

## **Current Issues in Sign Language Linguistics**

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This course aims at introducing the core issues of Sign Language Linguistics in order to place them in the broader context of the study of the human faculty of language. To this end, an overview will be offered of the main issues in the phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics of sign languages, from a crosslinguistic perspective. Special attention will be devoted to the expression of reference in sign languages, in order to finally zoom in on a case study on the nature of agreement in the signed modality. Although verb agreement has occupied a prominent place in sign language research from the very beginning, it is far from clear how its idiosyncrasies vis-à-vis spoken language agreement systems should be properly analysed and integrated into a general theory of the phenomenon. We will review the existing approaches to agreement phenomena in sign languages and we will evaluate them critically both for their own merits/shortcomings and with respect to prevailing views of agreement in spoken languages.