# Giving a sign to the next generation: a corpus study of the grammaticalization of GIVE in Sign Language of the Netherlands (NGT).

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# Abstract

The transfer verb GIVE is a fruitful base for metaphorical extension and grammaticalization across languages. Previous work by Bos (1996/2016) and Couvee and Pfau (2018) has shown that the sign GIVE is used beyond its underlying concrete transfer meaning in sign language of the Netherlands (NGT) as well. In this corpus study, I find GIVE in NGT to be used in a prototypical concrete transfer meaning in fewer than 30% of the instances. Other uses attested in the corpus include (i) abstract transfer of linguistic type items such as INFORMATION, (ii) light verb use as well as serial verb use where GIVE marks a RECIPIENT rather than describing the transfer action, (iii) used in a causative construction and (iv) passive auxiliary use. I propose two different grammaticalization paths of GIVE in NGT, as well as evaluating NGT GIVE in a typological context. Extensions of GIVE all have a RECIPIENT-focus in NGT and are comparable to the extensions of GIVE found in other languages, both spoken and signed.


**Keywords: Grammaticalization, Typology, GIVE, Sign Language of the Netherlands (NGT), Corpus.**

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# Abbreviations

## Sign languages used in examples

| | |
|---|---|
| ASL | American Sign Language |
| DGS | German Sign Language (Deutsche Gebärdensprache) |
| DTS | Danish Sign Language (Dansk Tegnsprog) |
| GSL | Greek Sign Language |
| LGP | Portuguese Sign Language (Língua gestual portuguesa) |
| LSC | Catalan Sign Language (Llengua de signes catalana) |
| NGT | Sign Language of the Netherlands (Nederlandse Gebarentaal) |
| NTS | Norwegian Sign Language (Norsk Tegnspråk) |
| VGT | Flemish Sign Language (Vlaamse Gebarentaal) |

## Other abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ++ | reduplication |
| 1SG | first person singular |
| 3SG | third person singular |
| ACC | accusative |
| ALL | allocative |
| ASP | aspect |
| BEN | benefactive |
| CL | classifier |
| ERG | ergative |
| DAT | dative |
| hs | headshake |
| IMP | imperative |
| IND | indicative |
| lit. | literal translation |
| LVC | light verb construction |
| OBJ | object |
| PERF | perfective |
| PL | plural |
| PRT | preterite (perfective past) |
| PST | past |
| PU | palm-up (sign) |
| REFL | reflexive |
| SL | sign language |
| SUBJ | subject |
| SUF | suffix |
| SVC | serial verb construction |
| TNS | tense |
| VCL | verbal classifier |

# Transcription

In case you are unfamiliar with sign language and/or linguistic transcription and notation, here follows a short walk-through of the notations used for the examples in this thesis.

## Sign Language transcription: Glosses

Manual signs are written down by their gloss. A gloss is not a translation per se, but usually a word from a local spoken (and written) language or from English is chosen for the gloss that has a similar meaning to one of the meanings of the sign. The goal with glossing is to connect one gloss to one sign. Glosses are written in small caps. The first line (as in example (A)) or second line (as in examples (B) and (C)) of the transcription consists of glosses. Some glosses consist of multiple hyphenated elements, still denoting one sign, e.g. TAKE-OVER.

## Sign Language transcription: Non-manuals

Non-manual components of an utterance, if there are any of note, are annotated in the first line of the transcription. The line underneath the non-manual represents the duration and scope, i.e. the non-manual in question is articulated while the manual signs written on the next line of the transcription are signed. In example (B), the eyebrows are raised through the whole duration of the sentence.

The non-manuals found in examples in the thesis are: raised eyebrows; headshake.

## Sign Language transcription: Mouthings

Mouthings are spoken components borrowed from spoken language. They are written on the non-manuals line of the transcription, using the line for scope/duration. The mouthings are annotated between forwards slashes, the form following the spoken form (so not a translation) and the orthography of the spoken language it is borrowed from (or a transcription to the Latin alphabet if needed). In example (C), four of the five manual signs are accompanied by a mouthing based on a Dutch spoken word, aligning with the manual signs. The meaning of the mouthings will be clarified in the text.

## Examples of Sign Language transcription

(A) BANANA $_1$GIVE$_{3a}$ MONKEY INDEX$_{3a}$

'He gives a banana to the monkey.'

[Sign Language of the Netherlands; CNGT0523 00:00:32]

(B) raised eyebrows

WANT INDEX$_2$ WITH SKI HOLIDAY

'Do you want to come with on a ski vacation?'

[Danish Sign Language; (Ordbog over Dansk Tegnsprog, 2022)]

(C) /leven/ /gegeve/ /liefde/ /geven/

LIFE CHILD $_1$GIVE$_2$ LOVE $_1$GIVE$_2$

'you have given the child life, you should give it love'

[Sign Language of the Netherlands; CNGT1734 00:00:10]

### Transcription of spoken language examples

The spoken language examples also consist of several lines, see Russian example (D) for illustration. The first line in italics describes the utterance, transcribed to the Latin alphabet. I follow the transcriptions the original authors have used. The second line is a word-for-word translation, with any grammatical elements glossed in small caps (all grammatical element abbreviations can be found in the list of abbreviations above). The third line is a translation of the whole utterance to English in single quotation marks.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (D) | *Ya* | *dal* | *knig-u* | *uchitel-yu.* |
| | I | gave | book-ACC | teacher-DAT |

'I gave the book to the teacher.'

[Russian; (Newman, 1996, p. 83)]

### Notation in the text: Semantic category, form, and meaning

Throughout the text, I will follow Newman (1996) and use capitals when discussing the semantically defined categories of GIVER, THING and RECIPIENT. This helps comparing languages with different structures and systems. English, for example, is a language that typically codes the THING as a (direct) object, but many different coding systems are in use. Since those coding systems are not of interest to me here, I only use the semantic categories. Comparably, GIVE written with capitals refers to the category of verbs with a 'give' meaning. The precise meaning in English is written in single quotation marks. When written in italics *give* (or whatever the form is) refers to the form of a spoken language, and small caps gloss GIVE refers to a sign language form.

# 1 Introduction

Humans are a social species, who commonly engage in *giving*, that is, intentionally transferring an item from one person to another person. A GIVE verb is in the core vocabulary of most languages, and is a word that is learned early (Newman, 1996). This makes it an interesting study object for typologists. GIVE may be a basic vocabulary verb, yet the concept of giving is a layered one. The concept consists of the person who is the GIVER, the person who is the RECIPIENT, the THING[1] that is being transferred, the action of the transfer, the path the THING moves along, the locations of both GIVER (the starting point) and the RECIPIENT (the ending point). Additionally, it is often implied that the giving action or the given THING is *for* someone or some reason. All these layers may serve as a starting point for grammaticalization.

Grammaticalization is the process in which the use of a linguistic item changes from a relatively unconstrained lexical use to a more constrained, more grammatical use. This change spreads gradually through a language, and several more and less grammatical uses of one item can exist at the same time. Metaphorical extension is one of the main mechanisms at play in grammaticalization. The lexical items that are likely to be a source for grammaticalization form a closed set across languages. In order to be a candidate for grammaticalization, a lexical item must be perceptually salient, i.e. its core meaning must be easily recognizable, the item must be semantically suitable to users for easily making and understanding metaphorical extensions, and the item must be frequent (Heine & Traugott, 1991). GIVE meets all three of these requirements. Indeed, we find many different extensions of GIVE in different languages, both spoken and signed.

Typological research increasingly includes sign languages in its comparisons. For typological studies of GIVE, sign languages are especially interesting. In many sign languages GIVE has a high iconicity: the transfer of the THING is visible in the sign as it is iconically encoded in the movement from the GIVER to the RECIPIENT. Couvee and Pfau, in their 2018 corpus study on Sign Language of the Netherlands (NGT), found the sign GIVE to appear in serial verb constructions in NGT, as well as in a number of light verb-like uses with abstract meanings.

Using a corpus allows us to study language patterns in naturalistic data, also finding the phenomena that have not been fully established yet. This is especially relevant for scholars studying language change. In this corpus study, building on the findings of Couvee and Pfau (2018), I answer the following questions: What extensions from the underlying core meaning of concrete transfer, both in meaning and in constructions, are available for the NGT verb GIVE? How does this compare typologically to the uses of GIVE in other languages, both spoken and signed? How can the extended uses be accounted for in terms of grammaticalization?

This paper is structured as follows: In the next chapter, I set out to relay the relevant background information on sign language (verbal) grammar, followed by an exposition of a few common grammatical uses of GIVE, backed up with examples from a sample of diverse

[1] Throughout this work, I will follow Newman (1996) and use capitals when discussing the semantically defined categories of GIVER, THING and RECIPIENT.

languages (spoken and signed). The third chapter explains my methodology. In the fourth chapter, I present my results, which are then discussed and tied in to the typological bigger picture in chapter 5. I also propose two grammaticalization pathways for GIVE in NGT. The paper ends with suggestions for further research and my conclusion.

# 2 Setting the Scene

Since I will discuss many sign language examples in this study, this chapter starts with a section that introduces the relevant aspects of sign language (verbal) grammar. The second part of the chapter discusses GIVE in different spoken and signed languages, starting with a section about the literal meaning of giving verbs, then going over several lexical and grammatical extension in the use of GIVE verbs.

## 2.1 Relevant Background on Sign Languages

Sign Languages (SLs) make use of the visual-spatial modality, as opposed to the auditory-vocal modality of spoken languages. This leads to several characteristics that are specific to sign languages, so-called modality-specific features. One striking visual feature we observe in SLs is a pervasive iconicity. All sign languages use several signs and constructions where the connection between form and meaning is obvious to non-signers or to signers who speak a different sign language (Taub, 2012). A second modality-specific characteristic is simultaneous expression. Signers are not restricted by a vocal tract that can only produce sounds in sequence. Instead, they can make use of two hands as well as a range of non-manual articulators, which allows several components to be articulated simultaneously. For example, raised eyebrows can be used as a question marker. As it is possible to use one's hands to express lexical content and raise one's eyebrows at the same time, a question can be marked as such by raising the eyebrows while signing the sentence. Another common way sign languages make use of different articulators simultaneously is by combining manual signs with mouth actions. A third modality-specific feature which has received a lot of attention is the use of space in a systematic way: spatial grammar.

All three aspects will be relevant to our discussion of GIVE, as the NGT verb GIVE (i) can be spatially modified (section 2.1.1); (ii) displays iconic properties, as it may combine with iconically motivated classifier morphemes (section 2.1.2), and (iii) may be accompanied by mouth actions which have the potential to specify meaning (section 2.1.3).

### 2.1.1 Sign Language Spatial Grammar

All SLs that have been studied so far use the signing space to keep track of discourse referents in more or less conventionalized ways (Engberg-Pedersen, 1993; Meir, 2002; Ferrara, et al., 2022). A referent can be present, for example a conversation partner or an entity close by, making it possible for a signer to use a real-life location as a reference point. The following examples (1) from DTS illustrate the use of space in reference.

(1) a. <u>raised eyebrows</u>
WANT INDEX$_2$ WITH SKI HOLIDAY INVITE
'Do you want to come with on a ski vacation?'

b. INDEX$_{3a}$ BOY WANT VISIT INDEX$_{3b}$ SCHOOL INDEX$_{3a}$ LETTER $_{3a}$SEND$_{3b}$

'The boy wanted to visit the school, so he sent them a letter.'
[DTS; (Ordbog over Dansk Tegnsprog, 2022)]

In (1a.) the location of the conversation partner is labeled 2, and the second person argument in the question is realized by a pointing sign[2] towards the location of the interlocuter, meaning 'you, person I'm talking to'. Of course, the referents we talk about are not always present. In this case, a non-present referent can get an assigned point (or area) in the signing space, called a referential locus (plural *loci*). The notation method for referential loci used throughout this paper uses 1 for at or towards the signer (and first person arguments), 2 for at or towards an interlocutor (and second person arguments[3]), 3a for at or towards the right side of the signer and 3b for at or towards the left side of the signer (see Figure 1). Locus assignment for non-

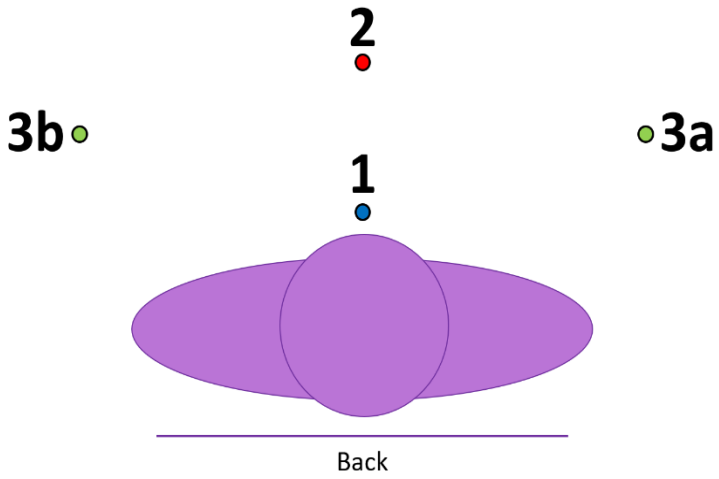


**Figure 1: Locus assignment in Sign Languages.** Locus 1 is (close to) the signer (first person), locus 2 is a location close to the conversation partner (second person), locus 3a is to the right of the signer and 3b to the left of the signer (third person). For this study, Locus 2 was assigned to neutral space as well (figure adapted from (Pfau, Salzmann, & Steinbach, 2018)).

present referents can be done in a similar way to the previous example, with a pointing sign, such as in (1b.), where a pointing sign towards the right of the signer (locus 3a) assigns a referential locus to BOY. This way the signer can point towards locus 3a again later in the sentence to refer to 'boy', making it unnecessary to sign BOY again. Locus assignment is usually arbitrary. That is, the choice for locus 3a for BOY in (1b.) is not related to any feature of boys in general nor to features of this particular boy, and the signer could have chosen to locate SCHOOL at 3a instead (Pfau, Salzmann, & Steinbach, 2018).

