Reciprocity in asymmetry

Cross-domain structuration in Acazulco Otomí

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Overview of the talk

1. Reciprocal constructions

2. The semantic domain of reciprocity: parameters of variation

3. Crosslinguistic variation in role differentiation: other domains

4. Acazulco Otomí

5. Field study: Reciprocals in Acazulco Otomí

Reciprocal constructions

- **Prototypical reciprocal construction:** A pronoun or verbal form used to express a mutual activity or a reciprocal relationship
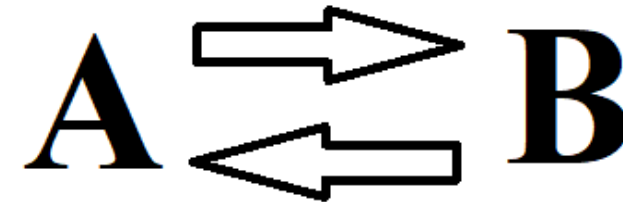
Non-reciprocal

A loves B
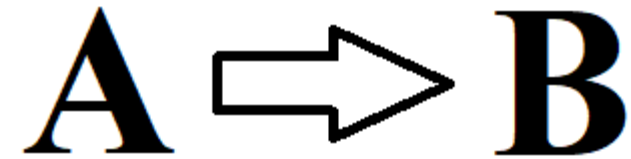
Reciprocal

A and B love each other

Less prototypical reciprocal

They walk after one another *onto the stage*

$$A \Rightarrow B \Rightarrow C$$

Majid et al (2011) "The grammar of exchange: A comparative study of reciprocal constructions across languages"

- What does the semantic domain of reciprocity look like cross-linguistically?

- Data from 20 languages
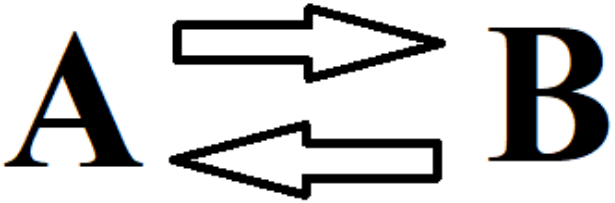
- Stimuli set of 64 video clips

Majid et al. (2011): Parameters of reciprocals

Number of participants	Configuration	Symmetry	Temporal organization	Event-type
Two	Strong	Symmetrical	Simultaneous	Bump
Three	Pair	Asymmetrical	Sequential	Chase
Four	Chain		Both	Delouse
Five	Radial			Follow
Six	Melee			Give
Eleven	Ring			Hit
				Hug
				Lean
				Look
				Meet
				Be.next.to
				Shake.hand
				Talk

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Prototypical reciprocal

Participants: 2
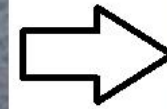**Configuration**: Strong
Symmetry: Symmetrical
Temporality: Simultanous
Type: Hug

Non-prototypical reciprocal

Participants: 2
Configuration: Strong
Symmetry: Symmetrical
Temporality: Sequential
Type: Hug

Very non-prototypical reciprocal

Participants: 2
Configuration: not applicable
Symmetry: Asymmetrical
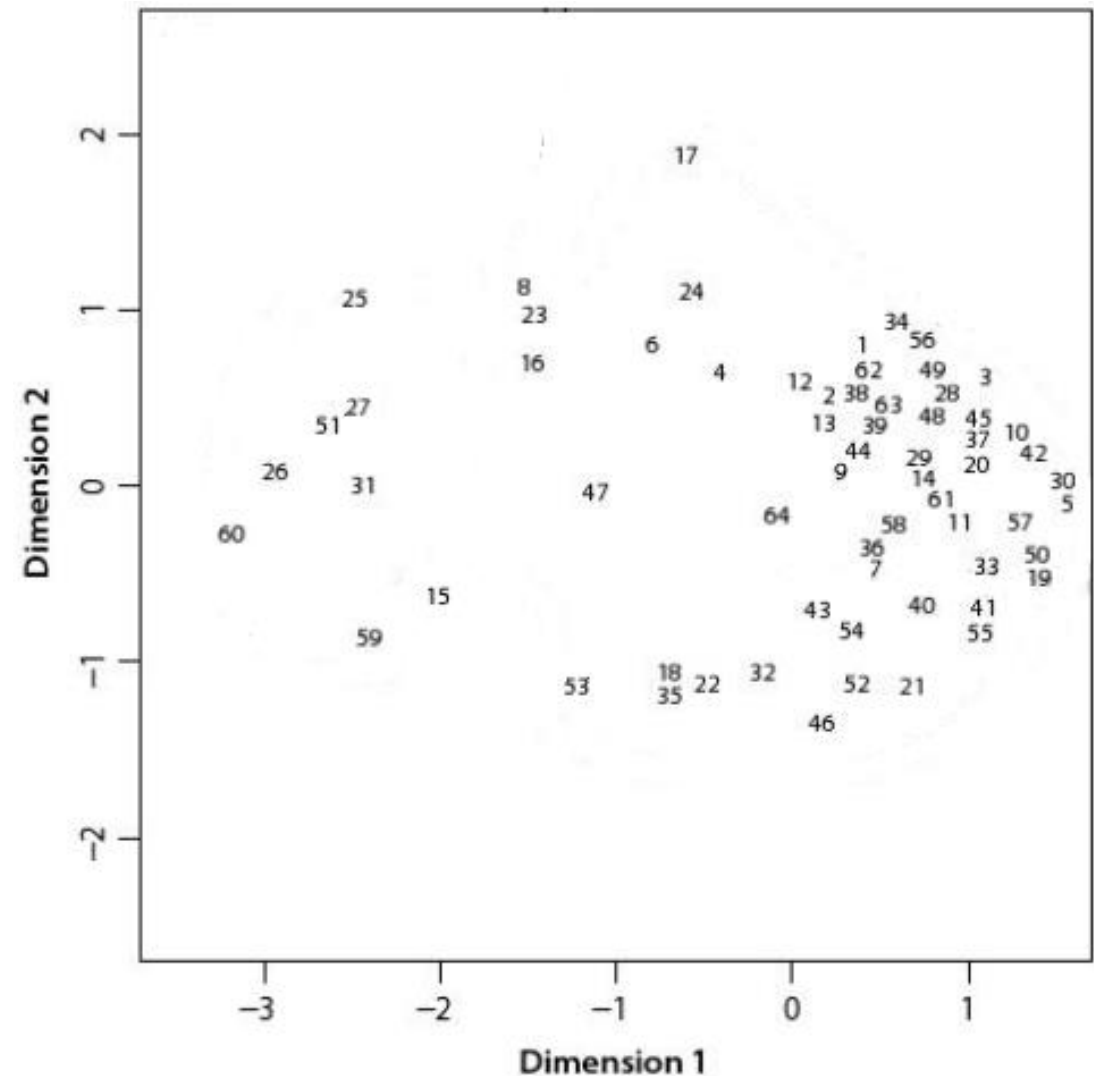**Temporality**: not-applicable
Type: Hug

What do they do with the data?

