The Auslan System
Tuition System User Manual

Preface:

This manual explains how to use the Auslan Tuition System. The software referred to in this manual, the "Auslan Tuition System", is designed to work in conjunction with the sign creation software, "Auslan Sign Editor". The tuition system software is the front-end display and shows the signs that were created in the sign editor. The "Auslan System" will be used to describe both the tutorial program and sign editor collectively.

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Chapter 0: Installing the Auslan Tuition System

To install the Auslan Tuition System, simply unzip the "AuslanSystem.zip" file to an appropriate location. To do this, simply double click on the icon of the file. You will need to have *Winzip* or some other un-compression software installed on your system.

Once unzipped, there should be two directories. One contains the Auslan Tuition System and the other contains the Auslan Sign Editor. Within the tuition system directory, there should be several other folders. These contains the necessary files for the sign editor to run:

- *FingerSpelling*: This folder contains a copy of the files used for fingerspelling in the Auslan Tuition System.
- *Images*: This folder contains images used in the tuition system. Do not modify any of the files in this directory as it may break the program
- *Model*: This folder contains the information needed for the avatar. Do not modify any of the files in this directory as it may break the program.
- *Numbers*: This folder contains a copy of the files needed for signing numbers used in the Auslan Tuition System.
- *Signs*: This folder contains sign files that were created from the Sign Editor. These sign files are used in the Auslan Tuition System.

Chapter 1: Getting Started with the Auslan Tuition System

Once you have successfully installed the Auslan System, double click on the "AuslanTuitionSystem.exe" icon to start the program.

1.1 Start-up window

When the tuition system is started, the user is presented with a *start-up window* (as shown in Figure 1.1.1). This start-up window acts as the main menu for the tuition system.
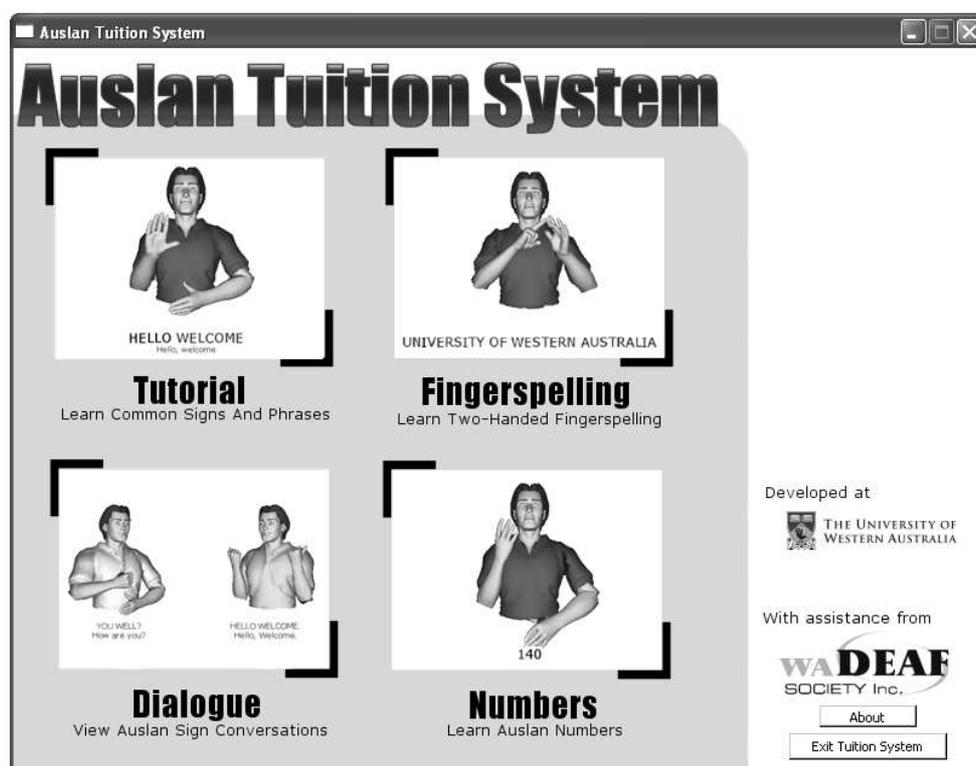
Figure 1.1.1: The *start-up window* – the main menu for the tuition system.