[2] Pointing sings are diverse in phonology: DTS uses a sign with the index finger extended, as does NGT. Other pointing signs include two fingers extended (index and middle finger), all fingers extended and pointing with the thumb (Bell, Ibrahim, Wei, & Lim, 2015). All pointing signs are glossed INDEX with their direction in this work.
[3] As well as some unspecified arguments, see also section **Error! Reference source not found.**.

Apart from pointing signs, referential loci can be expressed by the direction and/or orientation of certain verbs. In (1b.), for instance, $_{3a}$SEND$_{3b}$ moves from locus 3a (associated with BOY) to locus 3b (associated with SCHOOL) with the palm of the hand oriented towards 3b, as illustrated in Figure 2c. Figure 2 demonstrates how the DTS verb SEND[4] changes direction and orientation depending on its arguments. SL verbs that can change direction to match their referential loci

**a. DTS verb form $_{1}$SEND$_{2}$ 'I send to you'.**
1 and 2 are referential loci that in the discourse have been assigned to a first person referent (at the body of the signer) and a second person referent (away from the signer). This form is also the citation form.

**b. DTS verb form $_{2}$SEND$_{1}$ 'you send to me'.**
2 and 1 are referential loci that in the discourse have been assigned to a second person referent (away from the signer) and a first person referent (at the body of the signer).

**c. DTS verb form $_{3a}$SEND$_{3b}$ 'a sends to b'.**
3a and 3b are referential loci that in the discourse have been assigned to two different third person referents (to the right of the signer and to the left of the signer).

**Figure 2. The DTS verb SEND is a directional verb, that can change direction to match start and end-point with its arguments' referential loci.** Images from Ordbog over Dansk Tegnsprog (2022).

commonly form a closed verb category of directional verbs (depending on a researcher's theoretical stance[5], also called agreeing verbs, inflecting verbs or indicating verbs (Padden, 1988; Engberg-Pedersen, 1993; Liddell, 2000; Meir, 2002; Cormier, Fenlon, & Schembri, 2015)). Directional verbs are typically transitive or ditransitive verbs. However, disregarding phonological constraints, no SL has yet been described where all transitive verbs are able to be marked for the referential loci of their arguments (Mathur & Rathmann, 2012).

[4] I used the DTS verb SEND to demonstrate this phenomenon because the change in direction is very clear in screenshots, as this verb has a different initial handshape (closed fingers) and final handshape (open fingers), whereas NGT GIVE uses the same handshape throughout.

[5] Here, I take no stance on the exact mechanism or theoretical explanation of directional verbs, and I will refer to them as directional verbs because this term feels the most descriptive to me without assuming any position in the theoretical debate.

A type of sign language verb that makes a good candidate for a directional verb are verbs of transfer, although not all transfer verbs will be directional in all sign languages (Engberg-Pedersen, 1993; Meir, 2002). A prototypical transfer verb is GIVE, with its core meaning of transferring a THING from one person to another. This literal hand-to-hand transfer makes GIVE verbs in sign languages likely to be directional verbs based on the iconicity of the act of giving. The NGT verb GIVE can indeed be modified for the loci of its GIVER and RECIPIENT arguments. GIVE is a directional verb as well in American SL (ASL) (Wilcox, 1998), DTS (Engberg-Pedersen, 1993), Portuguese SL (LGP) (Choupina, Brito, & Bet, 2017) and many other SLs.

### 2.1.2 Classifier Constructions with GIVE

The transfer of an object from person to person, ingrained in the meaning of GIVE, gives rise to a phenomenon that builds on iconicity in sign languages: classifier constructions. Classifiers are found in many languages, and are typically elements that denote a salient feature of an entity, such as animateness, material, or shape (Zwitserlood, 2003). In a sign language classifier construction, the hands (and sometimes other body parts) of the signer are used as a direct or indirect representation of an entity. The so-called handling classifiers we see in GIVE classifier constructions are of the latter type. Since GIVE canonically describes the handing


**Figure 3. NGT verb GIVE citation forms and incorporation of the THING through a classifier construction.**

**a.** $_1$GIVE$_2$ citation form with money handshape [CNGT0017 00:01:32]
**b.** $_1$GIVE$_2$ citation form with B- handshape (two-handed variant) [CNGT0255 00:04:57]
**c.** $_1$GIVE$_2$ citation form with beak handshape (two-handed variant) [CNGT1914 00:00:40]
**d.** $_1$GIVE-STACK$_{3a}$ with a classifier handshape depicting the handling of a stack (of papers). [CNGT0060 00:02:39]

over of an object, an iconic representation of the THING can be incorporated into GIVE verbs in many sign languages, including NGT. In a classifier construction with GIVE in NGT, the movement of the verb remains the same, but the handshape changes to match the shape properties of the handled THING. Figure 3 a.-c. illustrates the citation form of GIVE with the three handshapes commonly used in NGT GIVE. All three forms are found in both one-handed and two-handed variants. In Figure 3d. we see $_{1}$GIVE-STACK$_{3a}$, GIVE with a classifier handshape meaning 'stack'.

Classifier constructions in verbs decided by the shape of an object are not unique to sign languages. Compare GIVE in the Waris (a Papuan language) example (2), which is very similar to the NGT example in that the shape of the THING 'coconut' is reflected in a prefix that attaches to the giving verb.

(2) *sa* *ka-m* *put-ra-ho-o*
coconut 1SG-to VCL:ROUND-give-BEN-IMP
'Give me a coconut' (lit. 'coconut to-me round.one-give')
[Waris; adapted from Brown, 1981 in (Aikhenvald, 2000, p. 3)]

### 2.1.3 Mouthings

Apart from manual signs, sign languages also make use of non-manuals, as we have seen previously in (1a.). A specific type of non-manuals are mouth actions, which encompass all (linguistic) uses of the mouth in a sign language. Two categories of mouth actions have to be distinguished: those that are clearly derived from spoken language, called mouthings, and those that have no association with spoken language, called mouth gestures. Relevant here are mouthings. The extent to which a specific sign language uses mouthings varies. In NGT, mouthings are an integral part of the language (Bank, 2014). Schermer (1990) noted that mouthings have two main functions. First, they are used for the disambiguation of minimal pairs, where two signs will have the same manual component but a different mouthing, as illustrated in (3a-b). In NGT, the sign GROUP can mean 'family' when combined with the mouthing /*gezin*/ 'family' (3a), or 'class' (in school) when combined with /*klas*/ 'class' (3b). Secondly, they can specify or complement a meaning when the meaning of the manual sign is general or broad, adding lexical information that is not (an explicit) part of the sign already. This is illustrated in (3c), where Norwegian Sign Language (NTS) verb DOWN-MIDDLE-OF-CHEST 'placing down the middle of the chest' is accompanied by mouthing /*knapp*/ 'button' to add more information about the action. Another type of information that can be added with a mouthing is tense marking. The mouthing /*gegeve*/ 'given' in (3d) marks the past participle on GIVE, distinguishing it from the second instance of GIVE in the sentence, which is accompanied by present tense /*geven*/ 'give'.

Apart from these functional uses, manual signs are also often accompanied with a redundant mouthing, i.e. a mouthing with the same semantic content as the manual sign it accompanies. The mouthings /*leven*/ 'live' accompanying LIVE and /*liefde*/ 'love' accompanying LOVE in NGT

sentence (3d) are an example of this. Mouthings can be one-on-one uses of a spoken language word, or a part of a word (reduced mouthing).

(3) a. /gezin/
GROUP
'family'

b. /klas/
GROUP
'class'
[NGT; (Bank, Crasborn, & van Hout, 2011, p. 260)]

c. /knapp/
DOWN-MIDDLE-OF-CHEST
'placing buttons down the middle of the chest'
[NTS; Vogt-Svendsen, 1984 in (Schermer, 1990, p. 101)]

d. /leven/ /gegeve/ /liefde/ /geven/
LIFE CHILD $_1$GIVE$_2$ LOVE $_1$GIVE$_2$
'You have given the child life, you should give it love.'
[CNGT1734 00:00:10]

In the next chapters, we will see that GIVE in NGT is often accompanied by a mouthing, both for disambiguation and to add various kinds of lexical information.

## 2.2 The Verb GIVE and its Extensions

The transfer of a thing from one human to another is an action that is deeply rooted in human culture. Many cultures around the world, if not all, have traditions and ceremonies that include or revolve around the exchange of goods, and acts of giving are frequent in everyday life as well. Therefore many languages, if not all, have a GIVE-type construction in their basic vocabulary. Consequently, GIVE is one of the very first action words learned in first language acquisition and it is a polyfunctional item in many languages (Bouveret, 2021; Newman, 1996).

In the second part of this chapter, we will see that the ubiquity of GIVE combined with its semantic complexity leads to a wide range of meaning extensions and grammaticalizations in many different languages, both signed and spoken.

### 2.2.1 The Literal Meaning of GIVE

GIVE-type constructions typically include three entities, i.e. a GIVER, a THING, and a RECIPIENT. The THING is the transferred entity. In the prototypical, literal meaning, this is an item that physically changes hands: from the GIVER's hand to the RECIPIENT's hand, as illustrated in Figure 4 (Newman, 1996).

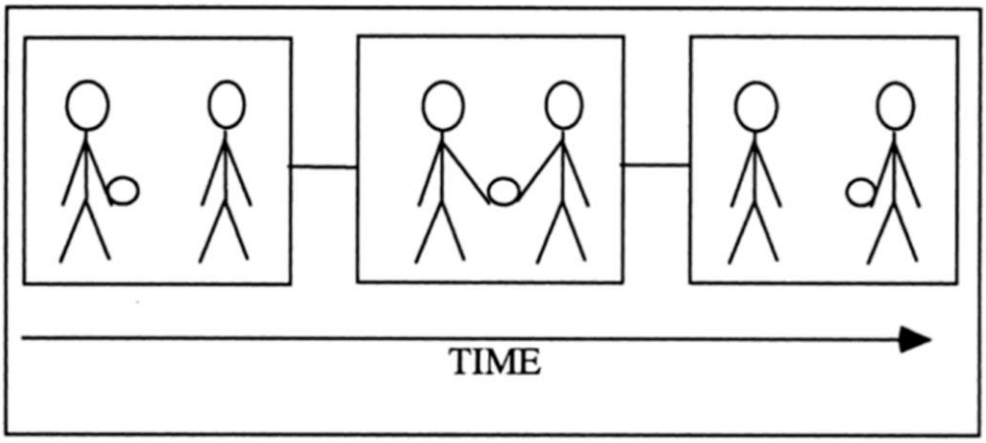


**Figure 4. Prototypical GIVE denotes the transfer of an object from (the hand of) one person to (the hand of) another person.** Shown here is the semantic framework that captures the base of GIVE-type constructions (Illustration from Fagerli (2001, p. 205)).

Examples (4a.-d.) illustrate a handful of mechanisms different languages employ to express the parts of a literal GIVE action. English (4a.) marks the GIVER as subject, the RECIPIENT as direct object and the THING as indirect object by means of word order. Russian (4b.) uses accusative and dative markings for THING and RECIPIENT, DTS (4c.) uses coreferential marking of RECIPIENT on the verb (as we have seen before, DTS can also encode the referential locus of the GIVER, (see (1b.) above)), and West-Greenlandic (4d.) also marks GIVER and RECEIVER on the verb. For a more extensive review of different literal GIVE-constructions, and the diversity in constructions, I refer the reader to Newman (1996).

(4) a. *The teacher gave the girl a toy.*

[English; (personal example)]

b. *Ya* *dal* *knig-u* *uchitel-yu.*
I gave book-ACC teacher-DAT
'I gave the book to the teacher.'

[Russian; (Newman, 1996, p. 83)]

c. ALL CHILD+ $INDEX_{3b}$ $INDEX_{3a}$ $GIVE_{3b}$ CREAM^BALLS
'She gave all children flødeboller (a type of cake with cream and chocolate).'

[DTS; (Ordbog over Dansk Tegnsprog, 2022)]

d. *Aningaasa-t* *Niisi-mut* *tunni-up-pai.*
money-PL Niisi-ALL give:3SGSUBJ:3SGOBJ-IND
'He gave the money to Niisi.'

