
Illocutionary force indicating devices in German Sign Language imperatives

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Abstract

In this paper, we investigate the Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices employed by German Sign Language for the expression of three imperative speech acts, namely command, plea and permission. We use a novel "Sign and Picture" task to collect data from native DGS signers. Our findings suggest that DGS employs particular manual indicators and non-manual elements for the articulation of imperative speech acts. Furthermore, our study shows that in addition to these factors, different degrees of intensity in the use of non-manual elements, seem to play a significant role for the distinction between the different imperative speech acts.

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