

Course C: Sign language phonology and the syntax-prosody interface

1. Contact information:

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2. Content of the course (course title and short description):

Sign language phonology and the syntax-prosody interface

This course provides an introductory overview of the phonology of sign languages. We will discuss phonological components and processes and illustrate how sign languages may be analyzed phonologically in comparison to spoken languages.

In addition, the prosody of sign languages will be an important part of the course. It will be shown that the prosodic hierarchy can be adopted to sign languages and that a prosodic analysis may account for certain nonmanual features. By opposing syntactic and prosodic analyses of such features, we will discuss the syntax-prosody interface.

We will examine examples from various sign languages with a specific focus on research on American Sign Language, Israeli Sign Language, and German Sign Language. Systematic data elicitation and experimental studies as well comprehensive video annotation and corpus analyses are essential for studying natural sign languages. Thus, we will look at methodological issues that are relevant to sign language linguistics.

3. Literature recommendation

Brentari, Diane (2002): Modality Differences in Sign Language Phonology and Morphophonemics. In: Modality and Structure in Signed and Spoken Languages. CUP. 58-109.

Brentari, Diane (1998): A Prosodic Model of Sign Language Phonology. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Dachkovsky, Svetlana and Sandler, Wendy (2009). Visual intonation in the prosody of a sign language. *Language and Speech* 52 (2/3), 287-314.

Herrmann, Annika (to appear). Prosody in German Sign Language. In: Pilar Prieto and Gorca Elordieta (eds.), *Prosody and Meaning*.

Sandler, Wendy (2011) Prosody and syntax in sign language. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 108:3. 298-328.

Sandler, W. & D. Lillo-Martin (2006). *Sign Language and Linguistic Universals*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.