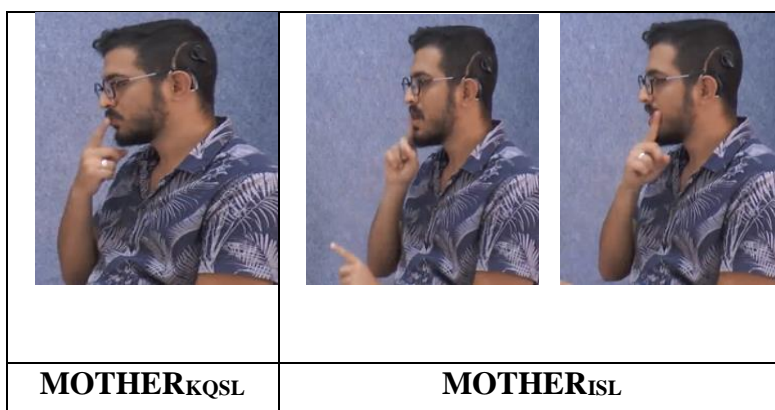


**Topical influence:
The influence of topic on code-switching in the Kufr Qassem deaf community**

Reiterative code-switching, when one lexical item from one language is produced immediately after a semantically equivalent lexical item in another language (e.g., MOTHER_{KQSL} MOTHER_{ISL}, see Figure 1) (Gumperz, 1982), is a frequent phenomenon in sign language studies (e.g., Jaraisy & Stamp, 2021; Quinto-Pozos, 2002; Stoianov et al., 2022) and yet, little is known about its function. Several spoken language studies suggest that reiteration functions as a form of accommodation, emphasis, reinforcement, or clarification (Auer, 1995; Eldridge, 1996; Pakir, 1989; Tay, 1989), however, the function in sign language seems less clear (Quinto-Pozos, 2002). In this study, we investigate code-switching, as well as reiterative code-switching produced in semi-spontaneous conversations while manipulating two important factors: interlocutor and topic. The frequency of code-switching has been shown to be conditioned by the interlocutor as language users attempt to accommodate or to make the other person feel part of the conversation (Grosjean, 2001; Henkin, 2016). Similarly, topic is an important factor in code-switching (Lipski, 2005); local topics such as food and traditions might lead to increased code-switching to the local language, while global topics, such as education and travel, may lead to increased use of the national language.

In this study, we investigate reiterative code-switching produced by bilinguals of two sign languages, Kufr Qassem Sign Language (KQSL), a local sign language used in central Israel, and Israeli Sign Language (ISL), the national sign language of Israel (Meir & Sandler, 2008). Twelve ISL-KQSL bilinguals participated in semi-spontaneous conversation, in three language conditions: (1) with another bilingual, (2) a monolingual KQSL signer, and (3) a monolingual ISL signer. They were given “local” and “global” topics to discuss. A total of 673 code-switches were found in the data, of which 65 were reiterative. Interlocutor and topic were found as significant predictors of the frequency of code-switching and language preference. Code-switching, and reiterative code-switching were most frequent when discussing a local topic or when interacting with a KQSL monolingual. Looking at ordering of the reiterations, there were more “ISL-KQSL” reiterations when signing with a KQSL monolingual and discussing a local topic, and more “KQSL-ISL” reiterations when signing with a KQSL monolingual and discussing a global topic. This suggests that the topic is more important in determining the ordering effect; when the first language is ISL, a local topic will lead to a reiteration in KQSL, and when the first language is KQSL, a global topic will lead to a reiteration in ISL. In this presentation, we suggest that reiteration does not appear to function as emphasis but rather as as a form of clarification.



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