American Sign Language

Shawn Abrahamson
American Sign Language

Shawn Abrahamson
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
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

sit
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?'