Code yes/no for reciprocal coding of certain clips

Plot it into a *Multi dimensional scaling Map* using data from all the languages

Points are clips and distance is likeliness to be expressed using the same construction
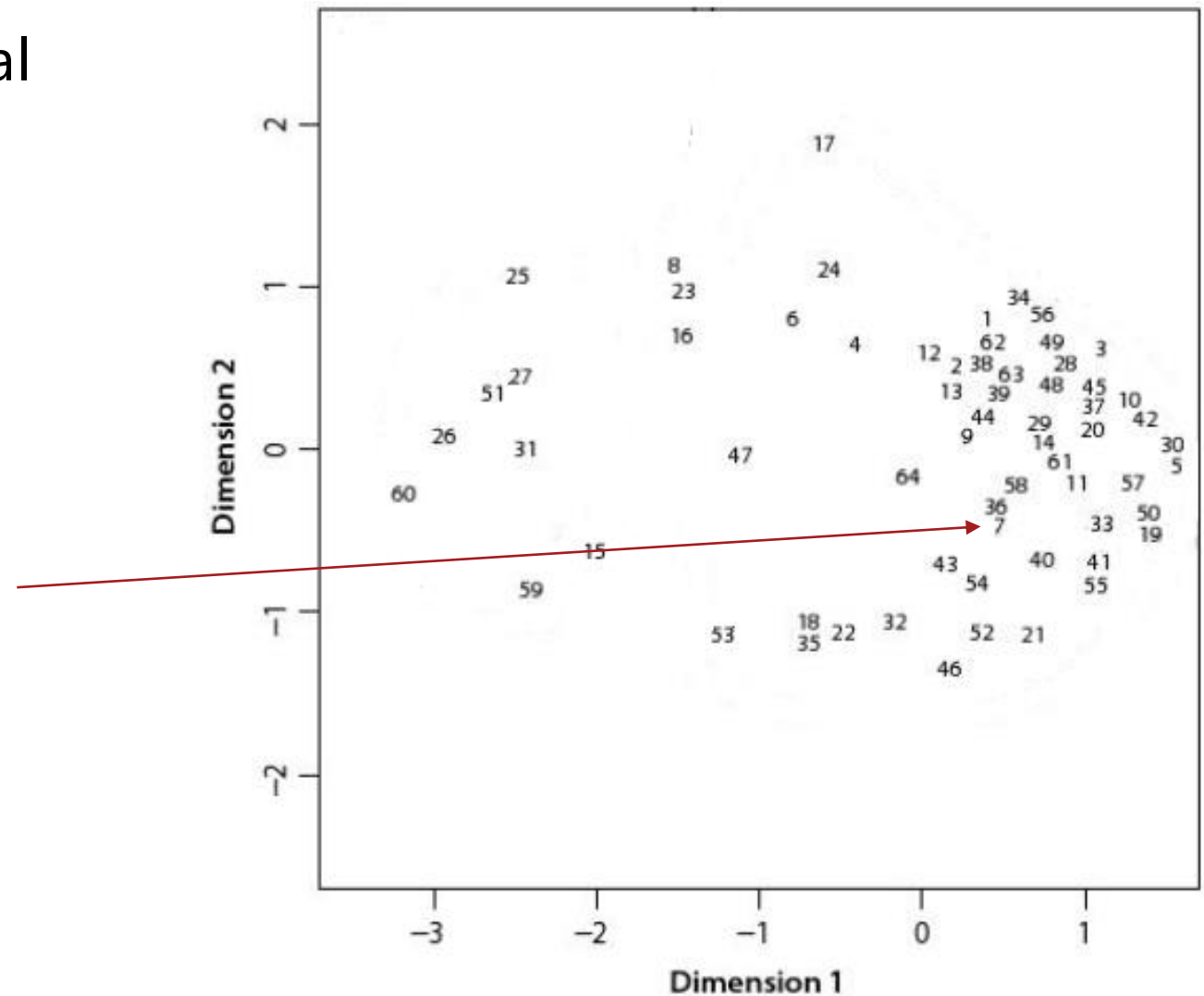
Crosslinguistic patterns

Prototypical situations are central

Clip 7

What do they do with this stimuli?

Less prototypical are peripheral

Clip 23
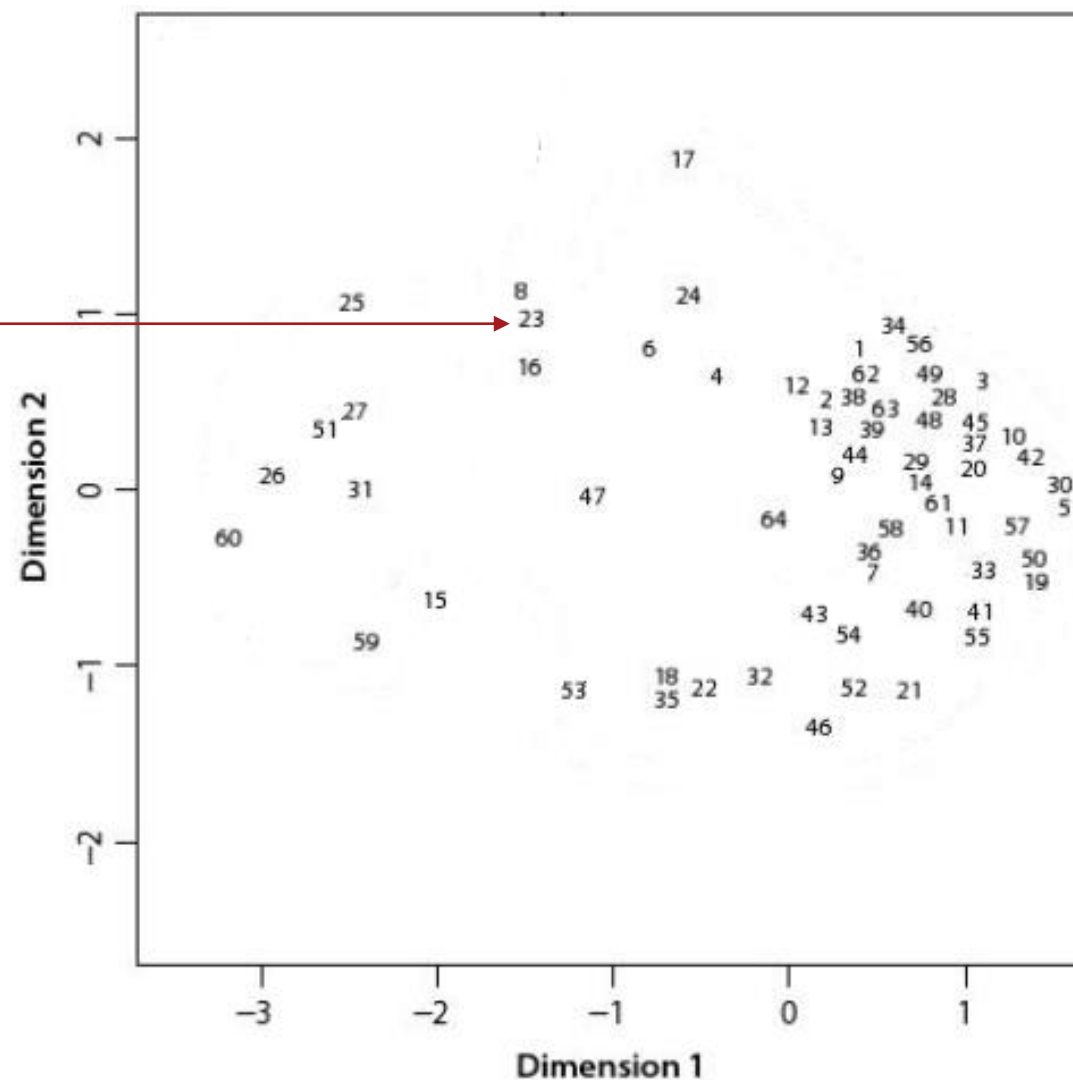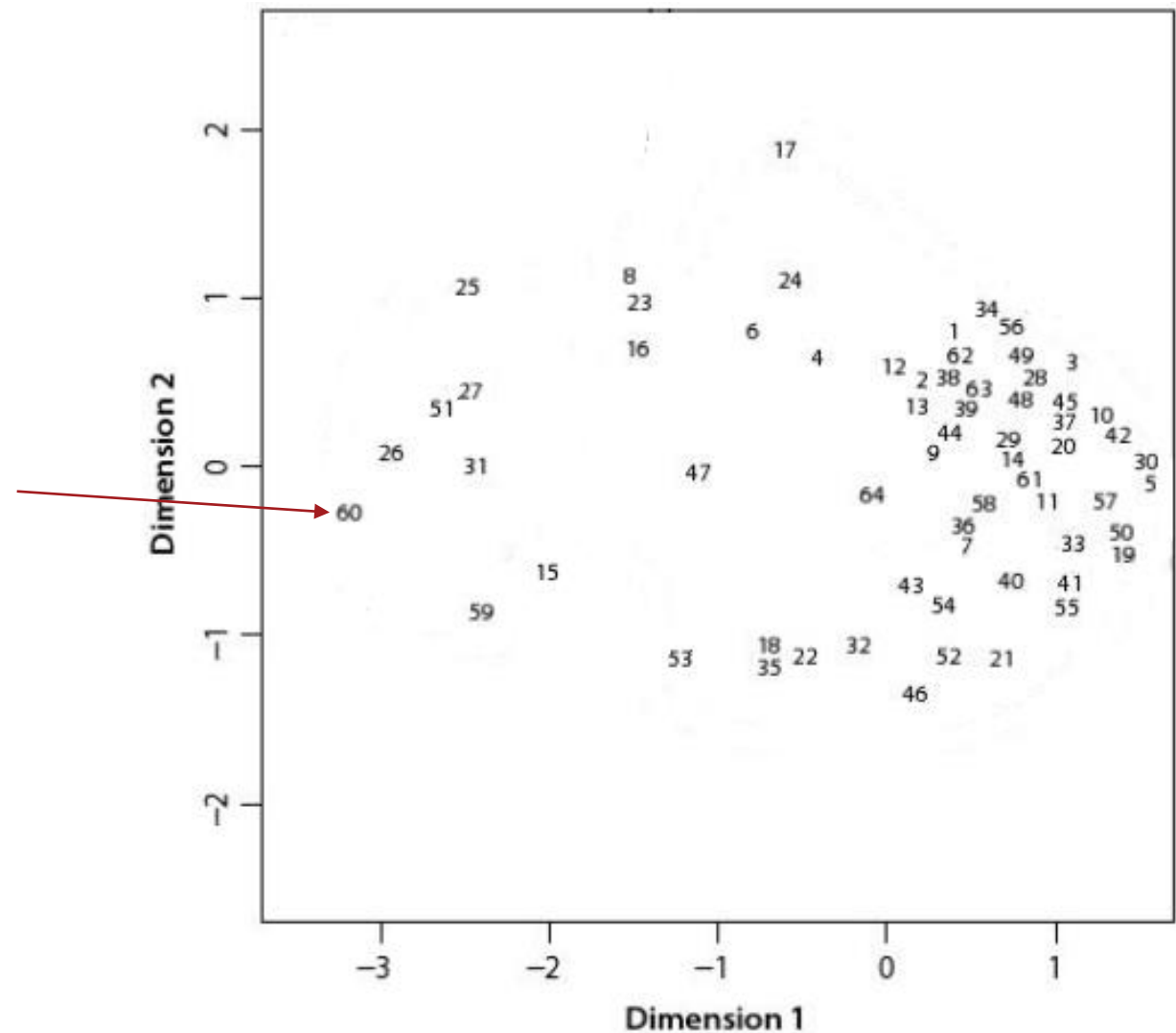
What do they do with this stimuli?