[West-Greenlandic; Fortescue, 1984 in (Newman, 1996, p. 71)]

The rich semantics of GIVE verbs lead to semantic extension from the prototypical meaning into a range of other meanings, some of them grammatical in nature. We will take a closer

look at those from section 2.2.2 onwards, after considering the status of RECEIVE and TAKE in the context of the typological study of GIVE.

#### 2.2.1.1 The Status of RECEIVE and TAKE

Two verb meanings often found in similar contexts as GIVE are RECEIVE and TAKE. Comparing those two to GIVE, we notice that RECEIVE has the same structure as GIVE but with focus on the RECIPIENT. A GIVER is implied, but can be left out, such as *from the teacher* in (5a.). The same action, but with focus on the GIVER, is described with GIVE in (5b.). TAKE, on the other hand, does not require any giver, overt or implied. One can, for example, take something from a table, as in (5c.), but a table cannot be a (literal) giver (5b.). The described action relates only to the TAKER and the THING.

(5) a. *I received a book (from the teacher).*
b. *The teacher gave me a book.*
c. *I took a book (from the table).*
d. **The table gave me a book.*[6]

As RECEIVE type verbs use the same semantic framework as GIVE type verbs (Newman, 1996), they can be semantically extended and grammaticalized in similar ways to GIVE type verbs, as we shall see below. TAKE type verbs certainly can be the base for several interesting semantic extensions, but those are outside the scope of this study, so TAKE will hereafter be disregarded.

#### 2.2.1.2 GIVE versus RECEIVE in NGT

In NGT, the same sign is used for GIVE and RECEIVE, changing only orientation and direction to agree with the locus of the GIVER and the RECIPIENT. RECEIVE type meanings can be marked with a mouthing /*krijgen*/ 'receive' (or reduced /*krijg*/), often combined with an unspecified GIVER. In (6a.) the receiver is specified, but has not been assigned a locus. GIVE/RECEIVE moves here from neutral space to the signer, the signer can take the place of the RECIPIENT (Engberg-Pedersen, 1993) (Barberà & Hofherr, 2017) (Ferrara, et al., 2022). In (6b.) there is a specified GIVER and a specified RECIPIENT with no specific focus on either of the two, making both a GIVE and a RECEIVE meaning feasible. In (6c.), the locus of the RECIPIENT SIGN CENTER is marked as 3b, with the verb moving from the signer to this locus. The signer here takes the place of a general GIVER. This sentence has a clear GIVE type meaning.

(6) a. /krijgen/
PLUS GROUP $_2$GIVE/RECEIVE$_1$ MUCH SUBSIDIES
'Besides, this group receives a lot of subsidies.'

[6] As is common practice in linguistic literature, I mark non-standard examples with an asterisk.

[NGT; CNGT0128 00:02:14]

b. hs

#JO #WIN WOMAN COME TRUST SIT COFFEE $_{3a}$GIVE/RECEIVE$_1$

'Jo Winsum, that woman, came over and didn't trust it. She sat me down and gave me coffee/ and I received coffee.'

[NGT; CNGT0284 00:04:40]

c. SIGN CENTER INDEX$_{3b}$ EMAIL $_1$GIVE/RECEIVE$_{3b}$

'You could give your email address to the sign center.'

[NGT; CNGT0388 00:00:47]

Because it is not always transparent whether an instance of NGT GIVE/RECEIVE is used with a GIVE type meaning or with a RECEIVE type meaning, I have treated them as one verb. I will get back to GIVE/RECEIVE in section 5.2.2.

### 2.2.2 Metaphorical Extensions

We commonly use concrete, easy-to-visualize entities and actions metaphorically in order to describe more abstract acts. Apart from being very frequent, GIVE as a concept consist of several salient parts that can all potentially serve as a starting point for metaphorical extension.

As we have seen above, prototypical GIVE denotes the transfer of possession of a concrete, physical THING from a GIVER (who is a person) to a RECIPIENT (who is a person). Abstractions of the THING are very common, leaving behind the notion 'change of possession' in favor of the related notion 'change of control'. An example would be 'give time (to someone)' or 'give (someone) a chance'.

A prevalent metaphorical extension of GIVE identified by Newman (1996) is interpersonal communication, where the THING is some sort of message, either more general as in (7a.) 'information' or more specific as in (7b.) 'a legacy'. Most of the semantics of literal GIVE stay intact; yet, the GIVER does not lose control over the THING but rather shares the control with the RECIPIENT.

(7) a. SIGN LANGUAGE IMPORTANT TO INFORMATION $_1$GIVE$_2$

'Sign Language is important for giving information.'

[NGT; CNGT0255 00:04:57]

b. MOTHER $_{3b}$GIVE$_1$ L-E-G-A-C-Y [fingerspelled]

'Mother gave me a legacy (of language, heritage, history).'

[ASL; (Wilcox, 1998, p. 197)]

A step further on the scale of abstractions of the THING, we find meanings where control of the THING is not transferred but rather stays with the GIVER. The focus is instead on the influence the THING or the GIVE action has on the RECIPIENT, for example 'give someone a

punishment' (see section 2.2.4 for details). Such an affectedness marker can in turn be extended further into passive marking (see section 2.2.5).

A different RECIPIENT-focused extension of GIVE codes the RECIPIENT as a goal or destination. Similarly, a GIVER can be marked as the source of the THING or the action. Other abstractions focus on the agentive state or the purposeful nature of the GIVER. Causative meanings combine those last notions with the influence on the RECIPIENT (see section 2.2.6).

Before discussing benefactive and malefactive, passive and causative uses of GIVE in more detail, I will provide the constructions where we most often find metaphorically extended or grammaticalized GIVE verbs.

### 2.2.3 Constructions Featuring Extended GIVE

So far, we have seen GIVE predicated with GIVE as the main verb and a noun-like argument as the THING. In various metaphorically extended and grammaticalized meanings, we find GIVE in other kinds of constructions.

A construction with special status that at first glance looks like regular verb + noun combination is the light verb construction (LVC). In this type of construction, the GIVE verb contributes to the meaning to a smaller degree than the nominal part (the THING), which refers to an action or event and is often deverbal, i.e. a noun derived from a verb (Elenbaas, 2013; Nagy, Rácz, & Vincze, 2020). English examples include *to give an answer* and *to give a laugh*, that have nearly the same semantic content as *to answer* and *to laugh*, respectively (Caro & Arús-Hita, 2020). To my knowledge, LVCs have not been studied in depth for sign languages yet.

Similarly, GIVE can combine with another verb in a serial verb construction (SVC). In an SVC, one clause is built from two or more independent lexical verbs sharing the same arguments, with no linking items in between (so not complex constructions like 'we sat down and ate dinner'). This also means that they depict one event. The verbs involved are independent verbs, so auxiliary + lexical verb combinations are not SVCs (Aikhenvald, 2006). Like in LVCs, the GIVE-verb contributes less to the construction semantically than the verb it combines with, as illustrated by examples (8a.-b.).

(8) a.

| Kófi | bi | bái | dí | búku | dá | dí | muyé |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kofi | TNS | buy | the | book | give | the | woman |

'Kofi had bought the woman the book.'/ 'He bought a book for the woman.'

[Saramaccan; Byrne, 1990 in (Aikhenvald, 2006, p. 26)]

c. MAN SIT/ GIVE DOG WASH

'The man (sits down and) washes the dog'

[VGT; (Van Herreweghe & Vermeerbergen, 2004)]

GIVE was identified as a verb that is involved in serial verb constructions in NGT by Bos (1996/2016), which was confirmed in a corpus study by Couvee and Pfau (2018).

When the semantically bleached verb in a SVC loses enough of its lexical meaning and is used productively to add some sort of grammatical meaning to another verb, it shifts over to the category of auxiliary. This category commonly consists of verbs that behave differently from full lexical verbs (for example passive auxiliaries, see section 2.2.5). The borders of the constructions are not always clear-cut, and differences exist between languages and between researchers (Anderson, 2011). Auxiliaries can also combine with adjectives. Some sign languages use an auxiliary to mark the referential loci on the predicate when the main verb is not a directional verb. GIVE-type verbs are one candidate for this function, possibly combined with a causative or benefactive meaning (Pfau & Steinbach, 2013).

Another step away from the lexical verb is when GIVE has lost its verbal status altogether and has become a bound morpheme carrying only grammatical meaning, as illustrated by (9) where *a'a* 'give' has become a causative marker.

(9) *Cake* *x-a'a-ni-ayoj* *ixim* *awal.*
wind ASP-give-SUF-fall CL cornfield
'The wind made the corn fall down.'
[Jacaltec; Craig, 1977 in (Newman, 1996, p. 175)]

### 2.2.4 Benefactive, Malefactive and Affectedness

GIVE is often used with an overtone of 'giving a present', explicitly meant to benefit the RECIPIENT, which motivates extensions of GIVE to markers of benefactive phrases (Newman, 1996).

In Thai, as in many isolating languages that have a GIVE benefactive, the benefactive marker has the same form as the lexical verb 'give' (Kittilä & Zúñiga, 2010). The Thai examples in (10) show how benefactive GIVE can have a meaning closer to or further away from the meaning of lexical GIVE. In (10a.) 'send' and 'give' have the same arguments, with both verbs being directional. The sentence looks like a typical serial verb construction. In (10b.) the benefactive meaning is clearer, although the combination of the two verbs could still be interpreted as one action containing 'shoot' and 'give'. The verbs again have the same arguments. (10c.) however makes it clear that *hâj* is used here as a benefactive marker, and not a verb.

(10) a. *kháw* *sòŋ* *còdmăaj* *hâj* *phŷan*
he send letter give friend
'He sends a friend a letter.'
b. *deeŋ* *jiŋ* *nóg* *hâj* *Sùdaa*
Deng shoot bird give Sudaa

'Deng shoots a bird for Sudaa.'

c. *Deeŋ paj talàad hâj Sùdaa*
Deng go market give Sudaa
'Deng is going to the market for Sudaa.'

[Thai; Bisang, 1992 in (Colleman, 2010, p. 220)]

Japanese uses both GIVE and RECEIVE in benefactives, marking either the GIVER, as in (11a.), or the RECIPIENT of the favor, as in (11b.).

(11) a. *Kei ga Naoko ni hon o katte-yat-ta.*
Kei SUB Naoko DAT book ACC buy-give-PAST
'Kei did the favor of buying Naoko a book.'

b. *Naoko ga Kei ni hon o katte-morat-ta.*
Naoko SUB Kei DAT book ACC buy-receive-PAST
'Naoko received the favor of Kei's buying a book.'

[Japanese; (Smith, 1998, p. 223)]

Remarkably, benefactive markers, including those derived from GIVE, are also used as a malefactive marker, i.e. to mark an adverse or unfortunate effect on an AFFECTEE, as in Dagaare (12) (Fagerli, 2001).

(12) *O ngma la zirii ko Amai oi yideme yele*
He cut a.m. lies GIVE Ama she housepeople matter
'He lied to Ama about her family.'

[Dagaare; (Fagerli, 2001 p.214)]

Most languages that mark malefactive make no formal distinction between benefactive and malefactive and simply use affectedness markers, counting on the semantics of the core verb to convey the one or the other meaning (Fagerli, 2001; Kittilä & Zúñiga, 2010). One example of a language that has extended the use of GIVE to a general affectedness marker is Flemish Sign Language (VGT) (Van Herreweghe & Vermeerbergen, 2004). The hitting action in (13a.) has a negative effect on the AFFECTEE, whereas the caressing action in (13b.) has a positive effect on the AFFECTEE.

(13) a. GIRL GIVE BOY HIT
'The girl hits the boy.'

b. MAN GIVE DOG CARESS
'The man is caressing the dog.'

[VGT; (Van Herreweghe & Vermeerbergen, 2004)]

The boundary between affectedness marker and more neutral recipient marker is not always clear-cut. Van Herreweghe and Vermeerbergen (2004, p. 2) write that GIVE is used "to explicitly indicate the recipient of the action" in VGT. Compare this to *gei* 'give' in Mandarin Chinese in example (14). *Gei* functions as a recipient marker when combining with other directional predicates (e.g. 'send'), whereas it functions as a benefactive marker with non-directional predicates. Some combinations can have both meanings and will depend on context, such as 'write a letter (to him/ for him)' in (14) (Yin, 2023).

