Creating connections with an unseen audience: Discourse features of asynchronous video announcements in NZSL

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Abstract

Information sharing within the Aotearoa New Zealand Deaf community has changed rapidly over the last decade or so. New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) information is increasingly being shared through online informative video posts on social media. Traditionally Deaf people have gathered face-to-face in Deaf spaces such as Deaf Clubs to share information, so new online ways of sharing information are a stark and rapid change. Deaf presenters are now sharing information asynchronously and without a visible audience to give feedback about clarity and levels of engagement. The current study explores discourse strategies used by Deaf presenters in asynchronous NZSL informative videos, paving the way for a deeper understanding of how NZSL is evolving.

This study explores a dataset of 15 NZSL videos produced by nine fluent Deaf signers, published online (Facebook and YouTube) between 2020 and 2022. It was data driven and so began by examining general discourse features in the videos. *Pausing* was then selected as a key feature for more detailed discourse analysis. This revealed that pauses often function as discourse markers, used deliberately to organise asynchronous information for clarity and cohesion. Pauses also were used for grammatical purposes and to draw focus to the talk.

The study also explores explicit references to the unseen audience through presenters' use of pronominal pronouns, drawing on Goffman's (1981) *participation framework*. I analysed both first-person and second-person pronouns to better understand how the presenters imagined their audience. The analysis showed that referencing varied depending on the context of the talk. Footing shifts were observed through changes in pronoun use, showing signer alignment with their audience. Signers sometimes explicitly addressed their audience as a mass group, sometimes as a group of multiple individuals, and sometimes as individual addressees. While some decision-making likely represents personal style differences, discourse analysis allows us to understand deliberate pronoun choices (and shifts) within the context they occurred.

This study contributes new insights into NZSL use, and a greater understanding of strategies used by experienced Deaf presenters in this relatively new form of information dissemination in NZSL. It offers research-based material for future discussions within the Deaf community about the purposes of informative videos, characteristics of successful videos, and strategies to optimise connections with the unseen audience.

To the Deaf community, this is for us.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor used artificial intelligence tools or generative artificial intelligence tools (unless it is clearly stated, and referenced, along with the purpose of use), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

9 January 2025

Signature **Date**

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Chapter 1 - Introduction and aims of this study

Information sharing within the Aotearoa New Zealand Deaf community has changed rapidly over the last decade or so. Deaf people identify as a cultural and linguistic minority group and see being Deaf as a unique identity. They proudly embrace being Deaf and use NZSL in their everyday lives. For varying reasons including systemic barriers in education and language deprivation (see for example Mitchell & Karchmer, 2004; Emmorey, 2023), not all Deaf people are proficient in English, and NZSL is often preferred over written information. Deaf[1] people traditionally gathered face-to-face (for example at Deaf Clubs) to share news and information in New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL), as a more 'immediately accessible' form of communication (McKee, 2014).

This chapter introduces a study exploring information shared through asynchronous community announcement videos in NZSL. Due to the rise of social media and developments in technology, there has been a rapid move towards more online information sharing. This means that now Deaf presenters often cannot see the audience in front of them (as they traditionally always did), and researchers are suggesting that a new broadcast form of NZSL may be developing (McKee et al., 2024). The current study examines this in the context of publicly-available community announcement videos. In this chapter, a brief description of the New Zealand Deaf community is provided, as well as an outline of how information sharing in NZSL has changed over recent years (section 1.1). I then explain the aims of this study, and the research questions it seeks to answer (section 1.2). My position as researcher is described in section 1.3, with the structure of the thesis outlined in section 1.4.

1.1 The New Zealand Deaf community and information sharing

The New Zealand Deaf community is spread out across the country, with the largest Deaf communities in Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland, Ōtautahi/Christchurch and Pōneke/Wellington and its surrounding regions. Deaf Clubs (or in lieu of a local Deaf Club, other familiar locations where Deaf people regularly meet) have traditionally served as primary locations for Deaf people to gather, socialise, and run workshops or other events – all of which are NZSL-accessible. Prior to advancements in technology, the only way to use NZSL in dyadic communication was in-person, and often at Deaf Club. Nowadays, video-calling using mobile phones and tablets (e.g. Facetime,

[1] Throughout this thesis, *Deaf* with a capital 'D' is used to refer to members of the Deaf community who identify themselves as culturally Deaf (and not as disabled), and who use NZSL as their preferred mode of communication. I acknowledge in academic writing, *deaf* is often used so as not to make assumptions about a person's cultural identity, however in the context of this study (and a small group of known participants) I believe *Deaf* is most appropriate. When discussing literature where authors have used *deaf*, I also use *deaf*.

Facebook Messenger), or via specific software on computers (e.g. Zoom, MS Teams, Skype) is commonly used in addition to in-person interactions. Where Friday nights at Deaf Club used to be bustling, regular gathering points to share information[2], they are now less-frequented, especially by younger Deaf people who have other ways to share information. Large face-to-face gatherings still occur for specific organised community events.

Deaf communities globally are seen as typifying 'collective' culture (see, for example, McKee, 2017; Mindess, 1999). One trait of collective cultures is members helping each other to survive as a minority culture within in a majority (hearing, non-signing) society, as well as a sense of "duty to share information" (Mindess, 1999, p. 40). In the Deaf community, this means there is a strong need to ensure information is accessible in signed language, so no one is 'left behind'.

Two significant events in New Zealand have changed the landscape of information sharing in NZSL. In February 2011, an earthquake devastated Christchurch, New Zealand's second-biggest city with a large Deaf community. The city's Deaf Club was damaged, as was their local Deaf Aotearoa (the national Deaf association) office. These were two key places where Christchurch Deaf community members would meet and share or access information in NZSL. Furthermore, the earthquake damaged landline, mobile phone and internet connectivity in areas around the region, disrupting normal communication methods. This meant that the Deaf community had to rely on other avenues to send and receive information. As a result of the lobbying of Deaf Aotearoa after the earlier (and smaller) earthquake in September 2010, two NZSL interpreters were provided at daily televised media briefings in February 2011. This meant that Deaf people could access vital information about safety and earthquake recovery efforts in NZSL, from their television.

Later, in 2020 the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic saw New Zealand go into strict and lengthy lockdowns (especially in Auckland, the largest city). This time the internet was widely utilised as a platform for information-sharing by Deaf individuals and Deaf organisations on their social media platforms and websites. In addition, NZSL interpreters were publicly visible on screens every day, working alongside the Prime Minister, MPs, and health officials during the government's daily press briefings – streamed to television and the internet. These key events have given rise to relatively fast-changing ways of sharing information in NZSL through technology to an unseen audience – this is discussed in further detail in chapter 2.

[2] See stories in *People of the Eye: Stories from the Deaf World (2001)*, or watch recollections on *My Second Home: Auckland Deaf Society* at https://signdna.org/video/my-second-home/

Another change in online information accessibility in NZSL is due to the decreasing cost of smartphones and improvements in video technology. Smartphones and computers now tend to have higher quality cameras, and so it is easier (and more practical) for Deaf people to use their personal devices to quickly record a video and upload it to social media. At the same time, broadband costs are becoming more accessible, and many locations provide free Wi-Fi, meaning greater numbers of New Zealand Deaf people are relying on the internet to give and receive information in NZSL. This contextual knowledge is informed by my community involvement and observations of the community's smartphone and internet usage over the years. However we know very little about asynchronous announcements produced by Deaf presenters, and so the current study aims to address this gap.

1.2 Aims of the study

This study examines discourse features of asynchronous NZSL announcement videos produced for an unseen audience. As this study is the first of its kind (and given that NZSL discourse is under-described in general, see chapter 2) it was important for the research to be data-driven rather than starting with preconceived ideas for analysis. That is, I had a general motivation to better understand engagement through NZSL announcement videos, but from the beginning I planned for preliminary observations of the data to help narrow the focus for detailed analysis (see chapter 3 for details on this process).

The study thus aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What patterns of discourse features, including discourse markers and non-manual signals, emerge in informative NZSL videos?
2. How does a specific discourse feature (identified from analysis of research question 1) function at a detailed discourse level?
3. How is the unseen audience referred to in the videos?

To investigate these questions, the study draws on discourse analytical techniques as well as Goffman's (1981) *participation framework* to help us understand how a presenter relates to, imagines, or attempts to engage with an audience they cannot see (discussed in further detail in chapter 2). The study also takes an 'appreciative inquiry' (e.g. see Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Reed, 2007) approach: that is, exploring the work of experienced NZSL video presenters, so that the community can learn from the strategies they use.

1.3 Researcher positionality

I am a Deaf person who is strongly involved in the New Zealand Deaf community, and I use NZSL as my preferred language every day. I have held, and continue to hold, many different community-based roles in both personal and professional settings, which means I have a rich knowledge of many facets of the Deaf community. For over 15 years, I have produced NZSL videos for the purpose of sharing information, beginning in a professional capacity as a contractor for Stretch Productions (and later, Deafradio) to provide NZSL translations of written English resources for the Deaf community to access. These resources were initially distributed to the Deaf community on DVD. Nowadays NZSL translations (mostly from government/public services) are almost exclusively uploaded to an internet platform (i.e. embedded into websites, available on a video-streaming site such as YouTube, or uploaded to the organisation's Facebook page).

As awareness of social media increased, Deaf Aotearoa (the organisation I worked for at the time) increased its use of social media to disseminate information to the Deaf community. In my current role at New Zealand Relay[3] I am responsible for producing promotional material and information in NZSL for Deaf users of this service, and this is uploaded to the service's social media platforms. In a personal capacity, I have also been increasingly producing personal vlogs (video blogs) or video updates and sharing these on my personal social media platforms.

My personal and professional experience in this area was one of the key motivating factors for this study. I have had no formal training on presenting information or translating from English to NZSL, nor have I had any resources or guidelines to refer to when producing NZSL videos. I have relied on ad hoc feedback from my colleagues and peers, as well as self-reflection. I have noticed my own style changing over the years, and I wanted to know more about what I, and other Deaf presenters, do to engage an audience we cannot see.

There are both benefits and risks to being an 'insider' of the community being researched in this thesis. My broad experience across the Deaf community, rich cultural knowledge, fluency in both NZSL and written English, and video announcement experience make me well-placed to understand and explore features that will be meaningful and of practical use to the Deaf community. At the same time, however, I must keep limitations in mind and seek to mitigate risks throughout the study. The New Zealand Deaf community is small, and many individuals (including myself) have many 'hats' (roles) simultaneously. For example, at the time of

[3] New Zealand Relay is a government-funded telecommunications relay service provider that enables Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and people with speech communication difficulties to make equitable phone calls (www.nzrelay.co.nz).

conducting this study, I hold a key role on the New Zealand Sign Language Board, a government advisory group, even though the current study is undertaken in my separate role as an AUT master's student. There is also generally a risk of perceived or real bias toward the participants or research findings. The procedures undertaken to ensure clear understanding of my role as a master's student, and a robust process of analysis are outlined in further detail in chapter 3.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is organised into six chapters. Chapter 2 outlines a review of relevant literature and theoretical frameworks to provide context for the study. Chapter 3 introduces the research method and key ethical considerations. Chapters 4 and 5 present the findings, beginning with preliminary analysis and observations (research question 1), before delving into a discourse analysis of chosen features. Chapter 4 focuses on the function of pausing in NZSL announcements (research question 2). Chapter 5 examines references to the unseen audience (research question 3), drawing on Goffman's (1981) concepts of speaker roles and footing. Lastly, chapter 6 concludes this thesis by summarising the key findings and applications of the study.

Chapter 2 - Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets the stage for the thesis by reviewing relevant research literature underpinning the creation of video announcements in NZSL. Communication modes for the Deaf community are rapidly changing through technology development, and the ease with which information can be disseminated through online videos. This literature review chapter firstly touches on the differences between synchronous and asynchronous communication (section 2.2) and provides a brief overview of radio announcements, with a focus on what makes them successful in retaining engagement of an unseen audience (section 2.3). An overview of discourse is explored (section 2.4.1), before delving into signed and spoken language discourse features relevant to the current study (section 2.4.2), including specific discussion of pausing (section 2.5) and audience reference (section 2.6). Finally, the chapter outlines Goffman's (1981) participation framework as a relevant lens that the analysis will draw upon (section 2.7).

2.2 Synchronous versus asynchronous communication

Human communication is multi-layered and complex; broadly speaking, it involves the exchange of information between people (Finch et al., 2003; Finch, 2003; Leeds-Hurwitz, 1989; O'Keeffe, 2006). Whether spoken or signed, communication is discursive and context-bound (Finch, 2003; Paltridge, 2022; Ting-Toomey & Chung, 2012). Communication is a vast and interdisciplinary field of research; however, for the current study it is valuable to understand some of the key differences between live, synchronous communication and one-way, asynchronous communication such as pre-recorded announcements.

Live, synchronous communication is a two-way process between people with active roles in constructing meaning from the language used (e.g., Dimmick et al., 2000). Interlocutors adjust the way they talk depending on contextual factors including who they are talking to, the setting they are in, and how familiar they are with the audience (Holmes & Wilson, 2017; Mapson & Major, 2021; Maschler & Schiffrin, 2018). Participants use *backchanneling* to indicate their understanding and engagement in the interaction (Mesch, 2016). Discourse analysts have shown how participants co-construct talk through turn-by-turn interaction (Bloch & Beeke, 2008; Bolden, 2006; Bolden, 2018; Sacks et al., 1974; Solomon et al., 2021). Each contribution is built upon the previous turn and meaning is jointly created.

A wealth of research exists on dyadic communication; that is, a conversation between two speakers (e.g. Morgan & Hummert, 2000; Nakahama et al., 2001; Olsson, 2002). Even though a dyad typically is thought of as two people interacting, communication with larger groups of people is still considered to be dyadic, as they contain multiple shifts of dyadic encounters within them (Adler et al., 2012; O'Keeffe, 2006). Dyadic communication occurs in a variety of mediums, from live face-to-face interactions, to phone calls, to online typed conversations such as emails or instant messaging. Interactional meaning is conveyed not only through words/signs, but also non-verbally, for example through body language and facial expression (DeVito, 2014; Finnegan, 2013). Ahern and Brown (2006) posit that in a typical face-to-face communication setting, as much as 70% of the message may be non-verbal.

The current study will focus on one-way *asynchronous* public communication which is different to live synchronous communication on multiple levels; that is, these videos are not viewed in real-time - the audience might see the video soon after it is posted, or much later. Generally, a speaker is addressing a large audience, such as their online community of 'followers' – people that receive posts from the organisation on their social media newsfeed. This presents little to no opportunity for contact between the speaker and their audience (Adler et al., 2012). Unlike in a natural dyadic conversation, asynchronous public speakers are more likely to have planned the structure of their talk in order to maximise its impact on their audience (Adler et al., 2012). Although radio announcing is not necessarily asynchronous as it can occur live, the interactional demands can be quite similar to pre-recorded public communications (i.e. communicating to an unseen audience with no immediate feedback). Thus, radio announcing is discussed in more detail in section 2.3 below.

McKee (2014) discusses the lack of a present audience as influencing the interpreters' discourse choices while interpreting the 2011 Christchurch earthquake media briefings. The two interpreters shared that while they were aware these briefings were being shown nationwide, thus informing the wider New Zealand Deaf community of happenings in Christchurch, these briefings also served to inform the local people. Consequently, these interpreters prioritised clarity of information for the local Deaf community: familiar local signs for suburbs, road names, landmarks etc. were used, rather than fingerspelling these names to be accessible to the wider New Zealand community. The interpreters said they deliberately envisioned "members of the local community who would rely more on NZSL than the captioned information" (McKee, 2014, p.120) and interpreted to match their unseen target audience.

Recent research has examined how the vocabulary of NZSL is changing, with increasing influence from other signed languages, primarily American Sign Language (ASL; McKee et al., 2022). This is likely due to increasing exposure/access to online asynchronous videos. On YouTube, for example, it is observed that many signed language videos are in ASL. The relatively large size of the United States Deaf community means there is lots of resources and news in ASL. Livestream conversations of individuals vlogging/discussing are predominantly in ASL or International Sign. Anecdotally, there are more Deaf 'content creators' from the United States uploading videos to social media than New Zealand Deaf people, and presumably the younger New Zealand Deaf community look to those American Deaf as idols, inspirational, and likely consequently picking up the signed language vocabulary these people use.

Relatively little is yet known about the nature and challenges of asynchronous communication in comparison to live synchronous communication. Although it is not a new phenomenon, it is becoming more frequently used with advances in technology and the use of social media (e.g. Hilton, 2022; Perloff, 2015). Anecdotally, we also know that it is being increasingly used to share information within the Deaf community. The lack of research on asynchronous NZSL announcements is therefore a gap that the current study will address.

2.3 Radio announcements: Engaging with an unseen audience

Given the lack of research on signed language asynchronous communication, research on radio announcements provides useful parallel context. Even though radio announcements relate to spoken not signed languages, and may be synchronous rather than pre-recorded, radio announcers still must quickly engage with and draw in unseen listeners.

Effective radio announcements need to capture the audience's attention in the first utterance, after which further information can then be given (Geller, 2007; McLeish, 2005; Stewart, 2010). In a textbook for people learning to become successful radio announcers, Ahern and Brown (2006) explain that the message must be communicated in a way that ensures listeners will value it enough to continue listening. In an audio-only channel, effectiveness relies on pausing, pace, pitch and projection (Ahern & Brown 2006; Stewart 2010). Conversely, the end of the announcement is what the listeners will leave with. McLeish (2005) states that announcers need to give their listener something memorable to hold onto, such as repeating a main point, or finishing with a story to reinforce the theme of the announcement.

Table 1 below summarises Ahern and Brown's (2006) advice on the four P's which aid with delivering a captivating announcement over the radio.

Table 1

The four Ps of effective radio announcements

Pause	• Helps focus listeners' attention on each of the important points, when used correctly
Pace	• The speed of the delivery needs to fit the type of message. For example, ads are delivered quickly, to excite the listeners • Messages delivered slowly appear thoughtful, but risk boring the listeners if overused • Slow pace is used for emphasis on specific words. If certain words/phrases are delivered too quickly, the announcer appears dismissive
Pitch (e.g. inflection)	• [In Spoken English] inflecting upwards indicates a question; it is important not to overuse the upwards inflections as it can put the listener off or confuse them • Use of a downwards inflection at the end of a sentence aids with credibility
Projection	• Projection means choosing a particular word or two, and saying it louder or softer than the rest of the sentence; this places emphasis on that specific word

Note. Adapted from Making Radio: A practical guide to working in radio (2nd ed., pp. 87-90), by S. Ahern & G. Brown, 2006, Allen & Unwin. Copyright 2006 by Steve Ahern.

Although the four Ps relate specifically to spoken language through the medium of radio, there are likely parallels for each in NZSL video announcements. Deaf presenters will need to consider the pace and purpose of announcements, correct use of pausing, ways to clearly structure the information, and strategies to emphasise key information.

Radio is considered an intimate medium of communication, which means that announcers are expected to think of their audience as an individual, not as one mass of individuals (Ahern, 2006; Geller, 2007). If the audience feels that the radio announcer is talking to them directly as if they were friends, this helps build engagement between the presenter and the audience. (Ahern, 2006; Geller, 2007). Presenters are therefore advised to use singular words such as *you* rather than plural words (*you all, some of you, everybody/everyone*).

McLeish (2005) and Geller (2007) attest that radio announcers need to talk *to* their listeners, not *at/about* them, to maintain a sense of direct relationship with their unseen audience. The audience needs to feel they are in the same room as the presenter (Ahern, 2006). To maintain a sense of proximity to the announcer, Geller (2007) advises radio announcers need to choose their words carefully and eliminate words that clearly distance the audience from the presenter, or push their audience away, such as *out there* or *over in Christchurch*, which implies the presenter is not physically in Christchurch, and distant from their Christchurch listeners.

An announcer's choice of words is crucial for ensuring they are not telling the audience what to think. For example, if the announcer says, 'Come to Deaf Club and have a great time', what happens if an audience does go to Deaf Club and ends up not having a good time? Instead, Geller (2007) suggests that the announcer should *tell* the audience *why* they will have a great time (emphasis my own). In order to achieve this the announcer needs to have a good understanding of the topic and their audience (Ahern & Brown, 2006; McLeish, 2005). Additionally, word choices need to be relevant to the audience and the structure of the announcements need to be clear in terms of who, what, when, where, and why (Ahern, 2006).

A critical aspect of successful radio announcements is the announcers themselves, particularly the talent and personality they bring to their show (Ahern & Brown, 2006). If the presenter has a 'likeable' personality, the audience will enjoy listening to them. With announcements that focus on a particular group of people, it is suggested that the closer the announcer is to that community - in terms of familiarity and involvement – the better-quality announcements are made, which aids credibility (Ahern, 2006). This is supported by academics in the field of telecommunications (Smith et al.,1998), who affirm the audience's perception of the announcer affects their reaction to the message being delivered. They suggest that the announcer's prestige, and how much the audience likes and feels aligned to them will affect the audience's reception of the message. This likely draws parallels with NZSL videos that are posted online, because the New Zealand Deaf community is small, and Deaf announcers are likely known to many in their audience.

2.4 Discourse analysis

This study will draw on discourse analysis methods to explore chosen features from video announcements within their respective contexts. This section thus examines relevant scholarship in discourse analysis both generally and specifically in relation to signed language research. The focus then narrows to exploring what is known about discourse markers in signed languages as key context for the current study.

2.4.1 Discourse analysis in spoken and signed languages

Discourse is the study of language in context; that is, any language "beyond the sentence" (Schiffrin et al., 2018, p.1). Sociolinguists consider discourse to refer to any "stretch of spoken or written text" (Holmes & Wilson, 2017, p.386), including signed language texts. Discourse analysts explore how language is used in context, often examining real-life or naturalistic interactions, rather than isolated words or utterances (Winston & Roy, 2022). Discourse analysis helps us to understand how participants infer meaning based not only on expressed words, but also contextual factors like setting, interpersonal relationships, and interactional goals (e.g. Holmes & Wilson, 2017). It also provides clues about the linguistic 'work' that participants do in order to accomplish a purpose or action (Holmes, 2005; Roy, 2000). There is a wealth of literature on discourse analysis of spoken languages, which started to emerge in the 1960s/1970s (see, for example, Gumperz, 1972; Hymes, 1964), and over the years it has become an established field in spoken language research. It is a broad approach to research, encapsulating a variety of different techniques (Schiffrin, 1994; Stubbe et al., 2003).

