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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This series offers general accounts of the major language families of the world, with volumes organized either on a purely genetic basis or on a geographical basis, whichever yields the most convenient and intelligible grouping in each case. Each volume compares and contrasts the typological features of the languages it deals with. It also treats the relevant genetic relationships, historical development and sociolinguistic issues arising from their role and use in the world today. The books are intended for linguists from undergraduate level upwards, but no special knowledge of the languages under consideration is assumed. Volumes such as those on Australia and the Amazon Basin are also of wider relevance, as the future of the languages and their speakers raises important social and political issues.

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SIGN LANGUAGES

edited by
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<td>ABSL</td>
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<td>LSB</td>
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<td>SLN, NGT</td>
<td>Dutch Sign Language; Sign Language of the Netherlands</td>
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NOTATIONAL CONVENTIONS

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

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

**Subscripted letters:** e.g., ‘rocket_lands_oni,’ 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.