SIGN LANGUAGES

What are the unique characteristics of sign languages that make them so fascinating? What have recent researchers discovered about them, and what do these findings tell us about human language more generally? This thematic and geographic overview examines more than forty sign languages from around the world. It begins by investigating how sign languages have survived and been transmitted for generations, and then goes on to analyze the common characteristics shared by most sign languages: for example, how the use of the visual (rather than the auditory) system affects grammatical structures. The final section describes the phenomena of language variation and change. Drawing on a wide range of examples, the book explores sign languages both old and young, from British, Italian, Asian and American to Israeli, Al-Sayyid Bedouin, African and Nicaraguan. Written in a clear, readable style, it is the essential reference for students and scholars working in sign language studies and Deaf studies, as well as an indispensable guide for researchers in general linguistics.

Diane Brentari is Professor of Linguistics and Director of the ASL Program at Purdue University. She is the author of A Prosodic Model of Sign Language Phonology (1998) and has published widely in the area of sign language phonology and morphology. Her current research involves the crosslinguistic analyses of sign languages.
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## SIGN LANGUAGE ABBREVIATIONS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Language</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSL</td>
<td>Al-Sayyid Bedouin Sign Language</td>
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<td>AdaSL</td>
<td>Adamorobe Sign Language</td>
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<td>ArSL</td>
<td>pan-Arab Sign Language</td>
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<td>ASL</td>
<td>American Sign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Auslan</td>
<td>Australian Sign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>BANZSL</td>
<td>British, Australian and New Zealand Sign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>BSL</td>
<td>British Sign Language</td>
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<td>CSL</td>
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<td>LIS-SI</td>
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<td>LIU</td>
<td>Jordanian Sign Language</td>
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<td>LSA</td>
<td>Argentinian Sign Language</td>
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xix
List of sign language abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Language</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSB</td>
<td>Brazilian Sign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSC</td>
<td>Catalan Sign Language</td>
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<td>LSE</td>
<td>Spanish Sign Language</td>
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<td>LSF</td>
<td>French Sign Language</td>
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<td>LSF-SR</td>
<td>Swiss French Sign Language</td>
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<td>LSL</td>
<td>Libyan Sign Language</td>
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<td>New Zealand Sign Language</td>
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<td>ÖGS</td>
<td>Austrian Sign Language</td>
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<td>Polish Sign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSL</td>
<td>Palestinian Sign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLN, NGT</td>
<td>Dutch Sign Language; Sign Language of the Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Swedish Sign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>TSL</td>
<td>Taiwan Sign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>UGL</td>
<td>Ugandan Sign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>VSL</td>
<td>Venezuelan Sign Language</td>
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</table>
NOTATIONAL CONVENTIONS

Upper case letters: e.g., ‘FATHER.’ Glosses of lexical signs

Lower case letters with underline between words: e.g., ‘rocket_lands_on,’ Glosses of material in a classifier construction articulated by a single form.

Subscripted letters: e.g., ‘rocket_lands_on,’ The subscript indicates spatial loci.

Subscripted numbers: e.g., GIVE3. The subscript indicates verb agreement.

Carat symbol ‘^’: e.g., BLACK^NAME ‘bad reputation.’ This indicates a compound.

Annotated line above a signed gloss: e.g., ‘MOTHER.’ This indicates a simultaneously articulated nonmanual property.

Underlined letter(s): e.g., CAFETERIA; VIDEO_TAPE. The underlining indicates elements of a sign that are derived from the manual alphabet.