Communication depends on how speakers and listeners use contextualisation cues to interpret meaning. Drawing on his earlier works, Gumperz (1992) emphasises that cues in talk – both verbal and nonverbal – signal to the audience how it should be interpreted. *Contextualisation cues* include intonation, prosody, lexical choices, and body movements. Context is key to understanding the purpose of the talk, the social roles of the participants in the talk, and the cultural norms relevant to the talk. Head nods in spoken languages (e.g. Gurion et al., 2020; Lee & Marsella, 2010; Oshima, 2014) and signed languages (e.g. McKee, 2017) are another example of contextualisation cues. Context helps the audience to interpret whether a head nod signals emphasis, affirmation, or agreement, for example.

In contrast to spoken language research, discourse analysis of signed language texts is a newer field of research. A very small body of research exists on monologue/asynchronous delivery within signed languages (e.g. McKee, 1992; Roy, 1989), although more research literature exists on discourse involving signed language interpretation (e.g. Hanquet et al., 2024; Metzger, 1999; Major, 2024; Mapson & Major 2021; Marks, 2012; Napier, 2007) and signed language conversation (e.g. Lepeut & Shaw, 2024; McKee & Wallingford, 2011; Metzger & Bahan, 2001; Smith & Ramsey, 2004).

Discourse analysis is an analytical tool ideal for the current study of NZSL video announcements, because it allows us to investigate how people actually use language to make announcements cohesive and engaging (not what they think they do, which may be different; see for example

Bailey, 2021; Major, 2014). Signed language researchers have used discourse analysis to explore aspects of discourse such as turn-taking in ASL (Roy, 2000) and Japanese Sign Language (JSL) (Dale-Hench, 2024). Discourse analysis of an interpreted naturally-occurring in-person dialogue revealed the ASL interpreter was an active participant in the conversation between a student and their professor, thus influencing the turn-taking (Roy, 2000). A triadic online conversation between three deaf mothers using JSL (which was initially live on Instagram, then subsequently uploaded to YouTube) featured a strategy used to invite the next person to speak. The addressee's sign name was used to signal who was next to sign, providing clarity of turn-taking in this triadic conversation (Dale-Hench, 2024). Discourse analysis has also been used to examine opening and closing of conversations in NZSL-English interpreted video dialogues (Bailey, 2021) and meetings (Henley & McKee, 2020).

Studies to date have found some similarities in discourse features in both spoken and signed languages, however many differences have also been identified. Topicalisation, for example (where the topic is stated at the beginning of the sentence), is a significant element in signed languages but not in spoken English (Davis, 2011; Holcomb, 2013; McKee, 2017). Ross and Berkowitz (2008, as cited in Holcomb, 2013) note the use of a clear 'diamond' discourse structure in ASL videos, whereby the topic is made clear at the start, and reiterated at the end for clarity, with reduced use of nonmanual markers, and deliberate use of pausing as a boundary marker. Roy (1989) examined an ASL lecture and found it contained specific patterns for signalling introductions and transitions to new topics/subtopics, through linguistic features marking shifts. These included head nods, body shifts, and the signs OK[4] and ANYWAY.

2.4.2 Discourse markers

Discourse markers are small linguistic elements that help to provide text structure and cohesion, for example signalling relationships between participants, and connecting sequences of utterances within the text (Schiffrin, 1987). Speakers naturally want to be understood by their audience, so to facilitate comprehension they mark their information units as clearly as possible (Maschler & Schiffrin, 2018; Swerts & Geluykens, 1994). This helps the audience interpret and understand the flow of information (Schiffrin, 1987).

A small number of researchers have investigated signed language discourse markers. Many signs have multiple functions, for example functioning as discourse markers in particular contexts. In NZSL, the *palm-up* (WELL) gesture is a logical connector when it occurs between clauses (McKee

[4] Signs are represented using capital letters (*glossing* - see chapter 3 for more information)

(2017). McKee and Wallingford (2011) used discourse analysis to investigate a dataset of NZSL conversational dialogue and informal interviews from 20 signers across the country of varying ages. They showed that this *palm-up* sign has various forms and functions (and overlaps with a gesture used by non-signers), and as a discourse marker it can be used to signify the speaker's modal stance in relation to information. In French Belgian Sign Language, *palm-up* was found to have 19 discourse marker functions, including punctuation, closing, and showing agreement (Gabarró-López, 2020).

Certain signs used within specific contexts have been shown to function as discourse markers in ASL. Some examples include NOW (Roy, 1989), QUOTE and STOP (McKee, 1992), and FINE (Metzger & Bahan, 2001). Roy's (1989) study examined the use of NOW by a lecturer using ASL. She found that NOW functioned as a discourse marker in this context to signal *footing shifts* (see section 2.7.2 below), rather than a temporal marker as typically thought. Metzger and Bahan (2001) analysed a multiparty conversation with five deaf signers, illustrating how one signer used FINE to bracket different events within the re-telling of his experience. McKee (1992) showed how the use of spatial location during a signed lecture delivery also functioned as a discourse marker, whereby the signers physically stepped or leaned to the side, to signal an aside in the text. Hoza (2011) notes that HEY and WELL in ASL can function as politeness markers.

Buoys are a type of discourse marker used in signed languages which are relevant to the current study. Buoys are signs that are produced with both hands; the non-dominant hand produces a sign that depicts a list, while the dominant hand continues to produce signs and points to the other hand (Liddell, 2003). There are five different types of buoys, including *list buoys*, which allow up to five different entities to be established as numeral signs on the non-dominant hand as a list (Gabarró-López, 2019). Gabarró-López (2019) examined a dataset of 12 conversations in French Belgian Sign Language across four different styles of talk (argumentative, explanatory, metalinguistic, and narrative) and found that more buoys occurred within explanatory texts. Gabarró-López (2019) suggests that the high number of discourse marker buoys in explanatory texts may be because the signer has more time to prepare their production and organise their thoughts, in comparison to more spontaneous talk. A recent examination of online NZSL videos (such as on Facebook, websites, and in e-newsletters) noted an increasing use of list buoys which were typically associated with ASL and were not evident in earlier NZSL styles (McKee et al., 2022).

The current study aims to contribute to the emerging field of signed language discourse. Specifically, this literature review found little research on discourse features of online asynchronous signed texts; the current study aims to address this gap.

2.5 Pausing as a discourse function

Pausing has been found to have many crucial and versatile functions in both spoken and signed discourse. Pauses can be unplanned, such as hesitation, which gives an insight into the speaker's thought process (Zellner, 1994). Pauses can also be purposefully used in discourse to aid the speaker's cognition processes, as well as the audience's comprehension of the text (Ahern & Brown, 2006; see section 2.3, Table 1). Butterworth (1980) tasked three English speakers with creating a convincing but unrehearsed speech from a text and found that they used pauses to help with their planning while delivering their talk.

Short, indistinct utterances are commonly described as filled pauses (Goffman, 1978; Yule, 1996) and occur when speakers have temporarily lost their place. Filled pauses signal that the speaker still has their attention to the matter, and these pauses function to 'buy time' for the speaker to recollect their thoughts. Filled pauses can also be used to hold the floor in a conversation (Bailey, 2021; Dale-Hench, 2024; McKee & Wallingford, 2011; Yule, 1996). This is an especially important feature in radio announcing due to the lack of visual cues signalling the speaker's recollecting (Goffman, 1978). Goffman also suggests that the silence from a radio announcer while recollecting their thoughts may be confusing, hence filled pauses are essential for the unseen radio audience.

Spijker and Oomen (2023) examined hesitation markers in Netherlands Sign Language (NGT) to identify whether these hesitations were involuntary planning problems or deliberate choices. They examined a group of 20 signers, each of whom produced a monologue talk and participated in a dialogue. Hesitation was defined as *breaks* (unfilled), *holds* (filled), and *filler words/signs*; false starts were excluded. Examples of holds included the *palm-up* gesture (see section 2.4.2), as well as holding a sign in place; breaks were those where the signers' hands moved into a resting position. *Palm-up* was found to be frequent in dialogue but rare in monologue delivery, thus the authors suggest signers' use of this gesture while hesitating also functioned to hold their turn in a dyadic interaction. Occurrences of *palm-up* with wiggly fingers appeared to align with planning problems (Spijker & Oomen, 2023).

Pauses also provide cues to facilitate the smooth progression of interpreter-mediated dialogue. Napier's (2007) case study examined a deaf person's Auslan (Australian Sign Language)

presentation and its interpretation into spoken English, which was videotaped, as was the preparatory meeting prior to the presentation. Napier (2007) identified that the three participants (the deaf presenter and two interpreters) established and used clearly-defined cues to achieve better flow in the Auslan-English interpretation. Pauses were one such cue, with 78 occurrences of pauses in the delivery, identified by deliberately stopping signing for several seconds. During those pauses, the presenter looked to the interpreter to check they were close behind in their simultaneous interpretation into spoken English. This also marked the episodes, confirmed in the preparation meeting as a strategy the presenter would use.

Presenters generally do not speak non-stop during their talk but rather use segments of talk, separated by silences (Chafe, 1980; Rendle-Short, 2005). In Australia, Rendle-Short (2005) examined nine naturally occurring monologic presentations in spoken English by academics on research-in-progress at an institute as part of their weekly updates to colleagues. They found that speakers used a range of strategies (contextualisation cues, see section 2.4.1 above) to signal the end of a segment, including changes in intonation, body position, eye gazes, and hand actions. The audience was attuned to this structure of talk, in that they sought clarification or asked questions during silences between segments. Importantly, the strategies that they identified were not used alone – in other words, several cues occurred together to signal the upcoming pause. This literature search has identified few studies on pauses in spoken and signed language monologue delivery or asynchronous videos.

Some similarities have been identified in duration of pauses in spoken and signed languages. Analysis of pause length in a narrative delivery in ASL found some parallels with spoken English (Grosjean & Lane, 1977). Grosjean and Lane studied five native ASL users (with deaf parents) narrating the story of Goldilocks, finding patterns in the length and occurrences of pauses. For example, longer holds were used to signal the end of a boundary. They also suggested that pauses can be used in lieu of conjunctions within sentences for 'signing economy': that is, it takes less effort to just stop signing than to sign conjoining words (such as *and*). Strategic pauses can therefore serve as a discourse function across both spoken and signed languages, crucially structuring the information, and signalling units of talk.

2.6 Referencing people

In NZSL, most pronominal referencing is produced with a pointed index-finger handshape. Pronominal referencing in NZSL is more explicit than in spoken English, as it usually requires a

clear distinction between singular and plural pronouns and possessives (see Johnston & Schembri, 2007; McKee, 2017, and further discussion in chapter 5).

Pronominal referencing in signed languages can also be achieved using *agreement verbs*; that being, verbs that can be modified to include reference to people or locations (Johnston & Schembri, 2007; McKee, 2017). Agreement verbs have a starting point which usually indicates the agent and an ending point which usually indicates the receiver.

The signer's eye gaze can also function as a strategy to reference people. Eye gaze helps to convey who the signer is talking about (McKee, 2017), gazing at their audience when referring to them as the second-person reference (*you*). When the signer is referring to a third person (*she/he/they*), they are likely to look away to the right or left of their audience (McKee, 2017).

Pronominal pointing can be somewhat influenced by who the audience is. Simchowitz (2023) examined a subset of six adult Māori Deaf NZSL users and their pronominal referencing as noticed on existing recordings, focusing on occurrences of a pointed index-finger and a flat palm. There was a higher occurrence of the flat palm form for pronominal references. In the focus group discussions, the participants shared they noticed flat palms used by hearing Māori when they made references to people. Participants also shared that this form showed more respect, functioning as a politeness marker. As these signers' pronominal pointing choices were influenced by their visible audience, this study seeks to identify what pronominal referencing choices the signers make when their audience is unseen.

2.7 Framing, footing, and participation framework

In addition to taking a discourse analysis approach to this study of NZSL video announcements, I also draw on Goffman's (1981) *participation framework*, a tool for assessing the various roles people take on in an interaction, including those of speakers and listeners. This helps us to understand the range of interactional roles as well as shifts between different types of talk within communication (Goffman, 1974, 1981; Gordon, 2018). This section outlines the related concepts of *speaker roles* followed by *footings* (Goffman, 1981) and highlights relevant literature from both spoken and signed language research.

2.7.1 Goffman's speaker roles

Using Goffman's (1981) framework we can analyse any talk in terms of who produced it (the *animator*), who created the content (the *author*), and who is responsible for the content (the *principal*). Often a speaker will have all three roles, but at other times the person producing the

talk may not have created it or may not have overall responsibility for it. Examples of the latter would include talk conveyed by an interpreter (e.g. Marks, 2012; Metzger, 1999). This will be relevant to the current study in considering whether the presenters are likely to also be the principle and author, or not, and what impact this may have on their alignment to the audience and the linguistic choices they make.

Goffman (1981) has suggested different ways the audience may be referred to: *ratified* refers to acknowledgement of participants in the encounter; some participants are directly *addressed*, and others *unaddressed* (Goffman, 1981). O'Keeffe (2006) emphasises that participation framework encompasses a variety of shared spaces, a reservoir of knowledge, and a collective sense of identity. O'Keeffe gives the example of an Australian radio announcer who does not make explicit references to the topic (Parliament, and the jury), because the announcer assumes the audience has the shared cache of knowledge to understand the referents, due to the context of that specific interaction. Holt and O'Driscoll (2021) describe instances where a speaker may deliberately *de-ratify* a hearer by speaking as though the hearer is absent, effectively excluding them from the interaction.

Speaker roles can be considered to be even more fluid in technologically-mediated interactions, which blur the boundaries between addressed and unaddressed participants and challenge traditional conceptions of ratified participation. Holt and O'Driscoll (2021) discuss how audience roles differ in contexts such as television broadcasts or online interactions. Broadcast audiences are often categorised by scholars as *overhearers* because they cannot directly and immediately influence the interaction (Dynel, 2011). However, it is argued that these audiences are ratified participants, given that broadcasts are specifically produced for them (Dynel, 2011). The nature of the talk further defines audience roles. For example, in what Holt and O'Driscoll (2021) describe as "Talk A" such as a television program, the audience has the right to access the talk clearly, as the interaction is designed for them in that the broadcast has been made available for people to view. In contrast, "Talk B", such as a livestream of parliamentary proceedings, occurs independently of the audience's engagement. This dynamic nature of participation framework is particularly evident in platforms like YouTube, where multiple layers of interaction occur. Dynel's (2014) research applied Goffman's participation framework to YouTube videos, suggesting there are three roles that people may have: the speaker and hearer within the video, the creator and viewer of the video, and commenters/viewers interacting with the content (the video). Participation framework demonstrates the potential fluidity of roles, with participants continuously shifting their footing as they engage with different forms of communication.

A study of audience design in vlogs (Frobenius, 2014) investigated how roles are defined, and talk is adapted for when there is no present audience. Examining a dataset of 30 English vlogs hosted on YouTube, they proposed that vloggers do have an idea of their audience through their existing subscribers, or by reactions to previously published vlogs. Furthermore, Frobenius (2014) asserts that receiving a monologue (such as viewing a vlog) is not a passive role; while the audience is viewing the vlog, their role shifts between participant and addressee. The investigation found references to unknown/future audiences through lexical choices such as the if-clauses (*if you're interested*...), and general audiences such as *you/you guys*.

Grice's maxims (as described in Paltridge, 2022; Yule, 1996) are of some relevance to this study, and the roles of the speaker and audience. Grice posits that a basic cooperative principle is followed in interactions: this includes *quantity* – giving just the right amount of information*; quality* – only saying what you believe is true or what you can back up*; relation* – the relevance of the information*;* and *manner* – being clear, to the point and structured (Holmes & Wilson, 2017; Paltridge, 2022). Producers of asynchronous videos need to keep this in mind: due to lack of present audience, there is no backchanneling available to indicate if any of these maxims is being violated.

2.7.2 Goffman's concept of footing

Within participation framework, we can also use the concepts of *framing* and *footing* to assess asynchronous information sharing to an unseen audience. Framing helps us understand how people construct their social worlds (Goffman, 1974); that is, any speaker interprets and expresses meaning through their own schemas and worldview. Footing is "the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present as expressed in the way we manage the production or reception of an utterance" (Goffman, 1981, p.128). Thus, as we produce language, we indicate our alignment toward different addressees, and this can change moment by moment, signalled by cues (Gumperz, 1992; section 2.4.1 above). Footing can also shift during different parts of talk , for example as a speaker moves from building rapport with the audience through a warm greeting, to factual information sharing. Speaker roles and footings can overlap: when a speaker shifts from talking as self (i.e. simultaneously being animator, principle and author), to reporting something someone else said (shifting from author and principal role while maintaining animator role), their footing has changed. Listeners undergo footing shifts too, signalled through nonverbal behaviours such as facial expressions, eye gaze, or body position, indicating level of engagement and emotional reaction (Holt & O'Driscoll, 2021).

Footings have been examined in studies analysing discourse, for example telephone service encounters (Sun, 2012; Marquez Reiter & Bou-Franch, 2017), the dynamics between a doctor and their patient's family member (Tannen & Wallat, 1993), and the openings of talk radio (Hutchby, 1999). In China, Sun (2012) examined two sets of telephone interaction data, a decade apart, and found there was realignment of footings in the newer data. That is, in the more recent data callers were more often treated as equal conversation partners. This was identified largely through language choices of the staff when referring to their addressee (the caller). Tannen and Wallat (1993) analysed footings within an encounter between a doctor examining a young patient with the patient's mother present. Footing shifts were identified through changes in register, where the doctor shifted to a *consultation frame* to discuss with the mother her concerns in a conversational manner, from the *examining frame* where the doctor was talking with the young patient in *motherese*[5].

This literature review identified very few studies drawing on Goffman's (1981) participation framework in relation to signed languages, and those identified focus on ASL. McKee (1992) investigated footings and footing shifts in ASL lectures, focusing on presenters' use of quotations and asides. She found that footing shifts were signalled by various linguistic and paralinguistic cues, which included physically stepping aside, the use of body leans, as well as signing QUOTE, and using role-shift (constructed action/dialogue) to indicate a change of narrator. McKee notes that many of the parenthetical asides made by the signers were intended to address the shared knowledge between themselves and their audience, either directly or indirectly referencing their own ("*I think; I forget; maybe…"*) or their audience's ("*I know you…; …I don't know how to spell it, do you know?"*) state of knowledge; these shifts were demonstrated through lexical choices as well as paralinguistic cues.

Roy (1989) investigated an informal lecture delivered in ASL by a Deaf fluent signer. While this study did not look at footings specifically, it is relevant to this study due to its investigation of signed language discourse, especially the organisation of the talk to maintain audience engagement. She analysed the lecture structure of eight episodes (different naturally-formed segments of topics) used to create and maintain audience cohesion, and more specifically two discourse markers (NOW; NOW-THAT) which bracketed these eight episodes to shift the audience's focus. While she identified several discourse markers (including *ALRIGHT, OK*), NOW and NOW-THAT were identified as signalling a new episode. The sign NOW occurred eleven times

[5] Motherese: how humans (typically mothers, but generally any adult) alter their speech when addressing young people, as compared to addressing other adults.

in the lecture; five of these functioned as a discourse marker by mostly being preceded by a long pause, with one occurrence featuring a body-shift change. In this study, NOW-THAT was found to function as a signal change to a new group of episodes, occurring twice, while also implicitly referring to previous information to ensure comprehension linked to the new information about to be presented. Both discourse markers in that study functioned to maintain audience engagement and cohesion of the information being delivered.

There has been a greater focus on frame and footing shifts within *interpreted* discourse involving a signed language (see, for example, Marks, 2012; Metzger, 1999; Napier, 2007). Metzger (1999) investigated footings in the context of two ASL-English interpreted interactions – both mock and actual medical encounters. She identified the different ways the roles (ratified addressee) of the deaf patient and the hearing doctor were established by the interpreter, leading to different footings between the interpreter and each of the participants. For example, across both the mock and naturally-occurring interactions, the interpreter rarely let the deaf patient be an *unratified* addressee (by voicing for the deaf person while also signing the same information, so the deaf person could follow what was being said), while often the (hearing) doctor would be an unratified addressee as the interpreter only used ASL to the deaf person. Napier's (2007) study sought to understand how cooperation (Grice, 1975) was achieved between the deaf presenter and the two interpreters. Examining the video-taped seminar, as well as the video-taped preparation meeting, it was identified that the presenter deliberately used head nods to mark episodes in his talk. That is, he was done with the utterance and would be moving onto a new episode, cueing to the interpreters his footing had shifted, and to interpret this accordingly (see also section 2.5).

Although the studies reviewed here describe different settings to the current study on asynchronous NZSL presentations posted on social media, they nonetheless provide valuable context to examining the use of footings in NZSL. To date there has been no known analysis of footings in NZSL announcements (or any NZSL texts), a gap that the current study will address.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has examined a range of literature relevant to this study: synchronous and asynchronous communication, radio announcements and engagement with their unseen audience, and discourse analysis in both spoken and signed languages including discourse markers. Pausing as a discourse function has also been described, as has referencing to people in signed languages. Lastly, literature relating to Goffman's concepts of speaker roles and footings in both spoken and signed languages was discussed as key context for the current study.

The literature review has shown that there is little research on pauses and audience referencing in NZSL specifically, and to date no research on these features in NZSL asynchronous monologues. The current study therefore seeks to better understand the language use of experienced Deaf presenters in this rapidly emerging new style of NZSL. The next chapter will outline the research methods used in this study.

Chapter 3 - Research Method

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methods used in this study, including data collection and analysis techniques. The dataset for this study consisted of asynchronous informative videos produced in NZSL by fluent Deaf presenters, as well as interviews with three of the presenters. Ethical considerations are discussed, including the reasoning for using participants' real names in this thesis. The study uses discourse analysis to explore features of NZSL in this unique and emerging setting at a detailed level, and it also draws on Goffman's (1981) participation framework as outlined in section 2.7. The research sought to address the following questions:

1. What patterns of discourse features, including discourse markers and non-manual signals, emerge in informative NZSL videos?
2. How does a specific discourse feature (identified from analysis of research question 1) function at a detailed discourse level?
3. How is the unseen audience referred to in the videos?

