be central, while in exclusive contexts these pronouns tended to be displaced (to the right or left side). In order to determine if these tendencies were due to a grammatical inclusive–exclusive distinction, I elicited further grammaticality judgments for each of the lexical plurals mentioned. Participants were shown sentences like examples (1) and (2) and were then asked if these sentences could be used in an inclusive context, an exclusive context, or either. A summary of the results based on these grammaticality judgments is shown in Table 4.
Table 4. Grammaticality judgments for lexical plurals in inclusive and exclusive contexts (✓ indicates grammaticality; * indicates ungrammaticality)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical Plurals</th>
<th>Inclusive context</th>
<th>Exclusive context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>we-central</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we-displaced</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4/5-of-us-central</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/4/5-of-us-displaced</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all-of-us-central</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all-of-us-displaced</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our-central</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our-displaced</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) next-week **we-central** go-out movie
   ‘Next week we’ll go out to see a movie.’

(2) next-week **we-displaced** go-out movie
   ‘Next week we’ll go out to see a movie.’

According to Table 4, the central forms are grammatical in inclusive and exclusive contexts. The displaced forms are grammatical in exclusive contexts only. Since there is no form that is grammatical for inclusive but ungrammatical for exclusive, we cannot posit a distinct inclusive category for lexical plurals. However, the fact that the displaced forms of the lexical plurals are grammatical in the exclusive context and ungrammatical in the inclusive context shows that there is a distinct exclusive category for lexical plurals.

For the ostensive plurals **WE-comp** and **TWO-OF-US**, it seems inappropriate to posit any sort of inclusive–exclusive distinction. These forms include all and only the referents that they point to, as described in Table 5. Other referents are ‘excluded’ only in the sense that they happen to be not included.

The results so far indicate that the displaced forms are exclusive in the same sense that spoken languages with an inclusive–exclusive distinction have exclusive

Table 5. Semantic description of ostensive pronouns coded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of first person plural</th>
<th>Semantic Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composite plural</td>
<td>Includes all and only referents that are pointed to. If point to self is included, then this is a first person plural (we-comp: ‘me, him, her, and him’).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual</td>
<td>Includes both and only the two referents that are pointed to. If point to self is included, then this is a first person dual (two-of-us).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
forms. However, this is not exactly true. Wilbur & Patschke (1998) noted that body leans in ASL indicate inclusive/exclusive on a broader basis. According to Wilbur & Patschke, lean forward indicates inclusion, while a lean backward indicates exclusion.\(^{17}\) These leans can be used with any noun (not just first-person pronouns) to indicate inclusion or exclusion of whatever referent is salient in the discourse. Thus a lean forward can include the addressee, or it can include the signer or a non-addressed third participant.\(^{18}\)

The study described in this chapter was initially designed to elicit forms that included or excluded only the addressee, since the addressee is typically the referent that is included or excluded in spoken languages that have an inclusive–exclusive distinction. However, following Wilbur & Patschke’s (1998) finding that forward and backward leans can indicate inclusion or exclusion of participants other than just the addressee, it became clear that it was necessary to check to see if the forms identified as exclusive could be used to include or exclude discourse participants other than the addressee as well. Consultations with my native signer participants about other possible meanings of the displaced pronouns revealed that these exclusive forms can indeed exclude any salient referent in the discourse, not just the addressee.\(^{19}\) This salient referent can be someone who has not been explicitly named in the discourse (i.e. a referent who is understood in context); furthermore, the excluded referent can be someone not present. Thus, in example (3), assuming a discourse situation with three present participants (i.e. the signer, X and Y as shown in Figure 10 and also another non-present referent Z, the form three-of-us-displaced can exclude X, Y or Z, as shown in Table 6.\(^{20}\) However, Table 6 also reveals that if there is no salient referent other than the signer, X, Y, or Z, three-of-us-displaced is ungrammatical, because this form must exclude someone.\(^{21}\)

(3)  next-week three-of-us-displaced go-out movie
    ‘Next week the three of us will go out to see a movie.’

