

N.B. | indicates a space

Sign Language Transcription Symbols

Typing sequence: SIGN@x [=...] [=?] [...] [“”] [*] [*...] [%...] [x N]

Meaning	Symbols	Glosses	Points to note
Signs	SIGN	GO FROG	
Unintelligible signs / gestures / index	XXX	XXX gesture [= xxx] IX_obj [= xxx] IX [= xxx]	
Signs which are out of the screen	WWW	WWW [= WHAT]	
Index signs 1 – 1st person 2 – 2nd person 3 – 3rd person	IX_ (p = plural)	IX_obj [= a book] IX_cmd [= go there] IX_loc [= kitchen] IX_evt [= younger sister cries] IX-a [= a dog] IX_CL IX_sign [= FISH] IX_ges [= nodding] IX_all [= books] IX_which [= books] IX_1 IX_1p IX_2 IX_2p IX_3 IX_3p	obj: objects cmd: commands loc: location evt: event a/b/c: discourse reference CL: classifier handshape ges: gesture all: involve a path pronouns
Classifier Predicates (please refer to another note sheet)	CL_sem CL_sass CL_hand CL_body +	jump+CL_sem:person [= a person jumps] squarish+CL_sass:picture [= square picture] hold+CL_hand:sword [= hold a sword] bite+CL_body:shark [= the shark bites] g1: jump+CL_sem:person [= a person jumps up from the table] g2: be located+CL_sass:table	sem: semantic CL sass: size and shape CL hand: handling CL body: bodypart CL
Gestures which may be early forms of signs	gesture	gesture [= play toy]	
Location markings	-a, -b, -c	PUT-a ONE-a TWO-b	
Location associated with verb agreement	-o, -m, -i, -j	2m-GIVE-1o GIVE-2m a-GIVE-2m 1o-GIVE-b	Different codes in UTT tier: GIVE-2S&Sub-1S&Obj GIVE-loc-2S&Obj
Contracted form markings / fast-signing	~	DO~WHAT IX_obj~WHAT [= picture, what]	
Descriptions of index, gesture and CL	[=]	gesture [= play toy] gesture [= get someone’s attention] IX_obj [= picture]	*Note the use of space
Comments Use a semicolon ‘;’ and a space ‘ ’ to separate the comments, e.g. [% idiosyncratic; rs]	[%]	TELL [% fast signing] HOUSE [% meaning: go home] EAT [% plural] NOT [% idiosyncratic] IX_1 [% assimilation with GOOD] SWEETS [% slip of the hand] 1o-GIVE-2m [% rs] CAT [% hold book] EAT [% two-handed] FINISH [% one-handed] KISS [% self-correction] IX_1 [% extended thumb] SIGN CLEARLY [% m:adverbial] TORTOISE [% learner-directed]	*Note the use of space <- for different meanings rs: role-shift one-handed / two-handed: without holding any materials m = manual; nm = non-manual <- for adult learners, e.g. mother

		PLAY [% hesitation] REMEMBER~GOOD [% signed Cantonese] BEAUTIFUL [% on 's body]	the child signs on adult's body
Alternative transcription	[=?]	EAT [=? FOOD]	*Note the use of space
Incomplete signs	&	&SWEETS	
Delimiters	. ? +/. !	SIT . SIT ? SIT +/. SIT !	*Note the use of space (1) Delimiters appear in the last gloss of the sentence in g1/g2 (2) Every utterance ends with a delimiter
Child-directed form markings	@m	DUCK@m IX evt@m [= your clothes is dirty]	m: motherese
Child-invented form markings	@c	HARD@c	
Family-specific form markings	@f	DUCK@f	
Fingerspelling – English words	@k	MAN@k BRENDA@k	
Substitution of signs	[* SIGN]	BLUE [* GREEN]	*Note the use of space
Child-imitated form markings	[“”]	SWEETS [“”]	*Note the use of space
Repetition of the same signs	[x N]	EGG [x 5]	*Note the use of space
Incorrect form markings	[*]	SWEETS [*]	*Note the use of space
Continuous holding	>	ELDER_BROTHER > IX 3	The holding marker > is in an independent annotation
Mouthing	mouth	mouth:leung_ka_fu	mouth would be split up to another tier in the 2nd stage of CC's data; all the data will be transcribed by Chinese character and compensated by Jyutping.