(14) *wo* *gei* *ta* *xie* *le* *yi* *feng* *xin.*
I for/to him write ASP one CL letter
'I wrote a letter for him.' or 'I wrote a letter to him'.
[Mandarin Chinese; Li & Thompson, 1981 in (Yin, 2023, pp. 137-138)]

### 2.2.5 Passive Marker

As we have seen in the previous section, GIVE is commonly used as an affectedness marker. Passive type meanings can be extended from the notion of 'being affected beyond one's control' to marking a non-agent, i.e. a passive marker (Lenz, 2009). As the focus in this meaning extension is on the RECIPIENT, many languages use a RECEIVE-type verb for passive marking, such as English *get* in example (15a.). Some languages use both a GIVE verb and a RECEIVE verb for passive marking. Luxembourgish, for example, has an event passive with *ginn* 'to give', which has focus on the accusative object (in the GIVE frame, the THING) as illustrated in (15b.). *Ginn* 'give' passives can be formed with any transitive verb. Luxembourgish also has a recipient passive with *kréien* 'to receive', which puts focus on the dative object (the RECIPIENT)[7] (see (15c.)) and can only be used in combination with ditransitive verbs (i.e., verbs that have a dative object) (Lenz, 2009). Mandarin likewise has passive markers derived from both GIVE and RECEIVE type verbs. *Bei* was a verb in Old Chinese meaning 'receive' that has become a neutral passive marker in modern Mandarin, illustrated in Taiwanese Mandarin example (15d.). We have seen in section 2.2.4 that *gei* 'give', which in contrast to *bei* is still in use as a lexical verb, can be a recipient marker or an affectedness marker. *Gei* is also employed as a passive marker[8], as illustrated in (15e.), showing the relationship between the different metaphorical extensions of GIVE (Yin, 2004; Yin, 2023). To my knowledge, GIVE as a passive marker has not been described yet for sign languages.

(15) a. *They got arrested by the police last night.*
[English; (Reed, 2011, p. 42)]

b. *D'Buch* *gëtt* *dem* *Jong* *(vun* *der* *Schwëster)* *geschenkt.*
ART-book gives ART boy from ART sister donated

[7] State passive with *sin* 'to be' also exists but is not as frequent. Event passive with *ginn* 'to give' is used most.
[8] *Gei* passives have a predominantly malefactive connotation, although neutral uses do occur.

'The book is being presented to the boy (by his sister).

c. *De Jong kritt d'Buch (vun der Schwëster) geschenkt.*
ART boy receives ART-book from ART sister donated
'The boy is getting the book presented (by his sister).'
[Luxenbourgish; (Lenz, 2009, p. 132)]

d. *Amei bei (gemi) weizhu le.*
Amei PASS fans encircle PERF
'Amei was encircled (by the fans).'
[Taiwan Mandarin; (Her, 2009, p. 422)]

e. *Yu gei mao chi le.*
fish pass cat eat PERF
'The fish has been eaten by the cat.'
[Mandarin Chinese; (Yin, 2004, p. 9)]

### 2.2.6 Causative

Causatives are semantically complex constructions with different nuances depending on the language, exact construction and context. A type of causative that is easily conveyed by means of GIVE is what Newman (1996) calls "manipulative" and Smith (1998) calls "coercive causative": a person causes another person to do something. In this case, the GIVER is the causer, the RECIPIENT the causee, and the THING the (responsibility for the) action, as illustrated by the Alawa example in (16a.). This kind of causative can, in many languages, also be constructed with a RECEIVE-verb, as in the Danish example (16b.), which adds the notion that the RECIPIENT is (also) affected by the action of the causee, comparable to affectedness marking we saw before in section 2.2.4. In an extension of the coercive causative, GIVER and RECIPIENT can be inanimate[9], for example 'wind' and 'corn' in the Jacaltec example (16c.). In examples (16d-e.) we find change-of-state causatives. In Greek Sign Language (GSL), GIVE can be combined with an intransitive verb of state such as FEEL-SLEEPY or BE-HAPPY in a causative meaning, as illustrated by (16d.). The causative use is different from GSL lexical GIVE in that causative GIVE cannot be combined with a mouthing (Sapountzaki, 2005). Catalan Sign Language (LSC) AUX-DA is an auxiliary, derived from the lexical verb GIVE, which has a causative meaning only when used with psychological predicates such as NERVOUS in (16e.). In contrast to the GSL example, in LSC AUX-DA is the GIVE version that combines with a mouthing /da/, whereas lexical GIVE in LSC does not (Steinbach & Pfau, 2007).

(16) a. *Lilmi-r•i mar• a-muta-ya-ngur•u da an-kir•iya*
man-ERG carry he-give-PST-her PRT CL-woman
'The man made the woman carry it.'

[9] Not all languages permit this extension, see for example Mandarin Chinese causative *gei* 'give', which can only be used for 'manipulation of a person'-meanings (see (Newman, 1996, p. 174)).

[Alawa; Song, 1996 in (Smith, 1998, p. 224)]

b. *Han er god til at få andre til at hjælpe sig*
he is good to to receive others to to help REFL
'He is good at getting others to help him/ making others help him.'
[Danish; (ordnet.dk/ddo/ordbog)]

c. *Cake x-a'a-ni-ayoj ixim awal.*
wind ASP-give-SUF-fall CL cornfield
'The wind made the corn fall down.'
[Jacaltec, Craig 1977 in (Newman, 1996, p. 175) repeated from (9)]

d. INDEX$_1$ SEA ALL-IN-FRONT-OF-ME SIT SUN SUN-SETS, WHAT? $_3$GIVE$_1$ (gesture: 'oh, how nice!') BE-CALM, BE-HAPPY.
'When I sit in front of the sea, what is it like? It makes me happy.'
[GSL; (Sapountzaki, 2005, p. 132)]

e. /da/
EXAM $_3$AUX-DA$_1$ NERVOUS
'The exam makes me nervous.'
[LSC; Quer and Frigola, 2006 in (Steinbach & Pfau, 2007, p. 320)]

## 2.3 Grammaticalization of GIVE

Grammaticalization is the language change process that describes the transition from a lexical item or somewhat grammatical item into an increasingly more grammatical (functional) item. This process occurs over time, often slowly and with overlapping forms and variation (Janzen, 2012). Grammaticalization has been shown to be modality-independent, and the grammaticalization pathways that have been identified for sign languages overlap to a great degree with the attested pathways in spoken languages, e.g. noun to pronoun and verb to tense marker (Kuteva, et al., 2019).

Grammaticalization evidently applies to GIVE in many languages, both signed and spoken. We have seen only a fraction of the possibilities in the sections above. In the process of becoming more grammatical, GIVE is subject to desemanticization (also called semantic bleaching) when it loses parts of its original semantic meaning, as well as decategorialization when it loses (some of) its main-verb characteristics. GIVE can also, as we have seen for the Mandarin Chinese *gei*, be subject to "polygrammaticalization", obtaining different independent (although not unrelated) grammatical functions (Moser, 2005).

Various grammaticalization pathways have been suggested for GIVE-like and RECEIVE-like verbs (Couvee & Pfau, 2018; Kuteva, et al., 2019; Yin, 2023). Th pathways I illustrated above are the following:

- GIVE/RECEIVE > benefactive > affectedness marker > recipient marker > passive.
- GIVE/RECEIVE concrete entity > GIVE/RECEIVE abstract entity > cause (change of) state > cause action.

As NGT lacks a written record and thus the sources available for NGT are all relatively recent, we cannot compare 'Old NGT' with 'Modern NGT' in order to study the grammaticalization of GIVE in NGT over time, as is often the case when studying language change in signed languages (Pfau & Steinbach, 2006). Therefore, we must resort to synchronic analysis and internal reconstruction. For this, a corpus study is ideal as a corpus consists of a larger body of naturalistic data.

## 2.4 The Present Study

The aim of the present study is to use the Corpus NGT to answer the following questions: What extensions from the underlying core meaning of concrete transfer, both in meaning and in constructions, are available for the NGT verb GIVE? How does this compare typologically to the uses of GIVE in other languages, both spoken and signed? How can the extended uses be accounted for in terms of grammaticalization?

Following Bos (1996/2016) and Couvee and Pfau (2018), I expect GIVE in NGT to appear in serial verb constructions, as well as in light-verb-like abstract meanings as noticed by Couvee and Pfau (2018, p. 15). Since GIVE is such a fruitful base for metaphorical extension and grammaticalization cross-linguistically, I predict that the ways GIVE is employed in NGT are corresponding to functions of GIVE we find in other languages, both spoken and signed. Likewise, I expect to find that grammaticalization paths of GIVE in NGT will be comparable to those proposed for other languages.

The answers uncovered in the current study will add to the typological description of GIVE from a sign language perspective, as well as to the knowledge of grammaticalization in NGT.

# 3 Methodology

For this study, data was collected from the Corpus NGT, an openly available corpus that consists of video recordings, recorded between 2006 and 2008, of 92 signers from different parts of the Netherlands. Videos are partly annotated and/or translated, with new annotations and translations still being added. The material consists of both free and elicited conversations, each conversation involving two signers (Crasborn & Zwitserlood, 2008).

## 3.1 Participants

The data used for this study comes from 41 signers, 26 women and 15 men. The other signers in the corpus did not produce any instances of GIVE. The participants were of varying ages (the youngest under 20 at time of recording and the oldest above 80) and from different areas in the Netherlands. All participants have NGT as a first language (i.e., learned before the age of four) (Crasborn & Zwitserlood, 2008).

## 3.2 Searching the Corpus

As annotations to the corpus were made in ELAN (an annotation tool for audio and video recordings), data collection was also done using ELAN. The FASTSearch function allows for a case-sensitive search. Glosses in the Corpus NGT are consistently annotated in all caps, and gloss tiers can therefore be searched by entering a search term in all caps. The verb GIVE is glossed as GEVEN. A search for GEVEN on the gloss tier returned 130 hits. However, given that two-handed signs are glossed on two separate tiers, a number of these hits referred to the same instance, as GIVE occurs both one-handed and two-handed. After the doubles were taken out, 70 instances remained. A search for 'geven' without capitals on the translation tier returned 96 occurrences. Most of these were of an instance already found with the gloss search. Some were part of a translation of a different verb, e.g. INFORMEREN 'to inform' was annotated on the translation tier with 'informatie geven' ('to give information'). These were excluded from further analysis, as I was only interested in the different uses of the verb GIVE. Furthermore, four instances of a giving action signed with a classifier predicate were found by searching non-capitalized 'geven' on the translation tier. Those instances were all glossed as MOVE in the corpus annotations. The found classifier instances were also included in the quantitative analysis. Searching for MOVE yielded many unrelated results of other types of classifier constructions not expressing the transfer semantics we were interested in. It was deemed too time-consuming to sort through those results in order to identify further instances of transfer that could be relevant for this study, so those not immediately identified by their translation as a giving action were ignored.

The verbs GIVE and RECEIVE are very similar in NGT. The same handshapes are used for both, and both have an orientation and movement from the locus of GIVER towards the locus of RECIPIENT. In the Corpus NGT, GIVE-RECEIVE verbs that are directed away from the signer are

almost always glossed GEVEN ‘give’, as in example (17a). However, GIVE-RECEIVE verbs directed towards the signer are almost always glossed KRIJGEN ‘receive’, as in example (17b).

(17) a. $_{1}$GIVE$_{3A}$ INDEX$_{3A}$ ALSO POSSIBLE
‘I give them other possibilities’
[CNGT1914 00:00:40]

b. $_{2}$RECEIVE$_{1}$ INDEX$_{1}$ WORK
‘(someone) gives me work’ or ‘I get work’
[CNGT0331 00:01:16]

As there is, at face value, no difference in how the two verbs are used, ‘receive’ was also included in the analysis. GIVE and RECEIVE were treated as versions of the same verb and glossed by me as GIVE for all other examples given throughout this study.

Consequently, a separate FASTSearch was done for RECEIVE, which is annotated as KRIJGEN on the gloss tier in the corpus annotations. On the translation tier, some instances were translated as ‘receive’ and some as ‘give’, depending on the context. After removing doubles, in the same way as explained for ‘give’ above, 54 instances remained for ‘receive’.

## 3.3 Annotation

A gloss is a consistent label assigned to a sign to make it uniquely identifiable and machine-searchable (Johnston, 2008). For the Corpus NGT, each gloss is a Dutch word. A gloss is not chosen arbitrarily but it is also not a translation of a sign’s meaning, as that meaning can be highly context-dependent. In my transcriptions of the NGT examples, I followed the glosses as used in the corpus, with the exception of RECEIVE, see section 3.2. I have used the English equivalent gloss as noted in the lexical database Global Signbank (Crasborn, et al., 2020).

Pointing signs are glossed as PT in the corpus, where PT-1hand (a pointing sign with one finger, the index finger, extended) was the type of pointing sign most common in my examples. As the type of pointing sign used was not relevant for this project, I have annotated all pointing signs as INDEX$_{x}$, where the subscript stands for the locus in the signing space (see section 2.1.1).

Three distinct handshapes are used in NGT for the citation form of GIVE as well as RECEIVE: the money-hand, beak-hand and B-hand. In the corpus annotations, the three different forms are distinguished by adding letters to the gloss: GEVEN-A/KRIJGEN-A (money-hand), GEVEN-B/KRIJGEN-B (B-hand) and GEVEN-C/KRIJGEN-C (beak-hand) ) (Crasborn, Zwitserlood, van der Kooij, & Bank, 2017). I have ignored these markers used for the different forms in my analysis and transcription.

