

CLASSIFIERS

Classifiers are handshapes that have no meaning until assigned one by the signer.

- Classifiers always **DESCRIBE** action, relative location, or appearance.
- Classifiers can function as verbs, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, prepositions, etc.
- Classifiers are invented and used by the signer according to his perception of reality.

Classifier Examples

The following are examples. It is not a complete list of classifiers.

1CL - upright and animate

person, animal on two legs, "pick on", meet

1CL - upright, inanimate, tall

telephone pole

2CL <palm down> - eyes

looking, staring, reading

2CL <fingers down> - legs

stand, kneel, sit, dance, walk, crawl, jump, fall down, lay down

2CL - upright and animate, two

two people

3CL <palm center> - ground transport

car, bicycle, red wagon, covered wagon, motorcycle

3CL <palm down> - feet

chicken, birds

3CL - upright and animate, three

4CL - upright and animate, four

4CL <fingers spread> - even lines

stripes, fences, plaid pattern, charts and graphs

4CL <fingers together> - flat surfaces

doors, windows, floor, roof, wall, table, box, people feet

5CL - upright and animate, five

5CL <fingers spread, palm down, outward continuous motion> - group size indicator

masses of, audience, indication of large numbers

5CL <fingers spread, palm down, single down motion> - stationary indicator
location clumps

ACL <thumb up> - established object indicator
bottles, statues, location

CCL - 1. groups
class, ward, stake, team, tribe
2. large rounded object
road pipes, Christmas wreaths
3. hand-held object indicator
chalkboard eraser, stack of papers, edge of book

FCL - small, flat, round objects
buttons, coins, watch face, eyes

OCL <closed> - rounded objects
pipe shape and size, metal tubes

LCL - 1. <open> cornered object indicator
license, picture frame, table top
2. <closed> small size indicator
matchbox cars, piece of chalk
3. <open, palm center>—things that shoot
guns, spray wands

ILYCL <palm down> - air transport
planes, space shuttles, rockets

SCL - head indicator
"yes", animal or human head

XCL - indication of spraying
graffiti, hair spray

Other Classifier Rules

Proportion

The size of the classifier must be proportionate to the comparative size of the other information included in the description and to other classifiers. For example, if using the 4CL to indicate a door, using the 1CL to indicate a person approaching the door would be appropriate, but using an upraised fist to knock on it would not, unless it was the Jolly Green Giant knocking on an elf's door!

Perspective

Perspective can change back and forth from "real" to "classified". Things that are established in a space stay (mental storage) until either they are moved, destroyed, or the scene shifts away. At which point, if the scene shifts back, the established things are still there. Classifiers also convey distance and/or location. Essentially, "near" and "far". An object can be set up in the distance as something small, but as it is "approached" its size is increased. If it is picked up or touched, then the object would become its actual size.