Less prototypical are peripheral

Clip 60

Majid et al. (2011) results
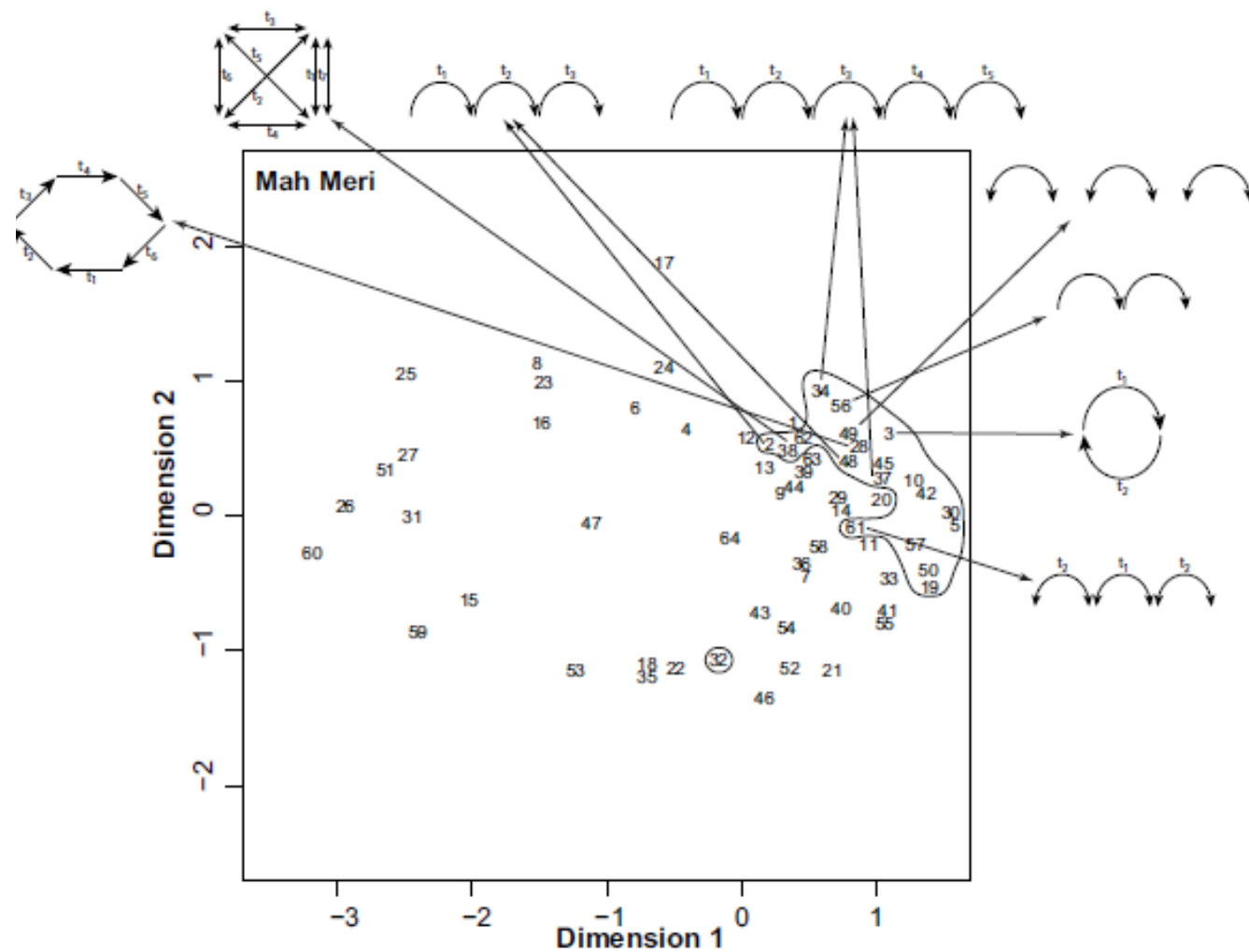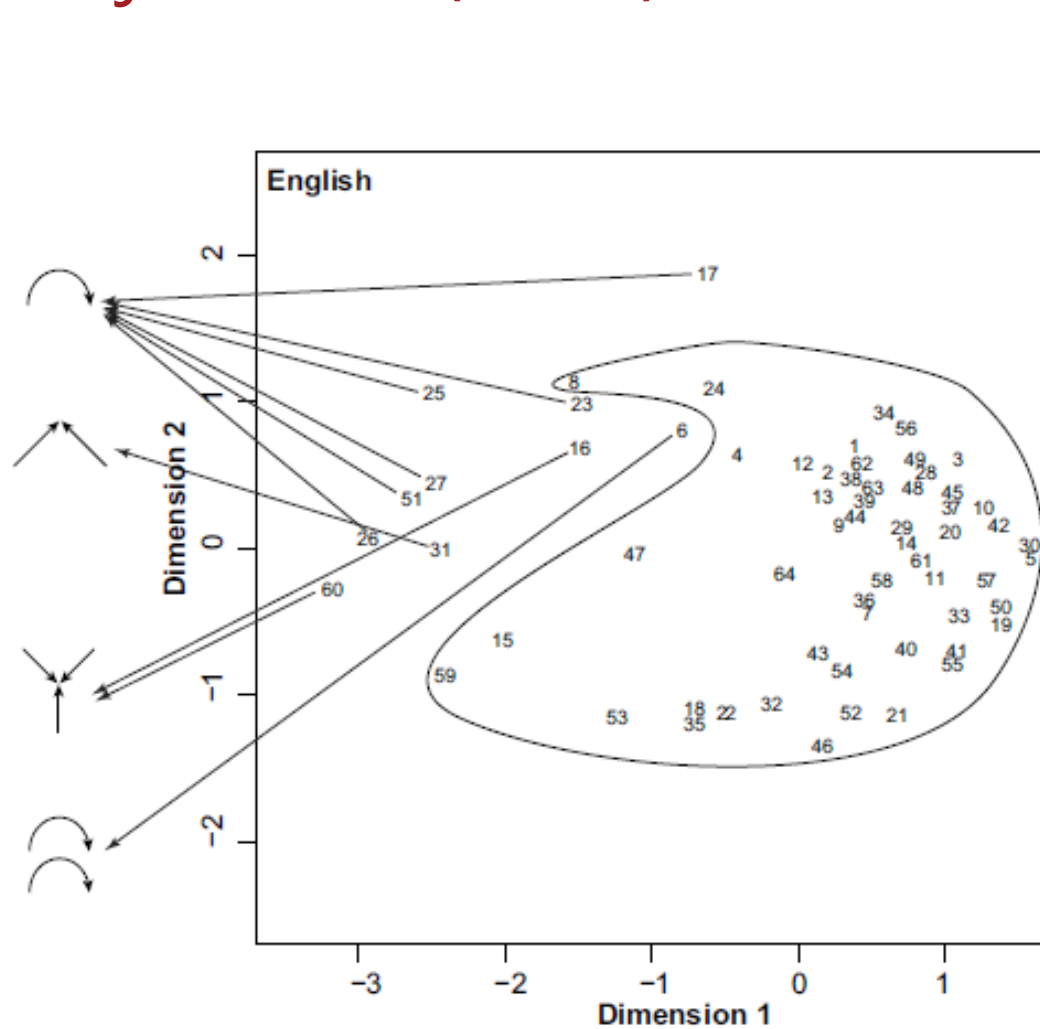
Reciprocal constructions