![Figure 10. Bird’s-eye view of discourse situation for example (3). The location of the pronoun three-of-us-displaced is marked by “*”.](image)
Exclusive pronouns in American Sign Language

Based on the grammaticality judgments shown in Tables 4 and 6, a semantic description of the lexical plural variants is shown in Table 7. This table indicates that the exclusive forms can exclude any salient referent, not just the addressee. Any form that is specifically marked [-SR] (i.e. any displaced form) is exclusive in that it excludes some salient referent. All other forms are neither specifically inclusive nor exclusive.

In this section we have seen that ASL lexical pronouns like WE can be displaced to the signer’s right or left side; these displaced forms are exclusive forms. Furthermore, unlike spoken languages that have inclusive/exclusive marking, the excluded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referents (with Z introduced as non-present participant)</th>
<th>Grammatical?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signer + X + Y (excluding Z)</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signer + X + Z (excluding Y)</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signer + Y + Z (excluding X)</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referents (no other salient referent in discourse)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signer + X + Y</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Grammaticality judgements of example (3), based on discourse situation shown in Figure 10

Table 7. Semantic description of lexical pronouns coded ([±X]*=one or more referent of type X, non1P=non-first person referent, SR=any salient referent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of first-person plural</th>
<th>Neutral/exclusive variants</th>
<th>Semantic description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-person plural (we)</td>
<td>we-central</td>
<td>Same semantics as English ‘we’: [+]speaker and [+]non1P*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>we-displaced</td>
<td>[+]speaker and [-SR]* and [+]non1P*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number-incorporated first-person plurals</td>
<td>3/4/5-of-us-central</td>
<td>[+]speaker and [+]non1P*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3/4/5-of-us)</td>
<td>3/4/5-of-us-displaced</td>
<td>[+]speaker and [-SR]* and [+]non1P*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-person plural possessive (our)</td>
<td>our-central</td>
<td>same semantics as English ‘our’: [+]speaker and [+]non1P*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>our-displaced</td>
<td>[+]speaker and [-SR]* and [+]non1P*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universally quantified first-person plurals (all-of-us)</td>
<td>all-of-us-central</td>
<td>All of a given set such that [+]speaker and [+]non1P*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>all-of-us-displaced</td>
<td>All of a given set such that [-SR]* and [+]non1P*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: I assume the first versus non-first person analysis for ASL proposed by Meier (1990), rather than a traditional three person system typically posited of spoken languages.
referent for these forms can be not only the addressee, but any referent that is salient in the discourse.

3.2.3. Discussion
So far I have defined lexical plurals as plural forms that do not point to the locations of their individual referents. Lexical plural pronouns (WE, 3/4/5-of-us, OUR, and ALL-of-us) do not point to each referent. However, in a non-exclusive context these forms can index the general location of the referents as a group. For example, the number-incorporated forms can be used indexically to distinguish between a group of three on the signer’s left versus a group of three on the signer’s right, as shown by the juxtaposition of the two forms of THREE-OF-US in Figures 11 and 12. Baker-Shenk & Cokely (1981) claim that regardless of person, the location of the referents determines the location of the pronouns, such that in Figure 13, the pronoun three-of-us at Location 1 (shown in Figure 11) would include (signer + Y + Z), and the

---

**Figure 11.** Three-of-us-displaced (Location 1 in Fig. 13)

**Figure 12.** Three-of-US (Location 2 in Fig. 13)

**Figure 13.** Bird’s-eye view of discourse situation for Figures 11 and 12
same form at Location 2 shown in Figure 12 would include (signer + X + Y).

I agree with Baker-Shenk & Cokely (1981) that the pronoun three-of-us produced on the signer’s right or left side can indeed index a group of referents. If articulated at Location 1 in Figure 13, for example, this pronoun refers to the signer + Y + Z because Y is directly in front of the signer and Z is to the signer’s right; taken together the group is basically on the signer’s right side. My data included several instances of lexical pronouns that were indexic of a general location in this way, as in example (4) below. In example (4), the referents of the pronoun three-of-us (i.e. the props) were generally to the right of the signer (signer + X + Y), as shown in Figure 14. The signer produced a pronoun that was also on her right side.

(4) three-of-us-displaced LIKE CAT
   ‘The three of us like cats.’

