Jordanian Sign Language (Lughat al-Iṣhārāt al-Urduniyya, LIU) is the sign language used by Deaf people in Jordan. It appears to be a relatively young language, although not much is known about its history. It is mutually intelligible with most other sign languages used in Arab countries in the Middle East. This study is the first in-depth study of grammatical structures in a Middle Eastern Arab sign language. It provides a lexical comparison of different sign languages from the Middle East and gives a brief overview of the grammar of LIU. Selected aspects of the grammar of LIU, notably negation, possession, manual simultaneity and perspective are described in more depth and compared to descriptions of other sign languages, revealing both interesting similarities and differences. This raises the question in how far cross-linguistic similarities between sign languages are related to the relative youth of sign languages, and in how far grammatical differences can be explained by age differences between sign languages.

Data for this study were gathered during a period of six years at the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf in Jordan, where the author worked as a linguist and teacher.

This book is of interest to scholars of sign linguistics, linguistic typology, Arabic linguistics, and Deaf studies.

Bernadet Hendriks