

The 5 Parameters



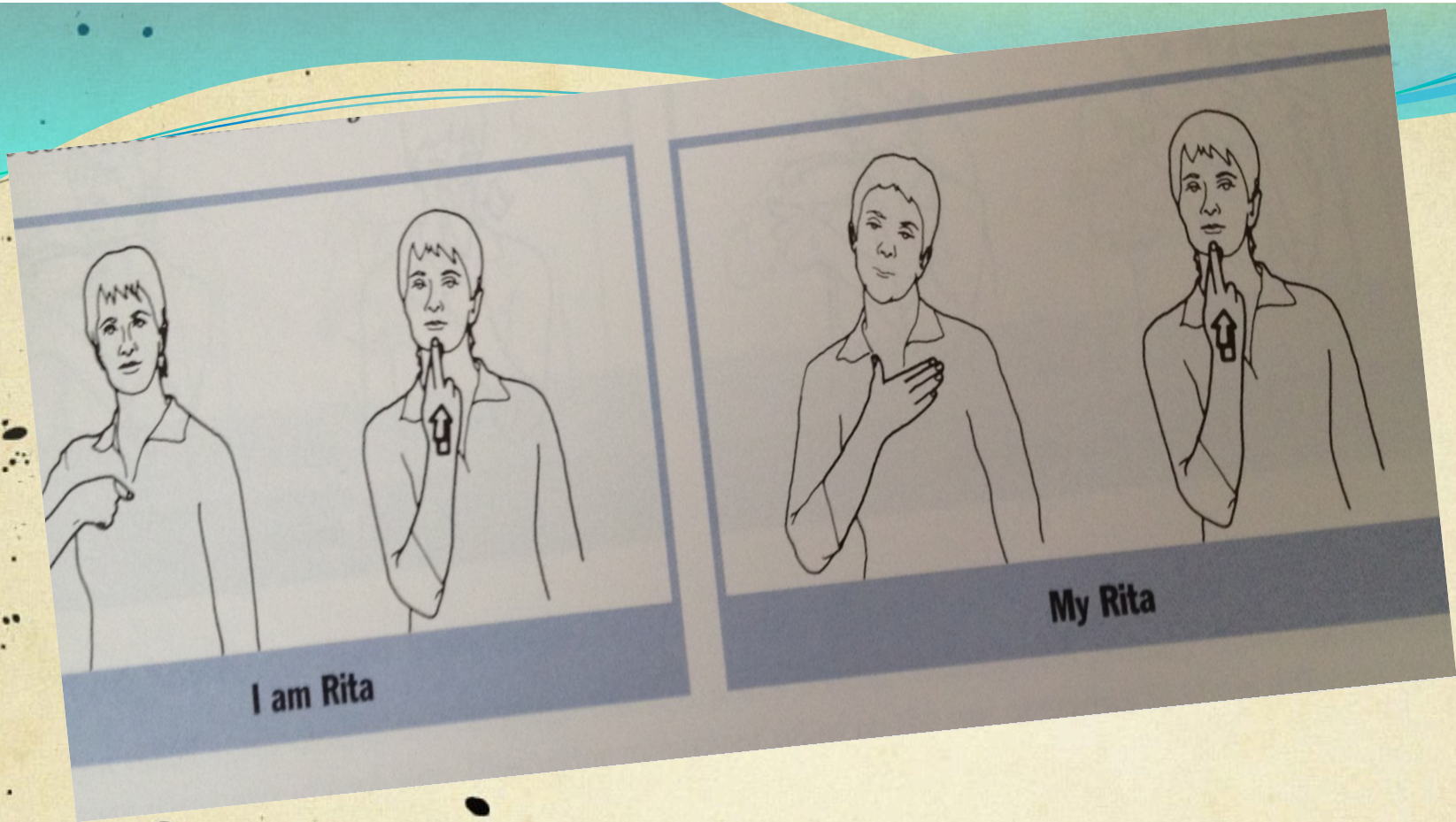


The Five Parameters of ASL

- Each ASL Sign can be broken down and analyzed into five separate features called **PARAMETERS**.
- For a single sign to be correct, each of the five parameters must be used correctly.
- The following slides will explain these parameters with examples to help you understand the concept.