Using the start-up window, there are several options:

a. *Tutorial Mode*: This mode is where Auslan phrases are shown, giving opportunities for the user to learn them. See Chapter 2 for more details.

b. *Fingerspelling Mode*: This mode is where user entered words are finger spelled. This mode is for learning fingerspelling. See Chapter 3 for more details.

c. *Dialogue Mode*: This mode has two avatars signing dialogue together. This mode is for learning how phrases are used in conversation. See Chapter 4 for more details.

d. *Numbers Mode*: This mode is for the signing of numbers. This is where the user can learn how to sign numbers. See Chapter 5 for more details.

e. *About*: This simply displays some useful information of the tuition system.

f. *Exit Tuition System*: This will quit and close down the tuition system program.

Chapter 2: The Tutorial Mode

The tutorial mode is the main and most important mode where the user is shown some Auslan phrases. The Auslan phrases are separated into several categories. Figure 2.0.1 shows the initial window at the beginning of the tutorial mode. Navigation through the categories is handled by the three buttons on the blue panel.
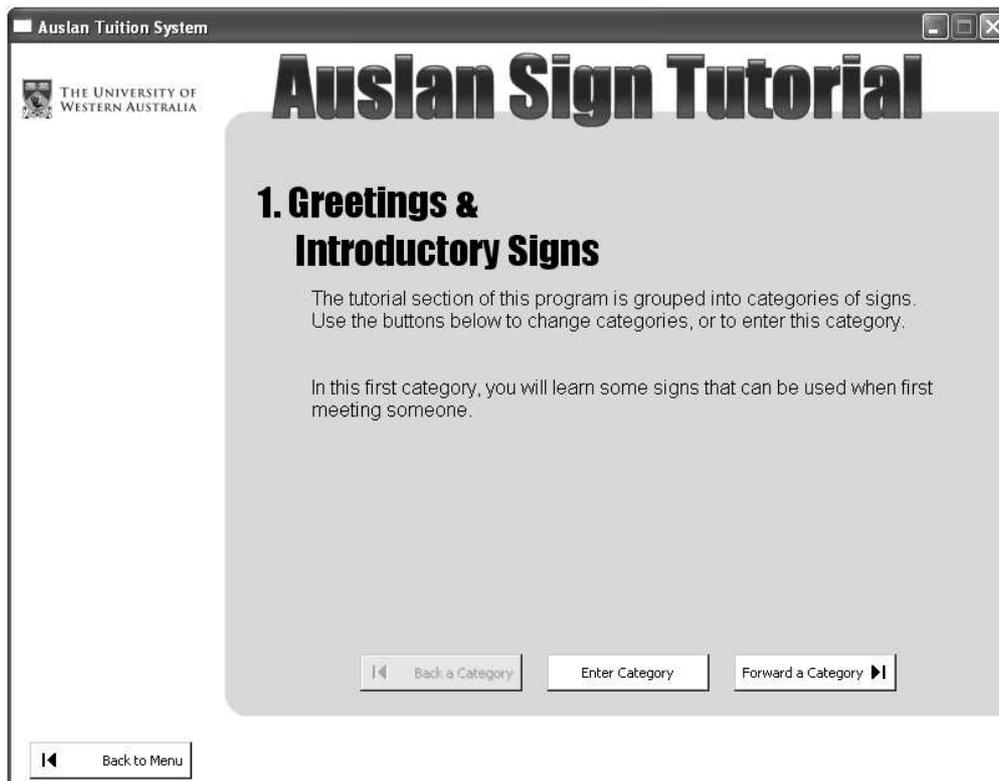
Figure 2.0.1: The initial window just after entering the tutorial mode.

The categories available include:
  a. *Greetings & Introductory Signs*: This category contains some signs that can be used when first meeting someone.
  b. *Family*: This category contains signs relating to family members.
  c. *Conversation*: This category contains some signs that are used in day to day conversation.
  d. *Emotions*: This category contains some signs to express personal feelings.
  e. *Food*: This category contains signs relating to food.
  f. *Questions*: This category contains signs of some common simple questions.

