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Authors

Latif, Nida

Alsius, Ages

Munhall, K.g.

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In the event of a turn exchange: Visual information the perception of turn-taking behavior in natural conversation

Nida Latif

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada

Agnès Alsius

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada

K.g. Munhall

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada

Abstract: Everyday conversation is composed of a rapid exchange of turns between talkers as they communicate. The speed of these exchanges implies simultaneous perception and production of conversational cues relevant to turn-taking behavior. Natural face-to-face conversation involves a rich set of these social cues including visual information whose contribution to perception of turns has yet to be examined. Our studies investigated the influence of visual information in perceiving a turn exchange. We examined the time-course of the use of these visual cues during turn judgments. Results show that visual information is sufficient but not necessary for perceiving turn exchanges. Further, the temporal precision with which auditory cues influence turn perception is greater than that of visual information. We suggest that although auditory cues dominate the perception of turn exchanges, reliance on the various sources of information is flexible and may follow highly sensitive timelines.