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Are modal representations automatic ingrained when processing the meaning of motor concrete Spanish verbs?

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Abstract

For modal approaches to conceptualization, concepts are couched by a corpus of cognitive processes such as perception, language, and action. Motor verbs offer an opportunity to evaluate the automatic onset of a clear spatial and modal component in the mental representations of linguistic items. This study aimed to test the automaticity of these spatial components when processing the meaning of concrete motor verbs. In one eye-tracking experiment, 31 participants viewed 144 Spanish rebug sentences (i.e. *escurrir*) with four schematic pictures (left, right, up, down) by a visual word paradigm. The study registered more and larger visits on the schematic pictures related to the motor and perceptive experience when doing the action refereed by the verbs. Mainly, these findings add evidence on the automaticity of the modal component of mental representations and help to understand how this component is ingrained in language for action meaning.