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Demonstrative This and Hand Pointing Can Promote Socio-Centric Interpretations About Invisible Objects

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Abstract

Conveying referential intention is essentially important to cooperate with others. It is reported that even adults sometimes take ego-centric perspective (i.e., perspective that is based on one's own perspective ignoring other's perspective) in comprehending others utterances. In the present study we used a modified version of Keysars paradigm of 4x4 grid, and examined whether the interpretation of the instruction by the addressee was affected by the directors use of two social-pragmatics aspects; demonstratives and gestures. Results showed if the director did not use a demonstrative and hand pointing, the addressees interpreted the object from ego-centric perspective. In contrast, if the director used a demonstrative and hand pointing, the addressees correctly interpreted the referred object showing their use of the directors perspective. The result suggested that demonstratives and hand pointing may promote the addressees interpretation based on the directors perspectives.