**IV. Sign, homesign and gestures**

**Social and vocal learning of language**

**What’s implied by the suggestion of independent evolution of vocal skills among animals and humans vs. other primates?**

**Sound making apparatus**

**Who depends on auditory learning? Learning and knowing vs. imitating and using**

**Cognitive and affective sound-making**

**Babbling**

**Being vocal learners of language?**

**Cultural transmission and communal learning**

**Language code**

**Holistic signs**

**Instinctive gesturing vs. communicating**

**Learning vs. hearing**

**Language universals constrained by cognition**

How good in signing can chimps get? What doe

s the difference between chimps and monkeys imply about our evolution?

Why is it not a crazy idea that the first language might have been gestured rather than spoken?

At what evolutionary stage did the „cognitive pathway“ of vocalizations come in place?

What is the difference between mimicking and knowing sounds?

Why are certain human sounds, like laughter or pain exclamations similar across cultures but the sounds of words for a particular concept (*drinking, animal or…*) vary dramatically across languages?

**On what sort of code did the kids settle when at the Nicaraguan School for the deaf?**

* Communicating from scratch
* When gestures replace language
* Language: It takes a village
* Streamlining signing
* The sensitive period and innate language ability

In what ways and why did the code become further conventionalized when they got an opportunity to socialize?

What features of complex language sprout over time when people who have been deprived of language come together?

In what ways are homesigns different from conceptualized signing in a linguistic code?

To what characteristics of the deaf community should we pay attention when comparing **the Nicaraguan school and Israel Bedouin** community? In what specific ways were „communicative pressures“ of language learning different?

Children using homesing <https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/sedivy-2e-student-resources/sedivy2e-chapter-2-web-activity-3?previousFilter=tag_chapter-02>

Deaf children who are not in contact with people who know a sign language typically develop their own system of gestures to communicate with those around them—it is usually the children who are the innovators and “teachers” of these gestures.

Video 1: A deaf adult homesigning a complex series of events. Unlike pantomime, this system of signs is hard to decipher for someone who is not familiar with it. Many of the gestures have some visual connection to the things in the world that they describe, but they still require some shared agreement between users about their meanings.

Video 2: Homesigners typically combine signs in a regular order, which is often a different one than the word order of the language that is spoken by their family members.

**Inventing a sign language** <https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/sedivy-2e-student-resources/sedivy2e-chapter-2-web-activity-5?previousFilter=tag_chapter-02>

Come up with **a collection of signs** that have (1) specific agreed-upon meanings, (2) ways to combine those signs into sentences, and (3) ways to mark abstract concepts and grammatical relationships, to express …

* The baby is eating some cake.
* The mother feeds the baby.
* The father fed the baby this morning.
* The boy is eating all of the cake.
* The girl wants to eat some dessert.
* The boy ate all of his supper.
* The girl ate all of his breakfast.
* One of the girls stole the ball from her brother.
* The boy’s mother will make a cake tomorrow.
* Boys always like to eat cake.

Signs from ASL demonstrate duality of patterning in action… can be broken down into smaller units that are recombined and decomposed into sub-parts. The examples illustrate “minimal pairs”:

the handshape with which a sign is made; the sign’s movement trajectory; the position relative to the body where the sign is made; the orientation of the palm.