The verbs GIVE and RECEIVE are known to be directional verbs, that is, they can be spatially modified to change their direction and/or orientation depending on the loci of their arguments. However, the Corpus NGT does not include annotations for locus markers. I

recorded for each instance the start and end locus of the movement, as well as the arguments of the verb and their locus (or no locus assigned). Locus assignment is established according to the schema in Figure 1 (here repeated as Figure 5 for convenience). The location in front of the signer is labeled locus 1, a location close to the conversation partner is locus 2, and the rest of the signing space is indicated by 3, where commonly the area to the right of the signer is labeled 3a and the area to the left of the signer 3b. For consistency, the neutral space in front of the signer was also labelled as 2, first because it is difficult to differentiate between a second person object agreement form and a neutral space/citation form, and second because verb agreement is not the main focus of this study. Pointing signs used as pronouns or as locus markers were annotated for locus in the same way.

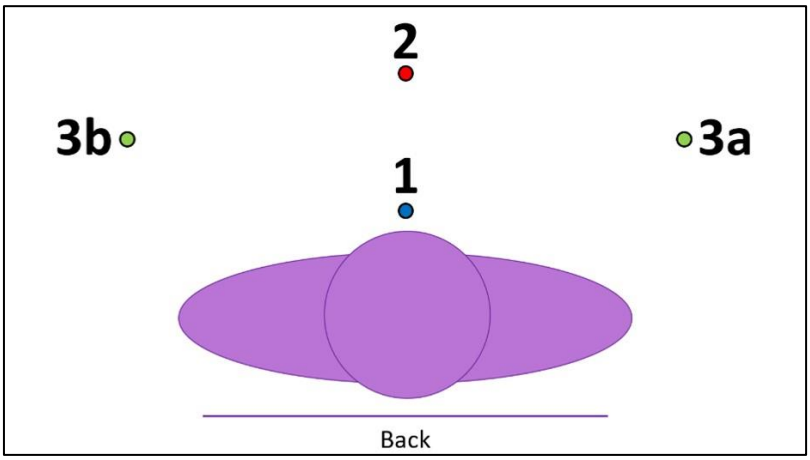


**Figure 5. Locus assignment.** Locus 1 is (close to) the signer (first person agreement), locus 2 is a location close to the conversation partner (second person agreement), locus 3a is to the right of the signer and 3b to the left of the signer (third person agreement). For this study, Locus 2 was assigned to neutral space as well (figure adapted from (Pfau, Salzmann, & Steinbach, 2018)).

The Corpus NGT includes mouth actions in the annotations for some of the videos. For all tokens of the verbs under consideration, the mouthing was either taken from the existing annotation or was newly annotated by me. For the cases without mouthing, 'none' was recorded. In the examples presented in this study, only the mouthings that are of interest are given, that is, mouthings accompanying the GIVE verb or in some cases its object. Other signs in any given sentence may also be accompanied by a mouthing, but those are not shown unless they are relevant for the example. Mouthings are noted between forward slashes and underlined to show how they line up with the manual signs, as illustrated in (18), where /*krijg*/ 'receive' is articulated simultaneously with $_2$GIVE$_1$. Mouthings are customarily noted as they were uttered, i.e. the (partial) Dutch word is given, in Dutch orthography (as opposed to an English translation).

(18) /krijg/
INDEX$_2$ $_2$GIVE$_1$ MONEY
'you receive money'

[CNGT0129 00:02:08]

## 3.4 Analysis

After recording the handedness, mouthings, spatial modifications and arguments for each example, I sorted them into five categories: Concrete Transfer, General Abstract Transfer, Linguistic Transfer, Change of Condition, and Serial Verb Construction. Except for the latter category, which is based on the construction, the other categories are based on the type of THING. In Concrete Transfer, the THING is a concrete physical object, for example BOOK. The category General Abstract Transfer contains examples that denote transfer of an abstract but non-communicative THING, such as CHANCE. In the Linguist Transfer category, we find examples where a linguistic entity is being transferred. This can be a language part such as SIGN or a specific sign, or SENTENCE. THINGs that relate to communication also fall in this category such as STORY, INFORMATION, IDEA. The Change of Condition category consists of examples where the condition of the RECIPIENT is changed, for example, where the THING is an illness such as CHICKENPOX (meaning 'RECIPIENT became ill with chickenpox') or DISABILITY (meaning 'RECIPIENT became disabled'). Serial Verb Constructions are all instances where GIVE appears together with another verb in one clause.

Several examples did not fall clearly within one category. For example, LUXURY could either mean concrete 'luxury items' or a more abstract 'luxury'. I have classified such examples conservatively as Concrete Transfer. Any examples with 'money' of some kind as the THING were sorted as Concrete Transfer, too, while examples with 'time' of some sort as the THING were sorted as General Abstract Transfer. Some objects can be in more than one category depending on context and meaning. For example, BABY in (19a.) refers to a concrete baby that changes hands, whereas BABY in (19b.) refers to the more abstract concept 'baby', which here together with GIVE has a Chance of Condition meaning of 'to become pregnant'.

(19) a. BORN $_1$GIVE$_2$ BABY
'when it is born they hand you the baby'
[CNGT0098 00:01:03]

b. IVF ARTIFICIAL BABY $_1$GIVE$_2$
'IVF makes you pregnant artificially'
[CNGT0430 00:00:15]

# 4 Results

My search for GEVEN 'give' and KRIJGEN 'receive' on the gloss tiers, as well as *geven* and *krijgen* on the translation tiers, yielded 128 relevant instances of NGT GIVE.

An overview of the distribution of the different categories of giving actions is provided in Table 1. In more than two-thirds of the examples, GIVE was used in an abstract or grammaticalized meaning.

**Table 1: Quantitative distribution of tokens in the different categories.** Four of the instances were glossed in the Corpus NGT as MOVE, 54 as KRIJGEN and 70 as GEVEN.

| Total | Concrete Transfer | Abstract Transfer | | Change of Condition | Serial Verb Construction |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Linguistic | General | | |
| 128 tokens | 36 tokens | 28 tokens | 44 tokens | 9 tokens | 11 tokens |
| 100% | 28% | 22% | 34% | 7% | 9% |

In this chapter, I will present my findings per category, presenting relevant examples of each.

## 4.1 Concrete Transfer

In its prototypical, core meaning, GIVE describes the transfer of a concrete item and can usually be translated with 'transfer'. The THING is a concrete entity which is first in possession of the giver, and is then transferred to the RECIPIENT whereafter the giver does not have the entity in possession anymore.

Interestingly, in only less than a third of all instances in the corpus data (28%), GIVE was used to describe the transfer of a concrete entity. Out of 36 instances describing concrete transfer, only 24 were a canonical giving action of a concrete, physical object being transferred from a GIVER to a RECIPIENT, as illustrated in (20). Figure 6 shows example (20a.). In example


**Figure 6. Stills of the NGT sentence meaning 'He gives a banana to the monkey.'** The starting point of GIVE is at the signer, so locus 1. The ending point is to the right of the signer, so locus 3a. MONKEY is located at 3a by the pointing sign following right after, annotated by me as $INDEX_{3a}$. From context it becomes clear that the GIVER is a person talked about earlier. That referent is not signed in this sentence.

[CNGT0523 00:00:32]

(20b.), CL:KEYS is a handling classifier, meaning something like ‘holding a (set of) key(s)’. The mouthed /*ok*/ is a direct speech together with the index indicating the signer’s mother.

(20) a. BANANA $_{1}$GIVE$_{3a}$ MONKEY INDEX$_{3a}$
‘He gives a banana to the monkey.’
[CNGT0523 00:00:32]

b. /ok/
INDEX$_{3a}$ CL:KEYS INDEX$_{3a}$ CL:KEYS $_{3a}$GIVE$_{1}$
‘She was holding the keys, she said “ok” and gave me the car keys.’
[CNGT0050 00:01:48]

c. NOW NEW BOOK INDEX$_{2}$ FOR BABY COMMUNICATION INDEX$_{2}$ BEAUTIFUL PU INDEX$_{1}$ FRIEND $_{1}$GIVE$_{3b}$ INDEX$_{3b}$ HEAR
‘There is a new book about baby communication, it is really neat, I gave it to a friend, who is hearing.’
[CNGT0532 00:02:44]

In one example the signer talked about ‘three hundred dollars’ in bills that physically changed hands – this example has been included in the 24 canonical examples. Seven instances described the transfer of ‘money’ in a somewhat more abstract way, as illustrated in (21). Those were counted as concrete transfer, too, since the GIVER starts out with the money, and after transfer to the RECIPIENT, does not have it anymore, regardless of whether actual physical money changes hands or whether we talk about digital money or an unspecified amount.

(21) /krijg/
INDEX$_{2}$ $_{2}$GIVE$_{1}$ MONEY INDEX$_{3}$ WORK INDEX$_{2}$, (…) LEARN SURE MONEY $_{3a}$GIVE$_{1}$
‘You get money for this work, (…) you learn something and yet they give you money.’
[CNGT0129 00:02:08]

Some examples were slightly further removed from the core meaning, and for these a ‘transfer’ translation was more far-fetched, although possible. In two examples, the THING was a cochlear implant, which is indeed a concrete physical object, but the meaning of the verb is more along the lines of ‘implant with’ instead of the transfer of (control of) the item to the RECIPIENT. In one example, the THING was SPERM (in the context of someone being a sperm donor for IVF), which is concrete but not really an object. In two examples, the THING was LUXURY, which could mean ‘luxurious things’ or a more general, more abstract ‘luxuries’. All these cases were still counted as concrete transfer.

A mentioned before, searching in the translation tiers turned up four examples that were glossed as MOVE (the English word) on the gloss tier (see example (22)). Those instances used a classifier handshape, such as the handling classifier for small, cylindrical things to depict a glass of beer in (22), illustrated in Figure 7. Two of the found MOVE examples clearly involved

**Figure 7. A giving action with a classifier handshape for handling small cilidrical objects.** The movement is from locus 3a towards the signer (locus 1). The construction means 'he gives/gave me a glass (of beer)'.

transfer of a concrete object. Interestingly, the classifier handshape for 'stack of papers' was used metaphorically as a modifier of 'information' to indicate a larger amount of it (see (24) in section 4.2). These metaphorically used classifier constructions were counted as linguistic transfer.

(22) ANOTHER $_{3A}$MOVE$_{1}$ BEER
'He gave me another beer.'

[CNGT0805 00:03:32]

## 4.2 Abstract Transfer

About two thirds of the instances of GIVE in the corpus NGT do not describe the transfer of a concrete physical THING, but rather some sort of abstract transfer. The first category of Abstract Transfer I want to present is a group of examples I have called 'Linguistic Transfer', followed by 'General Abstract Transfer', which includes several examples that are rather like light verb uses of give.

### 4.2.1 Linguistic Transfer

Newman (1996) finds that 'interpersonal communication', including any communicative acts between person-like entities, is the most common metaphorical extension of GIVE across languages. Examples found in NGT that would fit in Newman's category include transfer of things such as 'new ideas', 'message', or 'information'. I have grouped interpersonal communication meanings together with any other transfer of a linguistic entity, inspired by a sizable number of examples (seven out of a total of 28 in this category) where the THING is 'the sign for concept X'. This is illustrated by example (23a.) which has 'the sign for the lattice

shaped snack Hamka's' as the THING. The relatively high frequency of these 'sign transfer' examples is connected to the type of subjects the informants converse about, as a high number of the analyzed videos are about Deaf issues and Sign Language.

Most of the examples in this category have a 'pass on' type meaning with a focus on the transfer, as illustrated by examples (23a-f.). The RECIPIENT can be unspecified, as in (23d-e.), where it is implied that the stories and message are passed on to someone, but not clear or even relevant to whom. In these cases, the citation form of the verb is used. In example (23e.) the signer uses GIVE twice, starting towards himself and then towards his conversation partner in a reciprocal meaning 'we gave to each other'. As pointed out by Newman (1996), the GIVER in a linguistic transfer does not lose the THING when transferring it, but rather shares it with a RECIPIENT.

(23) a. LATTICE HAMKA YES CALL INDEX$_1$ OH-I-SEE $_1$GIVE$_{3a}$
'The lattice shaped crisps, the sign for them is 'Hamka's', yes, someone asked me what it was and I gave it to them.'
[CNGT0487 00:02:17]

b. TRY DO-YOUR-BEST $_1$GIVE$_{3a}$ SIGN LANGUAGE
'They (parents) must try to do their best to give it (their child) sign language.'
[CNGT0254 00:03:13]

c. SIGN INDEX$_1$ KEEP FROM BEFORE GENERATION INDEX$_{3a}$ $_{3a}$GIVE$_1$
'I preserve the signs, the earlier generation passed them on to me.'
[CNGT0295 00:01:18]

d. DEAF SCHOOL STORY $_1$GIVE$_2$+++
'At the deaf school(s), the stories are passed on and on and on.'
[CNGT1915 00:00:13]

e. SAME $_2$GIVE$_1$ $_1$GIVE$_2$ ALREADY
'It is the same (subject) we talked to each other about already.'
[CNGT0532 00:00:20]

f. /boodschap/
$_1$GIVE$_2$
'We convey the message.'
[CNGT0256 00:06:11]

An interesting thing about (23f.) is that the THING is not signed but exclusively mouthed /*boodschap*/ 'message', simultaneously with the verb. In the linguistic transfer category I also saw two different signers using a classifier construction with GIVE where the classifier handshape 'handling a stack' is used metaphorically as a quantifier for an abstract THING, namely 'a stack of information/a lot of information', as illustrated in (24)[10].