2.1 Running the tutorial

Once a category has been entered, the tutorial will now move to the main *tutorial window* shown in Figure 2.1.1. This is where the signing takes place.
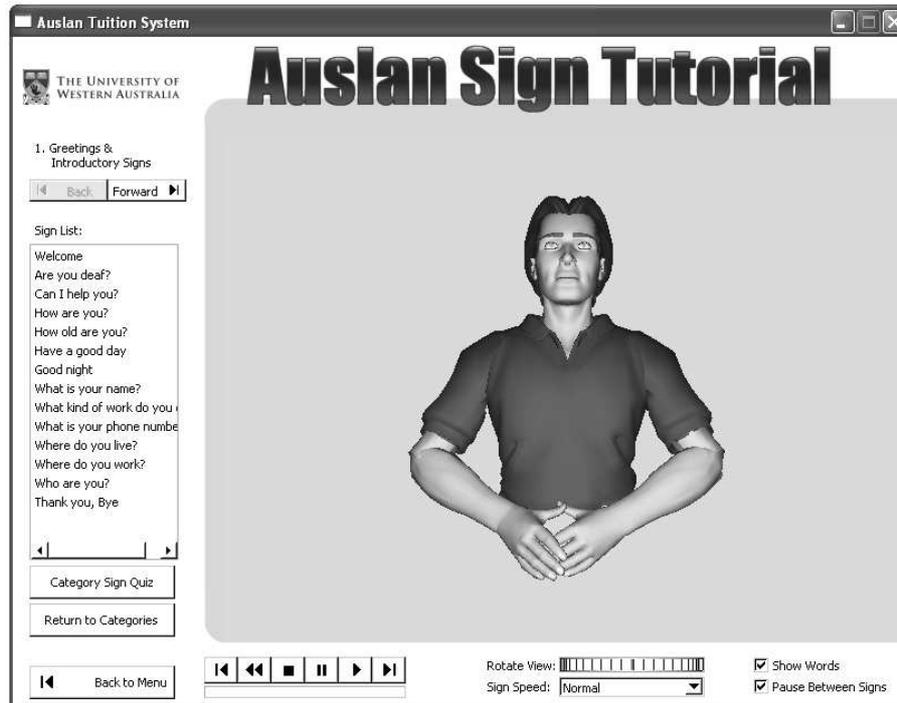
Figure 2.1.1: The main *tutorial window*.

1. The Left Side Panel
The panel on the left side of the window contains the main controls as shown in Figure 2.1.2. The top two buttons, *Back* and *Forward*, are used to move from one category to the next. The *Sign List* is the phrases currently available in the category. Clicking on any of these in the *Sign List* will start the avatar signing that particular phrase.

Figure 2.1.2: The left side panel of the Tutorial Mode Window.

The *Category Sign Quiz* button will start a short test on the phrases in the category. This quiz is a good way to make sure the user can recognise the signs. See Section 2.2 for more details.

The *Return to Categories* button will take the tutorial back to the category selection window (Figure 2.0.1). The *Back to Menu* button however, will take the tutorial back to the mode selection start-up window (Figure 1.1.1).

2. The Play Control Panel
The panel for controlling the playing of the sign phrase animation (Figure 2.1.3) is located at the bottom of the tutorial window. The panel consists of several buttons and a slider bar. The slider bar gives an indication on the progression of a sign phrase. In Figure 2.1.3, the slider bar shows that the animation of the phrase is just over half way.

Figure 2.1.3: The *Play Control Panel* used in the tuition system.

The buttons on the *Play Control Panel* (from left to right) have the following effects:

- ◂◂ : Moves the animation back a frame. Works best when the animation is stopped or paused.
- ◂◂ : Rewinds the animation to the beginning.
- ■ : Stops the animation.
- ▮▮ : Pauses the animation.
- ▸ : Plays the animation.
- ▸▮ : Moves the animation forward a frame. Works best when the animation is stopped or paused.

3. The Options Panel
The *Options Panel* (Figure 2.1.4) is the bottom right panel that sets some of the features of the tutorial.

Figure 2.1.4: The *Options Panel* controlling some of the features in the tutorial.

There are several useful features in the tutorial that is controlled by this panel:
a. *Rotate View*: This feature rotates the avatar around so the animation can be viewed from different angles. Simply clicking on the rotational dial and turning it will rotate the avatar.
b. *Sign Speed*: The speed can be set to be *Slow*, *Normal*, or *Fast*. The different speeds are accessed through the drop down box.

c. *Show Words*: This option will toggle on/off the display of words during the sign animation. It is good to leave this option on when initially learning the phrase.

d. *Pause Between Signs*: This option will toggle on/off the pauses between words in a phrase. It is good to leave this option on when learning the phrase.