3.2 Theoretical framework and approach to the study

A data-driven approach was taken to exploring the research questions. This meant that the data was first collected, and then insights from preliminary observations of the full dataset drove the more specific focus for analysis. Discourse analysis (section 2.4 above) allows exploration of discourse features in the context in which they occurred (Schiffrin et al., 2018), through moment-by-moment examination of the language at a micro-level. This would not be possible if we relied solely on presenters' recollections about what they think they do, as these types of linguistic moves typically go unnoticed by participants in talk (Major, 2014). As asynchronous information dissemination likely represents a new broadcast style of NZSL (McKee et al., 2024), discourse analysis of talk in context is an ideal approach to discovering what presenters actually do, rather than what they think they do.

As highlighted in the literature review, this study draws on Goffman's (1981) participation framework, and particularly the concepts of speaker roles and footings. Goffman suggests footings are the adjustments in discourse by a speaker to signal changes in stance and alignment (Smith & Ramsey, 2004; see also McKee, 1992). This framework is used particularly in chapter 5 (alongside discourse analysis) to explore how the unseen audience is referred to in the videos.

An appreciative inquiry underpinned my approach to this study (e.g. see Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005; Reed, 2007). The research participants are individuals who are experienced producers of asynchronous NZSL videos. Appreciative inquiry is an approach that is cooperative and "coevolutionary" (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005, p. 15) in looking for the best in people, and appreciating their expertise and what they offer. This means the wider community can learn from strategies already used by experienced Deaf presenters.

3.3 Data collection

3.3.1 Purposive sampling

Purposive sampling (Campbell et al., 2020; Emmel, 2013) was used to collect a dataset of video announcements. Purposive sampling is the deliberate choices of participants and data sources, following a criterion. This approach ensures the dataset matches the aims of research, by yielding more useful information (Campbell et al., 2020). A criterion was established and followed to select suitable videos for analysis. Videos needed to be:

- Produced in the last two years (at the time of commencing the study),
- Notices/announcements that contained non-sensitive information, for example, no individual's personal or sensitive information was shared, and no personal opinion posts,
- Publicly accessible,
- Produced for an organisation,
- Featuring only one Deaf (fluent in NZSL) individual signing, and
- Not longer than three minutes.

The rationale for choosing a maximum length of three minutes draws on my personal experience, noticing that the majority of announcement videos are shorter than three minutes.

To identify a suitable set of videos, I browsed Facebook pages and newsletters with links to YouTube videos and noted videos that fitted the above criteria. I also made note of the organisations and individuals associated with each video. This approach is realistic and appropriate in a small community: organisations are known because the videos are publicly published under their name to online platforms such as Facebook or YouTube. The individuals are visually identifiable due to the visible nature of videos and the small community in which most people know of each other (McKee, 2017).

3.3.2 Organisations

Videos were chosen from five organisations, all well-known in the New Zealand Deaf community. They regularly produce informative videos in NZSL containing notices for their audiences. These organisations had a variety of videos to select from, encompassing a range of presenters. The final videos were chosen because they matched the criteria in section 3.3.1.

The selected videos had already been published which meant that I first needed to seek permission from the organisations who produced and published them prior to approaching the individual presenters. The organisations were contacted by email, with a brief introduction to the invitation. The email included an organisation information sheet and a consent form (see Appendices B and D).

3.3.3 Participants

I had originally approached six organisations, of which five gave their consent. The sixth organisation initially expressed interest, then ceased communication. Therefore, this organisation was not included any further.

After gaining consent from the organisations, I approached nine Deaf presenters who had produced the videos. I approached the participants directly using my personal community networks, which was appropriate due to the closeness of the community (see section 3.4 below for further detail). When presenters expressed interest, the information sheet and consent form were sent to them (see Appendices C and E). All nine presenters agreed to participate. This study did not aim for a demographically balanced dataset, and so participants were not asked to provide their background information. All nine participants are fluent adult NZSL users, and based on my knowledge of the community, these participants represent a range of ethnicities, ages, and genders. Three of these participants were also invited to participate in an interview (see section 3.3.5 below).

3.3.4 Process of collecting video data

The videos were published by the organisations on their respective social media channels and publicly accessible. A wide range of topics were covered, including (but not limited to): Deaf Club closures, online gatherings, job advertisements for a Deaf-related organisation, request for financial support, an update about access to a Deaf Club, surveys, and sporting events. A total of 15 videos were collected, comprising a total length of 23:34 minutes of data. Table 2 below outlines the organisation, the presenter, the topic, and the length of each video in the dataset.

Table 2

List of videos collected for this study

Video #	Organisation	Presenter	Topic	Length (m:ss)
1	Auckland Deaf Society	Brent (video a)	My Second Home festival going ahead	2:08
2		Brent (video b)	Deaf cricket on this weekend	2:04
3		Brent (video c)	Deaf Club's dinner menu	0:59
4		Julie-Anne (video a)	Deaf Club closure due to Matariki	0:18
5		Julie-Anne (video b)	Club Manager's monthly update	2:25
6		Tanesha (video a)	Upcoming Māori Deaf Hui at Deaf Club	1:03
7	NZSL Board	Josje (video a)	3x vacancies at ODI	1:09
8		Darryl (video a)	Reminder re NZSL Community Survey	1:09
9	Deaf Society of Canterbury	Craigo (video a)	Upcoming SGM – reminder	1:02
10		Craigo (video b)	CCTV at Deaf Club	2:29
11		Craigo (video c)	Deaf Club becomes a Vaccine Pass venue	2:12
12		Rodney (video a)	Deaf Golden Oldies rugby game in Christchurch	2:44
13	Wellington Deaf Society	Candice (video a)	Reminder re National Online Deaf Club	0:45
14		Darryl (video b)	Financial pledges for new Deaf Club building	1:32
15	Manawatu Deaf Society	Sheryl (video a)	Deaf Club closure due to Labour Weekend	1:35
			Total	**23:34**

These videos were individually downloaded from the respective platform and stored on my supervisor's AUT OneDrive as well as on an external hard drive device stored in a locked drawer in her office at AUT.

3.3.5 Process of collecting data: The interviews

In addition to the video analyses, three presenters were invited to participate in individual one-hour, semi-structured interviews to gain insight into presenters' decision-making: Darryl, Josje, and Alex[6]. In a larger study it would be ideal to interview all participants, however in this case three were chosen to fit the scope of a master's study. These three were specifically chosen

[6] Note: Alex is a pseudonym as this participant chose to be identified in the video dataset, but not in the interview data. This has been done with their full understanding that their interview data is only semi de-identified (i.e. due to the small dataset of video announcements).

because they each had produced video(s) for different organisations, and their video(s) contained an interesting range of discourse features as identified in the preliminary analysis (see section 4.2). Furthermore, from my personal knowledge, these three individuals have produced many NZSL videos over the years and were likely to have reflective skills due to their experience. They were also more likely to be consciously aware of discourse features and be able to answer questions about these as identified in their video(s).

I approached potential interview participants directly to gauge interest, and all three were keen to be interviewed. I arranged a time with each of them for their interview, and consent was verbally sought and received in the recorded interview (in addition to the original written informed consent). Zoom was used for the interviews. This is a video conferencing platform familiar to the individuals and was also chosen for its recording abilities. I also created a backup recording of each interview with a video camera positioned behind me so the computer screen (displaying myself and the interviewee on Zoom) was clearly visible.

Prior to the interviews, I developed interview questions that were semi-structured and underpinned by an appreciative inquiry approach (see section 3.2). I then conducted a short practice session with my supervisor, which allowed me to check that the Zoom recording function captured both myself and the interviewee. I was also able to check that the sequences of the questions flowed well for the interview. After receiving and implementing feedback from my supervisor, I conducted a final practice session with a Deaf friend to check that my style of questioning was culturally appropriate. I received valuable feedback which I used to revise the final questions (see Appendix G for a sample of the semi-structured interview questions). Once the interviews were completed, I created transcripts by translating the recordings into written English.

3.4 Further ethical considerations

The New Zealand Deaf community is small, and as mentioned in chapter 1 it is not unusual for individuals to have multiple social and professional roles within the community. Furthermore, the Deaf community values collectiveness (e.g. Mindess, 1999). When contacting the participating organisations and individuals, I took care to clearly introduce myself as a master's student at AUT, and not one of my other community roles. I also clearly explained that I am researching language use only. Given the small and close-knit nature of the community, it was ethically and culturally appropriate for me to directly contact the organisations and individuals; anything less direct would be perceived as very odd.

From the beginning of this study, it has been made clear that the dataset, and subsequently the thesis, would not be anonymous. This is a realistic approach because the videos are publicly available online on the social media platforms of familiar Deaf community organisations, and the presenters are visible in the videos. Using real names is also an important way to acknowledge the skill and expertise of these Deaf presenters. It would be culturally inappropriate and a disservice to the expert participants if the research masked their identities. Therefore, it was made clear to potential participants that if they agreed to participate in this research, they would be identifiable, and if they did not want to be identified they should choose to not participate. In saying this, I did explicitly check again during the data collection process if participants were happy to have their real names used and all were, apart from the one participant who chose to use a pseudonym only for the interview.

3.4 Video annotation

Once the data had been collected, the next step was to note initial broad observations of patterns across all videos (section 3.4.1), to understand potential areas for closer examination. Section 3.4.2 outlines the process of annotating the videos which allows for moment-by-moment descriptions of several layers: annotating lexical items, as well as any co-occurring information such as eye gaze, head movements and so on, all of which contribute to the meaning of the message.

3.4.1 Initial observations

The first part of this process was to download the videos and view them in full, making initial observation notes. This provided me with a high-level overview of what was happening in each of the videos in terms of structure and features, such as whether openings and/or closings were used, audience acknowledgement, and any other interesting features.

3.4.2 ELAN

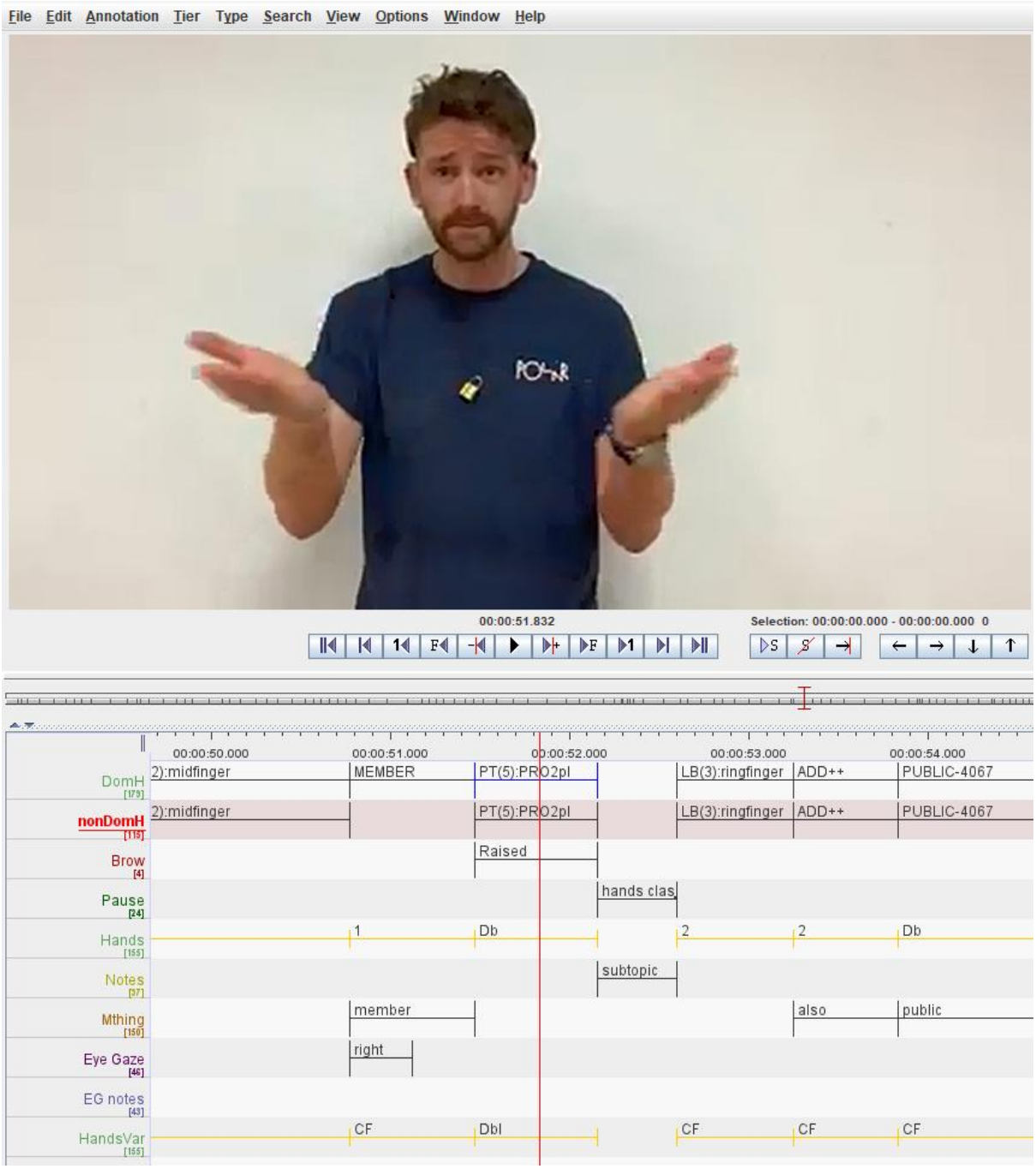
ELAN (EUDICO Linguistic Annotator[7]) software was used for annotation and analysis of the videos. ELAN is widely used for coding and annotation of data within signed language research (for example, Hou, 2022; Napoli et al., 2022; Young et al., 2012). This software is suitable for signed language research due to its ability to have multiple tiers of annotation that can be precisely synced to video data. Each annotation is linked to a specific timeline on the video, and multiple tiers can be added for observations and analysis, including relationships between tiers.

[7] See https://archive.mpi.nl/tla/elan

Figure 1 below shows an example of the relationship between the production of signs and non-manual features, and how I annotated this. While referencing to his unknown audience (PT(5):PRO2pl) Craigo also has his brows raised; see chapter 5 for a detailed examination of this excerpt.

Figure 1

An ELAN screengrab



In Figure 1 the video is paused while Craigo is referencing the audience, as indicated by the vertical red line which corresponds to its position along the video timeline. Within the tiers (seen

on the left in Figure 1) key information has been annotated and lexical signs have been glossed. More detail is provided in section 3.5.3 below.

3.4.3 Glossing and annotation

Glossing and annotation of all announcement videos formed the basis of the discourse analysis. This process also constituted the preliminary analysis phase (section 4.2) as I was able to notice interesting discourse features annotating and re-checking the video data. Each lexical sign was glossed. Glossing is a method of noting each sign in written form, by using an approximately equivalent English word written in capital letters (McKee, 2017; Johnston & Schembri, 2007). Where a sign did not have an appropriate English equivalent or was a partly-lexical depicting sign I instead included a brief description of the sign. For example, in one video, a presenter had established his raised right hand (with palm facing the camera) as a referent for a letter (document). As his announcement progressed, he continued to use that referent, and when he specifically pointed to the letter, this was annotated as *DS:point-at-letter*[8] to describe this action.

Glossing consistency was achieved by using a Controlled Vocabulary template provided by Victoria University of Wellington's Deaf Studies Research Unit, based on entries in the Online NZSL Dictionary[9]. Due to the multi-layered nature of NZSL, annotating and glossing NZSL video data is an extremely time-consuming process (see McKee & Vale, 2017). This challenge is further compounded by the fact that signed language annotation remains a manual task (see for example, Crasborn, 2022). This process took roughly one hour for each minute of video.

In addition to lexical glossing, tiers included non-manual features, such as eye gaze, mouthing, head-nod, and brow positions. This was a cyclical process: the tiers were initially established by what I observed in the preliminary analysis. However, as I progressed with annotation, and the repeated viewings of the dataset, I continued to refine the tiers until the entire dataset was annotated. The focus of this research and the literature review process also influenced the final tier choices (e.g. having a distinct tier for pauses). I also added a tier for notes where I could capture additional observations as I went. This was part of the data-driven approach whereby observations of the data itself drove the final decision to focus on pauses (chapter 4) and pronouns for audience reference (chapter 5).

[8] DS: Depicting sign; see McKee (2017).
[9] See https://www.nzsl.nz/

3.5 Analysis

3.5.1 Analysis of video announcements

Once the entire video dataset was glossed and annotated into ELAN, it was exported to Excel so I could count occurrences and forms of the selected features (i.e. pauses and pronouns). I then conducted a more detailed discourse analysis of each occurrence within the context it occurred; that is, I went back to the primary video data to examine each excerpt at a micro-level. It was critical to understand how each feature was used within the immediate context (the presenter's moment-by-moment decision making) as well as the overall context of the announcement. In chapters 4 and 5, selected excerpts are presented, transcribed with necessary non-manual information alongside the glossing (e.g. pause length, eye gaze, raised or furrowed brows, head nods).

3.5.2 Interviews

To analyse the interview data, I first noted similar and different themes from the three participants. I also searched for keywords that related to the research questions (e.g. 'pause', 'audience', 'people watching', 'who'), and made notes of insights provided by interviewees. Relevant quotes are presented in chapters 4 and 5 to help further understand participant perspectives on the features of interest. I acknowledge that their views do not represent all participants in the dataset, but they do provide some key insights into presenters' decision-making processes.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the theoretical and practical approaches used for this study. Ethical considerations, participants, data collection methods, annotation, and analysis have been described. The next two chapters present findings from the analysis of this dataset. Chapter 4 will focus on the discourse functions of pausing, and chapter 5 will describe how the unseen audience were referenced in the announcement videos.

Chapter 4 - Functions of pausing in NZSL asynchronous announcements

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores pausing as a discourse strategy in NZSL video announcements. Deliberate use of pausing contributes to the clarity and cohesion of discourse, including its information structure and flow (Swerts, 1997; Yang, 2004). As outlined in chapter 2 (section 2.5), pausing can function as a discourse marker by framing discrete information units, thus creating boundaries (Brown & Yule, 1983; Swerts, 1997; Roy, 1989 – see section 2.5). Pauses, as contextualisation cues, can also indicate footing shifts (section 2.7), however the focus in this chapter is the use of pauses to provide clarity to the talk. Preliminary observation of the dataset revealed a noticeable amount of pausing across all videos, and I was motivated to understand how and why presenters were using pausing to address an unseen and asynchronous audience.

Section 4.2 below presents my preliminary observations of the dataset as a whole and outlines my rationale for focusing on pausing (this chapter) and pronouns for audience address (chapter 5). Section 4.3 then outlines the different forms and functions of all pauses identified in the dataset and discusses which were and which were not considered to function as discourse markers. Finally, section 4.4 examines different pausing functions in closer detail, drawing on discourse analysis to explore the moment-by-moment functions of pausing in context.

4.2 Preliminary observations

This study focuses on features of a likely new broadcast style developing in NZSL (McKee et al., 2024), a new area for linguistic research in NZSL. For that reason, the analysis needed to be data-driven and not approached with pre-conceived ideas, facilitating openness to key features in the asynchronous video dataset. To this end, I began with a preliminary observation phase, in which I carefully watched the videos multiple times, noting patterns and features of interest. I also made notes about discourse patterns previously found in the signed language literature (chapter 2), as well as my own perspective as a Deaf NZSL user with experience making similar videos. These early insights into the full dataset revealed a range of interesting discourse patterns, such as:

- Pausing: a noticeable range of pauses used in different ways, and of varying lengths
- References to an unseen audience: varying from singular reference to plural reference

- Paralinguistic behaviours such as exaggerated head and body movements (e.g. leaning towards the camera)
- Almost non-existent role-shifting (McKee, 2017; Goswell, 2011). Role shift is a key feature of signed languages; I had expected to see it in the videos and the lack of it was striking
- Eyebrow furrowing to signal parenthetical asides
- Eye gaze: a variation of eye gazes, including looking at the camera only, looking off-camera while thinking or during a pause, or to read prompt notes

Initial observations were discussed with my supervisor, and based on this preliminary analysis the focus of this research was narrowed to two features, to fit the scope of a master's study. I decided to explore pausing (this chapter) and audience reference (chapter 5), based on interesting and plentiful examples in the data and my own intuition about what would be valuable new knowledge for the Deaf community. The other features noted above would be a fruitful focus for future studies but were decided to be outside of the scope of the current study (except where relevant to the selected features, for example the use of eye gaze during pausing).

Throughout this study, I refer to a (somewhat) unknown audience as the *unseen audience*. The rationale for this choice is that while the audience is theoretically unknown (one can never predict who will view an online video on a public page), I suggest the presenters do have at least some idea of who their audience is (as also discussed by Dynel, 2014; Frobenius, 2014; see Sections 2.7 and 5.3.1), based on the following observations:

- The videos chosen for this study are all produced in NZSL with no English voiceover; this limits the audience to those proficient in NZSL.
- The videos are uploaded to specific places: the organisation's social media platform (such as Facebook and YouTube), thus the followers/subscribers of these platforms are presumed to be the primary audience.
- At times, the role of the presenter (e.g. Deaf Club president) make it very likely that a specific group within the community (e.g. Deaf Club members) are the target audience.

Preliminary observations allowed me to refine research question 2, which had initially been left broad so as not to make assumptions about what would be found in the data. As pausing emerged as a key feature warranting more detailed analysis, research question 2 was rephrased to: *How does pausing function at a detailed discourse level in video announcements?*

The nature of the unseen/imagined audience will be explored further through discourse analysis in chapter 5. The remainder of this chapter now turns to focus on pausing as a discourse function in NZSL video announcements.