[10] see **Error! Reference source not found.** in section 2.1.2 to see what this handshape looks like

(24) INDEX$_1$ HAVE INDEX$_1$ INFORMATION ALREADY HAVE STACK CAN $_1$GIVE-STACK$_{3a}$ PU
'I have the information, I already have it, I can give them a whole stack'
[CNGT0060 00:02:39]

Two instances, shown in examples (25a-b.), denote transfer of a linguistic entity, but a 'pass on' or 'share' type reading is not possible, making the meaning a step further removed from concrete GIVE. In both examples, the THING is a kind of label, 'sign name' in (25a.) and 'the label 'handicapped'' in (25b.), and both examples would not work without a specified RECIPIENT .

(25) a. INDEX$_1$ CHILD++ SIBLING OFTEN MOVE, FUN SIGN NAME $_1$GIVE$_2$
'My children's friends often come to me, they think it is fun when I give them a sign name.'
[CNGT0859 00:01:09]

b. hs
INDEX$_1$ SELF INDEX$_{3A}$ WORD HANDICAP INDEX$_1$ SAME LIMIT $_2$GIVE$_1$ PLEASANT
'I myself get that label 'handicapped', like (the label) 'disabled', that is not pleasant.'
[CNGT0253 00:06:52]

### 4.2.2 General Abstract Transfer and Light Verb Constructions

This category encompasses examples which have an abstract THING that is not linguistic.

I found three examples where the THING is TIME, which starts in the control of the GIVER, and after transferring it to the RECIPIENT, the GIVER does not have it anymore. However, time is an abstract concept, so those examples were all counted as abstract transfer. The three examples with time as the THING encoded the meanings 'give someone time to cross the street', a general 'give it time', and 'spend time on an activity' as illustrated in (26a.).

A set of six instances that was related in meaning to the TIME examples had INTERPRETER as the THING. An interpreter is a concrete and physical entity, but the meaning of GIVE + INTERPRETER is more abstract, namely 'to get an interpreter to work for you (for a certain amount of time)', as illustrated by example (26b.). In all six instances, the direction of the verb is towards the signer, and the GIVER is unspecified. It is important to note that this data comes from only two different signers, and five of the instances are from the same informant.

(26) a. TIME $_1$GIVE$_2$ BOARD PALM-UP
'people don't give time to (be on) a board'
[CNGT0137 00:01:07]

b. WE INTERPRETER $_2$GIVE$_1$ SIGN INDEX$_1$ RIGHT INDEX$_{3B}$
'We get sign language interpreter hours (reimbursed by insurance), that is our right.'

[CNGT0256 00:04:51]

The second part of this category consists of 35 examples that could be classified as light verb constructions. The notion of transfer of (control of) the THING is either considerably weakened or is not there at all, and most of the semantic (action or event) content lies in the THING.

Two examples that are both oriented towards the signer with an unspecified GIVER express the meanings 'get (in) an accident', and 'get (into) a relationship', where no explicit giver is possible. Compare this to example (26), which could alternatively be translated as a passive 'we are given SL interpreter time (…)'. However, a passive reading is not possible for (27a.), '*they were given an accident', or (27b.), '*I was given a relationship'. Note that the signers did not use a /*krijgen*/ mouthing in either of those examples.

(27) a. $_2$GIVE$_1$ ACCIDENT FINISHED
'They just got (in) an accident, that's all.'

[CNGT0171 00:03:39]

b. OR INDEX$_1$ RELATIONSHIP INDEX$_{3a}$ SUCCEED-NOT $_2$GIVE$_1$
'Or I do not succeed in getting (into) a relationship.'

[CNGT0256 00:08:35]

24 of the GIVE sentences denoted abstract transfer of something that is to the benefit of the RECIPIENT ('attention', 'love', 'a chance', 'interest', 'work', 'welcome', 'possibilities', 'education') (28a-d.). The GIVER can be specified as illustrated by (28a.) or unspecified, with focus on the RECIPIENT in a 'receive' meaning as in (28b.) (note also the /*krijg*/ 'receive' mouthing). Example (28c.) features two instances of abstract transfer, with tense specification added in a mouthing, /*gegeve*/ 'given' for perfective past and /*geven*/ 'give' for present tense. In all these beneficial examples, control of the THING starts at the GIVER and is then transferred to the RECIPIENT.

(28) a. GOVERNMENT CAN SAME CHANCE $_1$GIVE$_{3A}$
'the government can give them the same chance'

[CNGT0821 00:00:50]

b. /krijg/
EVERYBODY MUST CHANCE $_2$GIVE$_1$
'everyone must get a chance'

[CNGT0060 00:01:43]

c. /leven/ /gegeve/ /liefde/ /geven/
LIFE CHILD $_1$GIVE$_2$ LOVE $_1$GIVE$_2$

'you have given the child life, you should give it love'

[CNGT1734 00:00:10, repeated from (3d.)]

d. MANY YOUNG INTEREST $_1$GIVE$_2$ NOT

'many young people are not interested' lit. 'many young people do not give interest'

[CNGT0137 00:02:39]

Nine examples involve an abstract transfer of something that is to the detriment of the RECIPIENT ('blame', 'a beating', 'punishment'). As with the previous set of examples, control of the THING starts with the GIVER, but what is transferred to the RECIPIENT is the effect of the action rather than the control over the action. (29a-b.) illustrates that the THING can be signed, such as BLAME in (29a.) as well as exclusively mouthed, such as /*schuld*/ 'blame' in (29b.) which accompanies the RECIPIENT. In the latter example, give is directed towards the signer and accompanied by a mouthing /*geef*/ 'give'.

(29) a. US-TWO ALWAYS $_1$GIVE$_2$ BLAME INDEX$_2$ INDEX$_1$ INDEX$_2$ INDEX$_1$

'the two of us always gave each other the blame'

[CNGT0369 00:00:45]

b. /schuld/ /geef/ /schuld/

TEACHER INDEX$_{3b}$ [NAMESIGN] INDEX$_{3b}$ INDEX$_1$ $_{3b}$GIVE$_1$ INDEX$_1$

'This teacher, [name], he gave me the blame.'

[CNGT1073 00:00:20]

## 4.3 Change of Condition

A set of nine examples expressed an effect on the RECIPIENT such that their state changed as a result of the giving action. Four of these examples had a meaning along the lines of 'become/make pregnant' or 'have a baby' as illustrated by (30a-c.). Example (30a.) is analogous to the Dutch expression *een kind krijgen* 'to have a baby/to become a parent', GIVE being accompanied by the mouthing /*krijg*/ 'receive' and no GIVER. In (30b.) the GIVER is the technique of IVF and the RECIPIENT a general (impersonal) 'you'. Example (30c.) is interesting because the THING is not specified. Rather, the meaning is conveyed by directing GIVE towards the belly of the signer in combination with the context.

(30) a. /krijg/

SUPPOSE INDEX$_1$ DEAF CHILD $_2$GIVE$_1$ INDEX$_1$ NOT PROBLEM MAKE

'suppose I would get a deaf child, then I would not make a problem of it'

[CNGT2216 00:00:48]

b. IVF ARTIFICIAL BABY $_1$GIVE$_2$

'IVF makes you pregnant artificially.' Lit. 'IVF artificially gives you a baby.'

[CNGT0430 00:00:15, repeated from (19b.)]

c. $_{2}$GIVE$_{1}$ DEAF HEARING WE-WILL-SEE PU
'If you become pregnant, you don't know if (the child) is deaf or hearing.' lit. 'If you get (a child) in your belly, you don't know if it is deaf or hearing'
[CNGT0332 00:00:20]

In four of the examples, the THING is an illness or disability, illustrated by (31a-b.). Comparable to (30a.), there is no GIVER in (31a.) and the verb is accompanied by the mouthing /*krijg*/. This meaning is something along the lines of 'become inflicted with tinnitus'. In contrast, the sentence in (31b.) does include a GIVER, namely SOCIETY.

(31) a. /krijg/
SOMETIMES CI THEN $_{2}$GIVE$_{1}$ TINNITUS
'Sometimes when you get a cochlear implant, then you get tinnitus.'
[CNGT0862 00:02:52]

b. COME IN SOCIETY INDEX$_{3A}$ RUN-INTO-PROBLEMS INDEX$_{3A}$ LIMIT $_{3A}$GIVE$_{1}$
'You come into society, you run into problems, and society makes you disabled.'
[CNGT0253 00:02:18]

The last change of state example is shown in (32), which has 'happiness' as the THING (note that the sign FEELINGS is specified with mouthing /*geluk*/ 'happiness').

(32) /geluk/
BOTH$_{3B}$ FEELINGS $_{1}$GIVE$_{3B}$
'you should make both of them happy' lit. 'you should give both of them happiness'
[CNGT0098 00:05:02]

## 4.4 Serial Verb Constructions

Couvee and Pfau (2018), following work by Bos (1996/2016), noted in their corpus study on serial verb constructions that GIVE in NGT may take part in this construction. In my data, I find 11 instances where a single clause is built up from two verbs, one of those verbs being GIVE. The GIVE SVCs come in two flavors: with the two verbs having the same arguments, and with those arguments being different for each verb.

GIVE can combine with a non-directional verb such as SUPPORT or SAVE in (33a.) to add a stronger link to the RECIPIENT. NGT PAY in (33b.) is not really a directional verb, but the signer points the fingers of her weak hand towards the locus of the RECIPIENT, strengthening this focus on the RECIPIENT even further. As we can see in examples (33c-d.), GIVE also occasionally combines with verbs that are directional themselves, such as SEND in (33c.). GIVE and CALL in (33d.) are bound together in one clause by a mouthing /*doorgeven*/ 'pass on', which has scope over both signs. Interestingly, there is no specified RECIPIENT in this instance. The same is true

for (33e.), which is remarkable because the verb GIVE combines with is not signed, but only mouthed */gebruiken/* 'use'. At first glance, this could be an example of a disambiguating or specifying mouthing, but I decided to treat it as a serial verb construction because the meaning 'use' is not included in any way in the sign GIVE. GIVE in (33e.) adds a general notion of 'to someone' to the meaning which is not present in 'use one's voice' which one could do when there are no other people present. Example (33f.) is noteworthy because of its */krijg/* 'receive' mouthing. The signer has put extra focus on the RECIPIENT here as well.

It is remarkable that the SVC examples fall in different of the previous categories: general abstract transfer (33a), concrete transfer (33b., c. and f.), and linguistic transfer (33d. and e.), meaning that it is independent of the type of THING whether an SVC is used.

(33) a. /som/ /niet/ /raak/
INDEX$_{3a}$ SELF CAN PREGNANT MAKE INDEX$_{3b}$ $_{3b}$GIVE$_{3a}$ SAVE
'Some people cannot get pregnant by themselves. They (can) save those people (with IVF).'
[CNGT0132 00:01:07]

b. INDEX$_1$ $_1$PAY$_{3a}$ INDEX$_1$ $_1$GIVE$_{3a}$ DONE
'I paid them (for it), and that was that.'
[CNGT0250 00:06:01]

c. INDEX$_1$ SOON EMAIL $_1$SEND$_2$ / GO.TO HOME INDEX$_1$ NOT $_2$SEND$_1$ $_2$GIVE$_1$ NOT.
'They say "I will send you an email soon". I go home and they never send it to me.'
[CNGT0137 00:05:16]

d. /doorgeven/
ALSO $_1$GIVE$_2$ $_1$CALL$_2$
'I passed that (information) on as well.'
[CNGT1071 00:01:05]

e. /gebruiken/
DEAF INDEX$_2$ DIFFICULT VOICE $_1$GIVE$_2$
'it is difficult for Deaf people to use their voice (to someone)'
[CNGT0173 00:04:27]

f. /krijg/
INDEX$_1$ $_2$GIVE$_1$ PUT-AROUND-NECK GARLAND
'I got a garland put around my neck.'
[CNGT0049 00:04:43]

In two of the examples of GIVE combining into one clause with another verb, the direction of the two verbs is different. Both instances are a combination of TAKE-OVER and GIVE, as illustrated in (34). Whereas in the SVCs we have seen before, the order of GIVE and the other verb was

different from example to example, the order of the verbs in these two examples matters to the meaning. The order is iconic, as the taking event precedes the passing on event.

Note that in the example (34), LEARN $_{3a}$TEACH$_1$ is also a serial verb construction 'I learn the signs from someone'. LEARN is non-directional and TEACH directional, directed towards the signer. The locus of the person doing the teaching is the same as the starting point of TAKE-OVER.

(34) INDEX$_1$ $_{3a}$TAKE-OVER$_1$ LEARN $_{3a}$TEACH$_1$ $_{3a}$TAKE-OVER$_1$ $_1$GIVE$_2$
'I take over (signs), I learn them and I pass them on to you.'
[CNGT0618 00:02:05]

# 5 Discussion

I set out to investigate what extensions from the underlying core meaning of concrete transfer are available for the NGT verb GIVE. Additionally, I wanted to learn how these extended meanings and constructions compare typologically to GIVE in other languages, and how they can be accounted for in terms of grammaticalization.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, give in NGT is used beyond its concrete meaning to describe metaphorical transfer as well as in some additional more grammatical contexts. In this chapter, I will discuss the meaning types I found in the corpus NGT in a typological context, and their position on the grammaticalization path of GIVE. I will propose two possible grammaticalization paths for GIVE in NGT.