2.2 The Category Quiz

In each category, there is the option of taking a short quiz. These quizzes are a good way of evaluating and practicing the sign phrases learnt in that category. When a quiz is started, the tutorial window will move to the *quiz window* as shown in Figure 2.2.1.
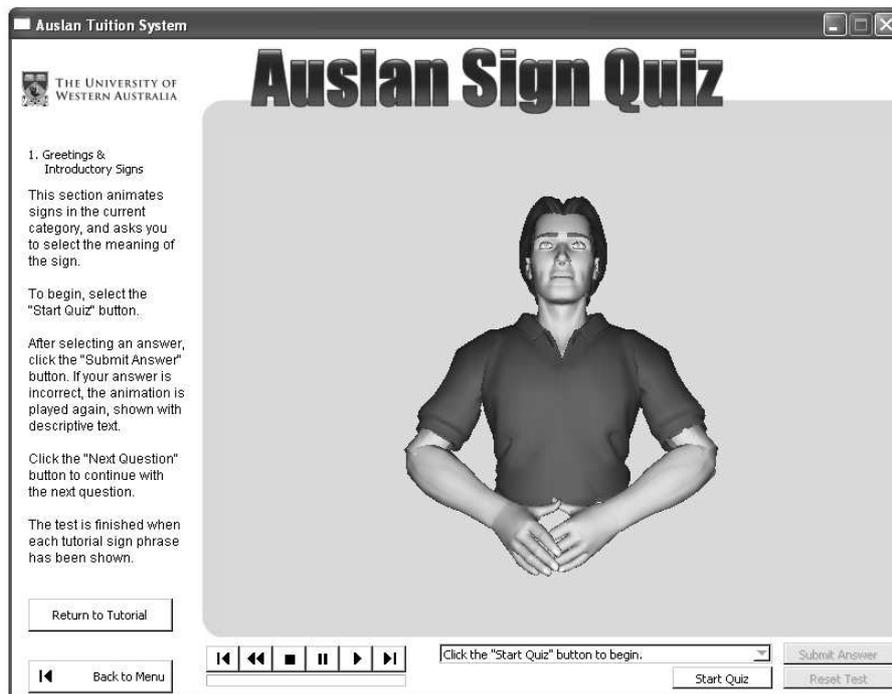
Figure 2.2.1: The *quiz window* in the tutorial mode.

The left side panel now becomes a brief explanation of the quiz and how it works. There is also the *Return to Tutorial* button that takes the tuition system back to the tutorial. The *Back to Menu* button takes the tuition system back the start-up window for selecting modes.

The *Play Control Panel* remains unchanged from the tutorial mode. See Section 2.1.2 for more details on controlling the sign animation.

The *Options Panel* is now replaced with the *Quiz Panel* in the bottom right corner of the quiz window as shown in Figure 2.2.1. Once the quiz is starting via the *Start Quiz* button, the *Quiz Panel* will change slightly as shown in Figure 2.2.2.

Figure 2.2.2: The *Quiz Panel* once the quiz is started.

Quiz Questions

The essence of the quiz is simply to match up the right phrase animation with the right sign description. Each time a quiz is started, the phrases in the category are randomly ordered. This means that each quiz is different.

The sequence of the quiz is as follows:
1. A phrase is signed by the avatar.
2. Select the correct phrase description from the drop down list.
3. Submit the answer via the *Submit Answer* button.
4. The answer is checked. (If incorrect, the correct answer will be shown)
5. Proceed with the quiz by clicking the *Next Question* button.
6. Continue answering questions until completed.

The quiz keeps track of the number of correct answers which is displayed below the drop down list. The quiz can be reset or restarted by clicking on the *Reset Test* button.

Chapter 3: The Fingerspelling Mode

The fingerspelling mode is where the user learns how to fingerspell. Since it is unreasonable to have signs for every word, Auslan users may resort to fingerspelling. Fingerspelling simply involves knowing the 26 letters of the alphabet and stringing them together to form words.

The *fingerspelling window* is shown in Figure 3.0.1. This is where the fingerspelling is demonstrated by the avatar.

Figure 3.0.1: The *fingerspelling window* in the tuition system.

Note that there are many similar features to the tutorial mode. On the left side, there is a brief description of fingerspelling and using the fingerspelling mode. The main mode selection start-up window can be accessed through the *Back to Menu* button in the bottom left corner.

The *Play Control Panel* is identical as the one used in the tutorial mode. Refer to Section 2.1.2 for more details on controlling the fingerspelling animation.

