



The eyes have it

The Role of Eye Gaze & Blinks in ASL



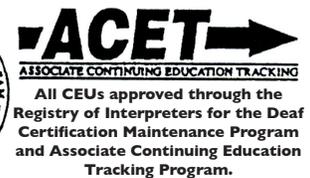
When signing, where should you be gazing? Do you stare at the other person, or is it okay to look away? How do you know when a signer is providing information or narration vs. a characterization? Absent a signed referent and obvious body shift, how can you tell when one characterization ends and another begins?

Answers to all of these questions (and more) can be found in the often-overlooked topic of eye gaze and eye blinks. This workshop will provide a brief look at different types of eye gaze and eye blink behaviors in American Sign Language. Eye gaze and blink behaviors will be categorized, explained and presented with the latest research available. Video demonstrations of Deaf signers will be used to reinforce the presented materials.

Regardless of your level of fluency in ASL, this workshop can dramatically impact your work. You'll never look at the eyes in the same way again!

Topics we will cover

- Utilize effective ASL eye gaze strategies for conversation regulation
- Identify and incorporate three types of eye gaze used in ASL narratives
- Explain the difference between periodic and voluntary eye blinks in ASL
- Identify characterizations (performatives) and sentence utterance boundaries as marked by eye behaviors



David N. Evans is a nationally-certified practitioner with over 25 years of providing ASL-English interpretation services, working extensively in conference settings as well as in music/performing arts, corporate and community settings.

Educating interpreters for two decades, David's sessions are interactive, entertaining, and informative—creating a relaxed, safe environment for all audiences. He has presented at conferences from the local to international with a record attendance of over 1,250 participants at the 2009 RID Conference in Philadelphia. Other accomplishments include presenting at two National Alliance of Black Interpreters (NAOBI) conferences and four national RID conferences. David established Bridge Communications in 1996 to further his goals of providing skill-building workshops and video materials for ASL-English interpreters.

When not on the road presenting, he makes his home with his partner, cat, and dog in Minneapolis, where he enjoys playing Frisbee, listening to disco, and taking walks around the city's many lakes.