4.3 Overview of pauses: Form, function, and length

I began the pausing analysis by identifying all pauses across the dataset. As a fluent NZSL user, I drew on my experience to identify when a pause had occurred – by noticing when the presenter stopped signing (unfilled pauses), or when they held their sign (filled pauses). This section outlines the forms observed in the dataset (section 4.3.1) followed by the pausing functions (section 4.3.2). Lastly, the lengths of the pauses are briefly described in section 4.3.3.

4.3.1 Forms of pausing in the dataset

The first phase of this analysis was to identify different pausing forms in the dataset, i.e. the different ways the presenters paused in their talk. To date no NZSL research has focused on pausing, and so it was important to describe what pausing looked like rather than starting with pre-conceived ideas.

There were 166 pauses in total across the dataset, and three different forms of pauses were identified – see Table 3 below. Within the forms, there were slight phonological differences – described hereon as 'form variation'.

Table 3

Forms of pausing identified in the dataset

Form	Tokens
Hands clasped	128
Hands down The presenter's hands have either dropped into a natural resting position next to their body, or they have clasped their hands below the video frame.	11
Sign held The presenter's hands were momentarily held or stuttered before resuming their talk.	27
Total	**166**

The remainder of this section provides an outline of these different forms and slight variations within them.

Hands clasped

Two form variations of *hands clasped* (n=128) were identified in the dataset (see Images A and B in Figure 2 below). In the first type, one hand is fisted, the other hand is cupped over the fisted hand, and their hands are held in front of their chest (Image A below). This occurred 118 times across eight participants. The other form variation was one hand in palm-up orientation, with the other hand palm-down, together holding a cupped position (Image B below). This occurred 10 times across three participants.

Figure 2

Two form variations of hands clasped

Image A

Image B

Note. Two examples of form variation of pauses where the presenter's hands were placed together. Image A from Craigo (video b), Image B from Brent (video a).

These form variations did not appear to affect pause function (section 4.3.2) in any way, so I considered them to be the same form (*hands clasped*) for the purpose of this study and annotated them as such. It is likely these variations reflect individual personal style.

Hands down

Another form of pause observed in the dataset was *hands down* (n=11), and two variations were identified (see Images A and B in Figure 3 below). In Image A, the presenter's arms and hands have dropped to a natural resting position on both sides of their body. In Image B, they have clasped

their hands just below the video frame, as evidenced by their lower arms visibly in front of their body.

Figure 3

Form variations of hands down

Image A

Image B

Note. Two examples of form variation of pauses where the presenter's hands/arms were down. Image A from Rodney (video a), Image B from Craigo (video b).

Like the hands clasped form variations, these hands down form variations appeared not to change the pause function (see section 4.3.2) and are more likely to again be personal styles of the presenters. Therefore, these variations are annotated as one form of hands down throughout the dataset.

All hands clasped and hands down pauses function in the dataset as unfilled pauses - otherwise known as silence because no signs were being produced at the time (e.g., Grosjean, 1979).

Sign held

Two variations of the *sign held* form were identified in the dataset. The first was when a presenter stuttered their signing (Figure 4). This occurred seven times across two participants.

Figure 4

Variation of sign held: stuttering

Note. Rodney completed signing OPEN, then stuttered by making a series of indistinct hand gestures and facial expressions before signing ANYTIME to recommence the utterance. This is a natural part of talk. From Rodney (video a).

The other sign held variation was when the presenter stopped signing mid-production to either hold or change their sign, before continuing (Figures 5 and 6 below); otherwise commonly known as a *false start*. This occurred seven times across six participants.

Figure 5

Variation of sign held: lengthened sign

Note. From Julie-Anne (video b).

In Figure 5 above, Julie-Anne signed IF then stopped, held the sign and shifted her eye gaze off-camera briefly. She then changed her head position and produced a different sign.

Tanesha, in Figure 6 below, completed signing HUI, then paused and held her hands in the air while shifting her eye gaze off-camera to recollect thoughts, then continued with the sentence, by signing LIKE.

Figure 6

Another variation of sign held: lengthened sign

Note. From Tanesha (video a).

The sign held forms, also known as filled pauses (e.g. Spijker & Oomen, 2023), tended to occur when presenters were thinking. This was shown in a variety of ways: their eye gaze shifting off-camera briefly, stuttering their signs, or holding their sign with either their eye gaze remaining on the camera, or shifted off the camera. The occurrences of the different sign held forms throughout the dataset are low compared to the hands clasped and hands down forms.

Now that pausing forms have been described, section 4.3.2 will outline the different functions of pauses that occurred throughout the dataset.

4.3.2 Functions of pausing in the dataset

Once all the pauses and their forms had been identified, I conducted a more detailed analysis to explore their functions within the video announcements. I examined the context for each of the 166 pause tokens, including the linguistic environment such as where in the discourse it was occurring, and what happened before and after that pause. From this analysis, as well as drawing on my NZSL video announcement experience, I categorised the pause tokens into four types of functions: boundary marker, grammatical marker, planning, and drawing focus. When I was unable to determine a pause's function, that token was categorised as *unknown*. Table 4 below provides more detail about the different functions and sub-functions identified.

Table 4

Functions of all pauses in the dataset

Function	Sub-function	Definition	Tokens

Boundary marker	*End of introduction* Unfilled pause	The video has opened with the presenter giving an introduction such as a greeting (*hello/kia ora/tēnā koutou katoa*), and/or introduced themselves, then paused.	9
	New topic Unfilled pause	New information unrelated to the preceding information comes after the pause.	7
	Subtopic Unfilled pause	Information is related to the preceding topic of the announcement, prior to the pause.	26
	Closing Unfilled pause	Either at the very end of the video announcement, or end of the main topic discussed, before the person 'signs off' with a farewell greeting such as *thank you*/*bye*.	10
Grammatical marker	*Rh-Q* (Rhetorical question[10]) Unfilled pause	A rhetorical question has been asked, such as *when, where, what,* and the presenter has paused before answering that question themselves[11].	8
Planning	*Reading notes* Unfilled pause	The person has looked off-camera/screen and is reading their notes/cue cards beyond the camera.	41
	Recollecting Filled pause	The person has stopped, thinking – as evidenced by shifting their eye gaze off-camera - or has hesitated[12] briefly before continuing with their signing[13].	17
	Natural break Unfilled pause	At the end of a phrase, where it is common practice to take a breather before continuing with the dialogue (Zellner, 1994).	28
Drawing focus	*Emphasis* Both unfilled and filled pause	The presenter has paused to place emphasis on the upcoming word or phrase.	7

[10] McKee, 2017
[11] Rhetorical questions are also known as pseudo-clefts (Johnston & Schembri, 2007)
[12] See 4.3.1 for description of sign held forms
[13] None of the hands clasped forms were associated with recollecting, only two hands down, and the rest (15) sign held

Unknown		Unable to clearly determine the function of this specific pause.	13
		TOTAL	**166**

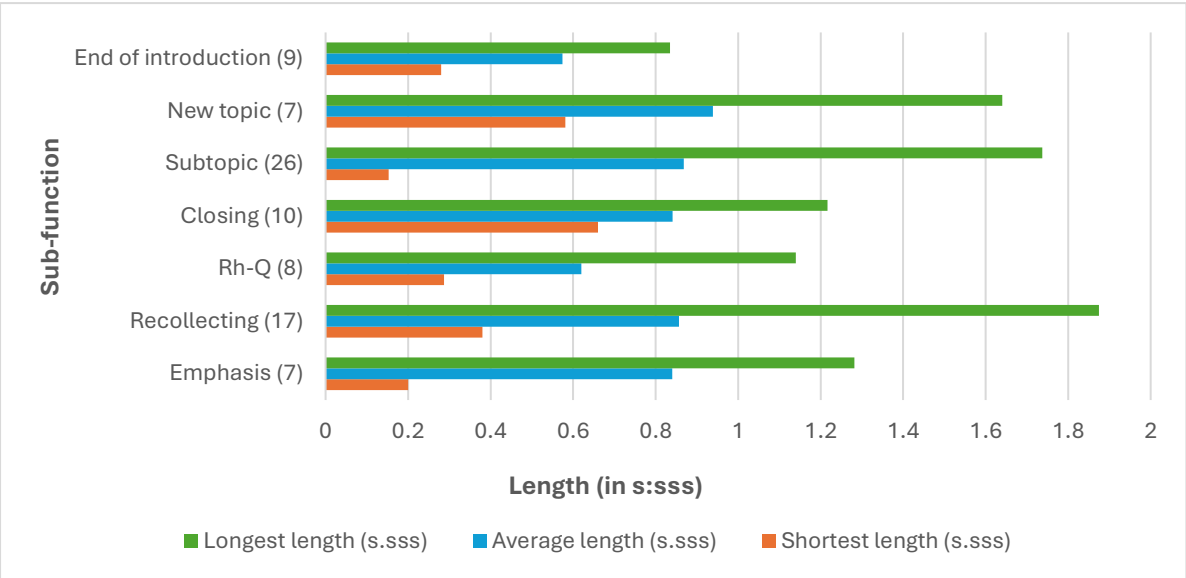
While pauses for *reading notes* occurred the most (n=41), further analysis revealed that these pauses were driven by the physical need to look away and read the prompt notes. Similarly, pauses classified as *natural breaks* (n=28) were also analysed as occurring due to the physical need to stop and breathe; the presenter continued talking about the same information. As such, these two sub-functions were not considered to have discourse functions and were not included in the subset of data for more detailed analysis. Lastly, any pauses for which function could not be determined (*unknown*; n=13) were excluded from the subset, except for the planning sub-function *recollecting* (not a discourse marker) which was included as it was the second-highest occurring pause in the subset, and so it is interesting to observe. Thus, the remaining pauses in the subset (n=84) constituted the subset of data for detailed discourse analysis (section 4.4 below).

4.3.3 Length of pauses

The length of pause tokens across the subset of discourse markers (n=84) varied: see Figure 7 below. Fifty-eight pauses (69.05%) were less than 1.0 seconds in length, with the remaining 26 (30.95%) over 1.0 second in length.

Figure 7

Lengths of each pause sub-function



We know from research literature on spoken discourse (see section 2.5) that pausing can be used to indicate information structure and mark boundaries, and longer pauses can be associated with clearer discourse boundaries (Swerts, 1997). The current study somewhat supports these findings, as longer pauses were more evident with new topics, subtopics, and natural breaks in the dialogue. However, longer pauses were also associated with the planning function of *recollecting*. Thus, in this subset, the patterns show that pause length alone does not determine pause function.

Figure 7 above has provided an overview of the lengths of each pause sub-function. Section 4.4 provides a more fine-grained discourse analysis of selected excerpts to understand the pauses (and pause length) in the context in which they occurred.

4.4 Pausing in context: a more detailed exploration

Butterworth (1980; see section 2.5) suggests that pauses support the speaker's cognitive processes. Ahern and Brown (2006; see section 2.3) recommend correct use of pauses to aid the audience's understanding of the dialogue. The three interview participants in the current study also alluded to this by stating that they paused both to aid themselves, as well as their audience's ability to process the information they had watched up to that point:

> *"The pauses were there to give the audience time to process the information; give them a chance to work out the details. And pauses also give the audience a chance to get ready for the next topic. Pauses are also helpful for me to think about what to say next, especially if there is no script."* (Darryl)

> *"I would say it is the process of information, signing something assertively/clearly, then pausing, then continuing to sign and pause. Not signing everything in one go without a pause!"* (Alex)

This section further explores the functions and sub-functions identified in section 4.3.2 above by illustrating each with discourse analysis of an excerpt. I also draw on the interview data where relevant, to understand participants' awareness of, and motivation for, using pauses as discourse markers.

Each of the excerpts below include the NZSL gloss as well as relevant non-linguistic information such as eye gaze direction of the presenter (if it is not at the camera), non-manual features such as eyebrow position (e.g. *br* for brows raised, *bf* for furrowed brows), hands (during pauses) such as *hc* for clasped hands, head nods (*hn*) and body movements (e.g. *lf* for leaning forward), and

EG for eye gaze. Prior to each excerpt, the English translation is provided. Please see Appendix H for further details about the transcription and glossing conventions used.

4.4.1 Pausing as a boundary marker: End of introduction

Interestingly, only nine out of 15 videos opened with an introduction, however all nine of these videos included an *end of introduction* pause. This pause sub-function signalled that the introduction had concluded. Following this pause, the presenters then either moved onto general talk or introduced the subject of the announcement.

In Excerpt 1 below, Darryl is introducing himself and his role in relation to the organisation, before he proceeds to establish the topic of the announcement (a fundraising pledge).

Excerpt 1: WDS president's announcement about new building's fundraising pledge

English translation: *Kia ora, I'm Darryl, the president of WDS. As you can see, the new building behind me will be completed very soon, in March 2021*.

1	hn br hn br KIA-ORA++ PT:PRO1 DARRYL #WDS PRESIDENT **[hc 0.28]** LOOK PT:loc= $\overline{EG:b}$
2	br hn hn =NEW BUILDING EXCITED LOOK, SOON FINISH MARCH 2021. $\overline{EG:b}$

In Excerpt 1, the presenter greets his unknown audience, and introduces himself, the organisation, and his role (line 1 – "*Kia ora, I'm Darryl, the president of WDS"*). He then pauses with hands clasped for 0.28 seconds (also line 1, in bold text). Just prior to this pause, he nods to affirm his role as president. Head nods used at end of declarative statements are described as *affirmative head nods*, and assert the information in the predicate (McKee, 2017; Johnston & Schembri, 2007). The nod in this context also serves as a boundary marker (Lackner, 2018), signalling to the audience that the introduction part of the talk has been completed.

After the pause, the presenter turns his body to look and point behind him (end of line 1), referring to the building in the background ("*As you can see, the new building behind me…",* lines 1 and 2) which has been marked as a new topic by use of raised brows[14] (lines 1 and 2).

[14] 'Topicalisation' is when signers place the topic at the beginning of the sentence, and use a brow raise (McKee, 2017).

Darryl was one of the interview participants, and he shared about his purposeful decision to open his videos with an introduction:

> *"I am conscious that I have to be very clear of my role and state the purpose of the video…The role is very important…what's your job, what exactly is it that you do, and why you're standing in front of the camera. Providing some kind of background information, it needn't be in depth, but you know, some context is important…The Deaf community is small, so it's important to state your role. It sets up expectations for the viewers about the relationship you have with them and why you're sharing the information."* (Darryl)

In his announcement, Darryl first establishes the focus of his talk by describing the new building that is soon going to be completed. Together with the pause after the opening introduction of himself in line 1, this has signalled a boundary ending the introduction, due to the completion of the introductory talk. This function aids the unseen audience's processing of information.

4.4.2 Pausing as a boundary marker: New topic

Across the subset, there were only seven *new topic* pauses identified out of 84 pause tokens. The new topic pause sub-function simultaneously signalled that a topic was finished and preceded the introduction of a new topic. While similar to the excerpt provided in 4.4.1, new topic pauses were those that were not preceded by an introduction from the presenter.

Excerpt 2 is from an announcement in which the presenter is sharing various snippets of short news from her organisation, a local Deaf Club, for its members. Prior to excerpt 2 below, Julie-Anne has been thanking some volunteers for their work inside the clubroom, then she moves onto introducing a new topic about NZSL classes.

Excerpt 2: ADS manager giving updates to members

English translation: *…people and their team for their volunteering, thank you. As for the NZSL classes in 2022, these are now being promoted for interested people to register*.

1	br PEOPLE AND PT(S):POSS2 GROUP HELP VOLUNTEER THANK-YOU++ **[hc 1.02]=** $\overline{EG:n}$
2	br bf br+hn br br+hn =NZSL CLASS NOW—2022 NEXT-YEAR START PROMOTE INTEREST REGISTER $\overline{EG:d}$ $\overline{EG:n}$

In line 1, and as seen in Figure 8 below, Julie-Anne thanks a group of volunteers for their work. She then clasps her hands for 1.02 seconds, glances briefly at her notes[15] beneath the camera, and then brings her eye gaze back to the camera. My observations across the dataset suggest that eye gazes away from the camera may also signal that there is new information to come.

Figure 8

A new topic pause

Note. Julie-Anne ending one topic, pausing, before continuing with a new topic, which is marked by a brow raise. From Julie-Anne (video b).

In line 2, following the pause, the topic of NZSL classes is introduced as a new topic by topicalisation and brow raising, which remains while signing NOW 2022. Topic-comment sentences signal new information in discourse (McKee, 2017), which is further evidence that the pause here functions to mark the new subsequent topic.

There is then a slight self-correction: the presenter starts to sign NOW, and quickly glances downwards before changing to 2022 instead, then clarifies NEXT YEAR with furrowed brows. This can be considered a parenthetical aside (McKee, 1992).

Excerpt 2 is representative of other pauses functioning as new topic boundary markers in the subset. That is, to clearly signal a change of topic, presenters often clearly paused, with their eye gaze away from the camera, and following the pause used raised brows to mark the new topic.

[15] While *reading notes* (n =41) was identified throughout the data set (just like here by the presenter looking away from the camera), and subsequently excluded from further analysis, this particular pause has not been categorised as *reading notes* because the presenter has clearly ended the previous topic with the words THANK-YOU to close that sentence – by thanking a group of volunteers for their work – and has signalled new information (the NZSL classes) after the pause. This is different to pauses classed as *reading notes* where the presenter only paused to read their notes, and then continued with the same topic.

4.4.3 Pausing as a boundary marker: Subtopic

In this dataset, the *subtopic* sub-function of pauses (n = 26) signalled that the main topic had been established, and was being supported by further information given after a pause. Excerpt 3 below is part of an announcement where the presenter is promoting job vacancies at a government department (ODI: the Office for Disability Issues [16]), and she is giving further information about each of the three jobs and the deadlines for applications.

Excerpt 3: Available jobs at a government department

English translation: *Three jobs are available within ODI's NZSL Team. The first one…*

	br	bf	br	hn	hn
1	THREE WORK FREE PT:loc #ODI IN NZSL TEAM PT:loc **[hc 1.12]** LB:index				
	$\overline{EG: h}$			$\overline{EG: h}$	

In line 1, Josje outlines the topic of her talk by introducing the topic: "*Three jobs are available within ODI's NZSL Team*." Here she uses a topic-comment structure, signalled by raised eyebrows at the start of the phrase (raised while signing THREE, line 1). Furthermore, by fronting the sentence with the specific number of jobs available (three) she signals that this is important information (as opposed to perhaps generalising that the department had *some* job vacancies). While fingerspelling ODI, the presenter glances at her hands, possibly to ensure she produced the letters correctly. Josje then has a furrowed brow whilst signing IN for "*in the NZSL Team*", which is an example of a parenthetical aside. She has added further information that is presumably shared knowledge between herself and the unseen audience: the Deaf community (the presumptive audience of this announcement) are likely to be familiar with this department and its NZSL team.

Josje then clasps her hands to pause for 1.12 seconds while nodding, likely to hold her audience's attention because she is not finished talking about this topic. She then uses list buoys (see section 2.4.2): directly following the pause, she points to her index finger (including an eye gaze at her hands) which links back to the numerical value given at the beginning of line 1. This indicates that the presenter is about to talk about the first of the three jobs available. McKee (2017) describes this as referring to known referents (old information), by involving an established referent (*three available jobs*). This is evidence that the pause here is functioning as a 'sub-topic' boundary marker: after the pause, she expands on information that has already been established.

[16] At the time of writing this thesis, this organisation is now known as Whaikaha – Ministry of Disabled People.

4.4.4 Pausing as a boundary marker: Closing

Ten out of 15 videos included a farewell or thank-you prior to closing. All 10 of these videos included a pause as a *closing* sub-function. This occurred at the end of the main announcement content and preceded farewells or other closing comments, signalling that the announcement was about to be completed. Closing pauses had the longest duration among the shortest pauses across the seven pause sub-functions.

In Excerpt 4, Tanesha is announcing that there will be a hui at the Deaf Club, which is also going to be a fundraising event for her group, by way of having some food for sale. Below in Excerpt 4, we see Tanesha signing off her talk by farewelling her unseen audience.

Excerpt 4: Announcing an upcoming hui at ADS

English translation: *Some of the food will be free; some will be available for purchase. I hope to see you all there. Thanks, bye bye.*

1	*lr* *ll* SOME FOOD WILL FREE, SOME FOOD WILL LITTLE-BIT PAY++ **[hc 1.21]**=
2	=[thumbs-up] HOPE SEE PT:PRO2 ALL THERE [thumbs-up] THANK-YOU BYE++

In line 1, Tanesha is clarifying about food at the hui ("*Some of the food will be free; some will be available for purchase")* which she does in a contrasting manner, shifting her body to her right for the first part, and then shifting to the left for the second. She then pauses with hands clasped for 1.21 seconds. After this pause, at the beginning of line 2, she slightly tilts her head and holds up her thumbs briefly (0.87 seconds). From my personal observations and from noticing usage across the subset, the 'thumbs up' gesture is likely to also function as a discourse marker, to signal the conclusion of that utterance (similar to one of the functions of *okay* in spoken English). This is an example of the pause functioning alongside other discourse markers. The visual information conveyed by thumbs pointing up after an utterance and a closing pause could be perceived as "I'm finished with this piece of information, and I'm moving on". This is supported by the following utterance in line 2: "*I hope to see you all there*.", which is not directly related to the previous discussion of food.

With that phrase ("*I hope to see you all there")*, the presenter could be very well sharing her desire for people to come along to this hui, but this expression also serves as a common farewell

message in NZSL (akin to “see you soon” or “catch you later”). The thumbs-up gesture is produced very briefly (0.44 seconds) for a second time, to signal the utterance boundary. She then moves into her final farewell greeting: “*Thanks, bye bye*” before the video finishes. Throughout this excerpt, the presenter maintains her eye gaze at the camera and does not change her brow position at all.

Pausing as a closing discourse marker functioned similarly in other excerpts. Typically, the key announcement information was shared, followed by a closing pause alongside other discourse markers, and then a farewell to the unseen audience.

4.4.5 Pausing as a grammatical function: Rhetorical question

This section examines pauses that served a grammatical purpose. One type of grammatical function pause was identified in the subset as occurring after rhetorical questions.

In this dataset, *rhetorical question* sub-function of pause (n = 8) is identified where the presenter has ended an utterance with a wh-word: *what, how, when,* and *why*, and paused briefly before answering their own question. Not all rhetorical questions in the subset had a pause; only those with a pause were classified as such.

