Notational conventions

These initial comments on notational conventions exemplify the transcription that is used throughout this book. As is common in sign language linguistics, small capitals represent signs (SIGN). Small letters on lines above the manual glosses indicate the nonmanual features that are used simultaneously. The extension of the lines above the words indicate the scope and distribution of the respective nonmanual markers. For the purpose of discussing the examples with deaf informants and other native signers, the glosses are in German, Dutch and English for German Sign Language (DGS), Sign Language of the Netherlands (NGT) and Irish Sign Language (ISL), even though the sign languages investigated have no direct relation to the surrounding spoken language. Of course all foreign glosses are accompanied by English translations. For illustration, see the following example in (1) from DGS.

(1) a. \[ \text{ix}_2 \text{ GLAUB WAS} : \text{TIM SCHON ZU-HAUSE} \]
   ‘What do you think? Is Tim at home already?’

b. \[ \text{TIM} \text{ ix}_3 \text{ NUR} \text{ BLUME GIESS} : \text{BAUM SCHEID BFF} \]
   ‘Tim only watered the flowers, he did not cut the trees.’

A colon ‘:’ between the glosses stands for a pause or prosodic break. A prosodic break may be marked by different manual and nonmanual means. Thus, I do not explicitly transcribe prosodic cues such as prosodic head nods or eye blinks in the examples. I usually display the nonmanual features that are relevant for my studies, the later analysis, and the correct interpretation. This also means that regular subject marking, some confirmative nodding, and emotional facial expressions or nonmanual gestures are neglected in the transcriptions. Of course, topics, interrogatives, conditionals, role shifts, etc. are indicated by their representative nonmanuals. Compared to the fine-grained annotations, however, the examples show only a minimal transcription selected for the purpose of illustration.
Manual signs

SIGN          regular signs
SIGN-SIGN     one single sign that is described by more than one
              word in the glosses
S.I.G.N.      fingerspelled sign
g-word        gestures are written in small letters and are initial-
              ized by a ‘g-’
SIGN (rep)     reduplication of a sign (e.g. for pluralization or as-
              pect marking)
IX_{1,2,3}     IX stands for index and represents the reference to a
              location in the sign space indicated by indices (e.g.
              used for pronominalization or localization of refer-
              ents in the sign space)
POSS_{1,2,3}  possessive pronoun

Nonmanual markers

r            raised eyebrows
f            furrowed eyebrows
w            wide eyes
sq           squint
hn           head nod
hs           head shake
ht           head tilt
bl           body lean
b            blink

It is important to bear in mind that most abbreviations refer to the form of a
specific nonmanual marker. However, it may also be the case that they refer
to the function of a nonmanual marker or a set of nonmanual markers (e.g.
in the case of nonmanuals for even). Specific nonmanuals are always intro-
duced in the respective sections. For a full list of all the abbreviations see the
transcription conventions in the appendix 9.4.