Common errors:

Wrong	Correct	Points to note
IX_obj [= picture]~IX_obj [= picture]	IX_obj~IX_obj [= picture; picture]	(1) Note the use of tilde ~ for contracted form / fast-signing (2) All the description should be in one square brackets (3) The descriptions are separated by a semicolon ‘;’ and a space
IX_obj [= picture]~WHAT	IX_obj~WHAT [= picture]	
IX_obj [= picture]~gesture [= what]	IX_obj~gesture [= picture; what]	
gesture [= get someone's attention]~gesture [= what]	gesture~gesture [=get someone's attention; what]	(1) No location markings are allowed in the index sign notation (2) Mark the difference in the description inside [= ...]
IX_loc-a [= room] IX_loc-b [= room]	IX_loc [= room A] IX_loc [= room B]	
IX_obj-a [= picture] IX_obj-b [= picture]	IX_obj [= picture A] IX_obj [= picture B]	
IX_obj-a-b-c [= three pictures] IX_obj [= pictures] [% plural]	IX_obj [= picture A] IX_obj [= picture B] IX_obj [= picture C]	(1) Sometimes the signer points to more than one location (2) Split the annotation into the exact number of pointings (3) If the pointing involves a path, use the notation ‘IX all’
Chun	CC	
Yan	YY	
Yuet-Ching / Ching	YC	To protect the privacy of the children, use the code to represent their names and name-signs in the transcriptions
maid / MAID	caretaker / CARETAKER	
BARBEQUE PORK	BARBECUE PORK	
CLEAN THE HANDS	CLEAN HANDS	Please note the spelling mistakes or improper use of English gloss for signs.
CLOSE THE MOUTH	CLOSE MOUTH	
PUT ON THE TROUSERS	PUT ON TROUSERS	
RUNNY NOSE	RUNNING NOSE	
HIGH HEELED SHOES	HIGH HEELS	

Code on utterance tier

Codes on utt tier	Meaning	Example in utterance tier	Example in mor tier
<A B> [/] A B	Repeated phrases	<IX_obj [= picture] WHAT> [/] IX_obj [= picture] WHAT ?	ix:obj PICTURE wh WHAT ?
<A~B> [% sim]	Unrelated simultaneous signs	<AFRAID~PAINFUL> [% sim]	adj AFRAID~adj PAINFUL
A+B	Related simultaneous signs / classifier predicates	FIVE_LIST+IX_ONE shoot+CL_sass:gun+CL_sem:thief [= the police fire a fun at the thief]	num +num FIVE_LIST+num IX_ONE cl +v shoot+cl CL_sass+cl CL_sem
&{l=A B A+B A+C D &{l=A	Continuous form markings of polymorphemic signs	be_located+CL_sem:thief [= a thief] &{l=CL_sem:thief POLICE shoot+CL_sass:gun+CL_sem:thief [= the police fire a fun at the thief] &{l=CL_sem:thief	cl +v be_located+cl CL_sem n POLICE cl +v shoot+cl CL_sem+cl CL_sem
[+ bch]	Switch for CLAN: utterance containing any gesture	gesture [= get someone’s attention] IX_2 GO . [+ bch]	ges gesture n:pro IX_2 v:pl GO
[+ imit]	Switch for CLAN: Child’s utterance containing all imitated signs	*CHI: ALICE GO . [+ imit] gl1: ALICE [“] GO [“] . *CHI: MONSTER UGLY . gl1: MONSTER UGLY [“] .	n:pr ALICE v:pl GO . n MONSTER adj UGLY .
[% directed to ____]	The utterance is directed to other people but not the target child	*KEN: IX_3 IGNORE_1-1S&Obj [% directed to camera operator] .	n:pro IX_3 v:agr IGNORE_1-1S&Obj .

