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Gestures for Self Help Learning by Creating Models

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Abstract

People spontaneously gesture when studying spatial descriptions. Doing so improves comprehension and learning. Their gestures create spatial models of the described environments. Here, we address two questions in two experiments: will people gesture to study descriptions that are not inherently spatial, and will people gesture when information is presented visually rather than text. The answers to both questions are yes. Together, the results suggest that gestures facilitate comprehension and learning by creating spatial-motor representations that directly reflect meaning.