

READ

MY

LIPS

A SHORT EXPLORATION
OF SEMIOTICS IN SIGN
LANGUAGE.

13.06.2012

A black and white photograph of a hand with the palm facing the viewer. The palm is covered in numerous faint, circular lipreading markings. In the center of the palm, the words "READ MY LIPS" are written in a bold, dark, hand-drawn font. The word "READ" is on the top line, "MY" is on the middle line, and "LIPS" is on the bottom line. The background is a dark, out-of-focus surface.

READ
MY
LIPS

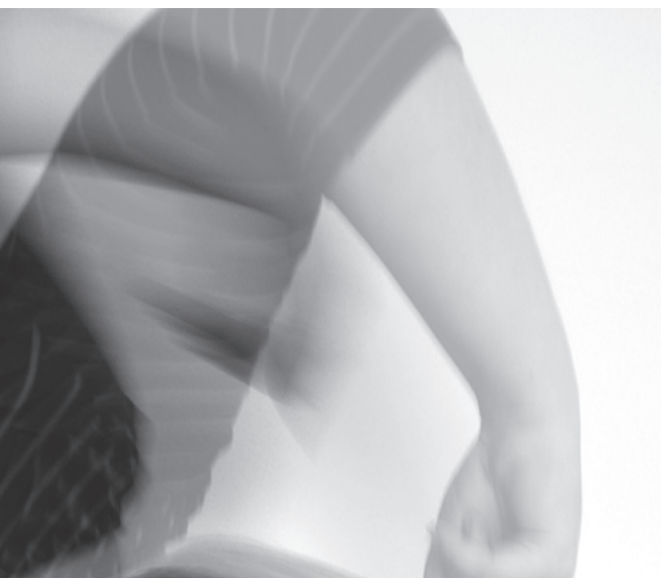
A short look at semiotics in sign language

13.06.2012

Modification

Modification within sign language is the way in which a sign is altered in order to exaggerate or change the meaning of a certain action. For example if it is raining a little the sign for rain would be slow and gentle with a softer facial expression, however if it is raining more heavily the facial expression particularly will change dramatically and the hand motions will become more vigorous.

Issues of semiotics are common in this area again the main issue is where a lack of facial expression is present it can be harder to decipher what the sign is conveying. However where the sign does not work with the facial expression it can also lead to a misread sign.



HOT.
MODIFIED TO
GIVE CONTEXT TO
A CONVERSATION
AND ADAPTING TO
EXAGGERATIONS.



BOILING.
MODIFIED TO
GIVE CONTEXT TO A
CONVERSATION.



Interpretation

Throughout sign language interpretation is key. Whether it is BSL, ASL or any other established signing culture it is always up to the reader to interpretate context from facial expression, surroundings, exaggerations and previously established context. Where signs are interpreted wrongly it can alter the dynamic of conversation dramatically.

The interpretation of conversation for others, for example on BBC's See Hear tv show, it is not simply a job of signing word for word what has been said, but to also gather context from what is happening within the scene or pictures. Doing this requires the interpreter to look for visual clues or signifiers in order to obtain and relay the context of the conversation.

