



MANUAL AND NON-MANUAL COMPONENTS OF ISL



Notes



You all have been signing naturally, but in this lesson, you will learn how these signs are formed. Both manual (related to hands) and non-manual (not made with hands) components of a sign together make a sign meaningful.



OUTCOMES

After studying this lesson, learner:

- demonstrates an awareness of manual and non-manual components in ISL
- lists examples of the use of manual and non-manual components in ISL

8.1 MANUAL COMPONENTS OF SIGNS

A sign has several components or parts. We need to understand the structure of signs and how these parts work together in signs. All signs have three main components:

- **Handshape:** This is the form of the hand, for example, a fist, a flat hand, a thumb-up, or showing all five fingers.
- **Place of articulation:** This means the place on the body or in the space around the body that we use for signing.
- **Movement:** This means how we move our hands, for example, right or left, fast or slow, or repeatedly.

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Figure-8.1 : India in ISL

Example: INDIA

- Handshape: Thumb-up
- Place of articulation: Forehead
- Movement: Up

These three parts are the manual components of signs. They are called manual because they are made with the hands.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.1**

1. Explain difference between manual and non-manual components of signs?
2. Describe the three manual components of the sign 'MOTHER'?
3. True/ False
 - a. Manual components are related to hands. (True/False)
 - b. Movement describes the place of the sign on the body or the space around the body. (True/False)

8.2 MINIMAL PAIRS

Some signs are minimal pairs. Let's compare some signs. Our aim is to compare handshapes, places of articulation, and movements in these signs.

Some signs have the same articulation and movement, but different handshapes.

Example: EXPLAIN vs. WALK-PAST-EACH-OTHER

Some signs have the same hand shape and the same movement, but different places of articulation.

Example: HAPPY vs. FLOWER

Some signs have the same hand shape and the same place of articulation, but different movements.

Example: DIFFICULT vs. COLD

These signs are called minimal pairs because they are only different in one part of the sign. When you change one part of a sign, we get a new sign with a different meaning.

Minimal pairs are not always two signs. Sometimes there are several signs that are all minimal pairs with each other.

Example: DIFFICULT – RUN – FRIDGE – SIT – COLD



INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.2

1. Give two examples of minimal pairs.

8.3 NON-MANUAL PARTS OF SIGNS

In some signs, the three manual components are not enough. We also need the face, and/or the upper body, so that the sign is complete.

Examples:

SURPRISE: you must open your eyes wide with this sign.

ANGRY: you must frown when you make this sign.

NAMASTE: you must bow down when you make this sign.

SLEEP: you must tilt your head to the side with this sign.

These parts of signs are called non-manual components. Non-manual means “not made with the hands”. It is important to remember that only the hands are not enough for signing.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.3

1. What is the meaning of non-manual components of a sign? Give two examples.

8.4 SIGN COMPONENTS AND GRAMMAR

We need the manual and non-manual components to make signs so that we can express what we want to say. But sometimes, this is also part of the grammatical rules.

Some rules in the grammar are about changing the form of a sign, for example:



Figure-8.2 : SPICY



Figure-8.3 : VERY- SPICY



Figure-8.4 : EXTREMELY-SPICY

The movement and facial expression is stronger when we want to say “very” or “extremely” in signs.

Some other rules are about using the hand and face or head together in the right way. For example

- When signing NOT, shake your head simultaneously.
- When signing I-F, use a facial expression and make a pause at the end.

Using components of signs together in the right way is important both in each sign, and in sentences. We apply the rules of grammar to know how to put all the components together.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 8.4

1. How do we say ‘Very’ or ‘Extremely’ in ISL?
2. True/False
 - a. Both manual and non manual components are important to make a sign.
(True/ False)
 - b. ISL components have no role in ISL grammar. (True/ False)
 - c. Face expressions are not part of ISL grammar. (True/ False)



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- d. If we change the ISL components, the meaning of sign will change. (True/ False)



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Signs have manual (related to hands) and non- manual (not made by hands) components.
- Manual components are:
 - a) Handshape: refers to how the hand is formed, for example, a fist, a flat hand, thumbs up, or showing all five fingers.
 - b) Place of articulation: the place on the body or in the space around the body that we use for signing.
 - c) Movement: this means how we move our hands, for example right or left, fast or slow, or repeated.
- Some signs are classified as minimal pairs. If out of the above three components, two are the same and one is different, they make minimal pairs.
- Non-manual components: sometimes for some signs, the three components are not enough. We also need the face, or the upper body, so that the sign is complete. e.g. SURPRISE: we must open your eyes wide; and for SLEEP: we must tilt your head.
- In ISL grammar, the movement and facial expression is stronger when we want to say “very” or “extremely” in signs.
- The hand, face and head need to move together in the right way, e.g. shake head while signing NOT.



TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. What are the three main manual components of signs?
2. Explain what minimal pairs are and give two examples of minimal pairs.
3. Choose the correct option:
 - i. The form of the hand is called:

- a) Handshape
 - b) Non-manual
 - c) Movement
- ii. What do we call the place on the body or in space where the sign is made?
- a) Movement
 - b) Manual
 - c) Place of articulation
- iii. Give examples of signs where the hands move in this way:
- a) In a straight line
 - b) Repeatedly
 - c) One hand touching the other hand
4. What have you understood about the manual and non-manual components of ISL.
5. Give five examples of minimal pairs.
7. What are Non-manual components of signs? Explain with at least 3 examples.
8. Give two examples from your own understanding of how grammar can be shown in ISL.



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ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

8.1

1. Manual components are related to hands, non manual components are not related to hands.
2. MOTHER
Handshape: One finger
Place of articulation: Nose
Movement: Outwards

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3. a. T and b. F

8.2

1. i. Explain – Walk past each other
ii. Happy - Flower
iii. Difficult – Cold

8.3

1. Non-manual components are the components that are “not made with the hands”.

Examples:

SURPRISE: you must open your eyes wide with this sign.

ANGRY: you must frown when you make this sign.

8.4

1. The movement and facial expression is stronger when we want to say “very” or “extremely” in signs.
2. a. True
b. False
c. False
d. True