Excerpt 5 is an announcement that was produced during the COVID-19 lockdowns in New Zealand. At this time, virtual Deaf Clubs were established and Deaf people met regularly online in lieu of face-to-face socialising opportunities. Here, Candice is reminding her audience that an online Deaf Club will be happening the next day.

Excerpt 5: Reminder from WDS about online Deaf Club

English translation: *I’m reminding you all about the national online Deaf Club which is happening tomorrow of course*.

1	*pm* *br* *br* REMIND-YOU-ALL+++ TOMORROW HAVE WHAT? **[hc 0.32]** NATIONAL=
2	*br* *hn* =ONLINE DEAF CLUB

In line 1, Candice signs *“I’m reminding you all”* in a manner akin to literally tapping people on their shoulders. This serves to draw attention , prior to commencing her talk. With a raised brow to create a rhetorical question, she signs TOMORROW HAVE WHAT? before pausing for 0.32

seconds with clasped hands. This very brief pause likely serves to keep the unseen audience interested in the talk, because there is more information to follow.

After the pause, the presenter answers herself by stating "*The national online Deaf Club*" and indicates she knows this is shared knowledge between herself and the unseen audience by nodding her head – which in this context translates into English as "*of course*". As with Excerpt 1, the use of a head nod in these circumstances serves as an affirming function.

This style of phrasing is intended to draw audience involvement (McKee, 2017), by incorporating a rhetorical question that serves a stylistic purpose. Typically, in NZSL wh-questions are marked with furrowed brows, signalling the interlocutor to answer . However, in this case, the wh-question is marked with raised brows, meaning the answer will be given by the presenter. Deliberate use of the pause has given prominence to this utterance, making this excerpt a clear example of a pause supporting the rhetorical question sub-function.

4.4.6 Pausing as a planning function: Recollecting

This section examines an example of pausing as a planning sub-function: *recollecting*. In this subset, the recollecting sub-function of pauses (n=17) signalled a planning problem by the presenter; they have paused to recollect their thoughts. As such, it is not considered a discourse marker in that it is not a deliberate pause. In the subset, this pause was the second-longest type, and occurred with seven out of nine presenters. This may be due to the informal delivery style (either unscripted or semi-scripted) of these announcements.

Excerpt 6 is an announcement about the Deaf Club's end-of-year function, and the new proof-of-entry requirements that had recently been voted in by the Board, considering the COVID-19 climate at the time. Here, Craigo is outlining the date of the event, and he momentarily loses his train of thought, pausing to recollect what to say next.

Excerpt 6: DSC president's announcement about end-of-year function

English translation: ...*which will be on Friday 10th December, F —2021*.

1	br hn ht hn WHEN? FRIDAY 10 DECEMBER, #F—**[h/hs 1.88]** 2021 EG: ur	

In line 1, Craigo has used the rhetorical question WHEN (like Excerpt 5 but without a following pause), with a brow raise, then the date is given, with a brief affirming head-nod at the end: "*Friday 10th December*". He then starts signing (presumably) FRIDAY, but he likely has realised

he has already said it, so hesitates by holding the first part of the sign, tilts his head to the right and looks upwards (see Figure 9), all of which is 1.88 seconds long. Returning his eye gaze to the camera, he self-corrects and changes his sign from FRIDAY to 2021 affirmed with a head nod.

Figure 9

A recollecting pause

Note: The presenter holds the sign "F" while looking upwards to recall, and then self-corrects to sign TWO. From Craigo (video c).

It is interesting to observe that throughout this announcement, Craigo pauses often to refer to his notes; for this repair, he does not glance at his notes, instead to another space – indicating this part of the talk was not scripted.

This example of holding the sign, and the presenter then glancing upwards to collect their thoughts, is a clear example of the recollecting sub-function pause. This is also an example of a footing shift, where his footing was giving details about the event, then shifted to recollecting, then shifted back to his original footing. Footing shifts are discussed in detail in chapter 5.

4.4.7 Pausing as a drawing-focus function: Emphasis

Pausing for *emphasis* (n=7) signals that the presenter is placing importance on what is being said. They sign a phrase, then pause, and end the phrase with the crucial information, thus drawing attention to that information.

In Excerpt 7 below, the manager of Auckland's Deaf Club is informing their members that a planned event will be going ahead amid a COVID-19 outbreak, however, there will be specific health and safety instructions from the Government for all to follow. Here, Brent is emphasising the importance of the requirement issued by the Government.

Excerpt 7: ADS' My Second Home festival still going ahead

English translation: *...which means the My Second Home festival is definitely going ahead tomorrow night as planned. But, as the Government announced, please if you are feeling sick with a sore throat, headache or anything like that, please test straight away and stay home.*

1	*br* MEAN TOMORROW NIGHT MY SECOND HOME ANNIVERSARY STILL ON GO=
2	AHEAD SAME [palms raised] **[hc 0.83]** BUT GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCE = $\overline{EG{:}\,ul}\ \overline{EG{:}\,r}$
3	*hn* =**[hc 0.44]** PLEASE PT:PRO2pl FEEL SICK DS:swollen-throat HEADACHE SICK= $\overline{EG{:}\,r}\ \overline{EG{:}\,r}$ $\overline{EG{:}\,r}$
4	=PLEASE IMMEDIATELY TEST AND STAY HOME

In line 1, Brent confirms the event is still going ahead ("*...which means the My Second Home festival is definitely going ahead tomorrow night...*"). MEAN is marked with a brow raise NMF, to draw attention to this fact. In line 2, the utterance continues with Brent signing "*as planned*" and ends with a two-raised-palms gesture, likely to give assurance that all is well. Brent then pauses by glancing to his upper left and clasping his hands for 0.83 seconds, creating an utterance boundary.

He then signs BUT and quickly glances to his right, then shares that the announcement from the Government is important and part of a cause-effect relationship ("*But, as the Government announced...*"), and pauses again very briefly for 0.44 seconds while nodding. The pause here likely has a dual function: to provide emphasis on what is to follow, and to provide a boundary marker between two sentences. Similarly to what was noticed in Excerpt 1, head nods in signed languages affirm or give prominence to the information that has been given or is to follow (McKee, 2017; Johnston & Schembri, 2007). Here Brent is reiterating what the Government has already announced to New Zealanders. BUT (like that seen in line 2) has been recognised as a discourse marker in ASL (Garrow, 2012) when it has been identified as relating a previous segment to an upcoming segment. Similarities have been noticed here: the event will be going ahead, as long as everyone complies with the request from the Government. As a discourse marker, the pause in line 2 has also functioned as a contextualisation cue (Gumperz, 1992; see section 2.7.2),

demonstrating a footing shift. The talk has changed from a general update to a serious request. Footing shifts are not the focus of this chapter and are discussed further in chapter 5.

In line 3, following another brief hands clasped pause, PLEASE is signed in a gestural form - two flat palms pressed together, in front of the chest, along with a rather serious face, placing strong emphasis on the request being made of the audience. Brent then provides examples of symptoms of ill-health to watch out for, in a slow-paced manner ("...*a sore throat, headache or anything like that* ...") while making quick glances to his right. This manner of delivery suggests the presenter is imploring the audience to take heed of the advice being provided, supported by the pause at the beginning of line 3 – drawing the audience's attention by placing emphasis on the seriousness of the situation.

The context of these utterances coupled with the pause prior to BUT (in line 2) establishes this as an emphasis sub-function, to impress on the audience the seriousness of the situation .

4.5 Emerging patterns

As noticed in this subset, the speaker's style can affect the occurrences of pauses. Several studies have touched on speaker's style (see for example, Yang (2004)) and found a close relationship between the pace of speech production and pause occurrences, with faster speakers having fewer pauses. Although the current study has not considered the speed of each announcement, it is reasonable to expect that people who are more familiar with the announcement topic may have fewer planning pauses. At the same time, it is also reasonable to expect that those who have more announcement experience may structure the discourse for optimal cohesion, and this is likely to include consideration of pausing. I did not explore participants' previous experience and skill level in detail regarding video announcement production; however, this could be a fruitful area for future study.

Recollecting was the third-most frequent function (n=17), across seven of the nine presenters. On one hand this may indicate frequent occurrence of planning problems; however, a more likely explanation is that these announcements are relatively informal (compared, for example, to a formal translation where information has likely been rehearsed, prepared, and glossed prior to filming). Thus, recollecting pauses likely reflect natural NZSL discourse. None of the *hand clasped* forms were associated with recollecting, only two were *hands down*, and the rest were from the sign held form.

Based on the discourse analysis presented in this chapter it appears that pauses rarely occur on their own; there are usually other discourse markers present before, during, and after the pause.

The presenters largely use deliberate pauses to aid the flow of their talk – to help themselves with their pace and to assist with audience's comprehension.

4.6 Conclusion

This is the first study to have analysed the use of pausing by Deaf presenters experienced in creating asynchronous announcements. This analysis has documented pause types used to provide discourse structure, cohesion, and to aid audience understanding of the talk. It was clear that overall, the nine presenters used pauses deliberately – by clearly marking boundaries for the different phases of their talks, by following grammatical function (rh-Q), or by drawing focus to their talk, with 67 (79.76%) of the examined pauses (n=84) appearing to be deliberate with a precise discourse function. Seventeen (20.24%) were associated with planning problems where the presenter needed a moment to recollect information (and not considered discourse markers). It may be that the pauses associated with recollecting are important to maintain, to ensure the style of these announcements are relatable, and not off-putting by being too formal. While not the focus of this chapter, there have been some examples of footing shifts noted.

The following chapter will focus on presenters' references to their audience as well as themselves, in order to further understand consideration of an unseen audience during asynchronous video announcements.

Chapter 5 - References to the unseen audience

This chapter examines presenters' references to an unknown audience through pronoun choice, drawing on the lens of participation framework (Goffman, 1981). Firstly, section 5.1 introduces personal and possessive pronouns in NZSL and briefly notes how Goffman's concept of footings will be drawn upon in this analysis. As outlined in section 2.7.2, footing shifts are observed in different parts of talk; this chapter focuses specifically on footings in relation to audience references. Preliminary observations of audience reference (not limited to pronouns) and speaker roles are outlined in section 5.2, followed by an examination of pronominal reference patterns throughout the dataset in section 5.3. Section 5.4 is a more detailed analysis of first-person reference, and section 5.5 is a more detailed analysis of second-person reference, both illustrated through discourse analysis of audience reference in context.

5.1 Pronouns in NZSL and participation framework (Goffman, 1981)

Signed languages are true languages in their own right and not visual representations of the spoken languages around them (see, for example, Emmorey, 2023). This means that the structure and grammar of NZSL is different to English (Johnston & Schembri, 2007; McKee, 2017; McKee, 2020). As such, this section begins with a brief outline of pronoun usage in NZSL in comparison to English pronouns to provide context for this analysis. I then highlight the ways Goffman's (1981) concept of footings will be used to analyse the dataset and references to the audience (see section 2.7 for more details on Goffman's (1981) participation framework).

Pronouns in NZSL tend to specify person and plurality more than those in English. *You* in English, for example, is a personal pronoun used to address a second person directly. The addressee can be either a single individual, or a group of individuals. This is the same for *your* (a possessive pronoun) which can refer to either a singular subject, or a plural subject, and the precise meaning is determined from context within the sentence and the wider discourse (see Frobenius, 2014, section 2.7.1).

NZSL pronouns and possessive pronouns, on the other hand, usually more clearly determine whether the addressee/s is a singular or plural referent. Second- and third-person pronouns use a pointing (index finger) handshape or a flat hand (McKee, 2017) in the direction away from the presenter. Wherever the addressee is located, the sign glossed PT:PRO2[17] for *you* is directed towards them. For third person referents, the same sign – glossed as PT:PRO3 – points at a

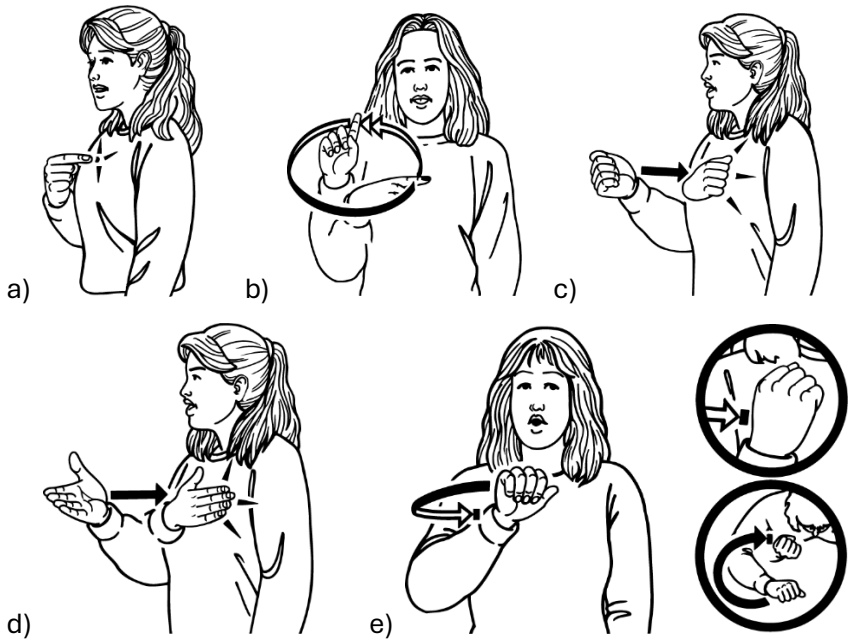
[17] Pronouns in the flat hand form are glossed as PT(B):PRO2 but few occurrences were found in this dataset.

location separate from both the presenter and the second-person addressee (Johnston & Schembri, 2007). Possessive pronouns move in the same way, but instead use a fist or flat handshape. See Figure 11 below for a visual description of this.

The way the sign is produced indicates whether the addressee is a single person or more than one person, and the inclusion or exclusion of the speaker e.g. YOU, or US (McKee, 2017). For example, a singular *you* (as in "You look tired today") would be signed as PT:PRO2 pointing directly at the addressee, thus making a clear singular second-person reference. In contrast, a plural *you* (as in "you need to work together to solve this problem") may be signed as PT:PRO2pl, with a sweeping motion across the people being referred to, indicating those individuals as the addressees. Figure 10 below illustrates forms of the first-person references.

Figure 10

First-person pronominal referencing

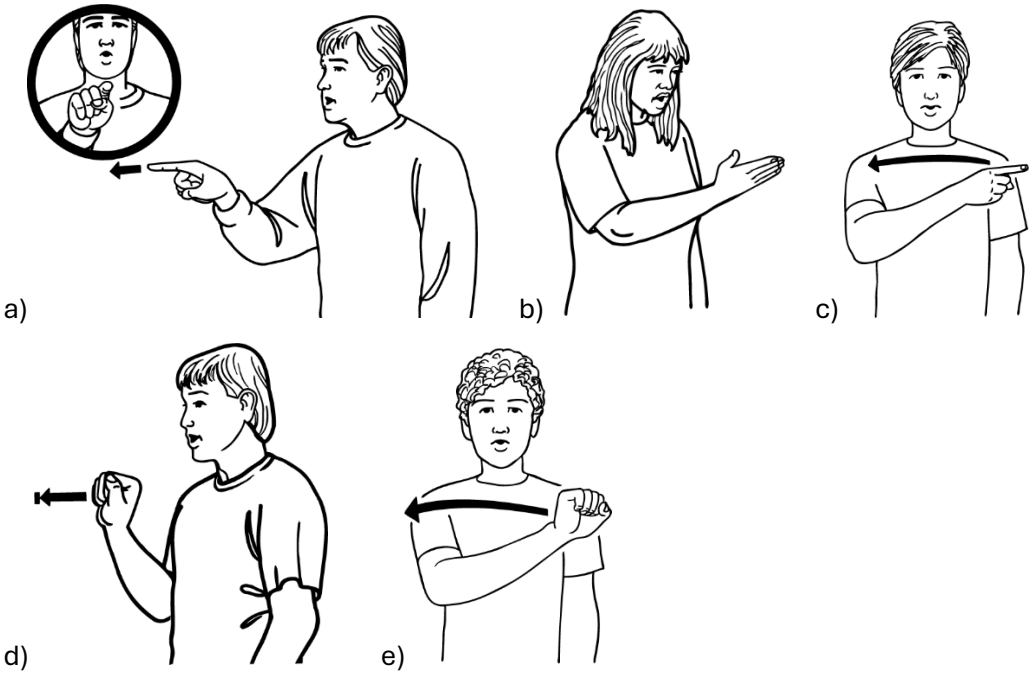


Note. Illustrations of the first-person pronouns: a) *singular* ME/I, b) *plural* WE, c) *singular possessive,* d) *singular possessive (flat palm),* and e) *plural possessive*. From NZSL Dictionary, (2011). (www.nzsl.nz). CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

Figure 11 below illustrates forms of the second-person references.

Figure 11

Second-person pronominal referencing



Note. Illustrations of the second-person pronouns: a) *singular* YOU*,* b) *singular* YOU *(flat palm)*[18]*,* c) *plural* YOU*,* d) *singular possessive* YOUR*,* and e) *plural possessive* YOUR. From NZSL Dictionary, (2011). (www.nzsl.nz). CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

The illustrations in Figures 10 and 11 above show how distinction between a singular or plural referent/s is conveyed, for both pronouns and possessive pronouns. I also briefly discuss form variations in section 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 to provide further context. An examination of pronominal referencing in NZSL helps us understand the speaker's position in relation to their unseen audience. The examples above are typical of face-to-face interaction, where the direction and movement of the pronoun directly indicates seen and known addressees. Research question 3, and the focus of this chapter, seeks to uncover how the unseen audience is referred to in videos. Goffman's (1981) participation framework (as detailed in section 2.7) is an ideal framework for this analysis. Goffman's concept of footing allows us to understand participants' adjustments of their communicative stance or perspective, while the concept of speaker roles helps us to understand the presenter's alignment to the unseen audience. Ratified participants are people that the talk is directed to, and who the speaker wants to be seen or heard by (Goffman, 1981). In this dataset, I consider the unseen audience to be ratified participants, as these are informative videos where the presenter is sharing information with people other than themselves. Evidence within the texts includes the use of pronouns to address the unseen audience. While these videos are asynchronous, in that the audience view the video at a later time, the audience will

[18] This is the singular form for a flat palm pronoun. To make a plural reference, sign the same handshape across the signing space, like for c) plural YOU.

still be ‘present’ when they view the video. My analysis of audience reference begins with preliminary observations of the dataset in section 5.2.

5.2 Preliminary observations of audience reference

Analysis of audience reference was motivated by the initial preliminary analysis (see chapter 4, section 2) in which I observed presenters indicating both themselves and their audience. I then conducted a more detailed round of observations of various ways presenters referred to their unseen audience. Key patterns included:

- Some presenters used a mix of singular and plural second-person references, others used only one type. This is interesting considering that radio presenters are encouraged not to refer to their audience as a mass, but as individuals (*you*), to develop a personal relationship between the presenter and their audience (see section 2.3.).
- Verb agreement (McKee, 2017, see also section 2.6) included reference to audience. These were signs that are not pronouns as such, but their sign production includes reference to second- and third-person.
- I had expected to see some instances of flat-palm handshape (see 5.1 above) based on research findings (see section 2.6) and my own observations. However, there were only two occurrences of this form for plural second-person reference and none for singular second-person reference.
- All nine presenters used explicit reference (second-person pronoun or possessive) to their unseen audience.
- However, not all videos included explicit audience reference. Only 12 out of 15 contained a reference to audience in some form (both second- and third-person reference).
- Not all videos opened with introductions of self/role. I had expected introductions to be more frequent, given the audience was unseen, and theoretically unknown. See section 5.3.1 for a discussion on this.

The preliminary observations allowed me to narrow the focus for analysis: I decided to focus on explicit pronominal references to fit the scope of a master’s study, while addressing research question 3. This focus meant that the 12 videos that included explicit pronominal reference therefore formed the subset of data for more detailed audience reference analysis. References to people through agreement verbs are briefly discussed in section 5.3.2 below to provide further context but are not the focus of this analysis. First, in section 5.2.1 I discuss speaker roles

adopted by and assigned to the presenters in the videos, as this underpins their alignment to an unseen audience.

5.2.1 Speaker roles of the presenters

I first examined speaker roles for each of the videos, as described by Goffman's (1981) participation framework (section 5.1), as this is key context for understanding how participants in asynchronous communication align themselves to one another and participate within that context. In each video, the principal is one of the five organisations that were responsible for producing the videos. This information is known because of where the videos are located, either on the organisation's public Facebook page or their public YouTube channel. All nine presenters were clearly the animators of the 15 videos as these individuals delivered the announcements in NZSL.

It was less certain who the author was in some of the videos. Where introductions were provided – including the person's role in relation to the organisation – it is likely the presenter created the message and is therefore the author. However, this occurred in only two out of 15 videos. Reviewing the organisations' Facebook pages, I observed there is information provided by these same individuals (e.g. introductions of self/role) in earlier videos they produced for the same organisation. In one case, a flyer accompanying one of the videos within the dataset clearly states the presenter's name and his contact details, with instructions to contact him if people desire further information. This suggests he was responsible for running the event, and likely to be the author as well as the animator.

Presentation introductions provide key clues about speaker roles, but these varied between the videos and were not always present. Six presenters did not introduce themselves, which may imply these individuals assume their audience knows who they are due to the close-knit nature of the New Zealand Deaf community. The information may also be available elsewhere. Prior to Josje's video (see Table 2, section 3.3.4), she had been introduced in an earlier video by another individual from the organisation as someone who has come onboard to help share the organisation's information with the community.

