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WENDY SANDLER & DIANE LILLO-MARTIN, *Sign language and linguistic universals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. xxi, 547. Pb \$45.00.

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Sign language and linguistic universals surveys the linguistic structure of signed languages, both in relation to spoken languages and in terms of their unique properties. As the authors state in their preface, this book is intended to be accessible to linguists with little knowledge about signed languages. However, specialists in signed language linguistics will also find this guide to be a useful reference.

Unit 1 outlines the theoretical framework for the authors' investigation. Among those of other researchers, the contributions of William Stokoe – the English professor who arrived at Gallaudet College (now University) in the 1950s and began the first-ever linguistic analysis of a signed language – are recounted here and throughout the rest of the book. While Stokoe's structuralist framework has been superseded by generative linguistics theory, his identification of the phonemic parameters of hand configuration, location, and movement continues to inform present research. Importantly, the authors' application of generative theory to signed language linguistics offers evidence for both the underlying similarities between signed and spoken languages and gaps in general linguistic theory that fail to account adequately for certain processes and structures within signed languages, such as classifier construction.

Unit 2 discusses the morphology of signed languages. As the authors note, while all such languages are iconic at their base, they follow universal constraints on morphological organization and structure. For instance, both the inflectional and derivational morphology of signed languages is largely templatic, or follows an abstract prosodical form. The chapters dealing with classifier constructions and lexicalization provide further evidence for the complexity of signed language morphology.

Unit 3, dealing with phonology, offers proof that sound is not inherent to phonological organization for languages in general. Instead, the authors argue for the following definition of phonology: "the level of linguistic structure that organizes the medium through which language is transmitted" (p. 114). Each of the phonological categories of hand configuration, location, and movement is discussed in detail, in light of Wendy Sandler's Hand Tier model for analyzing the internal structure of signs. As in the units regarding morphology and syntax, the existence of sequential structures in signed language phonology – which Stokoe assumed to be strictly simultaneous – is brought to light. Chapters regarding syllables and prosody in signed languages round out this unit.

Unit 4, about syntax, examines clausal and more extended sentence structure in signed languages. This section also discusses aspects and functions of pronouns, information packaging, and question formation. Several empirical and theoretical questions for future research, including research in cross-signed-language linguistics, are identified here.

Unit 5 concludes the book with a summary of the effects of modality on the structure and organization of signed and spoken languages: Both can be equally said to be products of their origins in visual-manual/corporal or aural-oral mediums. The pervasiveness of linguistic universals across languages is a compelling argument for the inclusion of signed languages in any formal linguistics program. Well-organized and amply illustrated, Sandler and Lillo-Martin's study provides a state-of-the-art overview of research and theory in signed language linguistics.

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