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- Crosslinguistic variation in sensitivity to role differences can also be found in other domains: space and kinship

Crosslinguistic variation in role differentiation: Space

Talmy (2000)

Crosslinguistic tendency:

Spatial markers sensitive to role differences in spatial relationships

*The fence is **around** the tree*

*The glove is **on** the hand*

Crosslinguistic variation in role differentiation: Space

Talmy (2000)

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The tree...

*The glove is **on** the hand*

The hand...

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*The hand is **on** the glove*

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Crosslinguistic variation in role differentiation: Space

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Crosslinguistic tendency:

Spatial markers sensitive to role differences in spatial relationships

The fence is **around** the tree   The glove is **on** the hand

The tree is **inside** the fence   The hand is **in** the glove

Crosslinguistic variation in role differentiation: Space

Brown 1994, Kita 2008:

Spatial markers in some languages (Tzeltal, Japanese):

- less sensitive to role differences in spatial relationships
- more sensitive to participation in a specific relationship

Tzeltal

joyol: F encircles or is encircled by G

xojol: F is completely in/around G

*The fence/tree is **around/inside** the tree/fence*

*The glove/hand is **on/in** the hand/glove*

Crosslinguistic variation in role differentiation: Kinship

Langacker 1987

Kin terms profile contrasting substructures in underlying kinship network

granddaughter

grandmother

Crosslinguistic variation in role differentiation: Kinship

Langacker 1987

Kin terms profile contrasting substructures in underlying kinship network
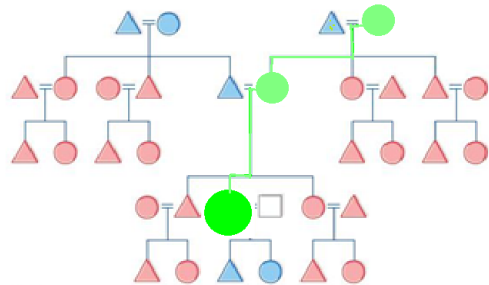
granddaughter   *grandmother*
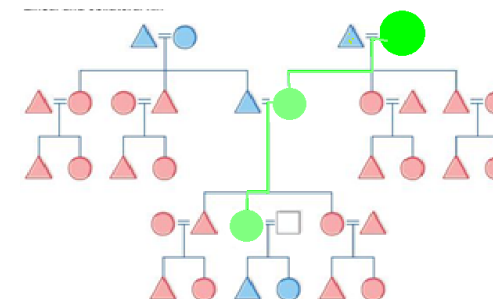
Cf. Murdock (1949): Principle of polarization, widespread in kinship systems.

Crosslinguistic variation in role differentiation: Kinship

Murdock 1949

"Self-reciprocal" kin terms – without role differentiation - are not unusual.

Nothern Paiute (Kroeber 1917):

mu'a

mu'a

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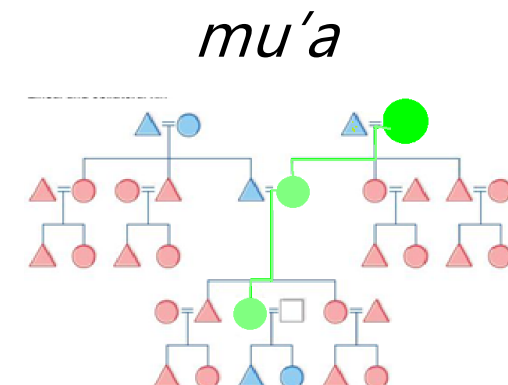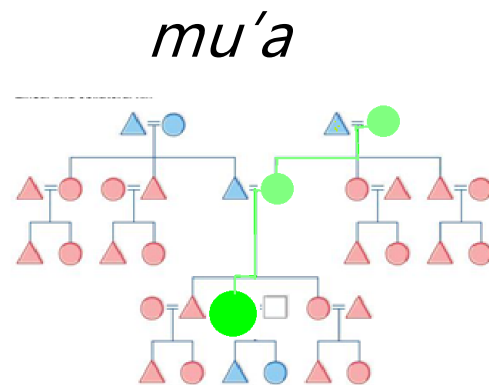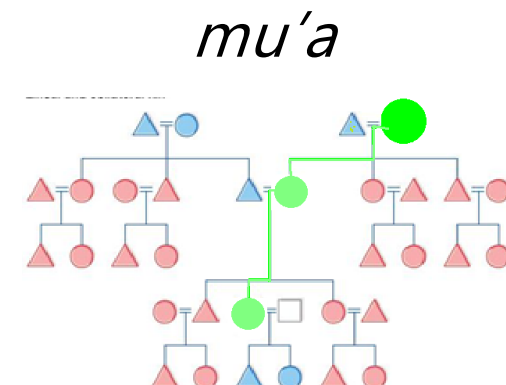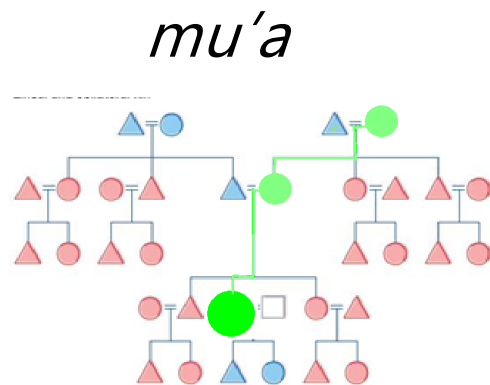
- less attention to role differences in kinship relationships
- more attention to participation in a specific relationship