However, THREE-OF-US-DISPLACED can also be exclusive, in which case it need not refer to the location of the referents. For instance, the pronoun at Location 1 in Figure 13 could include (signer + X + Y), in which case Z or some non-present referent must be excluded. In this situation, the pronoun is not at all indexic because the pronoun is being produced on the signer’s right side while the referents are directly

Figure 14. Bird’s-eye view of discourse situation during production of example (4). X and Y are referents; X represents the addressee. The location of the pronoun three-of-us-displaced is marked by “*”

Figure 15. Bird’s-eye view of discourse situation during production of example (5). X, Y, and Z are referents; X represents the addressee. The location of the pronoun three-of-us-displaced is marked by “*”
in front of her and to her left. In this case, context would determine whether the indexic or exclusive interpretation would be most likely.

The following example from my data illustrates exactly this point. In example (5), the referents of the pronoun three-of-us (i.e. the props) are to the signer's right (signer + Y + Z), as shown in Figure 15. A pronoun matching the location of the referents in this instance would be on the signer’s right side (as in Figure 14). One of the participants of this study, however, produced a pronoun not only on her left side (represented in Figure 15 by “*”), but also with her left hand (despite the fact that she is normally right-handed). Specifically, the participant produced the sign three-of-us-displaced with her left hand, then holding her left hand in place produced the rest of the sentence (fond-of cat) with her right hand.

(5) Left hand: three-of-us-displaced.................
Right hand: fond-of cat
‘The three of us (excl) love cats.’

Examples like this show that an exclusive context requires displacement of the pronoun and that the pronoun's location does not have to match the location of the referents. In a context which is neither specifically inclusive or exclusive, the pronouns WE, 3/4/5-OF-US, OUR and ALL-OF-US can either be produced in the neutral (i.e., central) form, which is not indexic, or they may index the general location of their referents. However, modulations for exclusive interfere with any default indexic properties that these pronouns may have, resulting in examples like (5). The fact that it is possible to produce non-indexic forms in both neutral and exclusive contexts is compelling evidence for the lexical rather than ostensive status of these pronouns. The neutral and exclusive forms together provide evidence for the lexical status of these pronouns, whether particular tokens are indexic or not.22

3.3. Markedness

In one set of pronouns in ASL (i.e. we, our, 3/4/5-of-us), there is a distinct form for exclusive but no form specifically for inclusive. For another set of pronouns (i.e. two-of-us, we-comp) there are no forms specifically for inclusive or exclusive. Thus, inclusive is never morphologically distinct from regular first-person plurals in ASL.

Exclusive marking, however, is possible with all lexical plurals. Based on this observation, ASL does not follow the same pattern of markedness for inclusive/exclusive that spoken languages do; recall from Table 1 that many spoken languages have only inclusive in a given number category, but no spoken languages have only exclusive in a given number category. Recall that according to Greenberg’s (1966) crosslinguistic distribution criterion, this suggests that inclusive is the unmarked category for spoken language.

ASL, on the other hand, does not have inclusive but has a neutral form and exclusive form for lexical plurals. This exclusive form is grammatically distinct from the
neutral form but morphologically may best be thought of as a combination of two elements: first-person plural (e.g., WE) and exclusive (displacement). Under this analysis, exclusive marking in ASL is similar to exclusive marking in spoken French. French has a neutral first-person plural nous ‘we’ that can be used with both inclusive and exclusive reference, but it also has nous autres ‘we excluding you’ as a way of specifically marking exclusivity. Thus the morphological marking of exclusivity in ASL may be similar to exclusive marking found in some spoken languages, although it is not clear how common this is crosslinguistically — ASL and French may be somewhat exceptional in this regard. The set of referents that can be excluded (i.e. any salient referent rather than just the addressee) may be what is most unusual about exclusivity in ASL (although see Section 5 for examples of possible correlates to context-dependent inclusivity/exclusivity in spoken languages).

