

Temporal sequence and information status (with special attention on the interplay of gesture and speech)

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The temporal sequence of verbal expressions as well as the temporal alignment of gesture and speech is decisive for the information status of the involved expressions. It is by now established that, while appositives are generally seen as contributing non-at-issue, sentence-final appositive clauses are much easier to be interpreted at-issue than sentence-medial ones (AnderBois et al. 2014; Koev 2013). Similarly, the temporal synchronization of gesture and speech is not without consequences (cf. Esipova 2017). I will argue that while co-speech gestures are non-at-issue by default (Ebert & Ebert 2014; Schlenker 2016), post-speech gestures are more likely to be interpreted at issue (pace Schlenker 2016). I propose a continuous scale of self-contained gesture interpretation: gestures that have their own time slot are interpreted at issue; the less they are synchronized with speech the more likely it is that they will be interpreted as at issue material (cf. Kendon's continuum, Kendon 1980).

Furthermore I will discuss the possibility and systematic means to shift information from the non-at-issue dimension to the at-issue dimension and vice versa. I will focus my attention on the relationship between gesture and speech and argue that language provides different means of initiating dimension shifting.