Reciprocal constructions

- Languages differ in their propensity to code situations as reciprocal

- One parameter of variation: degree of tolerance for role differences

- Crosslinguistic variation in sensitivity to role differences can also be found in other domains: space and kinship

- Cross-domain structuration may be a central organization principle within a language (Levinson & Burenhult 2009)

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⇒ Could differences in propensity to code situations as reciprocal be related to degree of tolerance for role differences in the domains of space and/or kinship?

⇒ We investigate reciprocals in a language with high degree of tolerance for role differences in the spatial domain: Acazulco Otomí (Mexico).

Acazulco Otomí

Spatial descriptions
Stimuli: Topological Relations Picture Series (Bowerman & Pederson 1992)

Widespread use of predicates that:

  highlight joint participation

  gloss over role differences

ra-ʾó			*nṵ*	*r*	*ngù*	*na*	*khwá*

3.PRS–be.in.contain–   DET.SG   SG   house   DET.SG   rabbit
ment.relationship.with

"The rabbit is in its house"   *Boeg Thomsen & Pharao Hansen 2015*

Acazulco Otomí

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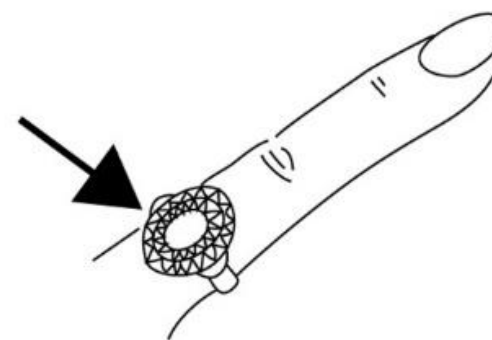
ra‑'ó	*na*	*r*	*xạ*	*na*	*r*	*ániljo*
3.PRS‑be.in.contain‑ment.relationship.with	DET.SG	SG	finger	DET.SG	SG	ring

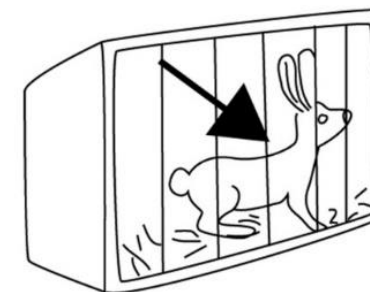"Her ring is on/around her finger"   *Boeg Thomsen & Pharao Hansen 2015*

Acazulco Otomí

Spatial descriptions
Stimuli: Topological Relations Picture Series (Bowerman & Pederson 1992)

Widespread use of predicates that:

      highlight joint participation

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⇒ Will Acazulco Otomí also pay more attention to joint participation and less attention to role asymmetry when coding situations as reciprocal or not?

⇒ Will Acazulco Otomí be among the highly inclusive languages as to the extension of the reciprocal construction?

Acazulco Otomí

- San Jerónimo Acazulco, 2760 m.a.o.
- Fieldwork in 2013 and 2017

Otomí variety

- The otomangue language family
- Severely endangered variety
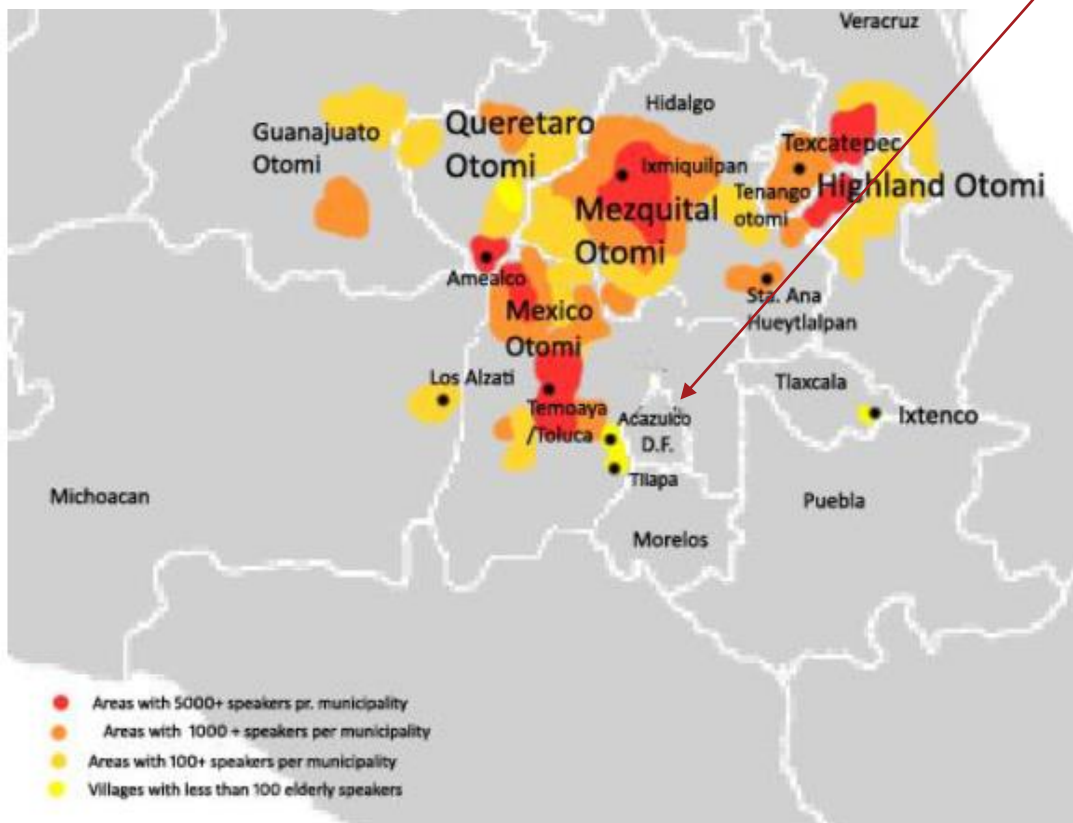
Oto-Mangue	Eastern Oto-Mangue	Oto-Pame-Chinantecan	Oto-Pame		Otomí
					Mazahua
				Matlatzinca-Tlahuica	Matlatzinca
					Tlahuica
					Pame
					Chichimeca
			Chinantecan		Chinanteca
		Tlapaneco-Manguean		Tlapaneco-Subtiaba	Subtiaba †
					Tlapaneco
				Manguean	Chiapaneco †
					Mangue †
	Western Oto-Mangue	Poplocan-Zapotecan	Popolocan		Mazatec
					Ixcatec
					Chocholtec
					Popoloca
			Zapotecan		Zapotec
					Chatino
		Amuzgoan-Mixtecan	Amuzgoan		Amuzgo
			Mixtecan		Mixtec
					Cuicatec
					Triqui

Informants

- 4 speakers aged from 65 to 75

Reciprocal constructions

- What do they look like in Acazulco Otomí?

