
Can you show me plurals: Do pointing gestures agree with plural nouns?

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Abstract

In this experimental study, we investigate the interaction between pointing gestures and plurality expressed in the spoken modality. Results show that multimodal sentences in which a multiple pointing is aligned with a singular NP are perceived as a mismatch, suggesting that a plural interpretation is probably triggered by the iconic properties of reduplication. Furthermore, the use of pointing gestures appears less strictly constrained when they manifest as co-speech gestures compared to their grammaticalized sign language counterpart. For instance, the movement parameter distinguishing the arch from the single pointing doesn't seem to be considered as a plural marker in spoken language.

Keywords: co, speech gestures, pointing plurality, experimental study

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