Early non-plural interpretation of 'some' in context: Mouse-tracking evidence for the role of real-time social reasoning

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Abstract

In a context where "more is better", such as numbers of qualifications in a job interview, listeners are likely to interpret "uh, some" as referring to a low number, even one, as indicated by object clicked in a visual display. Here, we show that "uh, some" can also be interpreted as *zero* in this context. However recorded mouse movements show that, compared to the fluent case, it is relatively easy to resolve "uh, some" as one, but harder to resolve it as zero. We suggest that an extended pragmatic interpretation of *some* is initially considered, even where deceit is likely.

Keywords: Disfluency, Scalar quantifiers, Mouse tracking

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