    Verbal strategy (Acazulco Otomí). Prefix + verbal class

    ra-pų̀   *nų̀*   *txi*   *ntx'ówi*

    3.REAL.IPFV-hit   DET.SG   DIM   companion

    'he hits the little companion'

    ra=di=m-pų̀ni

    3.REAL.IPFV=CL=RECP-hit

    'They hit one another'

Results

- Very inclusive in the categorization of the stimuli
- 56/64 of the clips were described using a reciprocal construction
- What is included?
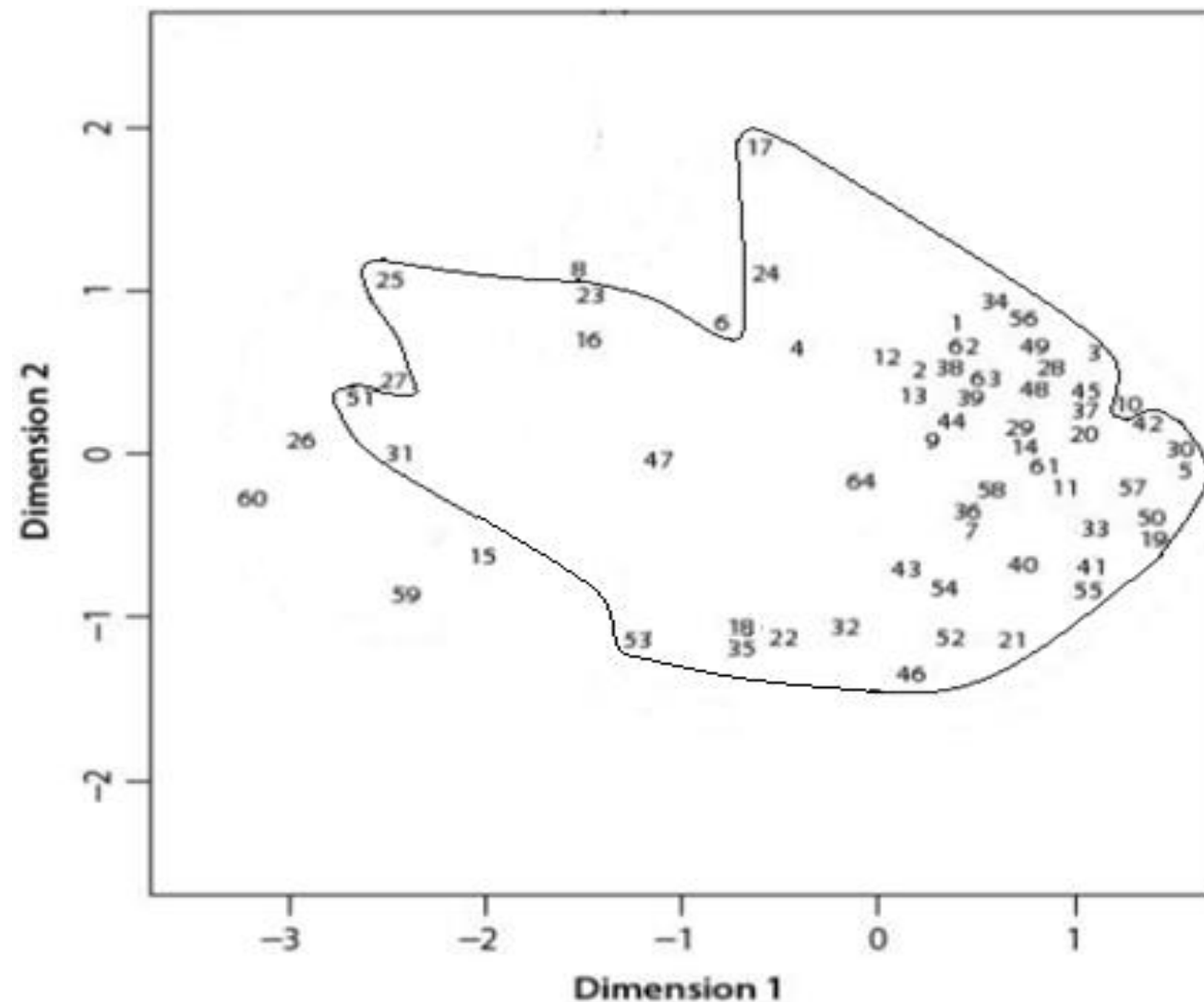
What is (unusually) included

Clip 51: Asymmetrical

ts'u̱   *gà-m-peí=ba=di*   *yő*
much   3.ADV.PRS-RECP=comb=??=APL   head
"They comb the head a lot (reciprocally)"
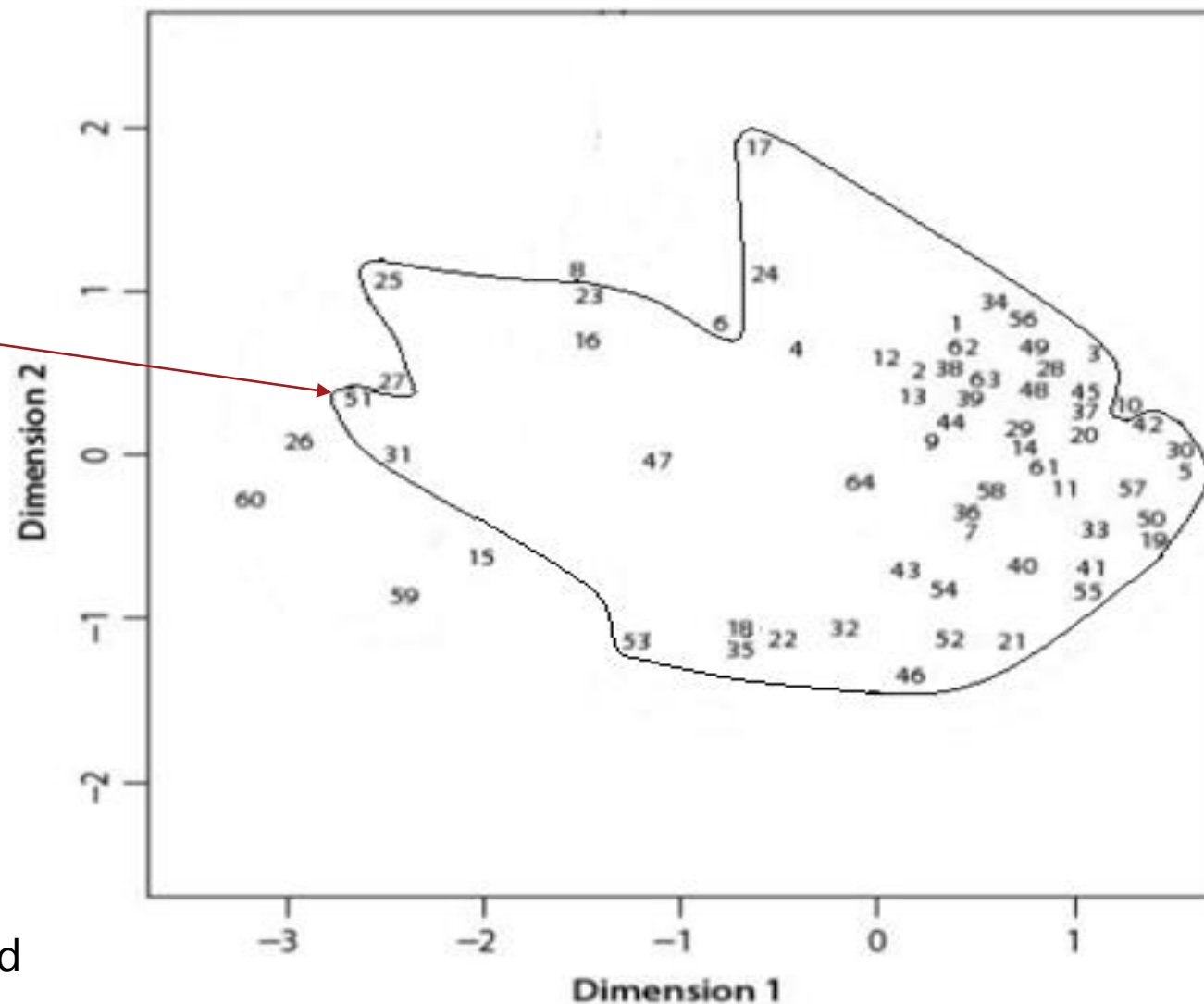
What is (unusually) included

