Multi –Channel Signs in BSL – part 1

Multi-Channel signs are part of the BSL language and most of these signs have no English lip-patterns as they represent a concept rather than a word. The lip-patterns are not like English words but rather lip-patterns that are particular to BSL. Not all multi-channel signs have lip-patterns and sometimes are accompanied by facial expressions. Multi-channel signs has another name – Polysyntactic (Poly = many syntactic = meanings)

Not comprehending – don't know or don't understand what it is about, over the head	Know nothing / haven't got a clue / no idea / have no knowledge of the subject

- We all watched a signed video and we could not understand any of it!
- My friend talked to me about physiology and I had no idea what it was about!

Try and see, See what happens See what it is all about. Give it a go	Oh really, I don't believe that! Come off it! You are kidding You are having me on!

- I wanted a pay rise so I thought I would ask the manager.
- My friend told me a strange story and I did not believe any of it.

Fantastic, brilliant, outstanding, excellent, unusual	Nothing for a long time – not for ages

- I went to see a show last week and it was fantastic.
- I haven't seen you for such a long time.

Bear with it / put up with it	Definite / for certain

- I hate food shopping but I have to do it.
- From now on I will certainly do internet food shopping

At last, finally, eventually	Disappear into the distance / Speeding off / sped towards

- At last the bus arrived
- I got up and sped to the door

Multi –Channel Signs in BSL – part 2

Innocent / butter wouldn't melt	Butter up / persuade / butter up to

- I never get into trouble, I am innocent.
- I tried to persuade my manager for a wage increase.

Knocked me for six	Can't be bothered

- Last month I was so ill that it knocked me for six.
- I just can't be bothered to go to the doctor.

Obsession	Not yet

- My obsession is buying shoes.
- The bus still hasn't arrived yet.

Learning and taking it all in / absorbing the knowledge	The penny has dropped / realise the meaning

- Surprisingly I am learning BSL and taking it all in quite easily.
- Sometimes I don't get the meaning, and then the penny drops.

Nervous	Is that all?

- I was so nervous of doing my NVQ course
- Is that all there is to the portfolio?

Favourite / Apple of my eye	Take my time / laid back

- When I was a child, my grandfather was the apple of my eye.
- But he was so laid back.

Multi –Channel Signs in BSL – part 3

Beat about the bush	Had it up to here / really fed up

- My aunt would always beat about the bush.
- My uncle would get really fed up with it!

Tell tales	Suspicious / superstitious

- He was always telling tales.
- She would get very suspicious of him.

Gain / have knowledge / very intelligent	Flabbergasted / gobsmacked

- My mother gained a lot of knowledge quite easily.
- My father was gobsmacked.

Backed to the wall	Panic – can't get out of this one

- The team were losing and had their backs to the wall.
- They started to panic and did not know what to do.

Cleared plate of food	Delicious / Mouth watering

- I was so hungry I cleared the pate of food quickly.
- The food was delicious I wanted more.

There isn't any, haven't got any	Surprised / Amazed / I see

- There isn't any food left.
- Well I am amazed by that!

Multi –Channel Signs in BSL – part 4

Cleared of …..	Could wring his/her neck!

- He ate all the food cleared the table of it!
- Well I could wring his neck!.

Have a go at someone	Feeling small

- She had a go at him.
- Now he is feeling small and guilty.

Delay	Put off constantly / delay repeatedly

- The train was delayed so I will be late for work.
- I am always putting off my work because I hate it.

Determined / Stubborn	Don’t care

- I am determined to finish the course.
- I don’t care if you don’t finish it.

Empty-headed / Mind blank	Pretend to understand

- I just can’t recall your name, my mind has gone blank!
- I pretended to understand him but he is foreign.

Don’t mind	Enthusiastic / Really interested

- I don’t mind if you want to go out.
- She was really enthusiastic about going to the theatre.

Multi –Channel Signs in BSL – part 5

Tempting – tempted	Gives me the creeps

- He was tempting me for a date.
- He gave me the creeps.

Risky / precious / very valuable	That will do, that will be fine, acceptable

- I can't accept that it is too risky.
- That cheap one there will do me.

That's how it works / that's why	The problem is / unfortunately

- Now I get it, that's how it works.
- I need to get to work but unfortunately my car has broken down.

Way off track	That's rubbish!

- The lecture went way off track.
- The lecturer was talking rubbish.

Exaggerate / Make up	Withdrawn / nothing to do with me

- His stories are always exaggerated.
- I do have anything to do with it!

Empty (container)	Disappeared / gone

- The coffee jar was empty.
- All the people had disappeared.

Multi –Channel Signs in BSL – part 6

Mocked you, mocked me, falsely	Defensive

- He mocked me so much.
- I then become defensive.

Good skills	Ignorant

- My signing skills were so good.
- But she was ignorant.

Interrupted by	Ignore / take no notice

- Watching my favourite TV program when my best friend called at the door.
- I let him in but I ignored him and watched the program.

Bored stiff	Objection, object to

- The meeting went on and on I was bored stiff.
- There were so many objections I had it up to here!

Tired out / worn out	Swallow my pride

- I had been working all day I was so tired out.
- I thought I understood the signed video but I didn't so I swallowed my pride.

*There are many multi-channel signs in usage. Always be careful with the meanings of these as they are often not what it may seem. Remember MCs can have more than one meaning so it depends on the usage and situation at the time.