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## A comparative account for backchannels in two settings, dyad and multi-person conversations in Swedish Sign Language

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The presentation addresses backchannel signals in two different conversation settings, dyads and multi-person conversation in Swedish Sign Language. Turn-taking patterns in signed conversations have been widely studied, mostly in dyads, e.g. Coates & Sutton-Spence (2001). Backchannel signals constitute both manual and non-manual signals, e.g. nodding, head-shaking, smiling, change of posture, use of facial expressions and full signs, e.g. JA ('yes') and PRECIS ('exactly') (Baker 1977, Mesch 2016, Ferrara 2020). The highlight of the presentation is the comparison of types of non-manual and manual backchannel signals in the two settings and a closer look at the quality of the types of backchannel signals, as some signals of one type occur in both of the settings analyzed in this study. Besides, in a multi-person conversation, the participants produced much fewer non-manual backchannel signals, and fewer different types of manual backchannel signals to the interlocutors than in a dyad. Other findings regarding manual backchannel signals are that in multi-person conversations are e.g. articulated larger and with a further distance from the signer's body in signing space than in a dyad conversation, e.g. JA ('yes'), RIGHT/AGREE ('agree'), and POINT. Also, the interlocutor's upper body leans more forward and/or has larger body movements in laughter. The non-manual backchannel signals in multi-person conversation are also fewer than in a dyad conversation; fewer head nods and mouth movements. When a dyad conversation occurs in a multi-person conversation, the backchannel signals remain more than those seen in a dyad conversation. The major issue in these differences is due to the restrictions of the field of vision when many participants are involved in a multi-person conversation.

**References:** • Baker, Charlotte. 1977. Regulators and turn-taking in American Sign Language discourse. In Friedman, L. (ed.), *On the Other Hand*. Academic Press, NY, 215-236. • Coates, Linda & Sutton-Spence Rachel. 2001. Turn-taking patterns in Deaf conversation. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 5(4). 507-529. • Ferrara, Lindsay. 2020. Some interactional functions of finger-pointing in signed language conversations. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 5(1), 1-26. • Mesch, Johanna. 2016. Manual backchannel responses in signers' conversations in Swedish Sign Language. *Language and Communication* 50. 22-41.