The *Fingerspelling Panel* is located in the bottom left corner of the window. A closer view is shown in Figure 3.0.2. This panel also contains features that are similar to that in the tutorial mode:

a. *Text to Sign*: The text box where the word/s is set for the avatar to fingerspell.
b. *Rotate View*: There is a rotation dial to control the rotation of the avatar to allow for more meaningful viewing angles.
c. *Sign Speed*: The signing speed can be selected to be *Slow*, *Normal*, or *Fast* from the drop down list.
d. *Pause Between Signs*: The feature of adding pauses in between the fingerspelling signs can be toggled on/off.
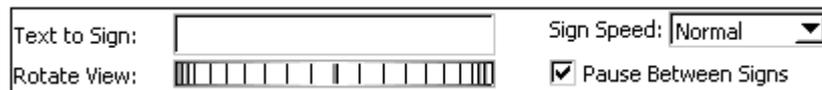
Figure 3.0.2: The *Fingerspelling Panel* of the fingerspelling mode.

The most important feature in the *Fingerspelling Panel* is the *Text to Sign* text box. To start fingerspelling, simply type a word or words into the text box and press the keyboard "Enter" key or click on the *Play* button on the *Play Control Panel*.

Note that any character that is not in the alphabet is not registered in the text box.

Chapter 4: The Dialogue Mode

The dialogue mode involves demonstrating Auslan dialogue between two avatars. The user is given a sense of how several phrases are linked to form a conversation. The *dialogue window* is in Figure 4.0.1.
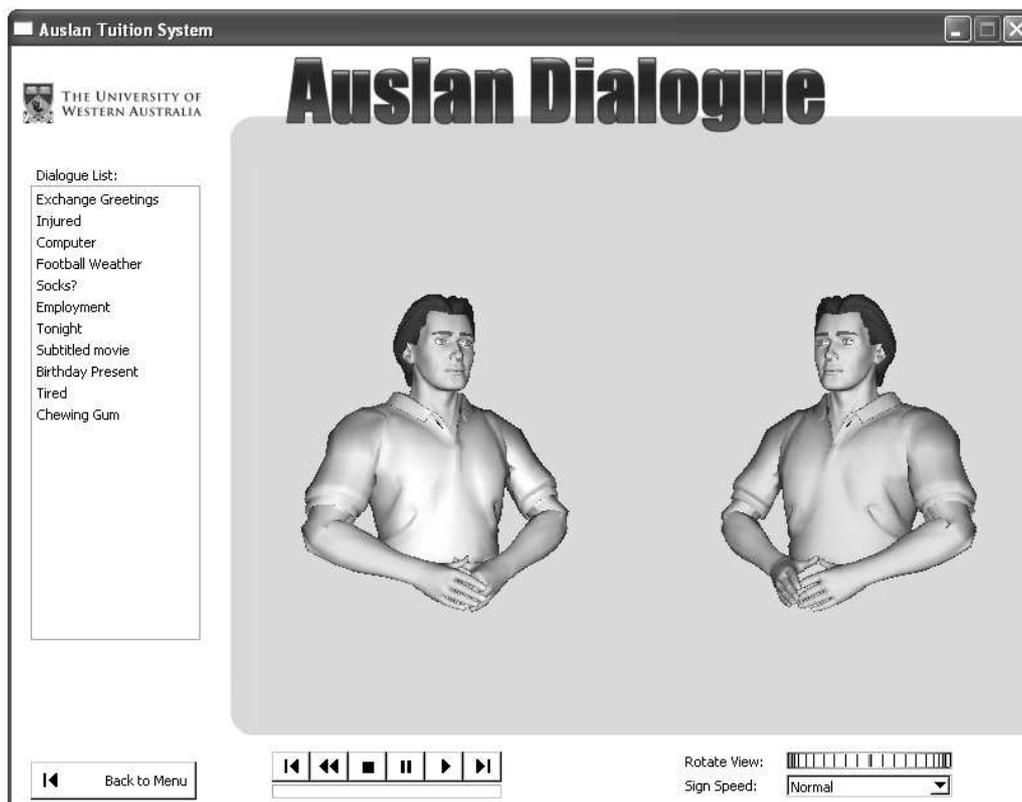
Figure 4.0.1: The *dialogue window* in the tuition system.