4. Inclusive/exclusive in other signed languages

Unfortunately, not much information is available on inclusive/exclusive pronouns in any signed language, ASL or otherwise. One problem may be that researchers of signed languages tend to consider all personal pronouns in signed languages to be indexic (Engberg-Pedersen 1995, Liddell 2000, Lillo-Martin and Klima 1990). For example, Baker-Shenk & Cokely (1981: 50) claim that pronouns with an index handshape (including we) are indexic. “Pronominal reference generally involves ‘pointing’ to a person or persons with a particular handshape. The handshape that is used indicates the type of reference … the pronouns [with an index handshape] are indexic (meaning ‘we’), whereas the ones [with a closed fist handshape] are reflexive/emphatic (meaning ‘ourselves’).” Baker-Shenk & Cokely’s assumption that the sign we is indexic goes against the claim made here that the sign we is not indexic. One possible reason for this discrepancy may be their use of the term ‘indexic’. They loosely define ‘indexic’ as “pointing to”, but my argument here is that the pronoun we (as discussed in Meier 1990) and the number-incorporated pronouns do not point to their referents in the same way that some of the other pronouns do (like singular pronouns and ostensive pronouns such as two-of-us). Also, the number-incorporated signs are considered by most researchers to be indexic for the reasons outlined above - i.e. in contexts not specified for inclusive/exclusive, the number-incorporated pronouns are indexic in that they index the location of the group. However, as I explained earlier, I have classified these number-incorporated pronouns as lexical rather than indexic because in inclusive/exclusive contexts, the indexic nature of these signs may be suppressed. Thus, there is no clear consensus about the indexicality of pronouns in ASL; this may be one reason why the inclusive–exclusive distinction remains largely unstudied for signed languages in general.

Through personal communication with informants contacted through the Sign Language Linguistics listserve (SLLING-L), reports suggest that the following signed languages may have a distinction between inclusive and exclusive: Polish
Sign Language, Icelandic Sign Language, New Zealand Sign Language, Australian Sign Language, German Sign Language, Japanese Sign Language, Danish Sign Language, and Israeli Sign Language. British Sign Language also has been identified as having distinct forms for first-person inclusive and exclusive pronouns (Deuchar 1984). However, it is not clear if these languages that were identified as having an inclusive–exclusive distinction were identified as such based on indexic forms like ASL TWO-OF-US, or if there are true inclusive/exclusive forms that do not rely on indexation (like ASL WE). Much more research needs to be done in this area.

5. Discussion: Modality effects?

The fact that ASL has exclusive forms whose meanings are context-dependent represents an interesting divergence from the typical pattern in speech. First of all, it is rare for a spoken language to distinguish forms that include a third person from forms that do not include a third person. Forchheimer (1953) notes that the languages Sierra Popoluca (Mixe-Zoque) and Kele (Niger-Congo) (see Table 1, types 3 and 9) distinguish between limited inclusive (ltd) and general inclusive (gen); limited includes first and second (but not third) person, and general includes first, second, and third person. Essentially, the limited inclusive excludes the third person, while the general inclusive includes the third person. Presumably this could only occur in a language that already has an inclusive–exclusive distinction in the traditional sense - i.e. including/excluding the second person (Cysouw 2003).

Also, it seems very rare in speech for a single inclusive form to be able to indicate, for example, inclusion of second person in one context and inclusion of a third person in a different context. However, these systems do exist, e.g. Gooniyandi, a language spoken in Australia (Filimonova and Plank 1996–2002). Gooniyandi has a first-person plural “unrestricted” pronoun yaadi that includes the speaker plus the hearer plus others. This form is inclusive in the traditional sense of including second person, but also includes at least one third-person referent as well. Furthermore, Gooniyandi has a separate first-person plural “restricted” pronoun ngidi that includes the speaker plus either the hearer or other(s) but not both (McGregor 1990). Similar pronouns have been identified in Yaoure (Niger-Congo) (Hopkins 1986) and Kunimaiipa (Trans-New Guinea) (Pence 1968). The context-dependent exclusive forms in ASL seem to be more similar to these “restricted” pronouns than to inclusive/exclusive forms which include or exclude only second person referents.

The exclusive pronouns identified here for ASL are consistent with Meier (1990), according to which ASL has no distinct second person but instead only marks first versus non-first person (see Section 3.1.2). The fact that these exclusive forms exclude any salient referent rather than just the addressee reinforces Meier’s argument that second person has no special grammatical status in ASL and also reinforces the special status that first person seems to have in all languages (Bühler 1982, Lyons 1968, Meier 1990).
6. Conclusion

We have seen several differences between signed languages and spoken languages in terms of inclusive/exclusive marking. First of all, the inclusive–exclusive distinction in spoken languages is an areal and genetic phenomenon. We do not yet have enough data to determine if or how inclusive/exclusive marking is distributed across signed languages, but we have no reason to expect that the distribution would be based on geography. This does seem like a feature that would be subject to parametric variation in signed languages just as it is in speech. I leave this issue for further research.

