

Cross-linguistic perspectives on gesture: Recurrency as a basis for comparison

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According to a review by Kita in 2009, cross-linguistic gesture research could be categorized into studies investigating (i) conventionalized form-meaning relations, (ii) linguistic organizational properties, (iii) underlying conceptual structures, and (iv) pragmatic idiosyncrasies (Kita, 2009). ICLC 2019 coincides with the ten-year anniversary of that review, and given the conference's special focus on cross-linguistic perspectives, provides the occasion to discuss important developments in comparative gesture studies.

Bearing the categories proposed by Kita in mind, this panel will address the notion of *recurrency* in gesture (Ladewig, 2014; Müller, 2017). We will be arguing that recurrency invites new perspectives on the units of comparison for cross-linguistic gesture studies and suggests different ways to view relations between gesture and cognition.

As a background, the notion of recurrency was formally introduced to gesture studies by Ladewig (2014) as 'the building of a formational core that correlates with a semantic core', with a focus on how the 'stable form-meaning unit recurs in different contexts of use over different speakers in a particular speech community' (pp.1559-1560). With this starting point, papers in the panel will be addressing three inter-related aims:

1. To further identify stable form-meaning units (i.e. recurrent gestures) and describe the factors that lead either to wide-spread similarity or language-specific variation
2. To better characterise the processes of gradual building through which the stability of such units emerge, including physiological, linguistic and cognitive processes
3. To explore how recurrency may relate to broader embodied, social and cultural contexts

Through these aims, we hope to show how recurrency can cut across previous categories established for comparative studies of gesture. The studies presented on this panel build on previous research by proposing different and sometimes broader explanatory units required to observe and understand cross-linguistic variations in gesture. The panel will be moderated by Cornelia Müller and include the following presentations:

1. **Open hand oblique in female politicians' speech** (*Keiko Tsuchiya*)
2. **Exploring bodily, collaborative, and coupled contexts for recurrent gestures associated with negation: Insights from communicative events in Chinese** (*Simon Harrison*)
3. **A cross-linguistic approach to the formal features of recurrent gestures: shrugging in spoken and signed languages** (Dominique Boutet, Aliyah Morgenstern)
4. **Gesturing to indicate time in L2 speakers of English** (*Renia Lopez-Ozieblo*)
5. **Our interpretive potential as source of gestural regularity across languages, cultures and forms of militancy** (*Jean-Rémi Lapaire*)
6. **Recurrent gestures and multimodal patterns in pre-school children** (*Lena Hotze*)
7. **Discussion** (*Sotaro Kita*)

References

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