Some presenters have prominent roles in the organisation (i.e. president, manager), making it likely that they were indeed the authors, even without an introduction. Alex, for example, holds a prominent role in their organisation; in their interview, they commented they felt it was not necessary to introduce themselves, as the information was not theirs personally, but rather belonged to the organisation. Darryl, on the other hand, explained in his interview: "*the Deaf*

community is small, so it's important to state your role. It sets up expectations for the viewers about the relationship you have with them and why you're sharing the information". This indicates that when presenters did introduce themselves, they had chosen to do so deliberately, likely to clarify their role and give authority to the talk. Similarly, when no introductions were given, this may have been a deliberate choice based on the assumption their audience knows who they are, and that they are the author of the presentation. This indicates that presenters do have an idea of their unseen audience. It is useful to note that 10 or so years ago, it would be more common for the audience to be in-person, and likely a clubroom full of Deaf community members. This has rapidly changed (as discussed in section 1.1); perhaps the same sort of audience is imagined while communicating asynchronously. The analysis in sections 5.4 and 5.5 will provide further insight into any grammatical reference to this unseen audience.

A study of 30 public YouTube vlogs and their comments sections (Frobenius, 2014; see section 2.7) found that while the audience was unseen, the vloggers used other information to get an idea of their audience, such as the number of subscribers to their YouTube channel, the comments/questions that viewers were leaving on the videos. The current study provides further support for this, in the context of Deaf users of NZSL. One of the interviewees shared that they now review the reactions and comments on their Facebook videos to reflect and improve future videos, understanding more about who the unseen audience is.

5.2.2 Referencing the audience through verbs

Although the analysis in this chapter will focus on pronominal reference, it is important to acknowledge that audience reference in signed language can also be indicated through other types of grammatical structures, particularly agreement verbs and directional verbs (McKee, 2017; Johnston & Schembri, 2007; Hou, 2022). Movement in these verb types has a starting point and ending point, which often defines subject and object – i.e. who is doing and who is receiving the action. For example, the agreement verb HELP can be inflected to indicate "I am helping you" by starting the sign at a location in front of the presenter, moving toward the second person. No further lexical signs are required beyond person agreement verb inflection. Switching the start and end points of this sign changes the subject and object.

There were several examples of verbs containing reference to the unseen audience as the object and/or subject of the verb in the dataset. Some occurrences of these are discussed in the discourse analysis (in both sections 5.4 and 5.5), as they provide evidence in context for how presenters imagine their unseen audience. Future research could focus more fully on agreement

verb usage to indicate unseen audiences, although is out of the scope of the current study. I will now focus in detail on distinct pronouns and possessives that occurred in the dataset.

5.3 Occurrences of pronominal references

This section briefly describes the occurrences and forms of first-person references, as well as second- and third-person references. Identifying the forms pronominal references take provides us with clarity on whether the different forms change the function of the reference. In the subset of data for this analysis (12 videos), there were 97 tokens for specific pronominal references, including second-person pronouns and possessives, third-person pronouns and possessives (grouped together as non-first-person for the purposes of this analysis), as well as both singular and plural first-person pronouns and possessives. Variation in the production of some pronominal references were observed in the subset. The observed variation does not appear to impact or change the function; however it is discussed further in section 5.3.2 briefly as relevant context to presenters' perception of their audience.

5.3.1 First-person references

This section briefly outlines first-person pronoun usage in the subset of data. As noted in section 5.1 above, movement indicates whether a reference is singular or plural. Table 5 below outlines the types and frequency of first-person references (pronouns and possessives) that were identified.

Table 5

First-person references

Description		**Glossed lexicon**	**Tokens**
First person	Singular ME/I [Figure 10, a]	PT:PRO1	25
	Plural WE (not including audience) [Figure 10, b]	PT:PRO1pl	3
	Singular possessive MY/MINE (fist) [Figure 10, c]	PT(S):POSS1	5
	Singular possessive (flat palm) [Figure 10, d]	PT(B):POSS1	1
	Plural possessive OUR [Figure 10, e]	PT(S):POSS1pl	4
		Total	**38**

Most first-person pronouns were singular (ME/I; n=25), as opposed to plural first-person pronouns (OUR; n=3). Observations of the dataset and information from interviewees suggest that reasons may be (but are not exclusive to):

1. Some presenters explicitly referring to themselves when opening their video, for example: "In this video I am going to talk about…". It is therefore reasonable to expect there would be a higher frequency of singular first-person references
2. Some presenters assuming the identity of the organisation (the principal); once this is established, the sign PT:PRO1 references that organisation/person and can be used as such throughout the announcement

There were fewer possessive references for first-person (n=10); of these, instances of singular possessives (n=6) were slightly higher than plural possessive references (n=4).

5.3.2 Non-first-person references

This section discusses the occurrences of pronouns and possessive pronouns for second- and third-person referents. In Table 6 below, I outline the types and frequency of each pronoun and possessive pronoun in the subset of data.

Table 6

Non-first-person references

Description		**Glossed lexicon**	**Tokens**
Second person	Singular YOU [Figure 11, a]	PT:PRO2	28
	Plural YOU [Figure 11, c]	PT:PRO2pl	21
	Plural YOU (flat palm) [Figure 11, b]	PT(B):PRO2pl	2
	Singular possessive YOUR [Figure 11, d]	PT(S):POSS2	3
	Plural possessive YOUR [Figure 11, e]	PT(S):POSS2pl	2
Third person	Singular HE/HER/THEY[19]	PT:PRO3	1
	Singular HIS/HERS/THEIR possessive	PT(S):POSS3	2
		Total	**59**

[19] In NZSL, pronouns do not mark gender, thus no distinction between she/he/they (McKee, 2017)

Non-first-person references (n=59) occurred in the subset of data more frequently than first-person references (n=38, see Table 5 above). There was a similar number of occurrences between singular second-person pronouns (n=28) and plural second-person pronouns (n=23). There was only one occurrence of a third-person pronoun, which was used to refer to a person being mentioned in the announcement.

As mentioned in section 5.2, all nine presenters used PT:PRO2, the singular second-person reference. Of these nine presenters, six used both plural and singular reference to their unseen audience, while only three used singular pronoun reference. Three of these six presenters used more PT:PRO2 signs than plural second-person references, two used more plural second-person pronoun references than singular, and the sixth person used both second-person pronoun types equally. A pattern that emerges from this data is therefore that some presenters are deliberately using singular pronouns more than plural pronouns to refer to their audience. This may be a strategy to engage more directly with each individual watching the announcement, as recommended for radio announcements (section 2.3).

In her interview, Josje reflected that her usage of a singular second-person referent might have been influenced by the fact there was just one camera she was looking at, and the camera acts as a "conduit…to a wider audience". She recalled another video she had produced, in which she was motivated to use a singular pronoun when giving specific instructions on how to navigate a new website that had been launched: "…I do use a singular YOU when I'm telling someone what they need to do. But I'm not imagining a specific Deaf person when I'm doing that, I'm still thinking of the general community". Darryl (who appears in two videos in this subset) reflected that he was not aware of his different use of second-person pronouns across these two videos. He however remarked that when he watches other videos, the presenter's use of YOU makes him feel he is the targeted audience; plural references make it feel generalised, and not specifically wanting him to do anything. Alex shared in their interview that they do not make deliberate choices about whether to use a singular or plural reference, however they did think that they might produce more plural signs, thinking of their audience as a collective.

Four presenters used both hands (instead of only their dominant hand) for plural second-person pronouns. One presenter had 11 occurrences of PT:PRO2pl (compared to just one usage of singular second-person pronoun), and eight of these were two-handed. The other three participants' usage of second-person plurality was much lower (3, 3, and 2). Although again this could just represent individual style and more data would be needed to confirm otherwise, context could also motivate these choices. One presenter's videos, for example, was about

following health instructions. It was a serious request related to the COVID-19 pandemic at the time, and so the presenter may have wanted to emphasise reference to his unseen mass audience and the instructions they must follow. There was an almost-equal distribution between one-handed plurality (n=11) and two-handed plurality (=12, also known as doubling). The use of two-handed plurality may visually intensify the message, compared to signing plurality with one hand. Analysis of the data revealed no differences in function; doubling is more likely associated with formality, emphasis, and a new broadcast style of NZSL (see McKee et al., 2024).

Another form variation occurred for second-person reference: the index-finger pointing handshape, glossed as PT:PRO2pl (Figure 12), and the flat-palm handshape with the palm facing upwards and gesturing towards the referent, glossed as PT(B):PRO2pl (Figure 13).

Figure 12

Pointed second-person plural reference

Note. From Brent (video a).

Figure 13

Flat-palm second-person plural reference

Note. From Craigo (video b).

While the form varies in Figures 12 and 13, the function remains the same: the presenter is making a plural reference to the second-person referent, by indicating more than one unseen audience member ("*you all*").

Most of the PT:PRO2pl occurrences were produced with a sweeping motion across the presenter's chest/signing space to indicate plural second-person addressees, regardless of whether it was one- or two-handed. However, there were two occurrences of multiple pointing in different locations towards the unseen audience (as opposed to holding their pointed hand in place at the camera to indicate a singular addressee), which is evidence of plurality. The form variations of PT:PRO2pl show the same function of second-person plurality, therefore they were glossed as PT:PRO2pl. Section 5.5 examines an example of multiple pointing referencing in more detail which reveals some possible differences between these references; that is, a mass referent versus a number of random individual referents.

Possessive pronouns for second-person referents were few (n=5), with three of these being singular, and two plural. There were two occurrences of third-person possessives, which were singular references. This study does not examine the third-person references in detail, as the focus is on participation framework and the relationship between the presenter and their unseen audience. Occurrences were also very low in this dataset. It is worthwhile noting that in these and similar videos, people referred to in the third person may be considered *bystanders* (Goffman, 1981).

5.4 Discourse analysis of first-person references

The preliminary analysis outlined in sections 5.2 and 5.3 provided the motivation and direction for a more fine-grained discourse analysis of first-person references (this section) and second-person references (section 5.5). This allows us to gain a richer understanding of how audience reference (as well as speaker roles and footing shifts) play out in context. Examples presented below are representative of pronominal referencing patterns observed across the subset of data. Goffman's (1981) concept of footings suggests that individuals can change their stance during their talk; this allows us to understand how presenters imagine and align to their audience, and how alignments may shift in different parts of talk. The discourse analysis excerpts below are organised by pronoun type, beginning with first-person singular pronouns. Understanding first-person references helps us to identify presenters' positionality in relation to their unseen audience, via the footings they convey in their talk.

5.4.1 First-person pronouns: Singular

The pointing index-finger handshape (see Figure 10 in 5.2), used as a singular first-person pronoun was glossed as PT:PRO1. Excerpt 8 is taken from an announcement about community meetings that will be run in different towns, as well as a survey. Here, Darryl opens the video by greeting his unseen audience, before going on to establish the topic of the talk.

Excerpt 8: Upcoming community meetings and survey

English translation: *Hello and tēnā koutou katoa. I'm here to talk about the NZSL survey, which for many of you might seem like a broken record…*

1	*lf* *br* *hn* HELLO+++ TĒNĀ KOUTOU KATOA **PT:PRO1** TALK ABOUT WHAT NZSL SURVEY=
2	*bf* =**PT:PRO1** KNOW+++ PT:PRO2pl LOOK-me+++ REPEAT+++ REMIND-YOU+++

This announcement opens with a standard two-handed salutation, repeated three times, followed by a customary te reo Māori greeting TĒNĀ KOUTOU KATOA, translating to *"greetings to you all"*. This is a new way in the Deaf community to greet a mass audience, suggesting that Darryl has considered his unseen audience to be relatively large, certainly plural. He then references himself by pointing to himself (PT:PRO1), establishing his footing as an individual giving the talk. Next, Darryl signs TALK ABOUT WHAT, with raised brows, making this a rhetorical question, signalling that a topic of talk will be established. He then states that the topic is the NZSL survey, affirmed by a head nod.

The full utterance in line 2 is accompanied by furrowed brows which marks an emphatic statement. Darryl makes another pronominal reference to himself, then repeats the sign KNOW, which creates emphasis. Here he also clearly signals that he is speaking to his audience as an individual (rather than an organisation) who possesses this knowledge. This supports the notion that Darryl is remaining in the same footing as established by his opening greeting and singular first-person referent. Darryl then directly refers to his unseen audience with a sweeping motion second-person pronoun, indicating all of his audience.

The next three signs that follow – LOOK-me, REPEAT, REMIND-you – are all signed repeatedly. This is known as an iterative, a type of temporal aspect (McKee, 2017), in which the action is repeated many times. When I interviewed Darryl, I asked why he said KNOW+++ PT:PRO2pl

LOOK-me (Line 2; *"…which for many of you might seem like a broken record"*), given his audience was unseen. He explained:

> *"Because the subject matter of that was a reminder video. I had also done multiple videos related to the subject prior to that one…I also wanted to have a different start to the video…it wasn't scripted or anything. I think it was an acceptable strategy in a way to engage with the audience to watch, to capture their attention again, on the same topic, so I had to try harder and in different ways…"* (Darryl)

Darryl was perhaps empathising with his intended audience and has made a deliberate choice of words in his video to ensure maximum audience engagement, i.e. that video is watched in full. Here Darryl is showing his alignment and shared knowledge with his unseen audience. This also demonstrates a footing shift, changing from an opening greeting and introductory manner to an empathising manner.

Given the usage of PT:PRO1 in Excerpt 8 represents an individual stance, Excerpt 9 below illustrates usage of PT:PRO1 where the presenter has taken on the identity of the organisation. This excerpt is from an announcement about the Deaf Club's end-of-year function, and the new proof-of-entry requirements that had recently been voted in by the Board, considering the COVID-19 climate at the time. Prior to the excerpt, the presenter has outlined which forms of proof will be accepted for entry, and how to get that documentation. Now, Craigo is letting his unseen audience know that there are two organisations they can approach for help.

Excerpt 9: DSC president's announcement about end-of-year function

English translation: *If you need help, make an appointment with Deaf Club or Deaf Aotearoa, and we'll help you.*

1	br br+lf br= IF NEED HELP %palm-up [hc 1.0] MAKE APPOINTMENT DEAF CLUB OR= EG:dr
2	= br hn =DEAF AOTEAROA **PT:PRO1** HELP

In line 1, the presenter opens with IF NEED HELP, with raised brows. This signals a topic-comment (McKee, 2017), which is followed by Craigo providing information about what to do. After the hands clasped pause, in which he glances down to the right (presumably at his prompt notes), he instructs the audience to make an appointment with Deaf Club (the organisation he is

associated with), which is marked with a brow raise and forward lean. This is followed by OR, then another organisation (in line 2) also marked with a brow raise – Deaf Aotearoa.

Craigo then makes a pronominal reference to himself, and then signs help in the direction of the unseen audience (the object of the action, making himself the agent of the action). This signals that the audience will be helped by the organisations Deaf Club or Deaf Aotearoa. The PT:PRO1 in this context clearly sets the entities as the subject rather than himself personally, because it may be that anyone in either organisation will do the helping. This usage indicates that the presenter may not be the sole author of the talk. Craigo has shifted his footing by aligning his communicative stance with another organisation's stance: both organisations are available for support if the community needs it.

5.4.2 First-person pronouns: Plural

The plural first-person pronoun is produced with a pointing index finger moved in a sweeping motion across the presenter's chest; these signs were glossed as PT:PRO1pl (see section 5.3.1 above).

Excerpt 10 below is from an announcement regarding a Deaf Club's adoption of a CCTV system and its usage policy. Prior to Excerpt 10, the presenter announced that the club has a CCTV system and explained what it is. Here we see Craigo explaining the access constraints associated with the storage of the recordings.

Excerpt 10: Announcement by DSC president regarding CCTV system

English translation: *The camera recordings [are kept] for a limited time only, to help us review if there are incidents at Deaf Club.*

1	PT:loc RECORDING FILM++ ONLY LIMIT TIME HELP **PT:PRO1pl** LOOK= $\overline{EG{:}\,l}$
2	br =LATER IF HAPPEN PROBLEM DEAF CLUB

Line 1 opens with a pointed finger downwards towards the referent (the recording device) which had earlier been set up in the same signing space, followed by RECORDING FILM++. While the signs do not specifically refer to 'storage', it is inferred by the RECORDING sign gesturing the download and keeping of its data, which commonly means storage. This is evidenced by the utterances that follow: ONLY LIMIT TIME gives context to the earlier utterances in that the

recordings are kept for a limited period of time. Further on in line 1, we see HELP inflected as an agreement verb, making the presenter the object of the action by signing HELP towards himself. It is not clear at this point whether Craigo is speaking as himself only or as the principal (the entity) as a whole. Goffman (1981) explains that the principal role can mean either an individual, or an organisation. However, the pronominal reference that follows HELP provides further clarity. A pronominal plural reference to self is made, by signing a sweeping motion across the chest to the right, then up into the air before looping back down to the chest – clearly indicating plurality. Thus, the presenter has momentarily explicitly shifted to a collective footing by including other people in the first-person role (*"we/us"*).

At the end of line 1 and into line 2, Craigo signs LOOK LATER, followed by a brow raise accompanying the remaining utterances: IF HAPPEN PROBLEM DEAF CLUB. The nature of this utterance and the accompanying brow raise mean this is a conditional statement (McKee, 2017): the CCTV recordings will only be viewed if a problem at Deaf Club has occurred.

This excerpt illustrates the use of a plural first-person pronoun and demonstrates the presenter's footing shift from an individual to a collective perspective with other individuals (comprising the entity (principal)). There were only two other similar references within the subset of data, suggesting that presenters mostly positioned themselves as either one organisation or one individual in the announcements.

5.4.3 First-person possessive pronouns: Singular

The first-person possessive pronoun was mostly signed with a closed fist, thumb tucked in at the side, with a short movement towards the presenter's chest, glossed as PT(S):POSS1. There was one exception to this, with one presenter signing it differently (see section 5.3.1, Table 5). Interestingly, PT(S):POSS1 was not always used to refer to a singular entity, despite being a singular possessive pronoun, as seen in Excerpt 11 below. This is from the same announcement as Excerpt 10, although these excerpts did not occur sequentially. Prior to Excerpt 11, Craigo outlined reasons for adopting the CCTV system.

Excerpt 11: DSC president giving reasons for CCTV

English translation: *Thirdly, to protect our building.*

1	*lb* LB(3):ringfinger PROTECT **PT(S):POSS1** BUILDING.

This utterance opens with a list buoy referent to the third item in a list, the first two items of which have already been established and explained. While signing PROTECT, Craigo leans slightly backwards, perhaps by the physical need to produce PROTECT, which comprises two arms in front of the chest (like in a self-defence manner). This is followed by a singular first-person possessive (which typically would be equivalent to 'my'), but Craigo mouths 'our'. The mouthing here can be considered a key contextualisation cue (Gumperz, 1992; section 2.4.1) that provides specific meaning and further insight into speaker roles. That is, where the plural "our" has been mouthed while signing the singular possessive MY, the presenter is likely positioning themselves as the organisation rather than an individual. This occurred three other times across two videos (including this one), by the same presenter.

At the end of the line, BUILDING is established as the object of the protection, and this has already been established as the Deaf Club. This means Craigo is taking on the role of the entity – Deaf Club – and is addressing the audience from this position. This shows a clear shift in footing compared to the first-person plural reference in Excerpt 10.

5.4.4 First-person possessive pronouns: Plural

Plural first-person possessives use the same handshape as singular first-person possessives but incorporate a sweeping motion to signal plurality (see section 5.3.1 above). This was glossed as PT(S):POSS1pl and all four occurrences were accompanied by mouthing 'our'.

Excerpt 12 is an announcement about a hui at the Deaf Club. Tanesha announces this is also a fundraising event for her group, Māori Deaf Youth, and some food will be for sale. Prior to the excerpt below, Tanesha established the focus of the hui and that there will be a barbeque fundraiser. Now, she explains the reason for the fundraiser.

Excerpt 12: Announcing an upcoming hui and fundraiser at ADS

English translation: ...*we'd like to fundraise for our project, which needs your support.*

1	*bf* *br+lf* LIKE HAVE FUNDRAISE FOR **PT(S):POSS1pl** PROJECT [hc 0.73] **PT(S):POSS1pl**= *EG: l*
2	*bf+hn* *lf* *br* =PROJECT NEED PT(S):POSS2pl SUPPORT

In line 1, Tanesha signs LIKE HAVE FUNDRAISE (accompanied by a furrowed brow) FOR, followed by PT(S):POSS1pl (signed with a glance to her left, and mouthing 'our'). This is a first-person plural

possessive pronoun. Earlier in the announcement, Tanesha had established herself as representing a youth group, therefore this possessive pronoun links back to that earlier-established referent. The use of OUR (as opposed to MY) indicates Tanesha is addressing the unseen audience from the position of herself amongst a group of other Māori Deaf Youth individuals and has not assumed the role of the entity as a whole. This demonstrates her footing as sharing the collective perspective of several individuals.

PROJECT establishes the purpose of the fundraiser, supported by the use of raised brows and a forward lean to emphasise the importance of this information. Tanesha briefly pauses (clasped hands) towards the end of line 1 and then repeats PT(S):POSS1pl (*"our"*) PROJECT (across lines 1 and 2) marked with a brow raise and head nod, affirming this as the topic of the following utterances. In line 2, she then signs NEED, then leans forward while signing a plural *"your"* (PT(S):POSS2pl) across the second-person referent space. This clearly references the unseen audience as a collective group not an individual. While signing SUPPORT, it is marked with raised brows, to place emphasis on the importance of the audience's support. SUPPORT is produced in agreement form, establishing the unseen audience as agent of the action, with Tanesha the object receiving the support. This marks multiple footing shifts: the unseen audience has changed from a collective to a singular referent. Simultaneously, the first-person referent has changed from a collective (plurality) to an individual. It is not clear why this has occurred or if this change was deliberate.

This excerpt illustrates how the presenter has positioned themselves as an individual amongst others – in other words, as a collective - by the use of plural first-person possessives, except for the shift to a singular referent. She has likely taken on Goffman's (1981) role of author, positioning herself in first-person in relation to the information being shared.

This section has provided some examples of first-person reference usage, and we have seen that some deliberate footing shifts are made, signalled here through a change of first-person pronouns. In the dataset, it is clear who is inhabiting the principal and animator speaker roles, and not always clear who the author is, though Excerpt 9 demonstrated the possibility of two authors through pronominal referencing use and shifts in footing. The next section will explore second-person references.