Another difference is in markedness relationships; inclusive is the unmarked category in spoken languages, whereas exclusive is the unmarked category in ASL. Perhaps the greatest difference is the context-dependent nature of exclusion in ASL. While the majority of spoken languages are limited to including/excluding the addressee, ASL can use one exclusive marking to exclude any salient discourse participant, thus supporting the two-person system for ASL proposed by Meier (1990).

Again, research on other signed languages would help shed light on this issue. If other signed languages have first-person plural exclusive pronouns which behave like ASL, this would suggest that language modality itself could be a factor in determining inclusive/exclusive patterning such that the visual/gestural modality lends itself to allowing these context-dependent exclusive forms. If other signed languages have first-person plural exclusives which behave differently from ASL (e.g. they include/exclude particular referents rather than any referent salient in the discourse) this would suggest that signed languages behave like spoken languages in this regard and thus language modality does not greatly affect inclusive/exclusive patterning.

Thus we have seen that inclusive/exclusive marking can pattern quite differently in spoken languages and ASL. One significance of these differences is that they highlight the importance of including signed languages in language typologies and studies of linguistic diversity. Any language typology that does not include signed languages may be making inaccurate generalizations about the world’s languages and about the possibilities of human languages in general.

Appendix

Notation

As is conventional in ASL literature, English glosses are given in all caps. Verbs are translated in present tense for clarity (ASL does mark aspect and can mark tense, but often tense is not marked if it is understood in context). Also, different genders are used in some of the English glosses to distinguish between different locations, although ASL does not grammatically distinguish gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign</th>
<th>English gloss for an ASL sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sign</td>
<td>English gloss for ASL sign requiring more than one English word for interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pronoun)-comp</td>
<td>A composite form of a pronoun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nonmanual signals

The following nonmanual signals were used by the signers in this study with exclusive pronouns in ASL:

- **Cheek-to-shoulder (CS)**
  The signer brings one shoulder close to his/her cheek. This indicates nearness in proximity, either in time or space (Liddell 1980). This NMS is adverbial in nature, so that the sign car-crash with CS would indicate that the car crash just happened. Likewise, CS can be used with the sign future in future wednesday (lit. ‘next Wednesday’) to indicate ‘this coming Wednesday’, a construction that is awkward in English. CS can also be used to express nearness in terms of physical location, so that the sign behind with CS would mean something like “right behind”.

  Interestingly, the signers in this study used CS more often in exclusive contexts than in inclusive contexts. One possible reason for this use of CS may be to accentuate the cohesiveness of those included and also to create opposition between those included (i.e. the signer and others) and the one excluded (i.e. the addressee). Thus CS used with exclusives may have the same effect as the English word “just”, as in “just the three of us”.

- **Body lean**
  The signer leans to one side, without necessarily rotating the torso. This can be used for a variety of purposes, e.g. verb agreement (Bahan 1996) or contrast. In this study, body leans served a purpose similar to CS. That is, the signer would often lean to one side when using an exclusive pronoun. In particular, when the signer leaned to one side, it was always the same side on which the pronoun was produced.

  Wilbur & Patschke (1998) claim that forward and backward leans (rather than leans to the side) indicate inclusion and exclusion, respectively. However, my data showed no systematic use of forward or backward leans.

- **Body shift**
  The signer’s torso rotates so that the shoulders noticeably change orientation. Body shift can be used for several purposes, but it is primarily used as a grammatical marker of role shift, where the signer assumes a role of another discourse participant. This shift is used extensively with direct discourse (Engberg-Pedersen 1995).

  In this study, body shift was most often used in exclusive contexts. However, the direction of the body shift (left or right) did not always match the location of the pronoun, so it is not clear if the body shift is further marking of inclusive or exclusive.