Handshape

- This refers to the hand configuration which is used in beginning any word production in American Sign Language (ASL).
- If you're familiar with ASL Alphabet, you'll notice that every word begins with one of at least forty handshapes found in the manual alphabet.
- The handshape difference between me and mine is simple to identify, yet, ASL students often confuse the two.
- Common handshape errors include the differences between the number 1 and D, D and F, & E and O
- Here are just a three examples of handshapes:
 - the 'c' as in class
 - the open 'a' as in behind
 - the bent 'v' as in squirrel.
- Signs in the same location but different handshape:
 - Restaurant
 - Arizona
 - Twin



I am Rita

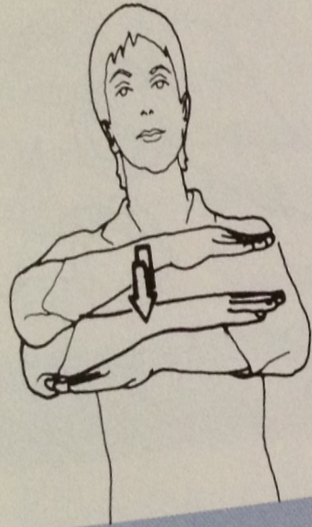
My Rita

Handshape

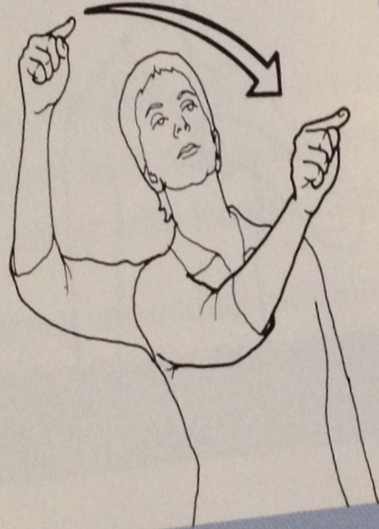
Example

Palm Orientation

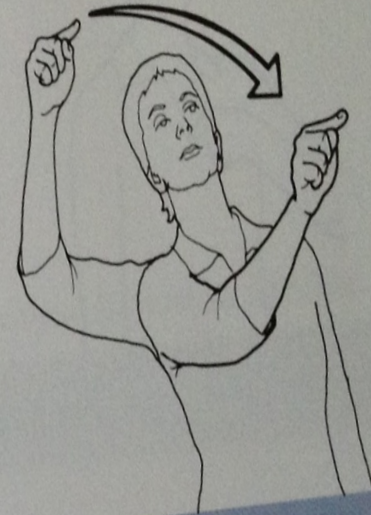
- This refers to the direction in which the hand is turned to produce a sign.
- Palm orientation is the direction of your palm which may include
 - palm up
 - palm down
 - palm right
 - palm left
 - palm outward (away from you)
 - palm inward (palm facing you).
- 3 Signs that change with palm orientation:
 - School
 - Stop
 - Proof



The table is over there.



(?) over there.

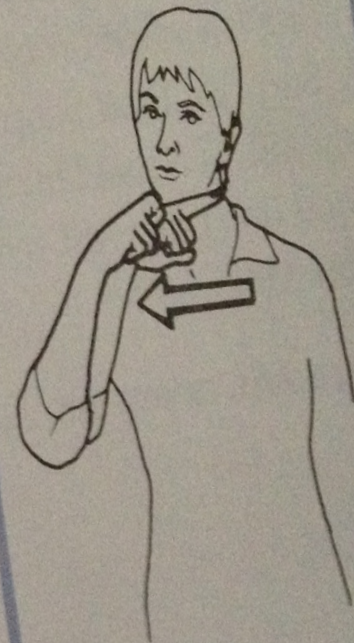
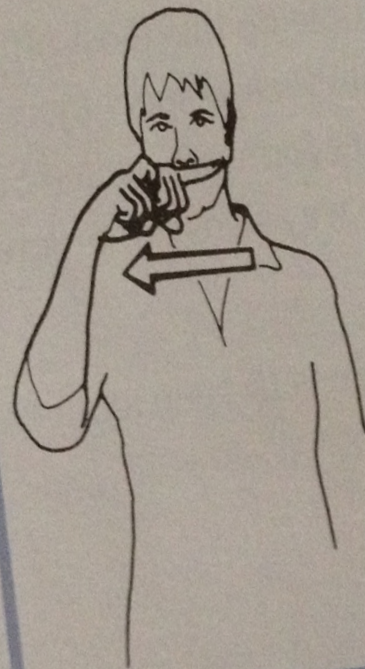
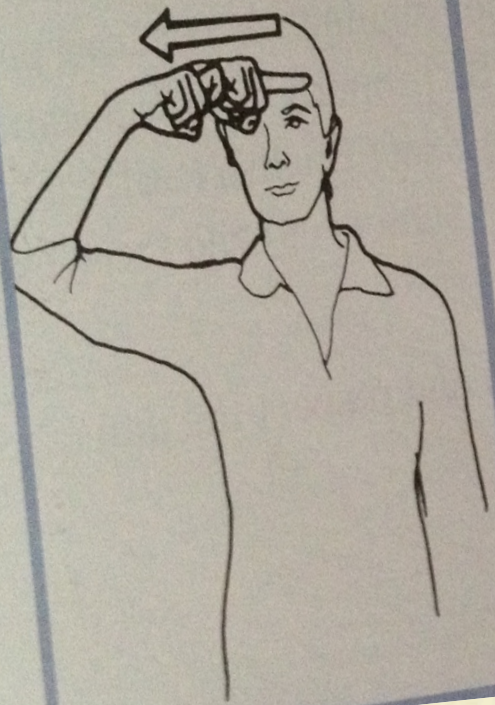


