

## **Skill Development Activity: IMPROVING SPATIAL STRUCTURING Classifier Use - English Texts**

Classifiers fall into a variety of classes. According to the Signing Naturally (2014) curriculum, published by Dawn Sign Press, there are eight.

### 1. Semantic Classifier

Semantic classifiers are proforms that function as "pronoun" that replaces a noun (or as noun and verb combined). Some examples of semantic classifiers are: cl-1 (e.g. a person), cl-2 (e.g. two persons), cl-2-upside-down (a standing person), cl-2-bent (e.g. an animal), etc.

### 2. Descriptive Classifier

## 7. Body Part Classifier

Body part classifier is a symbol that refers to a part of the body beyond the frame of the signing area -- e.g. legs, back, feet, etc. For example, you utter the ASL word #foot and then use its classifier (e.g. the passive hand) to represent the foot. Or, you would use an CL-S handshape to represent a head shaking no. Or, you would use the CL-index finger of both hands, crossed, to represent legs crossed.

## 8. Plural Classifier

Plural classifier is a plural symbol of a noun or subject. Some examples are a) CL-open-hand, horizontal, palm down for "many birds flying in the sky" or b) CL-horizontal 3-handshape representing a car parked in a lot, held, while the non-dominant hand replicates and moves that handshape across the lot, would show multiple cars parked in the lot.

1. Instrument CL:C handshape could be used to show us holding a can off a shelf in a grocery store. We could elaborate on this by holding cans in each hand for comparison, or by picking up one can, reading the label, putting it back on the shelf, picking up another can/different brand, etc. We could identify one can as beer and one as soda.
2. Descriptive CL:G handshape could be used to show the front section that has the brand logo/name and number of ounces of liquid, then turn the can to the back to check the label on the can with the calorie information.
3. Descriptive CL:open-B handshape to show changing size of a torso to indicate fluctuating weight and/or the desire to keep the torso lean/slim for the section on watching weight.

Part of the application of these classifiers is the use of

Step 6. Conduct a self-assessment. Were you successful in applying the classifier constructions you intended? What would you do differently to make it more effective? Share the recording with a mentor and/or peers for further feedback.

Step 7. Incorporating your own self-assessment and feedback from your mentor and/or peers, redo your translation and filming of it.

Step 8. If time permits, give the final translation in ASL to a peer unfamiliar with the text and your translation and have them back-translate it into English. How representative is the back-translation of the original English text? How might you improve your translation further to make it more equivalent?

Repeat this process with other texts. With regular practice, review, and revision, this strategy will

there are great cracks in the rocks below ground. The rocks on each side of the crack suddenly slide past each other. This makes the ground shake.

Q: Where do you think the Great Canyon is? (10)



## **Purchasable Materials**

*The following resources may be available for use from your local interpreter education program or through your public library. If the library does not have them, request that they purchase them for community use.*

### **Interpreter Practice Materials** from Sign Media ([www.signmedia.com](http://www.signmedia.com))

Set of 33 DVDs includes 12 simultaneous texts, 12 consecutive texts, 7 one-to-one situations, 2 small groups, 6 ASL texts and 6 English texts.

Excellent for individual, study group, or classroom skill development exercises.