Category on mor tier:

Category	Code	Example
Adjective	adj	SHAMEFUL, SHINY, SHORT
Adverb	adv	NOW, PLEASE, SAME
Fingerspelled English words	(according to the category of the word)	BRENDA@k MAN@k
mouthing in Cantonese (口語)	ca	mouthing:leung_ka_fu
Classifier predicates 量詞謂語	cl	be_located+CL_sem:person [= a person]
Conjunction	conj	AND, IF
Gesture	ges	ges [= play toy]
Index sign	ix:obj ix:loc ix:cmd ix:evt ix	IX_obj [= picture] IX_loc [= kitchen] IX_cmd [= go there] IX_evt [= younger sister cries] IX_ges / IX_sign / IX_CL / IX_which / IX_all
Interjection	inter	GOOD, CORRECT
Modal	mod	CAN, WON'T
Negative word	neg	NOT
Noun	n	TELEPHONE, BALL, DOG
Personal pronoun	n:pro	IX_1, IX_2, IX_1p, IX_2p
Possessive marker 屬格標記	n:poss	HIS, HERS, YOURS
Proper name	n:pr	KENNY, BRENDA
Number	num	ONE, TWO
Preposition	prep	ABOVE
Quantifier	quant	MANY, ALL
Question word	que	GOOD_NOT_GOOD, YES_NO_YES
Plain verb	v:pl	KNOW, EAT
Spatial verb	v:sp	PUT, WALK
Agreement verb	v:agr	GIVE, TELL, HELP
Wh-word	wh	WHAT, WHY, HOW, WHO

Additional codes on mor tier

Codes on mor tier	Meaning	Example in utterance tier	Example in mor tier
^	Alternative tagging	CUT HAIR	v:pl CUT HAIR^v:sp CUT HAIR
~	Contracted form / Fast signing / simultaneous signing	DO~WHAT IX_obj~WHAT [= picture] <AFRAID~PAINFUL> [% sim]	v:pl DO~wh WHAT ix:obj IX_obj~wh WHAT adj AFRAID~adj PAINFUL
+	Polymorphemic units	FIVE_LIST+IX_ONE be_located+CL sem:person [= a person]	num +num FIVE_LIST+num IX_ONE cl +v be_located+cl CL sem

Definition of special form markings from CHAT manual

@c

“**Child-invented forms** are words created by the child sometimes from other words without obvious derivational morphology. Sometimes they appear to be sound variants of other words. Sometimes their origin is obscure. However, the child appears to be convinced that they have meaning and adults sometimes come to use these forms themselves.” (MacWhinney 2000 p. 36)

e.g. gumma@c (meaning ‘sticky’)

@f

“**Family-specific forms** are much like child-invented forms that have been taken over by the whole family. Sometimes the source of these forms are children, but they can also be older members of the family. Sometimes the forms come from variations of words in another language. An example might be the use of *undertoad* to refer to some mysterious being in the surf, although the word was simply *undertow* initially.” (MacWhinney 2000, p.37)

e.g. bunko@f (meaning ‘broken’)

@nv

“**Nonvoiced** forms are produced typically by hearing-impaired children or their parents who are mouthing words without making their sounds.” (MacWhinney 2000, p.37)

@s:en/@s:c

“**Second-language forms** derive from some language not usually used in the home. These are marked with a second letter for the first letter of the second language, as in @s:c for Cantonese words inside an English sentence.” (MacWhinney 2000, p.37)

@sl

“**Sign language** use can be indicated by the @sl.” (MacWhinney 2000, p.37)

@sas

“**Sign and speech** use involves making a sign or informal sign in parallel with saying the word.” (MacWhinney 2000, p.37)

@si

“**Singing** can be marked with @si. Sometimes the phrase that is being sung involves nonwords, as in lalaleloo@si. In other cases, it involves words that can be joined by underscores. However, if a larger passage is sung, it is best to transcribe it as speech and just mark it as being sung through a comment line.” (MacWhinney 2000, p.37)

Reference

MacWhinney, B. (2000). The CHILDES Project: Tools for Analyzing Talk. 3rd Edition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Definition of signs/gestures/CLs

Definition of sign

Definition of gestures

Definition of CL

Criteria for distinction between sign and gestures (Casey 2003, p.354-363)

1) form	- handshape - movement - place of articulation - orientation parameters - meaning
2) semantic context	- whether the sign/gesture fit into the semantic context
3) linguistic context	- for isolated production, it can be an imitation of adult's production - whether the sign/gesture fit into the linguistic context
4) child's age	< 1;11 : the child use more gestures than signs to refer to actions > 1;11 : the child use more signs than gestures to refer to actions
5) native signer intuition	- Signer's judgment must be confident - If the native signer cannot determine whether it is a sign/gestures/CL, the data should not be counted in the analysis

Reference

Casey, S. K. (2003) “Agreement” in gestures and signed languages: The use of directionality to indicate referents involved in actions. Ph.D dissertation of University of California, San Diego.