Palm Orientation

Example

Location

- This refers to the physical parameters or bodily location where the sign are produced.
- The general physical parameters (signing space) for sign language production are approximately four inches above the head, elbow room as with hands on waist, and about four inches below the belly button or belt buckle.
- 3 Signs that Change meaning when changing location:
 - Summer
 - To be Ugly
 - Dry

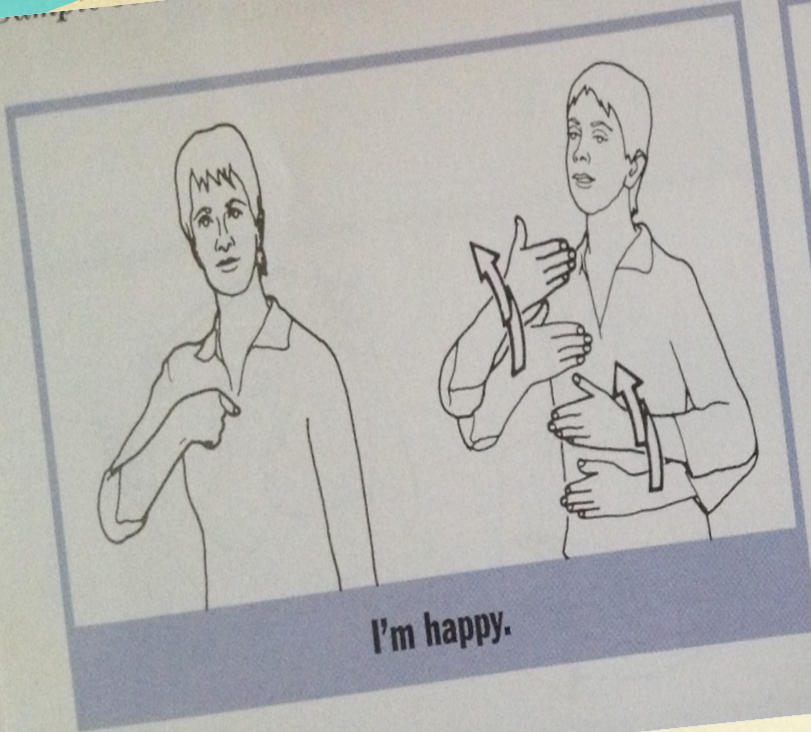


Location

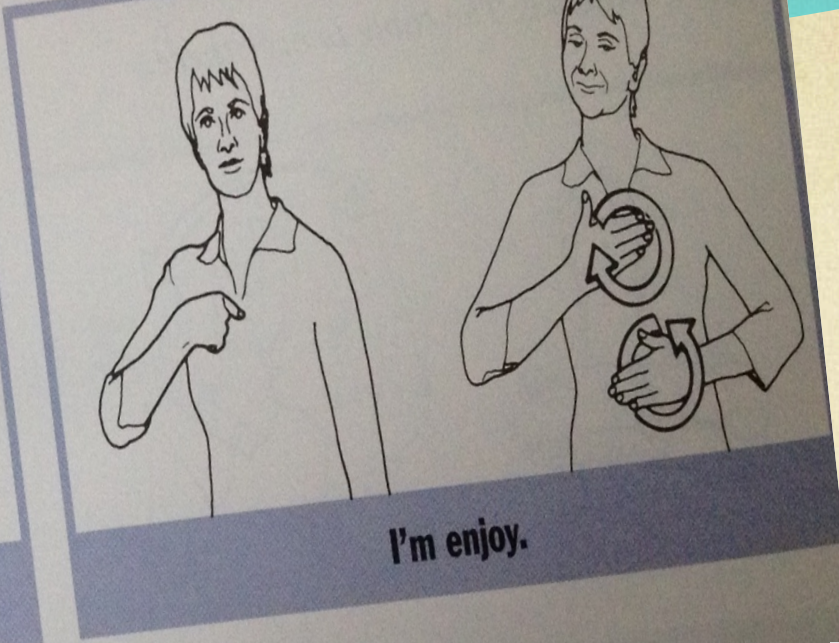
Summer, To Be Ugly, Dry

Movement

- This refers to the changing of the location of the hands within the set physical parameters during sign production.
- For example, a sign may be moving away from you or towards you to indicate a directional verb such as 'I give you the book' or 'She gives him a pencil'.
- Movement also refers to the frequency of an action.
- Movement affects meaning.
- 3 Examples of how Movement changes meaning:
 - Stop
 - Some
 - Reject



I'm happy.



