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The production of adaptors: its relationship with representational gestures and context

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Abstract

People make different kinds of gestures that may vary in their functions. For example, representational gestures can help communication. However, not all gestures promote mutual understanding, such as self-adaptors (touching one's face; twirling a strand of hair), which are perceived as having anxious behaviours. Nicoladis et al. (2022) propose a positive relationship between adaptors and representational gestures. Our study examined forty-six future broadcasters' production of self-adaptors and representational gestures in adult and child-directed programmes. We also investigated the relationship between adaptors and representational gestures as a function of broadcasting contexts. Results showed that broadcasters produced more representational but fewer self-adaptors in the child-directed programme. Participants' self-adaptors negatively related to representational gestures when broadcasting in the adult-directed programme. Moreover, there is a stable individual trend in one's self-adaptor strategy across programme contexts. In conclusion, speakers' self-adaptor production can be shaped by individual differences and contextual requirements.

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