Clip 17: Asymmetrical

kha   ora   ra-di-m-pùni
and   now   3.PRS-CL-RECP-hit
"and now they hit each other"
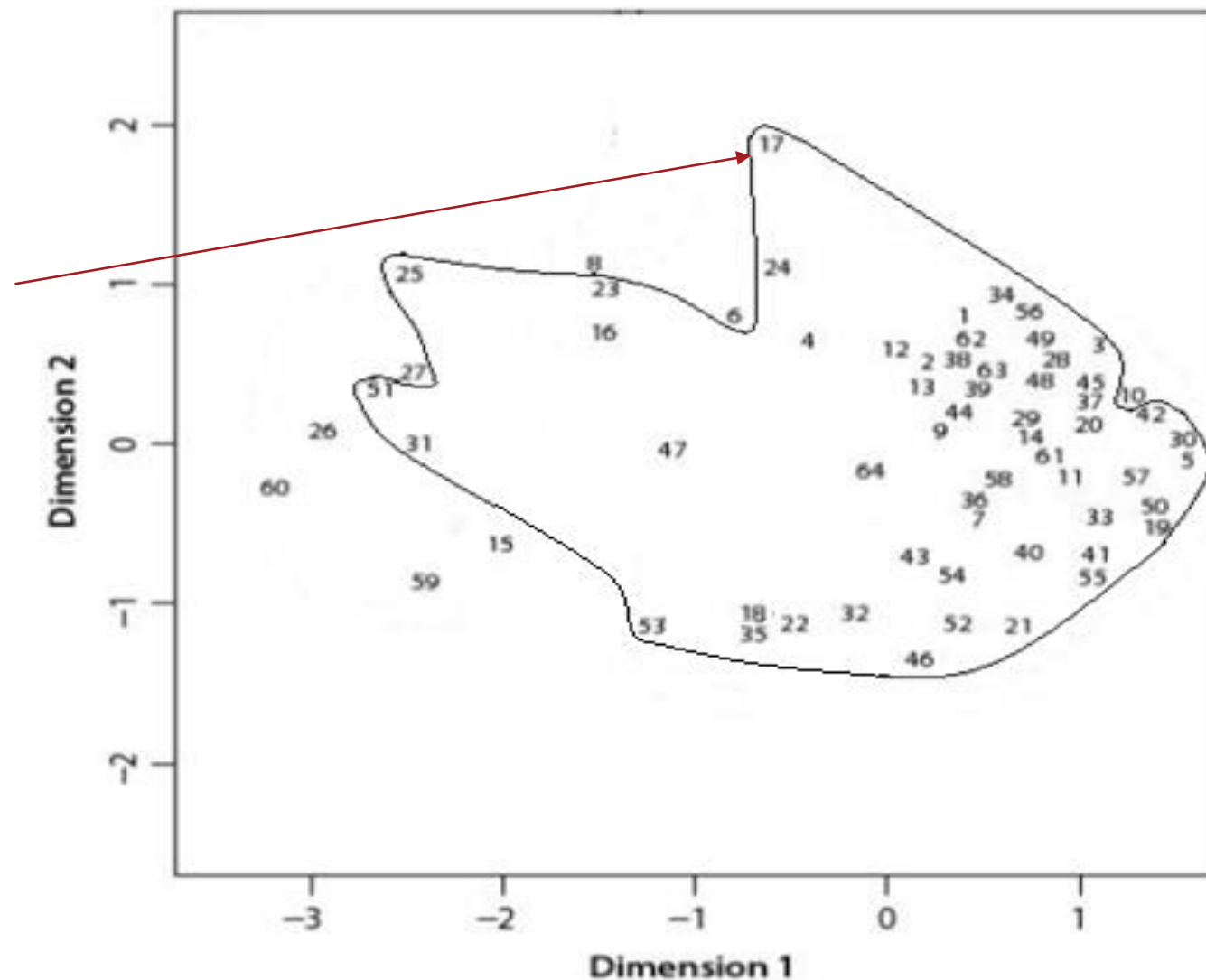
What is (unusually) included
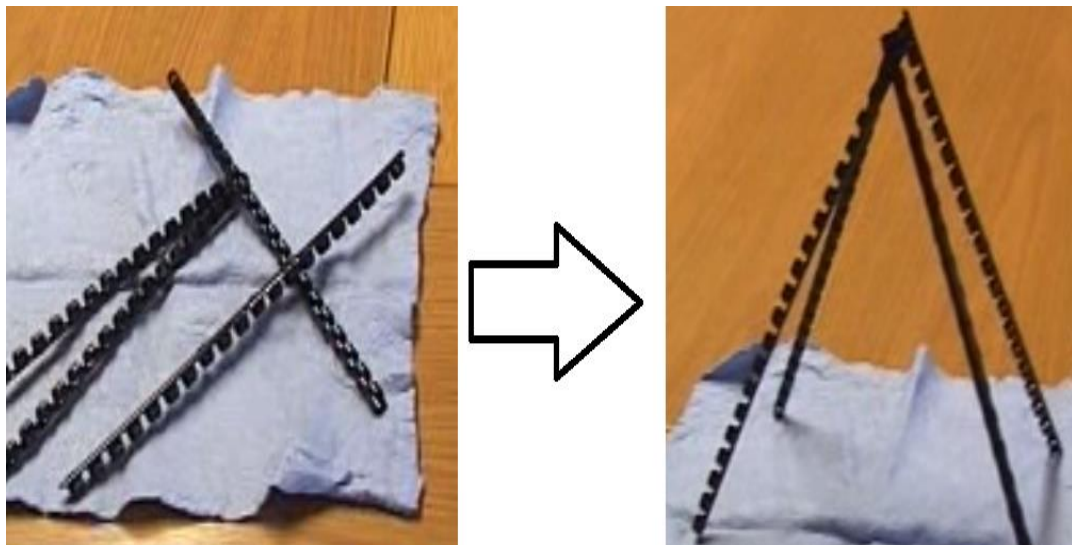
Klip 53: Inanimate

