

Multimodal language acquisition

Most language acquisition theories are based on what children can produce in their speech or what they hear in their input . However children, deaf or hearing produce, and are exposed to expressions in visual modality , as in sign languages or cospeech gestures. We know however little about what unique affordances of visual modality for expression (i.e, iconic gestures/ signs, points) play a role in the language acquisition process compared/in addition to that of the vocal modality . So drawing on work we have been conducting with Turkish deaf and hearing children I will bring insights to the role of visual modality in spatial language acquisition in particular. I will also discuss the importance of looking at multimodal diversity as well as crosslinguistic diversity in understanding the language acquisition process- a topic that has been quite central in Maya Hickmann's later work.