Additionally, I will discuss the different handshapes used in give actions in NGT, as well as mouthings accompanying GIVE in combination with the direction of the verb. In line with this, I will share my thoughts on passivization of GIVE.

## 5.1 Grammaticalization of GIVE in NGT

One of the properties of grammaticalization is semantic bleaching, i.e. losing (parts of) the prototypic, original meaning. A common way this happens to GIVE is by means of metaphorical extension to abstract transfer. From the corpus data it is clear that NGT belongs to the large group of languages that productively use GIVE with a metaphorically extended meaning, as the verb GIVE is used to describe concrete transfer in less than a third of its occurrences. This surprisingly low number might be influenced by the choice of conversation subject, as a relatively large number of videos in the corpus are recordings of conversations about Deaf issues, and those include conversations about (the transfer of) signs and sign language. It is likely that this fact leads to a higher rate of linguistic transfer meanings.

### 5.1.1 To Pass on a Sign: Different Mechanisms to Arrive at the Same Meaning

Because linguistic transfer is frequent in my dataset, I have a good sample of the different ways pass-on type meanings are encoded in NGT. In (35a.) there is no specific marking; the meaning follows from the context. This example represents the majority of instances. The meaning can also get specified by a mouthing derived from Dutch *doorgeven* ‘pass on’ (lit. ‘through-give’), like the partial mouthing */door/* in (35b.). Example (35c.) uses full mouthing */doorgeven/* to specify the serial verb construction $_{1}$GIVE$_{2}$ $_{1}$CALL$_{2}$. The verb CALL has a general meaning ‘call, address (someone)’[11] and together with GIVE signifies that there is a RECIPIENT, albeit an unspecified one in this case. In example (35d.) we also find a SVC. The construction is different from the previous one in that $_{2}$TAKE-OVER$_{1}$ and $_{1}$GIVE$_{3a}$ both contribute equally to the

[11] Interestingly, CALL has also been identified by Bos (1996/2016) as well as Couvee and Pfau (2018) as a verb that participates in SVCs as a fixed verb, usually with another communication verb. Considering the meaning of the construction in this instance so closely resembling the other examples without CALL, it could be possible that GIVE is in fact the meaning bearing verb here.

meaning of the predicate, making it a symmetrical SVC (Aikhenvald, 2006). The order of the two verbs is temporally motivated: $_2$TAKE-OVER$_1$ happens first. The two verbs share one argument, the signer, as the intermediary in the transmission of the message and the subject of both verbs, but note that the signer is the end point (RECIPIENT or GOAL argument) for TAKE-OVER and the starting point (GIVER or SOURCE argument) for GIVE. Lastly, compare the NGT examples to Bulgarian (35e.) which marks the pass-on meaning on the verb by the morpheme *pre-* 'through', comparable to *door-* in Dutch, which we find as a mouthing in NGT.

(35) a. SIGN INDEX$_1$ KEEP FROM BEFORE GENERATION INDEX$_{3a}$ $_{3a}$GIVE$_1$
'I preserve the signs, the earlier generation passed them on to me.'
[CNGT0295 00:01:18, repeated from (23c.)]

b. /door/
OLD FINGERSPELL $_1$GIVE$_2$
'passing on old signs'
[CNGT0435 00:01:56]

c. /doorgeven/
ALSO $_1$GIVE$_2$ $_1$CALL$_2$
'I passed that (information) on as well.'
[CNGT1071 00:01:05, repeated from (33d.)]

d. NEW SIGN $_2$TAKE-OVER$_1$ INDEX$_1$ $_1$GIVE$_{3a}$ NEW INDEX$_1$ FORGET
'There were some new signs that I was going to pass on to you, but I forgot them.'
[CNGT0016 00:03:31]

e. *pre-davam* *săobštenie*
through-give message
'to relay a message (to someone)'
[Bulgarian; (Newman, 1996, p. 140)]

### 5.1.2 Recipient Marking: LVC and SVC

Whereas the focus of the examples in the previous section was still on the transfer, in the majority of abstracted uses, the notion of transfer has eroded so that most of the remaining meaning signifies focus on the RECIPIENT. Two constructions in NGT where the verb GIVE contributes less to the meaning than the other parts of the construction are light verb constructions (GIVE + noun) and serial verb constructions (GIVE + verb).

A complication in discerning whether a construction is an LVC or an SVC is that many signs in NGT are both used as verbs and as nouns (Bank, Crasborn, & van Hout, 2011). In some cases, disambiguation happens by means of a mouthing, or the context makes it clear. Some instances, however, could be interpreted both ways. As demonstrated in examples (36a.-c.), PUNISHMENT is a sign that can only be used as a noun, making the construction in (36a.) an LVC.

SUPPORT is both used as a verb and a noun, leading to an ambiguous construction in (36b.). PAY, on the other hand, can only be used as a verb, making the construction in (36c.) an SVC. Even so, the constructions are strikingly similar in form, in use and in meaning, with the main contribution of GIVE being that it emphasizes the RECIPIENT.

(36) a. /krijg/
$_2$GIVE$_1$ SOMETIMES $_2$GIVE$_1$ PUNISHMENT INDEX$_1$
'Sometimes I got punished.' lit. 'Sometimes I received punishment.'
[CNGT0138 00:02:03]

b. $_1$GIVE$_{3b}$ SUPPORT INDEX$_{3b}$ KNOW RESEARCH
'We must support scientific research.' or 'We must give support to scientific research.'
[CNGT0256 00:06:17]

c. INDEX$_1$ $_1$PAY$_{3a}$ INDEX$_1$ $_1$GIVE$_{3a}$ DONE
'I paid them (for it), and that was that.'
[CNGT0250 00:06:01, repeated from (33b.)]

Incidentally, GIVE itself can also be used as a noun. In (37) the sign is accompanied by mouthing */aanbod/* 'supply, input' and immediately followed by verbal GIVE (accompanied by the mouthing of the past participle */gehad/*, a dialectal version of *gekregen* 'received').

(37) /aanbod gehad/
MEANING RECENT POWER MANY GIVE $_2$GIVE$_1$ PU
'That means they have gotten a lot of (language) input in the past.'
[CNGT2213 00:01:02]

For English, which also has verbs and nouns that share the same form (e.g. *to dream* vs. *a dream*), we know how verbs and nouns behave differently. We might find patterns in NGT to distinguish the two word classes, but this would be a topic that warrants further research.

The examples in (36) all have a meaning that assumes a RECIPIENT already ('to punish *someone*', 'to support *someone*' 'to pay *someone*'), and the use of GIVE emphasizes that. However, NGT can also use GIVE to add a RECIPIENT, as illustrated in (38a.). Instead of just using the sign USE, which can only take two arguments and does not assume any RECIPIENT, the signer employs an SVC with GIVE ('use' is realized as mouthing */gebruiken/* 'use'). This changes the meaning from 'use their voice (no matter if there is anyone to perceive it)' to 'use their voice at someone (implied: for communication)'. Compare this to the Dutch sentences (38b.-c.). Janssen notes that whereas *slaken* 'let-out' is a neutral wording, when used with *geven* 'give' "…the scream at issue can be assumed to have been audible to at least one person" (Janssen, 1998, p. 301). That is, GIVE adds a RECIPIENT to the meaning where there otherwise is none, even though the RECIPIENT can remain unspecified.

(38) a. /gebruiken/

DEAF INDEX$_2$ DIFFICULT VOICE $_1$GIVE$_2$

'it is difficult for Deaf people to use their voice (to someone)'

[CNGT0173 00:04:27, repeated from (33e.)]

b. *De man slaakte een gil.*
the man let.out-PST a scream
'The man let out a scream.'

c. *De man gaf een gil.*
the man give.PST a scream
'The man gave a scream.' 'The man screamed (and there was someone to perceive it).'

[Dutch; (Janssen, 1998, p. 277)]

### 5.1.3 Passive Auxiliary?

The focus on the RECIPIENT that plays such a significant role in the metaphorical extensions we see in NGT, has been shown to grammaticalize via the notion of 'being affected beyond one's control' to marking a non-agent, i.e. a passive marker (Lenz, 2009) (see also section 2.2.5). I found one instance of a passive-like construction, shown here in (39a.). GIVE here has a receive-type structure, as it is directed towards the signer and is accompanied by the mouthing /*krijg*/ 'receive', and is used in an SVC together with PUT-AROUND-NECK. Note that the construction describes transfer of a concrete object (GARLAND). This example is reminiscent of the receptive passive in Dutch, a construction which (at least in Dutch) is highly restricted to verbs that themselves have a strong notion of transfer. For example, in (39b.) *krijgen* 'receive' combines with *toesturen* 'send towards'. As noted by Colleman (2010), receptive passives with non-transfer verbs such as *kopen* 'buy' in (39c.) are not possible[12]. Comparably, PUT-AROUND-NECK is also a strong transfer verb with focus on the RECIPIENT.

(39) a. /krijg/

INDEX$_1$ $_2$GIVE$_1$ PUT-AROUND-NECK GARLAND

'I got a garland put around my neck.'

[CNGT0049 00:04:43, repeated from (33f.)]

b. *De jongen kreeg een boek toe-gestuurd (door zijn vader).*
the boy received a book towards-sent (by his father)

[12] In order to make the construction completely acceptable in Dutch, the extra focus on 'direction towards the RECIPIENT' added by *toe-* 'towards-' is necessary; interestingly, a receptive passive with neutral *sturen* 'send' was judged as questionable by my informants. A receptive passive with *versturen* 'away-send', which has focus on 'away from the sender', is just as ungrammatical as the example with *kopen* 'buy'.

'The boy got sent a book (by his father).'

[Dutch; personal example]

c. *De jongen kreeg een boek gekocht (door zijn vader).*
the boy received a book bought (by his father)
Intended: 'The boy got bought a book (by his father).'

[Dutch; (Colleman, 2010, p. 234)]

Since I found only one example with the receptive passive-like pattern, the possibility to use GIVE in such constructions must remain speculation at this point. An elicitation task or an acceptability judgement test investigating what NGT signers can and can't do combining GIVE with other verbs could provide more data.

### 5.1.4 Effect on the RECIPIENT: Change of State and Causative

In the LVCs and SVCs discussed above, the transfer meaning of GIVE has bleached. This means the meaning mainly comes from the (action or event) lexical content of the item GIVE combines with (either a noun or another verb). In a small number of cases in the corpus NGT, the meaning shifted even further, denoting the effect of the THING on the RECIPIENT.

When no GIVER is specified, $_2$GIVE$_1$ (directed towards the signer) can be used in a change-of-state meaning comparable to 'become'. The two contexts in which the signers in the corpus used this construction are in the context of 'become pregnant' as in (40a.) and 'become ill/afflicted with X' as in (40b.). The construction is comparable to the Rodriguan Creole example in (40c.)[13], although the GIVE/RECEIVE verb in NGT stays a bit closer to its prototypical lexical form, as it combines with a noun as the THING in these cases, not with an adjective.

(40) a. $_2$GIVE$_1$ DEAF HEARING WE-WILL-SEE PU

'If you become pregnant, you don't know if (the child) is deaf or hearing.' lit. 'you get (a child) in your belly, you don't know if it is deaf or hearing'

[CNGT0332 00:00:20, repeated from (30c.)]

b. /krijg/

SOMETIMES CI THEN $_2$GIVE$_1$ TINNITUS

'Sometimes when you get a cochlear implant, then you get tinnitus.'

[CNGT0862 00:02:52, repeated from (31a.)]

c. *kâ kan gañ gro, nu kup li.*
when cane get big 1:PL cut 3:SG
'When the cane becomes big, we cut it.' Lit. 'When the cane gets (to be) big, we cut it.'

[Rodriguan Creole; adapted from Corne, 1977 in (Kuteva, et al., 2019, p. 186)]

[13] English can also use *get* in this meaning: *get pregnant, get ill, get angry* etc.

With a specified GIVER in the construction, the meaning becomes causative, as in (41a.-b.). Note that FEELINGS in (41a.) is a sign that can be used as a noun 'feeling, happiness' or an adjective 'happy'. The mouthing */geluk/* specifying the meaning could be either a full mouthing corresponding to the Dutch noun *geluk* 'happiness' or a partial mouthing from the Dutch adjective *gelukkig* 'happy'. Example (41b.) shows that GIVE + BABY in the meaning 'become pregnant' is also possible with a GIVER, which makes the construction causative. The NGT examples are thus comparable to the causative auxiliary construction in LSC, as illustrated in (41c.).

(41) a. /geluk/
BOTH$_{3B}$ FEELINGS $_1$GIVE$_{3B}$
'you should make both of them happy' lit. 'you should give both of them happiness'
[CNGT0098 00:05:02, repeated from (32)]

b. IVF ARTIFICIAL BABY $_1$GIVE$_2$
'IVF makes you pregnant artificially.' lit. 'IVF artificially gives you a baby.'
[CNGT0430 00:00:15, repeated from (19b.)]

c. /da/
EXAM $_3$AUX-DA$_1$ NERVOUS
'The exam makes me nervous.'
[LSC; Quer and Frigola, 2006 in (Steinbach & Pfau, 2007, p. 320), repeated from (16e.)]