The left side panel contains a *Dialogue List* and a *Back to Menu* button similar to that in the tutorial mode. Different topics of dialogue are selected from the *Dialogue List* by clicking on the topic. When finished with the dialogue mode, the tuition system can be taken back to the start-up window via the *Back to Menu* button.

The *Play Control Panel* is identical to that used in the tutorial and fingerspelling modes. Refer to Section 2.1.2 for more details on controlling the dialogue animation.

The *Dialogue Panel* in the bottom right corner simply contains the options to *Rotate View* and selecting the *Sign Speed*. Clicking on and rotating the dial will rotate both the avatars and the signing speed can be *Slow*, *Normal*, or *Fast*.

Chapter 5: The Numbers Mode

The numbers mode is where the syntax of Auslan numbering is demonstrated by the avatar. The user is taught how to sign numbers. The *numbers window* is shown in Figure 5.0.1.
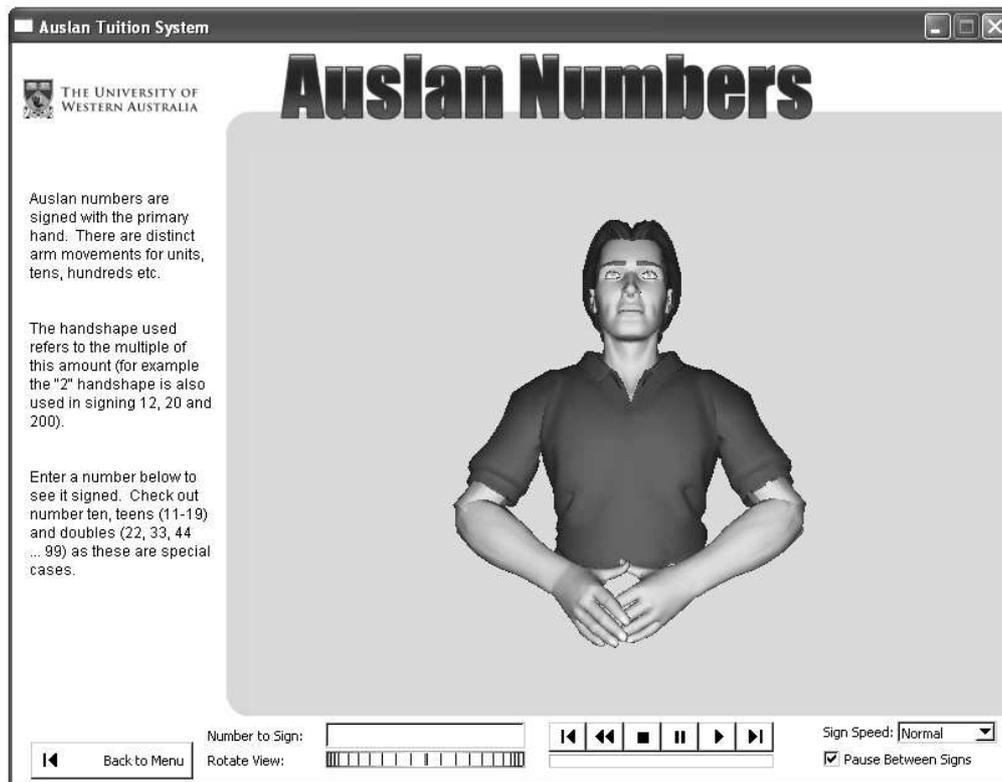
Figure 5.0.1: The *numbers window* in the tuition system.

The left side panel of the numbers window provides a brief introduction and explanation of how numbers are signed in Auslan. The option to return to the start-up window of the tuition system is accessed through the *Back to Menu* button.

Once again, the *Play Control Panel* is identical to the tutorial, fingerspelling, and dialogue mode. Refer to Section 2.1.2 for more details on controlling the numbers animation.

Other features that are available in the numbers mode include:
   a. *Numbers to Sign*: Text box for setting the number to sign.
   b. *Rotate View*: A rotation dial that controls the viewing angle of the avatar.
   c. *Sign Speed*: The speed of the signing can be set to *Slow*, *Normal*, or *Fast*.
   d. *Pause Between Signs*: Pauses between each sign can be toggled on/off.

The most important feature of the numbers mode is the *Numbers to Sign* text box. This box allows for the user to type in a number for the avatar to sign. Note that only numbers up to 9999 are available. Also, the text box will not register any character that is non numerical.