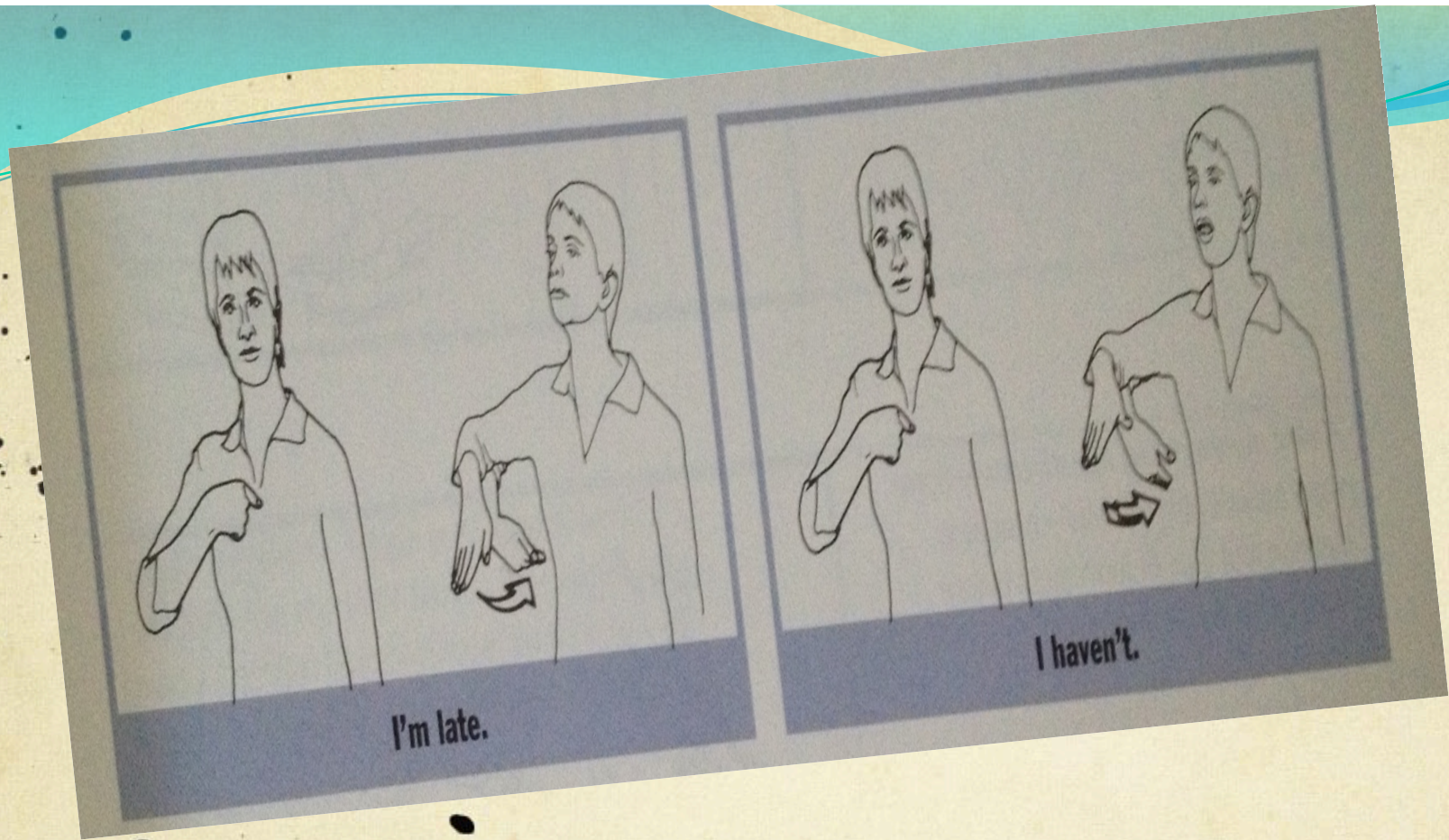
I'm enjoy.

Movement

Example

Non-Manual Markers/Signals

- Referred to as NMM or NMS, are signals or gestures done without the use of the hands and mostly from the shoulders, head, and face to relay a message.
- Specific NMM or NMS alter the meaning of a sign.
- Facial Expressions fall under the category of NMM/NMS
- Head nods, shakes, eyebrows, nose, eyes, and lips carry meaning that can be attached to a sign.



NMM/NMS

Example