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Event Units in Language and Cognition

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Abstract

In this work, we examine event unit formation in conceptual and linguistic event representations. Given typological differences in motion event encoding (satellite vs. verb-framed languages), we investigate to what extent cross-linguistic differences in the linguistic encoding and unit formation of motion events affect how speakers form cognitive event units in a non-linguistic task. We test English (satellite-framed language) and Turkish (verb-framed language) speakers on verbal and non-verbal event segmentation tasks. Our results show that when verbalizing information in the context of event unit formation based on visually presented input, and identifying event boundaries in a non-verbal task by means of a button press task, speakers do not rely on the same event representations. Therefore, we suggest a lack of a homology between conceptual and linguistic event representations in situations where speech planning is not required.