5.5 Discourse analysis of second-person references

This section examines some interesting examples of second-person references (both pronouns and possessive pronouns) in context. As discussed in section 5.1, the unseen audience members

are considered to be ratified participants (Goffman, 1981). The examples chosen below draw on Goffman's (1981) participation framework to understand the unseen audience's role in the talk and in relation to the presenter. In the subset, there were a total of 56 second-person references, with more pronouns (n=51) occurring than possessive pronouns (n=5). In this section, discourse analysis excerpts are again organised by pronoun type.

5.5.1 Second-person pronouns: Singular and plural (multiple pointing)

Second-person referencing signs are directed towards the referent. Pronouns in NZSL require the presenter to commit to either a singular or plural form, and this is fascinating to explore because NZSL grammar requires presenters to be clear about who they imagine their audience to be. Given these videos are produced without a visible audience, PT:PRO2 has been used to annotate signs that are pointing only in the direction of the camera, indicating singularity. Similarly, for plurality, any signs indicating several second-person addressees are annotated as PT:PRO2pl (see section 5.1).

Excerpt 13 below is taken from an announcement in which the president of the Deaf Club is informing members about the closure of the Club due to a public holiday (Labour weekend), and that the following weekend it will be open for an exciting Halloween party. Here, Sheryl is reminding members about it being Labour weekend. This excerpt illustrates both a singular pronoun and a plural pronoun (multiple pointing). These two examples are presented here in the same excerpt for analysis due to them occurring so close together, providing a clear example of footing shift.

Excerpt 13: MDS president's announcement about Deaf Club closure

English translation: ...*reminding you all this weekend is a long weekend with it being Labour Weekend. I know that some of you are away this weekend*...

1	*br* *br lf* REMIND-YOU **PT:PRO2** THIS WEEKEND WHAT LONG WEEKEND=
2	*br* =LABOUR WEEKEND KNOW SOME DEAF **PT:PRO2pl++** AWAY++ RIGHT

At the beginning of line 1, Sheryl signs REMIND-YOU, a tapping motion akin to tapping someone on their shoulder to get their attention. This is an example of an agreement verb in that the object (recipient) is clearly signalled as being the second-person referent as the sign is directed toward

the camera. She signs REMIND-YOU multiple times and with two hands, which indicates a plural audience rather than one addressee.

Interestingly, she follows this with a singular second-person reference (accompanied by a brow raise), which is a footing shift from a collective addressee to an individual addressee. This may be because she has already established a mass referent in the preceding sign. The brow raise here supporting the PT:PRO2 likely draws attention to the second-person as the focus of this talk (McKee, 2017). The presenter may be emphasising to her unseen audience that this information is for them specifically and that they should pay attention. Moving from a plural referent to a singular referent is possibly a deliberate action to make audience members feel she is talking to them specifically, similar to radio announcement recommendations (see section 2.3).

WEEKEND is signed with the brow raise continuing, keeping the upcoming weekend as the focus of this sentence. A rhetorical question is established with the presenter stating WHAT with a brow raise, supported by her body leaning forward to draw the audience's attention to the following information.

At the end of line 1, Sheryl states it is a long weekend, with an exaggerated movement of LONG to emphasise this. At the beginning of line 2 she adds clarity, it is a long weekend because it is Labour Weekend, a public holiday. She then states her knowledge by signing KNOW, indicating she and her unseen audience have shared knowledge. Next, she signs SOME with a brow raise (to draw focus), then she signs DEAF, presumably meaning the members of the Deaf Club, who are likely to be Deaf. Multiple PT:PRO2 signs are then made, in various spots at the camera – this is a plural reference thus it has been glossed as PT:PRO2pl. This demonstrates a footing shift back to a collective addressee, but I suggest this is a different type of collective. Given she earlier signed SOME, she may have deliberately chosen to do multiple pointing rather than the generic sweeping motion for plurality, to emphasise this is a random reference to some individuals, rather than all potential audience members. AWAY (still with the brow raise) is then signed multiple times, again indicating random reference to <u>some</u> audience members and not <u>all</u> the unseen addressees.

The excerpt ends with Sheryl signing RIGHT, to affirm that it is shared knowledge between herself and the unseen audience. As the president of the Deaf Club, it is reasonable to expect that her imagined audience is the Deaf Club membership, although without asking her we cannot be certain. Nonetheless, this use of RIGHT to indicate shared knowledge means the audience are seen as ratified participants as she has explicitly directed her talk toward them.

In this excerpt, the presenter has demonstrated both singular pronouns and plural pronouns when referring to their unseen audience. This was an interesting example of footing shifts used in referencing audience members in three different ways: as individuals, as a full group (mass) of addressees, and as some individuals in that group.

5.5.2 Second-person pronouns: Plural (sweeping motion)

Second-person pronouns were also produced with a sweeping motion and are examined separately to the multiple-point plural pronouns because discourse analysis suggests a likely difference between these types of plurals. Plurality here is declared by moving the pointed-finger handshape in a sweeping motion across the signing space, in front of the presumed second-person addressees, i.e. toward the camera (annotated as PT:PRO2pl). Discourse analysis revealed no difference in function between the one- and two-handed sweeping motions in reference to their unseen audience.

Excerpt 14 below is an example of a one-handed plural. It originates from an announcement about an upcoming annual rugby competition. The presenter invites interested people to consider playing in the rugby matches and explains what will happen afterwards. Here, Rodney is clarifying that the game will start at 2pm and asks that players arrive by 1pm.

Excerpt 14: Event organiser giving details about an upcoming rugby game.

English translation: *Kick-off is at 2pm; If you're playing, be there before 1pm.*

	br+lf *lf* *hs*
1	KICK-OFF CLOCK-TWO AFTERNOON PT:PRO2 **PT:PRO2pl** HERE=
2	=PLAYERS BEFORE CLOCK-ONE AFTERNOON

In line 1, we see Rodney establishing the topic of the sentence by signing KICK-OFF with a brow raise and his upper body leaning forward, which can be used to assert the topic (see section 4.4.1). He then provides the time of the event (2pm), and makes a singular referent directly to the camera, which appears to have been a false start. He quickly shifts the point direction slightly to his left, then sweeps across to the right, thus becoming a plural reference to the unseen audience: this is shown in Figure 14 below.

Figure 14

Repair from PT:PRO2 to PT:PRO2pl

Note. From Rodney (video a).

Returning to Excerpt 14 above we can see that Rodney signs HERE PLAYERS (lines 1-2), likely to provide clarity that it is just players that this request applies to. He then provides the time they need to be there at the field (note that information about being at the field was provided earlier in the video).

Sweeping plurality signs commonly start with a pointing finger to the presenter's side, which then sweeps across to the other side. Here, Rodney has repaired what began as a singular reference, correcting it to a plural reference. This gives us an insight into his perception of the unseen audience being many people, as the repair is evidence of plurality used purposefully. In his video, he has made both singular and plural references to his unseen audience, thus the false start in line 1, and self-repair could be considered a footing shift changing to plural addressees.

5.5.3 Second-person possessive pronouns: Singular

The singular second-person possessive pronoun is formed with a closed fist, thumb tucked in at the side, and signed in a short movement towards the second-person referent, to mean a singular YOUR (see Figure 11, section 5.2). This was glossed as PT(S):POSS2.

Excerpt 15 below originates from an announcement in which the audience is being asked to pledge their financial support towards the new Deaf Club building. Prior to the excerpt below, Darryl announced the need for this support. Here in Excerpt 15, he starts to outline the different ways support can be pledged.

Excerpt 15: WDS president's announcement about fundraising pledge

English translation: *There are four different ways you can support. [Pledging] one brick, which would have your name on it forever…*

1	br hs+hn br br HOW——— HAVE 4 GROUP+++ ONE BRICK DS:name-on-brick **PT(S):POSS2**=
2	hn =DS:name-on-brick CAN ONWARDS

In line 1, Darryl signs HOW with a brow raise, which is a rhetorical question (*"how can you support?"*). The sign is held slightly while he nods his head, to affirm that the following information will link to that question. He then explains there are four different categories of support, signing each category in a different location spread across the signing space in front of him. Attention is drawn to ONE BRICK with brow-raise topicalisation, followed by depiction showing the brick being labelled with a name (line 1). A singular possessive pronoun reference with a brow raise is then made, "*your"* , followed by (in line 2) the same depiction of naming the brick. This emphasises that it would be a specific person's name on the brick if they pledge their financial support. This is then followed by CAN, a modal verb to indicate that this is possible.

The excerpt ends with Darryl signing ONWARDS with a head nod, to affirm the brick pledges are likely to be a forever thing, thus worthy of their financial support. Darryl's use of a singular possessive pronoun rather than a plural one in this excerpt likely relates to the specific request he is making to each of his unseen audience members. This is supported by what he shared in his interview about it being an individual responsibility to pledge support. In the talk, out of six second-person references, Darryl has made only one plural (which was a multiple-pointing reference like in Excerpt 13), thus his footing has changed once to address some individuals, then back to a single addressee reference. This demonstrates Darryl's alignment with his individual audience members; the request he makes of them is tailored to them personally.

5.5.4 Second-person possessive pronouns: Plural

Plural second-person possessive pronouns in this subset use the same closed fist handshape as in 5.5.3 but move across the second-person reference location in a sweeping motion, signalling plurality. There were just two occurrences of this in the subset of data, by two presenters, and they were glossed as PT(S):POSS2pl. Both were signed one-handed.

Excerpt 16 is from a call for a Special General Meeting (SGM) by the Deaf Club president for members to vote on changes to the constitution. Prior to Excerpt 16, Craigo gave details about the SGM such as date, time, and venue, and explained the reason for the SGM. He is now

explaining the process. Changes to constitutions may only be voted on by an organisation's members; therefore, it is reasonable to expect the presenter has a more specific idea about his likely unseen audience, or at least who he is targeting. Craigo's alignment with his imagined target audience demonstrates concepts from Goffman's (1981) participation framework, by positioning himself as a person of authority who is making a request of his organisation's members.

Excerpt 16: DSC president calls an SGM

English translation: *I will go through each of the proposed changes clearly in NZSL. Those require your approval [to go ahead].*

1	*br* *lf* PT:PRO1 WILL EXPLAIN CLEAR IN SIGN PT:loc EXPLAIN WHY NEED=
2	=CHANGE+++ %clauses [hc 0.59] NEED **PT(S):POSS2pl** APPROVE CHANGE

Line 1 begins with Craigo referring to himself, with a first-person pronoun accompanied by a brow raise. The reference to himself is a clear indication he is likely the author of this information. This is followed by an assertion that he will explain clearly, in NZSL, with a forward lean to emphasise the importance of this information. Craigo then makes a reference to the imaginary document by referencing a space in which that document was earlier established. EXPLAIN is repeated, followed by WHY NEED, and on line 2, CHANGE+++. A brief clasped hands pause is observed, before the presenter resumes, signing NEED, followed by a plural possessive (PT(S):POSS2pl) directed at the plural audience. Finally, he signs APPROVE and CHANGE, as the unseen audience's approval is required for the changes to happen.

This excerpt shows the presenter making a request of his unseen audience. The audience is referred to as a plural referent; it is likely that the presenter (who is president of the organisation) has made this choice deliberately. General Meetings require a quorum, and use of plurality to refer to the unseen audience may enforce the president's wish to have many people attend this meeting. This indicates that it may have been a conscious choice by the presenter to make a plural possessive reference to the audience.

This section has provided some examples of how second-person references in this subset demonstrate the footings shifts and concepts from Goffman's (1981) participation framework

relating to presenters' audience alignment. As with first-person reference excerpts, there too was variation. In terms of footing shifts relating to audience reference, one presenter maintained the same footing for the duration of their talk; other presenters signalled footing shifts by change of second-person references, thus showing alignment with the unseen audience. The second-person references found in this dataset contrast to an extent with conventions in radio announcing. In radio, there is emphasis on using singular pronouns only, to maintain a rapport with the unseen audience as individuals. In these NZSL videos, we see a range of second-person pronouns, all of which are likely to be motivated by a desire to create connections between the presenter and their audience.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented examples of first-person and second-person pronominal referencing. Interesting and representative excerpts from the subset were presented and discussed at a detailed level. I drew on Goffman's (1981) concepts of footings and speaker roles to better understand strategies used by experienced Deaf presenters to align with an unseen audience. Analysis shows that deliberate footing shifts are made throughout the video announcements, particularly shifts in alignment and reference to the audience. These shifts can only be understood in context, for example where a specific request is made and so footing changes from general talk to a request of an individual.

Analysis showed that presenters tended to position themselves as a singular referent – either as an organisation, or as an individual. As such, there were many more singular first-person pronouns (n=25) than plural first-person pronouns, even though all presenters were representing an organisation. Several presenters changed their stance between an individual perspective and a perspective of a collective of individuals within one video.

The analysis presented in this chapter suggests that even though the audience is unseen, and presenters are not able to know who will actually be watching, they do still have an idea of their likely audience. It is probable this knowledge guides the way they show their alignment to the unseen audience. Sometimes presenters have a specific relationship with their intended audience (e.g. a Deaf Club president addressing their membership), and at other times they are addressing the community in general (e.g. a call to support fundraising). As discussed in section 2.3, radio announcers are encouraged to refer to their audience as one individual, to build engagement between the announcer and their unseen audience. This was seen in some excerpts (e.g. Excerpts 13 and 15 above), however the imagined audience for Deaf community

announcements is likely to be much more specific than a radio audience. Other strategies that do not necessarily align with recommendations for radio talk may further develop as this form of communication grows within the close-knit Deaf community.

The presenters in this subset of data assigned their unseen audience their participation status, by directly addressing them as second-person referents, making them ratified participants even if not present in real time. This was achieved by use of pronominal references as well as agreement verbs to signal agent and subject of the action.

Chapter 6 will summarise the overall findings on the discourse functions of pauses and audience references and will discuss both theoretic and practical applications of this research. Recommendations for future study in this area will also be outlined.

Chapter 6 - Discussion

This study has presented new information as the first known examination of pausing and audience reference in asynchronous NZSL informative videos, drawing on Goffman's (1981) concepts of footings and speaker roles. The final chapter of this thesis summarises the study and the findings for each of the three research questions. The limitations of the study and suggestions for future research will also be discussed. The chapter concludes with suggested practical applications for training and professional development within the Deaf community.

This study set out to explore online asynchronous video announcements produced by Deaf presenters for Deaf organisations. Specifically, I was interested in the following research questions:

1. What patterns of discourse features, including discourse markers and non-manual signals, emerge in informative NZSL videos?
2. How does a specific discourse feature (identified from analysis of research question 1) function at a detailed discourse level?
3. How is the unseen audience referred to in the videos?

Following a preliminary analysis of the dataset, I was able to further refine research question 2 to:

> How does pausing function at a detailed discourse level in video announcements?

Nine Deaf presenters from five Deaf organisations were identified and consented to participate in this study. Suitable videos were sourced from Facebook pages and online newsletters produced by Deaf organisations. Preliminary observations followed by more detailed discourse analysis of the selected features unearthed interesting patterns and strategies used by the presenters. I drew on Goffman's (1981) participation framework to better understand participants' presentation of themselves, their alignment to the audience, as well as how they imagine their unseen audience. Sections 6.1-6.3 summarise findings related to each of the research questions.

6.1 Research question 1: What patterns of discourse features, including discourse markers and non-manual signals, emerge in informative NZSL videos?

The preliminary analysis presented in chapter 4 identified a range of interesting discourse features used by presenters in the asynchronous NZSL video dataset.

Several paralinguistic behaviours were also observed:

- head movements
- body movements that were exaggerated
- eyebrow use to signal grammatical details such as question type or topicalisation
- furrowing of the eyebrows signalling parenthetical asides
- eye gaze variation: some presenters looking at the camera only; others varied their eye gaze direction (e.g. to recollect, or to read their prompt notes).

There was almost non-existent role-shifting, which is a key feature of signed languages. Further research is warranted to see if this is a pattern across other NZSL announcement videos.

There were a noticeable range of pauses used in different ways, and of varying lengths. Most of these pauses appeared to be used purposefully and to have specific discourse functions; to this end, I chose pausing as the more specific focus for a (now refined) research question 2.

6.2 Research question 2: How does pausing function at a detailed discourse level in video announcements?

A variety of pauses were identified in the dataset of NZSL videos. There were 166 pauses in total in the dataset, and after excluding 69 that did not have a discourse function (e.g. a natural break, reading notes) or its function could not be identified (n=13), a subset of 84 pauses was selected for more detailed discourse analysis. These included boundary markers (such as pausing for end of introductions, new topics, subtopics, and to close the talk), grammatical markers (rhetorical questions), and emphases to draw focus. Only one exception (i.e. not a discourse function) was included in this subset: recollecting. I wanted to include this as it was the second-highest occurring type of pause.

Discourse analysis revealed that pauses did not occur on their own, but rather alongside or adjacent to other types of paralinguistic behaviours such as head nods or brow raises. This aligns with research in spoken English, where several cues occur together signalling the upcoming pause (Rendle-Short, 2005). It appears that alongside other discourse markers, pauses can function as a contextualisation cue for footing shifts between different types of talk.

These other paralinguistic features along with content of the text help define the function of the pause in context. For example, head nods helped define boundary marker pauses (=52), as did brow raises (for example to signal a new topic). Most of the pauses were unfilled, whereby presenters stopped signing by either clasping their hands together or putting their hands down

by their sides. The *emphasis* sub-function pauses were both filled (sign being prolonged) and unfilled, while all the recollecting pauses were filled.

Discourse analysis of pauses in context highlighted the purposeful use of pauses by experienced Deaf presenters, to both help themselves with clarity in their delivery, and to likely aid their audience's comprehension. Pausing was used alongside other discourse features to mark footing shifts, new topics, highlight key information, and as a grammatical feature (to make rhetorical-question statements). This is likely to be especially crucial in an asynchronous announcement, where there is no audience to provide immediate feedback on clarity and cohesion.

6.3 Research question 3: How is the unseen audience referred to in the videos?

NZSL grammar requires pronouns to specify whether the referent is singular or plural, even when an audience is unseen and viewing the video at a later time. Pronominal referencing choices therefore provide insight into how the presenters imagine their audience to be. Twelve out of 15 videos included pronoun or possessive references and formed the subset of data for this part of the study. Discourse analysis showed that presenters displayed footing shifts during their talk. I drew on Goffman's (1981) participation framework in examining footing shifts to better understand presenters' alignment to their unseen audience. These footing shifts varied during different segments of their talk, to change between general talk, asides/recollecting, and making specific requests of their audience. Alignment with their audience was another use of footing shifts, e.g. to implore compliance with government instructions (see Excerpt 7) or to empathise with the audience over an ongoing topic (see Excerpt 8). Adjusting speaker role was also achieved using footing shifts; the three speaker roles according to participation framework (animator, author, principal) in NZSL videos were discussed in chapter 5. While this research question primarily focused on audience references, interesting occurrences with first-person references are worth noting. Some footing shifts occurred when making first-person references – some presenters switched between singular first-person and plural first-person referents. This highlighted a shift in perspective or alignment, for example using plural referents to clearly signal a collective perspective. Phonological variation in the pronominal referencing did not appear to affect function and may be personal style.

Discourse analysis showed footing shifts tended to occur at specific moments during talk; they were evident when the presenter changed their delivery from general talk to making a specific request or providing instruction. This was signalled in part through pronominal referencing

changes, for example making multiple pointing references towards their unseen audience, indicating some individuals rather than one mass audience. One interviewee also noted that they used individual references to emphasise that an action was an individual responsibility rather than a general request.

These findings also support the literature (e.g. Frobenius, 2014; Dynel, 2014) in that while unseen, the presenters must still have an idea of who their unseen audience is. As discussed in section 2.7.1, scholars propose that the unseen audiences are ratified, and this is supported by this analysis, as presenters still work to create connections with their audience even if they are not in front of them in real time. This makes sense, considering the collective nature of the Deaf community, and the high value placed on information-sharing (Mindess, 1999). In the interviews, the participants shared they did put thought into ensuring their information was as clear as possible for their viewers.

Radio announcers are advised to refer to their unseen audience as an individual so that the listener feels engaged (section 2.3), thus I was curious to see what would unfold with NZSL videos given the parallel of an unseen audience. As seen in chapter 5, there were some purposeful individual references, but also many plural references (although less frequent). Deliberate use of singular pronouns aligns with radio presenting, however the variation of references in these NZSL videos indicates motivation of the presenters to engage with their audience as a collective. As this field grows and is discussed more within the Deaf community, shared community expectations may develop.

6.4 Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research

There were some limitations to this study. Firstly, the study examined online asynchronous videos only. In a future study it would be ideal to compare these videos with similar informative announcements given by the same presenters in other settings, such as at Deaf Club, or in online settings with a visible and live audience. This would help us to better understand if the patterns noticed in this study are representative of a new genre specifically, or if it is representative of NZSL announcing in general.

The scope of a master's study meant that I needed to focus on pausing and audience references. Preliminary analysis identified a range of discourse features that are deserving of further analysis in the future. These include presenters' use of eye gaze in settings without a visible audience, as well as their use of agreement verbs toward the unseen audience. It would also be useful in the

future to expand analysis of pausing as a discourse marker in other contexts including face-to-face dialogues and presentations.

Finally, the scope of this study meant I needed to limit interviews to three participants. The interview data revealed useful, contextual insights into the dataset, as well as broad discussion on this emerging new genre. In a future and larger study, it would be ideal to interview all participants and seek their feedback on the analysis. It would also be fascinating to seek the views of audience members to understand their perspective of asynchronous videos, particularly how pauses and audience references are used to create connections with them.

6.5 Practical applications of this study

This study has identified new information about the use of NZSL in asynchronous online video announcements and will have practical applications in the Deaf community. Many Deaf individuals now regularly make announcement videos and post them onto organisations' Facebook pages. The findings of this study may help presenters to reflect on their work and notice similar strategies they are using, or to develop new techniques (e.g. using pausing to draw focus, to signal new topics or subtopics). The study may increase awareness of the unseen audience, and prompt presenters to consider who their audience might be, influencing the level of audience engagement in their videos. It is hoped this study encourages and contributes to community-led discussions about this emerging genre, which has rapidly been adopted.

