

American Sign Language

Shawn Abrahamson

Overview

- ASL is a natural language
- ASL is a visual-spatial language
- ASL is a contact language
- ASL is a language of the deaf
- ASL is a language of the hearing

Morphological Differences

Compare some English morphemes

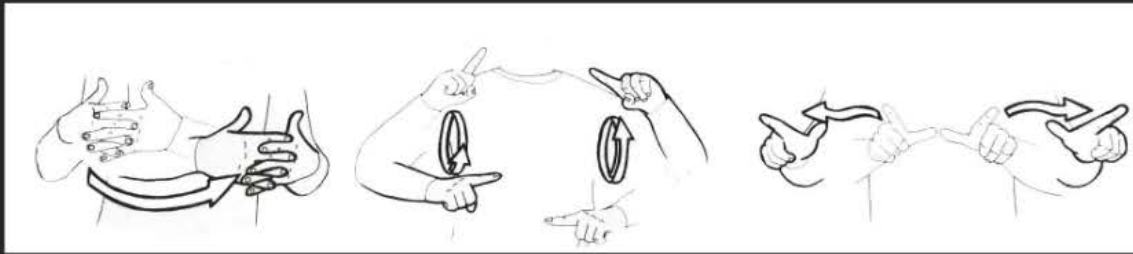
How is ASL different from English?

Syntax

- ASL syntax is a subject-verb-object language
- Plurals
- ASL can be reduced with non-manual signals

Example: six students accompanied in a variety of ways

Handsigns



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History

Overview

- How is ASL different from English?
- Differences in Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax
- Corpus Information
- Utterances
- Gloss
- Galia
- Research in Morphology

How is ASL different from English?

- Sign-language phonemes fulfill same role as phonemes in oral languages
- Not based on sound
- Spatial in addition to being temporal
- Body movement and manual communication

Oral

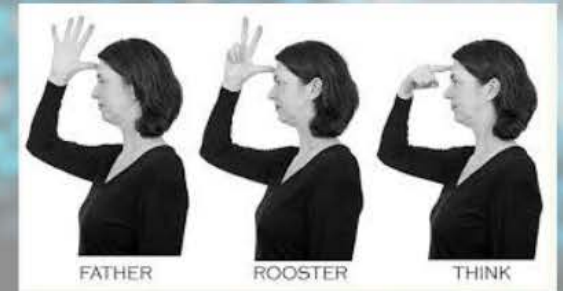


Visual



Phonology?

- Meaningless linguistic elements and how they pattern
- Much like how spoken language consist of syllables and smaller units of a word that are meaningless, signed language shares similar organization with these components:



Handshape
Orientation
Movement
Location
and Non-manual
markers

Morphological Differences

- Largely iconic

Example: Reduplication

chair



Baby Sign Language.com

2x



sit



Baby Sign Language.com



Syntax

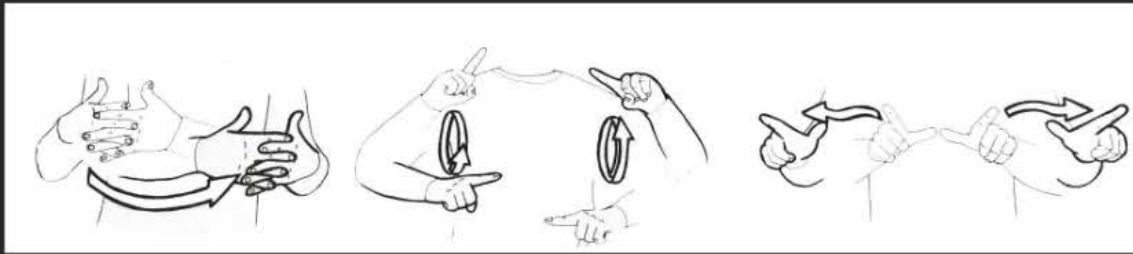
- ASL syntax is a subject-verb-object language
- Flexible
- Order can be indicated with non-manual signals

Example: -wh questions constructed in a variety of ways

whq (non-manual whq-marker)

LOVE JOHN WHO

'Who loves John?'



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- American Sign Language (ASL)
- ASL is a visual-gestural language, not a spoken language
- ASL is a natural language
- ASL is a language of the deaf
- ASL is a language of the hearing impaired

Morphological Differences

Compare some English morphemes

How is ASL different from English?

- ASL is a visual-gestural language, not a spoken language
- ASL is a natural language
- ASL is a language of the deaf
- ASL is a language of the hearing impaired

Syntax

- ASL syntax is a subject-verb-object language
- Plurals
- "Can" can be indicated with non-manual signals

Example: with plurals constructed in a variety of ways

Handsigns

- ASL uses hand signs to represent words and phrases
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