- **Eyegaze**
  Eyegaze is the direction or object towards which the signer’s eyes are directed. Eyegaze in general is difficult to determine because it can change so often and so quickly. Eyegaze in this study varied greatly, and was further problematic due to the method of data collection. The informants were instructed to sign to the camera as if the camera was the addressee, but the informants more often gazed at the questionnaire or the props. A more in-depth study on eyegaze as a marker of inclusive/exclusive would therefore be very helpful; I leave this for future research.

  Signers might not use CS or body shift or body lean, but eyegaze is always a factor in sighted signers. Therefore, this NMS may need to be considered separately.

Sample excerpts from questionnaire

The following are actual excerpts from the questionnaire used in this study. Items in bold face are referents who were represented by visual aids, so that informants could visualize the pos-
ition of the referents relative to each other. Informants were instructed to read each context and then translate the sentence in italics into ASL. Question 1 was designed to elicit a plural inclusive form, and Question 2 was designed to elicit a plural exclusive form.

1. You and ten others (including B & C & others) don’t have much in common. During a conversation, you realize that you are all cat lovers.
   B asks you:
   Do we all have anything in common?
   You answer B:
   Yes, we like cats.

2. Many people (including you & others) are having a discussion. Everyone except B is a cat lover; B likes dogs.
   B asks the group:
   I like dogs. Do all of you prefer dogs or cats?
   You answer B:
   We like cats.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to my native signer participants: A, B, G and K; without their intuitions this study would not have been possible. Thanks to Richard P. Meier for his invaluable input in this study. Thanks also to Tony Woodbury for very helpful comments on earlier drafts of this chapter. Thanks also to Claude Mauk for helping me videotape the participants. Thanks especially to Gene Mirus, for his help in every aspect of the initial pilot study and for help with designing the questionnaire and to Perry Connolly, the model for the illustrations. Finally I would like to thank Elena Filimonova, Michael Cysouw, and two anonymous reviewers for their extremely helpful comments on later drafts of this chapter.

Notes

1. As is conventional in ASL literature, English glosses are given in all caps.
2. See Daniel (this volume) for evidence that inclusive forms in particular constitute their own person categories separate from first person.
3. According to Zwicky (1977: 731), “no language has been reported with multiple speaker morphemes distinct from speaker plus other morphemes.” He also mentions that situations do occasionally arise in which there are truly multiple speakers (Greek choruses, for example). In these cases, the first-person plural form is used, but in no known language is a distinct morpheme used for the multiple speaker reading.
4. Obviously, there is also the objective form ‘us’; however, in this chapter I will focus on nominative forms.
5. There are counterexamples to this universal, including languages like Coos (Filimonova and Plank 1996–2002; Sokolovskaya 1980). This explains the apparent discrepancy of the Type 5 languages which do not seem to fit this pattern.
6. However, this does not hold for all languages. Among many Dravidian languages, the inclusive form is more morphologically complex than the exclusive form. In Kudukh, for example, the first-person plural exclusive form is e:m/em- whereas the inclusive form is na:m/nam- (Bloch 1954). I thank an anonymous reviewer for bringing this to my attention.

7. However, these tendencies should not necessarily be considered to be universals among spoken languages. LaPolla (this volume) notes that among Tibeto-Burman languages, “except for in the Kiranti group, usually the exclusive is more basic (simply based on the 1sg form plus plural marking) and historically prior to the inclusive form.” This suggests that for this group of languages the inclusive category is more marked than the exclusive category, which is the opposite of the pattern noted for all the other spoken languages described here.

8. Other researchers have claimed that there are factors that determine where a locus is established in signing space (e.g. discourse factors, semantic affinity with another referent, conventional location, etc.). Thus, the establishment of loci is rarely arbitrary (Engberg-Pedersen 1993).

9. Number incorporation for pronouns can only occur for up to five referents, and for some signers only four (Baker-Shenk and Cokely 1981). For more than five referents, signers use other pronouns, such as WE or WE-comp.

10. Interestingly, while there is a composite form of we (we-comp), there is no composite form of the possessive pronoun our (i.e. there is no our-comp). Multiple tokens of the possessive our are only used with the possessed noun, to indicate distribution.

11. There is a set of signs in ASL referred to as fingerspelled loan signs. These signs are based on fingerspelled words, but have acquired lexical status in ASL because of their idiosyncratic characteristics not typically found in normally fingerspelled words (Battison 1978).