The findings of this study are likely also relevant to NZSL-English interpreters and interpreter training. There is an increase in televised and live-streamed broadcasts (such as from the government, local government, emergency management services) that have NZSL-English interpreters present and interpreting to an unseen audience. NZSL-English interpreters are mostly non-native, second language learners of NZSL and will thus benefit from better understanding strategies that skilled Deaf presenters use in such announcements for clarity and audience engagement. Interpreting students will be able to better understand the key functions and positioning of pauses in monologic texts for structure and cohesion. The findings may also encourage interpreters to be more aware of pronominal referencing choices, depending on the intent and meaning of the source message. This may also help interpreters understand the strategies Deaf people use in their delivery of webinars and online presentations, for more effective and pragmatically equivalent voicing into spoken English.

Deaf presenters who produce NZSL translations of English texts will be more aware of references to the unseen target audience, which will help to ensure that the intent of the source message is

accurately conveyed through the translation (for example, understanding when an English "you" should become PT:PRO1 versus PT:PRO1pl in NZSL, and why). I note that I was one of the Northern signers who created informative videos and translations for the Deaf community following the 2011 earthquakes. The local Christchurch Deaf community did not always appreciate or understand the non-local signs used by Northerners (McKee, 2014, as discussed in chapter 1). However, at the time this was a new way of disseminating knowledge in NZSL and such community awareness had not yet been developed. Based on this personal experience, as well as new findings from the current study, I recommend that Deaf presenters (and interpreters too) seek as much local NZSL knowledge as possible, to create and maintain a connection with their unseen audience. This study provides some concrete strategies that will be food for discussion in workshops and professional development opportunities in the near future.

6.6 Conclusion

This study has shown that experienced Deaf presenters use purposeful strategies to structure their talk and create connections to an unseen audience. Presenters used pauses strategically, alongside other discourse features, to indicate boundaries between topics as well as openings and closings of their talk, and to emphasise key points. Given that the videos were produced asynchronously, the audience was technically unknown for each video, however presenters signalled some understanding of who their audience was likely to be. Changes in pronominal referencing and other contextualisation cues conveyed deliberate footing shifts; presenters moved between referencing a singular unseen audience member, to more than one individual, to a mass unseen audience (i.e., the local Deaf community). Discourse analysis of these references in context showed that the footing shifts closely aligned to the topic and purpose of the talk at that particular time.

This new broadcast style within NZSL has emerged rapidly and has been embraced by Deaf New Zealanders as a new way to quickly share information amongst the community. It will be interesting to see how this evolves as awareness increases and discussions unfold within the Deaf community. This study provides evidence-based insights to inform and enrich community discussions.

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Appendices

Appendix A: AUTEC Ethics approval

7 September 2022

George Major

Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear George

Re Ethics Application: **22/218 Discourse features used within New Zealand Sign Language vlogs to refer to an imagined audience**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 7 September 2025.

Non-Standard Conditions of Approval

Non-standard conditions must be completed before commencing your study. Non-standard conditions do not need to be submitted to or reviewed by AUTEC before commencing your study.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research and as approved by AUTEC in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using the EA2 form.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEC prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEC Secretariat as a matter of priority.
7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard and that all the dates on the documents are updated.
8. AUTEC grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted and you need to meet all ethical, legal, public health, and locality obligations or requirements for the jurisdictions in which the research is being undertaken.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz. The forms mentioned above are available online through http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEC Secretariat

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: , catherine@greenwoods.nz

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet – Organisations

Participant Information Sheet - Organisations

NZSL video: https://youtu.be/Vn6vJyWw_ng

This Information Sheet is for organisations.

Date Information Sheet Produced:

25 July 2022

Project Title

Discourse features used within New Zealand Sign Language vlogs to refer to an imagined audience.

An Invitation

My name is Catherine Greenwood, I am a current student at AUT, studying towards a Master of Language and Culture. I would like to invite your organisation to consent to my research. My research is looking at NZSL vlogs, and how the signer refers to their audience, even though they can't see the audience in front of them. This research will contribute to my master's degree at AUT. This research is being funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand's Marsden fund.

What is the purpose of this research?

Vlogs (video blogs) have been made since the early 2000s, but only more recently (2010s onwards) have the Deaf community used social media regularly as a platform for New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) vlogs. Social media (such as Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo) is being more and more used to share information & notices vlogs for the New Zealand Deaf community.

This research will investigate a sample of NZSL vlogs, signed by Deaf fluent signers, that are already available publicly online, and which are information notice vlogs with no sensitive information. I want to identify strategies used by the signers to refer to their imagined audience. There is little research on signed language vlogs, or on NZSL discourse, so what I find in this research will increase our understanding of NZSL grammar and discourse features used in this relatively new communication channel.

The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

I have looked at a range of NZSL vlogs on Facebook and YouTube that were produced by Deaf individuals, for Deaf-related organisations (for example, Deaf Clubs). I have focused on fluent, Deaf signers who have experience making vlogs like this. I have identified a small number of vlogs that I wish to explore for discourse features used by the signers. Your organisation has published one or more of those vlogs, and I seek your consent for me to use those identified vlogs and approach the individual(s) who signed those vlogs.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Your organisation's participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You give your organisation's permission to participate in this research by completing the *Consent Form* I have provided you.

You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

I am contacting your organisation first, to seek your permission and to approach the individual(s) who signed the vlogs for your organisation.

Providing you consent (which will take about 30 minutes of your time to read this sheet and the Consent Form, and sign), and providing the individual(s) consent, I will then download the vlog(s) you published, and start my analysis of the vlogs, to find out what language features are used in this video.

Of all the research participants (which is expected to be up to 10 individuals), I will invite 2 or 3 signers to have a 1-1 interview with me, to allow me to ask in-depth questions about their vlogs. The questions are developed from my analysis of the vlogs. A separate Consent Form will be provided for the individual(s) to agree to the interview.

The research findings will be used in my thesis, which will be submitted to complete my master's degree. Afterwards, the thesis (including research findings) will be used to write academic articles. I also plan to present it at relevant conferences (such as NZSLTA or SLIANZ, or linguistics-related conferences). **What are the discomforts and risks?**

Participating in this research is not anticipated to cause your organisation any disadvantages or risk, because the vlog(s) you published are already in the public arena, and do not have sensitive information.

There may be concerns about me analysing the use of NZSL in your organisation's vlog(s).

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

The focus of this project is on language use (*how information was signed*); I am not analysing the content of the vlogs (*what was signed*). I am looking at multiple vlogs produced by fluent Deaf signers.

If your organisation decides to participate, you have the right to withdraw from the project at any stage, and you can ask questions about the project at any time.

What are the benefits?

NZSL is a young language (when compared to other signed languages such as American Sign Language), and there is little research on NZSL discourse. This research will benefit your organisation by giving a better understanding of patterns of discourse features identified in online videos.

The wider Deaf community will benefit from this by having further evidence/confirmation that NZSL is a thriving language that adapts to meet an ever-changing world (e.g. the use of vlogs on social media) and use of language.

The community will develop by having another Deaf person qualified with research skills. In New Zealand there are few Deaf people with research skills, and who have postgraduate research degrees. This project will therefore grow research capacity within the Deaf community.

How will my privacy be protected?

The vlogs I will analyse for this research are themselves not private or confidential because they are available for anyone to watch on Facebook/YouTube. The vlog(s) have been published under your organisation's name, therefore privacy and confidentiality of your organisation is not provided for in this research.

This means, if you do not want the organisation to be identified in the research, your organisation should not consent to participate in this research.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There will be no financial costs incurred by your organisation for participating.

If your organisation agrees to let me use your published vlog(s), this will take up to 30 minutes of your time to consider the Consent and Release Form, and sign it.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have at least two weeks to consider this invitation.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes – a summary in both NZSL and English will be made available upon completion of the thesis.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, George Major, george.major@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 ext. 6463.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, *ethics@aut.ac.nz*, 09 921 9999 ext. 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Catherine Greenwood, catmul20@aut.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

George Major, george.major@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 ext. 6463.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7 September 2022,

AUTEC Reference number 22/218.

Appendix C: Participant Information Sheet – Individuals

Participant Information Sheet

NZSL video: https://youtu.be/BR2oKEI4slg

This Information Sheet is for **individuals**.

Date Information Sheet Produced:

25 July 2022

Project Title

Discourse features used within New Zealand Sign Language vlogs to refer to an imagined audience.

An Invitation

My name is Catherine Greenwood, I am a current student at AUT, studying towards a Master of Language and Culture. I would like to invite you to take part in my research. My research is looking at NZSL vlogs, and how the signer refers to their audience, even though they can't see the audience in front of them. This research will form part of my thesis I will submit to complete my Master's. This research is being funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand's Marsden fund.

What is the purpose of this research?

Vlogs (video blogs) have been made since the early 2000s, but only more recently (2010s onwards) have the Deaf community used social media regularly as a platform for New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) vlogs. Social media (such as Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo) is being more and more used to share information & notices vlogs for the New Zealand Deaf community.

This research will investigate a sample of NZSL vlogs, signed by Deaf fluent signers, that are already available publicly online, and which are information notice vlogs with no sensitive information. I want to identify strategies used by the signers to refer to their imagined audience. There is little research on signed language vlogs, or on NZSL discourse, so what I find in this research will increase our understanding of NZSL grammar and discourse features used in this relatively new communication channel.

The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

I have looked at a range of NZSL vlogs on Facebook and YouTube that were produced by Deaf individuals, for Deaf-related organisations (for example, Deaf Clubs) within the last 2 years. I have focused on fluent, Deaf signers who have experience making vlogs like this. I have identified a small number of vlogs that I wish to explore for discourse features used by the signers such as referring to the imagined audience. You signed one (or more) of those vlogs.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You give your permission to participate in this research by completing the ***Consent Form*** I have provided you.

You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

I have contacted the organisation that you produced the vlog(s) for and first sought their permission to approach you. With their consent, I am now contacting you.

Providing you consent (which will take about 30 minutes of your time to read this sheet and the Consent Form, and sign), I will then download the vlog(s) you signed, and start my analysis of the vlogs, to find out what language features are used in this video.

Of all the research participants (which is expected to be up to 10 individuals), I will invite 2 or 3 signers to have a 1-1 interview with me, to allow me to ask in-depth questions about their vlogs. The questions are developed from my analysis of the vlogs. A separate Consent Form will be provided to agree to the interview. If you are invited & agree to an interview, this will be up to 1 hour of your time.

The research findings will be used in my thesis, which will be submitted to complete my master's degree. Afterwards, the thesis (including research findings) will be used to write academic articles. I also plan to present it at relevant conferences (such as NZSLTA or SLIANZ, or linguistics-related conferences).

What are the discomforts and risks?

Participating in this research is not anticipated to cause you any disadvantages or risk, because the vlog(s) you signed are already in the public arena, and do not have sensitive information.

You may feel concerned about me analysing your use of NZSL.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

The focus of this project is on language use (*how information was signed*); I am not analysing the content of the vlogs (*what was signed*). I am looking at multiple vlogs produced by fluent Deaf signers like yourself.

If you decide to participate you have the right to withdraw from the project at any stage and you can ask questions about the project at any time.

AUT Student Counselling and Mental Health is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centre at WB203 City Campus, email counselling@aut.ac.nz or call 09 921 9998 via NZ Relay.
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet.

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on https://www.aut.ac.nz/student-life/student-support/counselling-and-mental-health

What are the benefits?

NZSL is a young language (when compared to other signed languages such as American Sign Language), and there is little research on NZSL discourse. This research will benefit you by giving you a better understanding of patterns of discourse features identified in online videos.

The wider Deaf community will benefit from this by having further evidence/confirmation that NZSL is a thriving language that adapts to meet an ever-changing world (e.g. the use of vlogs on social media) and use of language.

The community will develop by having another Deaf person qualified with research skills. In New Zealand there are few Deaf people with research skills, and who have postgraduate research degrees. This project will therefore grow research capacity within the Deaf community.

How will my privacy be protected?

The vlogs I will analyse for this research are themselves not private or confidential because they are available for anyone to watch on Facebook/YouTube.

The vlogs included in my thesis (and future presentations/publications) will not be kept confidential (because of the potential use of screenshots from the videos, or creating short video clips from the vlogs for presentations), which means you may be identifiable in this information.

This means, if you do not want to be identified, you should not consent to participate in this research.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There will be no financial costs incurred by you if you participate.

If you choose to let me use your vlog(s), this will take up to 30 minutes of your time to consider the Consent Form, and sign it.

Additionally, up to 1 hour of your time, if you are invited to an interview.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have at least two weeks to consider this invitation.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes – a summary in both NZSL and English will be made available upon completion of the thesis.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, George Major, george.major@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 ext. 6463.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, *ethics@aut.ac.nz*, 09 921 9999 ext. 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Catherine Greenwood, catmul20@aut.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

George Major, george.major@aut.ac.nz, 09 921 9999 ext. 6463.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7 September 2022,

AUTEC Reference number 22/218.

Appendix D: Consent & release form - Organisations

Consent and Release Form

NZSL video: https://youtu.be/slZUCUCgob8

For organisations

Project title: Discourse features used within New Zealand Sign Language vlogs to refer to an imagined audience

Project Supervisor: George Major

Researcher: Catherine Greenwood

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 25 July 2022.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered, in either NZSL or written English.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that our organisation may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- I understand we can withdraw from the study at any time, however, once the findings have been produced, removal of our organisation's data (the vlog(s)) may not be possible.
- I understand they will seek individual permission from the signers, before using any of our videos.
- I understand that the videos in full will be used for academic purposes only.
- I agree to our organisation taking part in this research, and permit the researcher to use the identified video(s) our organisation published, that are available publicly online for their research.

We wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes○ No○

After the thesis is completed, the researcher may participate in conferences or online presentations (in both community and academic contexts), or write articles for academic journals. The primary researcher would like to show screenshots and/or short video clips from these videos in the thesis and in future publications/presentations.

Please choose one option (circle **consent** or **do not consent**) for each of the following statements:

1. I **consent / do not consent** to the use of video screenshots in the thesis and future publications or presentations
2. I **consent / do not consent** to the use of video clips in the thesis and future publications or presentations

Participant's signature: .....

Name of organisation : .....

Name of person completing this form on behalf: .....

Person's role in organisation .....

Organisation's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

.....

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7 September 2022, AUTEC Reference number 22/218.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Appendix E: Consent & release form – Individual participants

Consent and Release Form

NZSL video: https://youtu.be/GQkrrZgu9gk

For individuals

Project title: ***Discourse features used within New Zealand Sign Language vlogs to refer to an imagined audience***

Project Supervisor: ***George Major***

Researcher: ***Catherine Greenwood***

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 25 July 2022.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered, in either NZSL or written English.
- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- I understand I can withdraw from the study at any time, however, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- I permit the researcher to use the identified video/s I signed that are available publicly online for their research.
- I understand that I may be invited for a 1-1 interview with the researcher, and a separate Consent Form will be required to be completed by me for the interview if I choose to participate.
- I understand that the videos in full will be used for academic purposes only.
- I agree to take part in this research.

I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes○ No○

After the thesis is completed, the researcher may participate in conferences or online presentations (in both community and academic contexts), or write articles for academic journals. The primary researcher would like to show screenshots and/or short video clips from these videos in the thesis and in future publications/presentations. This would make you visually identifiable.

Please choose one option (circle consent or do not consent) for each of the following statements:

1. I consent / do not consent to the use of my real name in the thesis and future publications or presentations. (If you choose 'do not consent', a fictional name will be used instead)
2. I consent / do not consent to the use of video screenshots in the thesis and future publications or presentations
3. I consent / do not consent to the use of my video clip/s in the thesis and future publications or presentations

Participant's signature: .....

Participant's name: .....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

.....

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7 September 2022,

AUTEC Reference number 22/218.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Appendix F: Consent for videoconferenced interviews

Oral Consent Protocol – videoconferenced interviews

Project title: *Discourse features used within New Zealand Sign Language vlogs to refer to an imagined audience*

Project Supervisor: *George Major*

Researcher: *Catherine Greenwood*

The participant joins the videoconference

O Do you agree to my recording your consent to participate?

If they agree, then the record function will be activated and they will be asked the following:

- Have you read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 25 July 2022?
- Do you have any questions about the research and/or this interview?
- Do you understand that notes will be taken during and after the interview and that the interview will also be video-recorded?
- Do you understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (your choice) and that you may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.?
- Do you understand that if you withdraw from the study, if the findings have been produced by that time, removal of your data may not be possible?
- Do you agree to take part in this interview?
- Do you want me to send you a copy of the video recording for this consent? YesO NoO
- Please confirm your name and contact details

Please choose one:

o I consent to being named as an interviewee in the thesis and future publications or presentations.

OR

o I do not consent to being named as an interviewee in the thesis and future publications or presentations. [A fictional name will be used instead.]

Participant's name: .....

Date of interview / consent :

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

.....

.....

.....

I will now turn off the recording of the Consent and then will start a separate recording for the interview.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 7 September 2022,

AUTEC Reference number 22/218.

Note: A copy of this completed form will be emailed to the Participant after the interview.

Appendix G: Sample of interview questions

a. Earlier, I asked you to watch a range of announcement videos that are available online. What makes a successful announcement video when you watch one? I.e. what draws you in/ keeps you hooked? Just to remind you, we don't need to talk about specific individuals, but of the whole video, how the language was used.

> Were there any videos that you did not feel was effective in keeping you engaged/interested as an audience? Remember, don't have to tell me who it was, just focus on what in that video you didn't like.
>
> Why/what about that video did you think was not effective?

b. What do you think is important when you produce an announcement video?
(probing for audience engagement, signing big/clearly, eye gaze, information clear, concise…)

c. When you produce the videos – do you have a rough plan of the sequence of information you will sign? How do you decide on the structure of your information? How do you know this information is what the audience needs?

d. Do you imagine your audience when you are producing your videos?
YES – who? Is this one person or a group of people? Why?
NO – any reason you don't?

e. When you have a face-to-face conversation with a person (either online like now, or physically together), or if you are at Deaf Club, standing up to announce information, you can see their responses e.g. AH, OH-I-SEE, nodding, confused face etc., which helps you with adjusting your delivery of information. But with your announcement videos, you are not getting this feedback when you sign the video.
When you make a video, how do you reflect, make sure your information is clear?

f. Timing of videos – out of curiosity, have you noticed whether you like shorter videos or longer videos? How long is too long?

f. In your two videos – for WDS, and for NZSL Board - I noticed some specific interesting things, that I would like to ask you more about, and if you can explain why you did it that way.

1. you paused frequently.

2. your eye gaze is fixed on the camera/computer screen – but does turn away (WDS)

3. In the WDS video – you introduced yourself, name and role. In the NZSL Board video, you don't. Can you explain why the difference in these?

4. You did those videos for two separate organisations (WDS, NZSL Board) do you think that it is clear you are giving an announcement on behalf of these organisations?

5. Some prior overseas research (e.g. for radio announcing) I have been reading, that is feeding into this research – public radio announcements should refer to their audience as a singular person (you) and not as a mass (e.g. you all, all of you, everybody). Why – this is important for making the audience feel this person is talking to ME.

   In NZ Deaf people's announcement videos, I am noticing a variation, some people use a type of mass (YOU-ALL), and sometimes singular YOU.

   In the WDS video, your reference to the audience is singular. In the NZSL Board video, your pronouns are a mix of singular and plural. Were you aware you are mixing both? Might you know why you use both in NZSL Board video? Why singular pronoun in WDS video?

6. Is it important to refer to the Deaf community as a whole? Why/why not?

7. When you watch other people's videos (your homework) – did you notice the different YOU/YOU-ALL being used? Do you feel more engaged when they use YOU, or more engaged when they use YOU-ALL?

   (Prompt – YOU-ALL use in Deaf Club / in person with mass audience, work as well on video?)

8. Your use of PALM-UP – can you explain why?

9. You said in NZSL Board video, you KNOWWWW the community exasperated at seeing you repeat the info, multiple videos, how did you "know" this?

Appendix H: Transcript conventions

The transcripts in this thesis draws on conventions used in McKee (2017)'s NZSL: A Reference Grammar and Victoria University of Wellington Deaf Studies Research Unit's 'NZSL Corpus Annotation Guidelines'.

With excerpts, firstly, the English-equivalent translation appears above the NZSL transcript.

The phrases from the extracted segments are separated into lines, and each line is numbered for reference.

Within the transcript, three rows of information are on each line, as described below.

Line #	*NMS information above specific glosses/moments* NZSL GLOSS – PER ELAN GLOSSING= Eye gaze information (if not looking at camera)
#	=GLOSSING CARRIED OVER FROM PREVIOUS LINE.

In the transcript, any gloss in bold is the focus of the chapter; pauses for Chapter 4, and pronominal referencing in Chapter 5.

Below is a table of the abbreviations used in these transcripts, along with its full name (and meaning).

br	Brows raised	*EG:ul*	Eye gaze up and to the left
bf	Brows furrowed	*EG:ur*	Eye gaze up and to the right
hc	Hands clasped	*lf*	[body] lean forward
hd	Hands down	*lb*	[body] lean back
hn	Head nod	*ll*	[body] lean to the left
ht	Head tilt	*lr*	[body] lean to the right
EG:l	Eye gaze left	*h/hs*	hesitation/held sign
EG:r	Eye gaze Right	GLOSS—	The sign that hesitated/is being held
EG:d	Eye gaze downwards	GLOSS++	The sign is signed repeatedly, two times in this example

EG:u	Eye gaze upwards		[hc s:ss]	The type of pause, and length of pause (in seconds followed by milliseconds)
EG:h	Eye gaze at hands		=	The phrase continues from one line to the next line
EG:b	Presenter has turned around and looks behind them		*XX*	Underline indicates length of that non-manual feature
EG:n	Eye gaze at notes		*pm*	Pursed mouth
#	A word preceded by # has its letters signed e.g. #CAT signing C, A, T to spell cat		*%*	Gestured/constructed action that is not in the NZSL Dictionary
LB	List buoy. Abbreviation is followed by a bracketed number which indicates number of fingers showing on non-dominant hand: followed by which finger/referent is being pointed at (e.g. LB(3):ringfinger shows three fingers are held up, and the third finger references the 3rd item being discussed)			
PT:loc	index finger pointing at a referent/location			