This change-of-state vs. causative pair is also found in Spanish for *dar* 'give' combining with nouns designating physical or psychological states, such as 'jealousy' in (42a.-b.) (Alba-Salas, 2012). Note that, just as in NGT, both constructions in Spanish also have a RECIPIENT focus: The recipient *Eva* is still dative-marked when there is no giver (42a.).

(42) a. *A* *Eva* *le* *dieron* *celos.*
to Eva DAT.3SG gave.3PL jealousy.PL
'Eva got jealous.'

b. *Luis* *le* *dio* *celos* *a* *Eva.*
Luis DAT.3SG gave.3SG jealousy.PL to Eva
'Luis made Eva jealous.'
[Spanish; (Alba-Salas, 2012, pp. 365-366)]

These findings are in line with the grammaticalization described by Kuteva et al (2019) from GET to change-of-state and from GIVE to causative.

So-called manipulative causatives with GIVE of the type 'make a person do something' have not been attested in my data. It is possible that such a meaning would emerge if the 'cause a (change of) state' meaning gets used more frequently.

### 5.1.5 Grammaticalization Paths

I propose two grammaticalization paths for GIVE in NGT, based on the discussion above and various grammaticalization pathways that have been described before for GIVE-like and RECEIVE-like verbs (Couvee & Pfau, 2018; Kuteva, et al., 2019).

(A) Concrete transfer > Abstract transfer > Light verb/serial verb > Recipient marker > Affected beyond one's control > Passive

(B) Concrete transfer > Abstract transfer > Effect of transfer on recipient > Causative/change-of-state

I have considered LVCs and SVCs as one category, since they are difficult to tease apart in NGT while being very similar in use. Remember that the grammaticalization into a passive auxiliary is tentative, as I found only one example in the corpus dataset fitting this use. All of the more grammatical uses of GIVE in NGT in this dataset are in one way or another RECIPIENT-focused. As the material in the Corpus NGT was recorded between 2006-2008, this study captures the state of NGT from about fifteen years ago (Crasborn, et al., 2020). It may well be the case that some of the constructions mentioned have become more or less prevalent in the meantime.

## 5.2 Avenues for Further Research Beyond Grammaticalization

In the course of this study, I encountered some patterns in my data that were outside the scope of my research questions. Three of those patterns were noteworthy to such an extent that I want to share them as possible avenues for further research. I will discuss in this section the three handshape variants used for GIVE, the difference between GIVE and RECEIVE in NGT and possible (non-dedicated) passive GIVE.

### 5.2.1 Lexicalized Classifier Constructions

In NGT, three versions of GIVE are used, each with a different handshape: B-handshape, money handshape and beak handshape (see Figure 8). The latter exists in a number of allophonic variants, which differ in the bending of the fingers and the position of the thumb. Apart from these, we have seen some examples of classifier handshapes denoting the shape of the THING. In contrast, ASL, a language that uses handling classifiers in GIVE predicates in much the same way as NGT, uses only one handshape for lexicalized GIVE (the beak handshape). Wilcox (1998, p. 178) argues that one handling classifier handshape has lexicalized: "It is the configuration in the 'handle a thin flattish wide object' predicate verb stem that is realized in the prototypical verb GIVE.". In NGT, the B-handshape is used for handling "large or bulky entities" (Zwitserlood, 2003, p. 95), the money-handshape is used for "cylindrical or long, thin entities (…) that need more careful handling (…) and bank notes" (Zwitserlood, 2003, p. 105), and the beak handshape is used for "flat entities" (Zwitserlood, 2003, p. 101). As all three handshapes are used for prototypical (non-classifier construction) GIVE, lexicalization has happened to all three forms. It is possible that each form has its origin in a different regional variant of NGT. Over time users might decide on one form, as seems to have happened for RECEIVE-type meanings; all examples in my dataset that are articulated with a /*krijgen*/ mouthing have a B-handshape. The B-handshape is also the most commonly used handshape if we disregard the examples with a /*krijgen*/ mouthing, and for instances of GIVE directed away from the signer, the three handshapes are used with a nearly equal frequency. Here, I have not looked into the distribution of the three handshapes in different contexts or at regional or generational differences – all of these would be interesting topics for future research.

### 5.2.2 RECEIVE or Passivized GIVE?

I completed the data collection and description assuming that the only difference between verbs glossed KRIJGEN 'receive' and GEVEN 'give' in the corpus would be that the 'receive' instances were directed towards the signer. However, in the course of studying the examples, I noticed a pattern regarding examples with RECEIVE-type meanings. About a quarter of the

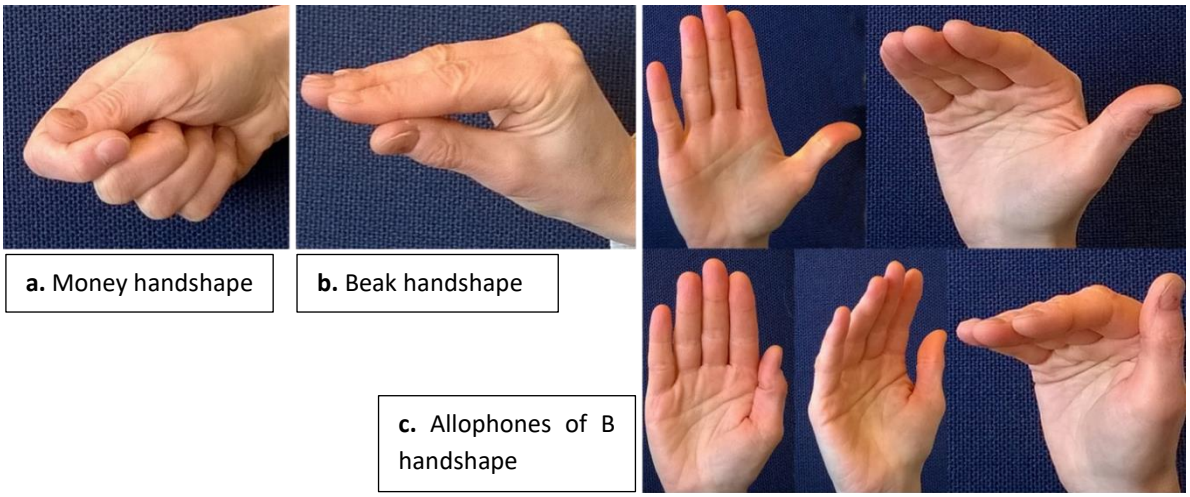


**Figure 8: Three variants of GIVE in NGT, distinguished by handshape.** Money handshape (a.), beak handshape (b.) and B-handshape (c.). For B-handshape, several allophones are common (Radboud University, 2020).

examples in the dataset are accompanied by a mouthing meaning 'receive'. All of these instances have a B-handshape, are directed towards the signer, regardless of the referential locus of the RECIPIENT, and do not have a specified GIVER. These behave so regularly and so differently from GIVE with a GIVE-type meaning, that I am inclined to conclude that NGT does have a bona fide RECEIVE verb that is different from GIVE.

Another fifteen examples are directed towards the signer and are glossed in the corpus as KRIJGEN 'receive', but have a specified GIVER. These are clearly instances of GIVE with a first-person RECIPIENT and should in my opinion be glossed GEVEN 'give' in the corpus.

To evaluate the difference, compare the two instances of GIVE in example (43). The first instance in an example of the form I would label RECEIVE: it is accompanied by a */krijg/* 'receive' mouthing and is articulated with a B-handshape. The conversation partner (specific 'you') is the specified RECIPIENT, but the verb is directed towards the signer. Second GIVE in example (43) I would label GIVE. This verb has a starting point spatially modified to the locus of the GIVER ('they'/ 'the people running the experiment'), and a general, unspecified RECIPIENT. It is interesting to note that the signer uses a different handshape for the second instance (a beak handshape).

(43) /krijg/

INDEX$_2$ $_2$GIVE$_1$ MONEY INDEX$_3$ WORK INDEX$_2$, (…) LEARN SURE MONEY $_{3a}$GIVE$_1$

'You get money for this work, (…) you learn something and yet they give you money.'

[CNGT0129 00:02:08, repeated from (21)]

Apart from the RECEIVE instances described above, a dozen or so examples do not have a specified GIVER and are directed towards the signer, but lack the 'receive' mouthing. Some of these I believe to be RECEIVE without the mouthing, but others could be passive GIVE. Hou (2022) describes passives in ASL, noting that these are only semantically marked and not morphologically or syntactically. Therefore, she uses the term *non-dedicated passives*. The characteristics of passive GIVE in ASL are an unchanged form, direction and orientation, and a focus on the RECIPIENT, while no specified GIVER is present, as in example (44a.). I have found similar examples in my NGT dataset, that can be interpreted as non-dedicated passive[14], or, as is also the case in ASL, as an impersonal construction. For example, (44b.) can be understood as 'I am given work.' or as 'Someone gives me work.'. Because the handshape used in this sentence is the B-handshape, a third possibility is that this is an instance of RECEIVE without the mouthing.

(44) a. $_2$GIVE$_1$ TROPHY. REMEMBER.

'We were given the trophy, remember?'

[14] Note that these non-dedicated passive uses of GIVE are different from the use of GIVE as a receptive passive auxiliary, which would be a dedicated passive. In the examples we look at here, GIVE is the main verb.

[ASL; adapted from Janzen et al., 2001 in (Hou, 2022, p. 10)]

b. $_{2}$GIVE$_{1}$ INDEX$_{1}$ WORK

'I am given work.' / 'Someone gives me work.' / 'I get work.'

[CNGT0331 00:01:16, repeated from (17b.)]

I found a total of 13 instances that are a candidate for passivized GIVE. Out of these, ten were articulated with a B-handshape, also permitting a possible RECEIVE interpretation.

To my knowledge, passivization in NGT has not been studied yet. These findings of GIVE could be a springboard for a study of passives in NGT.

# 6 Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to map the uses of GIVE in Sign Language of the Netherlands beyond its underlying concrete transfer meaning. Data was collected from the Corpus NGT, analyzed and evaluated in a typological context as well as a grammaticalization context. The results of this study expand our knowledge of grammaticalization in NGT. From a typological point of view, the findings add a language which has not been studied in depth before to the typological description of GIVE across modalities.

I expected GIVE in NGT to appear in serial verb constructions and light-verb-like constructions, as the verb's occurrence in these constructions had been attested by Bos (1996/2016) and Couvee and Pfau (2018). I also anticipated metaphorical extension from the concrete transfer meaning into abstract transfer meanings, as this is common for GIVE verbs across languages.

Surprisingly, in fewer than a third of the instances in the corpus, GIVE was used with its prototypical concrete transfer meaning. I observed extended meanings of GIVE including abstract transfer, recipient marking and recipient adding, change-of-state and causative meanings, and possibly a receptive passive marker. As anticipated, GIVE appeared in both serial verb constructions and light verb constructions. The two constructions were difficult to tell apart whenever GIVE was used together with a sign that occurs as both a verb and a noun in NGT. Furthermore, the constructions were similar in form, use and meaning. Further research into the borders between word classes is needed, both in NGT in particular, and in sign languages in general.

All of the abstract and grammatical uses of GIVE I distinguished, were centered around the RECIPIENT. In SVC's and LVC's, GIVE was used to focus, mark or add a RECIPIENT. I found one example of a passive-like construction, leading to the tentative conclusion that GIVE can function as a passive auxiliary in NGT. In several instances, the meaning of GIVE had shifted to mark the effect on the RECIPIENT, leading to change-of-state and causative meanings. As expected, all of the extended meanings of GIVE in NGT were comparable to uses of GIVE verbs in other languages, both spoken and signed.

I proposed two grammaticalization paths for GIVE in NGT:

(A) Concrete transfer > Abstract transfer > Light verb/serial verb > Recipient marker > Affected beyond one's control > Passive

(B) Concrete transfer > Abstract transfer > Effect of transfer on recipient > Causative/change-of-state

A limitation of doing a corpus study is that the corpus gives an intersection of the spontaneous use of GIVE in the NGT of fifteen years ago, which is when the videos in the Corpus NGT were recorded. To confirm my findings, especially the speculative passive auxiliary use of GIVE, further studies could include an elicitation task or an acceptability judgement test, specifically

investigating what NGT signers can and can't do regarding GIVE. Taking a long-term perspective, the study of language change in general and grammaticalization in particular would benefit greatly from the addition of new, current material to the Corpus NGT.

My dataset indicates that GIVE and RECEIVE are two different verbs in NGT, differentiated by handshape and mouthing, but that the glosses currently used in the Corpus NGT do not always reflect the difference between the two. A further exploration of the distribution of the handshapes used for the variants of GIVE could shed light on potential contextual, regional or generational differences.

Beyond the scope of this thesis, my data contained several examples that could be interpreted as a passivized GIVE. These findings would be a good starting point for a research of the (non-dedicated) passive in NGT, further expanding our understanding of NGT grammar.

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