What are language properties?
- Categorical, conventional, combinatorial, & linear
- Imagistic & diagrammatic
- Iconic, gradient, synthetic

Encoding strategies in LIS
- Lexical signs
- Depicting constructions
- Constructed Action (CA)

Diagrammatic properties of CA

What is the role of CA?
- CA has been considered gestural rather than linguistic property of SLs used for evaluative purposes.
- Studied in narrative contexts (viewed as enhancement of the narration)
- Engberg-Pedersen, 1999; Mather, 1996; Hodge & Ferrara, 2014; Rogers, 2012

Can CA serve referential function?

Aim: controlled assessment of whether LIS signers use CA not simply as a metalinguistic tool, but instead, whether its properties are taken advantage of for referential purposes for efficient communication in informative task

Material
- 30 total stimuli = 6 sets x 5 information density levels

Design
- 2 referents
- + static action
- + dynamic action 1
- + dynamic action 2
- + 2 dynamic actions

Coding

Annotation
- Lexical unit (LU)
- Constructions action (CA)
- Depicting construction unit (DC)
- Indexing (INDEX)
- Combined (e.g., LU+CA)

Method

Linguistic strategy
- Lexical units
- Pointing
- Constructed action
- Depicting constructions
- Combined

Combinations

Results

Conclusions

Although the task of participants was purely informative, they nevertheless increased the use of CA alone or in combination with another strategy

Use of Constructed Action due to its efficiency afforded by Imagistic and diagrammatic Iconicity

More direct representation of the event - multiple elements that are perceived holistically (e.g., agent and action) can be encoded in a single representation

Depiction as advantage of language rather than proof of its absence