12. Although Meier’s (1990) two-person system may currently be the most widely accepted among sign linguists, other person systems have been proposed for ASL as well. Some have proposed a three-person system (Friedman 1975, Klima and Bellugi 1979, Padden 1983), while some have proposed many distinct person values, i.e. more than 3 values (Bahan et al. 2000, Neidle et al. 2000). Still others have proposed that ASL has no contrasts for person at all (Liddell 2000, Lillo-Martin and Klima 1990, McBurney 2002).

13. Many sign language researchers currently follow Meier’s view about a two-person system in ASL, including Padden (1990), Lillo-Martin (1995), Emmorey (2002) and Rathmann & Mathur (2002). This two-person system has been attributed to other signed languages as well, including Danish Sign Language (Engberg-Pedersen 1993), Polish Sign Language (Farris 1994), and Taiwan Sign Language (Farris 1998).

14. There is evidence for this primary distinction between first and non-first person in languages of Papua New Guinea, for example, where in the future potential mode there are no person distinctions expressed (only number), and the forms that are used in that paradigm are those of the first person (Foley 1986). I thank Michael Cysouw for bringing this to my attention.

15. The use of props in the data elicitation means that the forms elicited apply to physically present referents, since the informants used the props to imagine referents present in the discourse. It is possible that signers might use other forms to indicate non-present referents; I leave this issue for future research.
Out of 329 pronoun tokens produced by informants in this study, 147 (43%) included one or more of the following nonmanual signals: body lean, body shift, raised or furrowed eyebrows, head nod, handshake, and the discourse strategy known as cheek-to-shoulder (CS). See Appendix for descriptions of each of these nonmanual signals.

According to Wilbur & Patschke’s (1998) analysis, body leans in ASL mark much more than simply inclusive/exclusive. They claim that body leans can also mark involvement or non-involvement of a referent and can serve different focusing functions as well. For example, a body lean forward is often used with the sign SAME to mean ‘even’, as in this example from Wilbur & Patschke (Wilbur and Patschke 1998: 285): “KNOW-THAT ALL BILL SAME pt [point] GET A ‘Everyone knows that even Bill got an A.’” A body lean backward, on the other hand, is used with the sign ONLY-ONE, as in this example from Wilbur & Patschke (Wilbur and Patschke 1998: 285): “RECENTLY FIND-OUT ONLY-ONE KIM GET-A ‘I just found out that only Kim got an A.’”

Wilbur & Patschke (1998) give examples which they consider exclusive in which a) a lean back with the pronoun TWO-OF-US excludes a third-person referent ‘him’, and b) a lean back with the pronoun TWO-OF-THEM excludes the first-person ‘me.’ Likewise, they also give examples which they consider inclusive in which (a) a lean forward with the pronoun THREE-OF-US is inclusive of first-person ‘me’ and excludes no one, and b) a lean forward with the pronoun TWO-OF-THEM is inclusive of both referents and excludes no one.

Since I had found no systematic use of body leans in my data, I simply asked the participants about other possible meanings of the displaced exclusive pronouns produced without any particular use of body leans.

The location of THREE-OF-US-DISPLACED, shown on the signer’s ipsilateral side in Figure 10), could alternatively be on the contralateral side, in which case, the same grammaticality judgements in Table 6 would hold.

Of course, X + Y + Z (excluding Signer) would also be ungrammatical, since these are first-person forms.

See Cormier (2002) for further discussion of indexicality of plural pronouns and verbs in ASL.

Thanks to Michael Cysouw for pointing this out.

As shown in Table 1, Kele does not distinguish between limited inclusive and general inclusive within a single number category. The trial form is general inclusive (i.e. includes first, second and third-person referents) while the plural category (in addition to an exclusive form and a common form not specifically inclusive or exclusive) has a limited inclusive form, which includes first and second but not third-person referents.

I thank Elena Filimonova for bringing this to my attention.

According to Pence (1968: 109), the pronoun reipi in Kunimaipa “is used with both inclusive and exclusive meanings.” However, it is unclear from the data whether this form can be either inclusive or exclusive, or whether this form can be either inclusive or simply neutral with regard to inclusive/exclusive.

Notation: incl = inclusive; excl = exclusive; Ø indicates that the language(s) in question lack the number category/categories denoted by the column heading.
References


