Translation of DEPICTING SIGNS from the Linguistics of Auslan series, which is located at
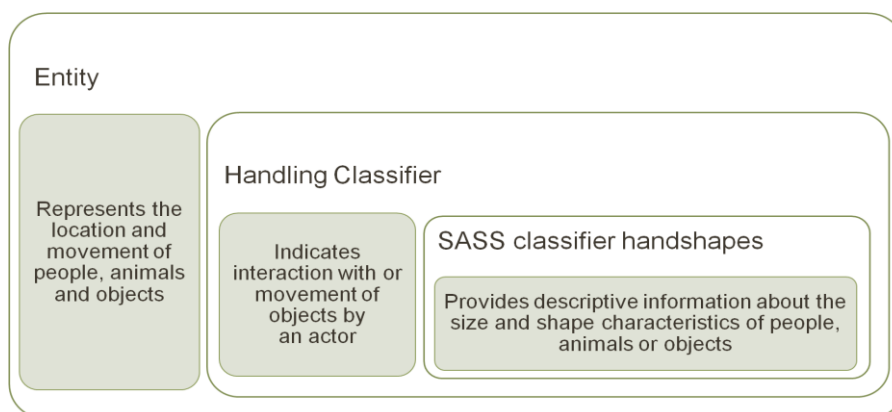http://www.deafconnected.com.au/linguistics-of-auslan/

DEPICTING SIGNS

Depicting Signs (usually abbreviated to D-S when signing) have four main linguistic elements:

1. *Handshape* – a 1-handshape in an upright position might represent a person while a flat handshape with the palm facing down might represent a car.

2. *Orientation* – refers to the direction of the palm and fingers in relations to the signer's body (left, right, up, down, towards or away from the signer). For instance, a 1-handshape with the palm facing away from the signer represents the front of a person, with the back of the finger as the person's back. Similarly, with a flat handshape and the palm facing down, the tips of the fingers may be used to represent the front of a car.

3. *Location* – the positioning of a person or object in the signing space, which can also show movement from one position to another; such as a person walking from location A to location B. It can also include information about the route taken in going from A to B.

4. *Movement* – depicting the movement of a person or object. For example, a 1-handshape could represent a person jumping (by using an up/down movement) or walking (by using a smoother forward movement).

Depicting Signs can fall into three categories:

1. *Motion and Location/entity:* An entity handshape can be used to represent people or objects. For example, the 1-handshape could represent a person, a flat palm facing down becomes a motor vehicle, or 1-handshape with palm facing down could depict an animal.

   These entities may also depict various forms of movement through signing action; for example, travelling by car on holiday and the road might be smooth, bumpy, hilly or winding; and you might be speeding or cruising slowly.

2. *Handling:* depiction of how a person or an animal holds and transfers an item. For example, a person holding a hammer with a clenched fist and movement to show the action of hammering a nail, the shape of the hand around a coffee cup and bringing it to the mouth, or lifting a heavy item such as a heavy box to move to another location.

3. *Size and Shape Specifiers (SASS):* these are handshapes used to describe the referent by outlining its shape and size, these vary according to the shape of the object; for example, the outline of a window frame, or the shape of a large vase compared to the outline of a much smaller vase.