ra-di-n-<d>o̱'tse
3.PRS-CL-RECP-<PHON>standing
'They are standing (reciprocally)'
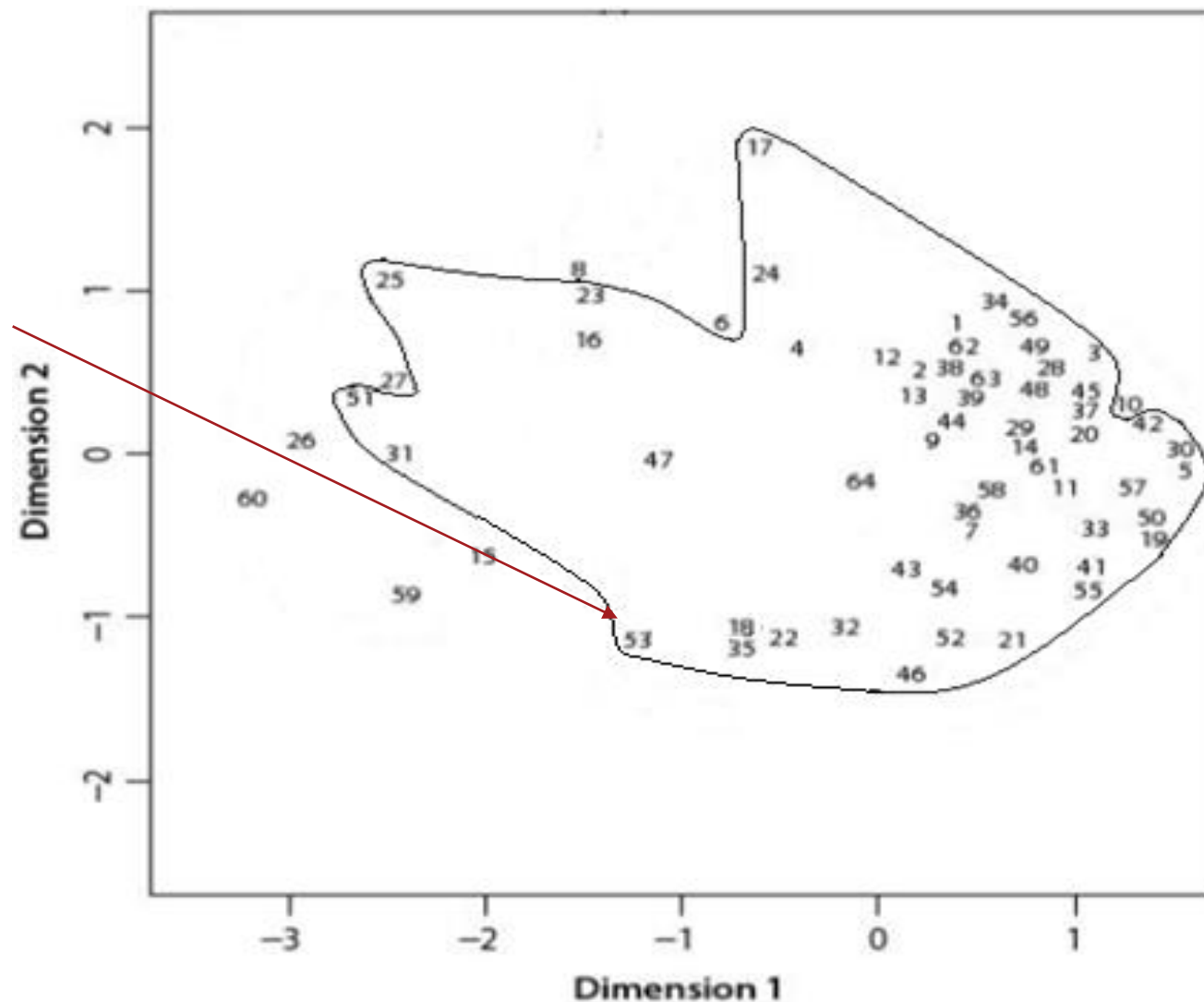
Results

- Is there a cross-domain tendency to highlight joint participation at the expense of role specification?

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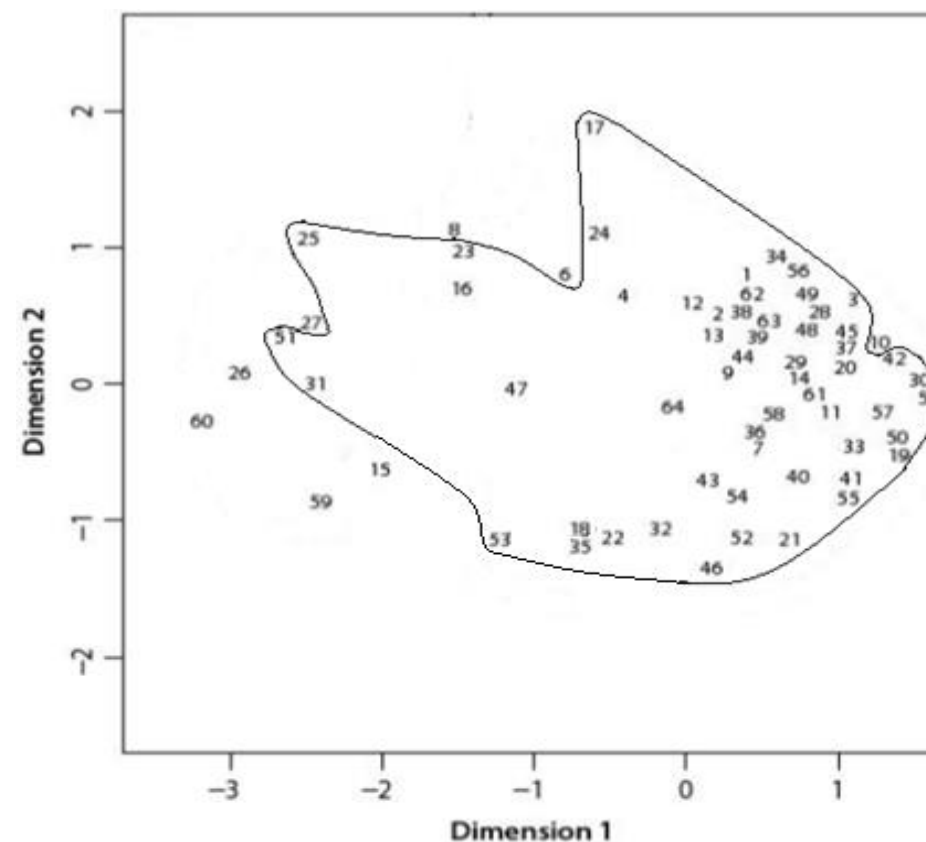
Different conceptions of mutuality

- **Psychology/sociocognitive linguistics:** joint action, mutual awareness and intentions as important parameters

Different conceptions of mutuality

- **Psychology/sociocognitive linguistics:** joint action, mutual awareness and intentions as important parameters
  - Supported by the importance of eye-contact in our data

Patterns of extension – what is not included?

- 8 clips
- No clear pattern with

the given parameters

Clip	Configuration	Symmetry	Temporality	Number of participants	Type
6	Pair	Asymmetrical	Simultaneous	4	Delouse
8	Chain	Symmetrical	Simultaneous	4	Next.to
10	Strong	Symmetrical	Sequential	2	Delouse
15	Chain	Asymmetrical	Simultaneous	4	Next.to
26		Asymmetrical		2	Give
27		Asymmetrical		2	Follow
59		Asymmetrical		2	Bump.into
60	Radial	Asymmetrical	Simultaneous	4	look

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  Attention to joint action

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Patterns of extension – what is not included?

Is not coded reciprocally

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Bi-hyŭgi
3.PST-bump.into
" She bumps into"

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Is not coded reciprocally

ár=téṇdi
3.PRS-CIS-follow
'he follows (towards the speaker)'

Patterns of extension – what is not included?

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IS coded reciprocally

Clip 23, Asymmetrical, 2 participants, hug

ra-di-n-<tx>hu̱ḥ=a
3.PRS-CL-RECP-<PHON>hug=ENCL
'They hug each other'

Joint attention as a parameter

Not coded reciprocally

Coded reciprocal

Attention as a parameter

Coded reciprocally

Not coded reciprocally

Coded reciprocal

Different conceptions of mutuality

- **Psychology/sociocognitive linguistics:** joint action, mutual awareness and intentions
  - Supported by the importance of eye-contact in our data
- Mutual awareness involved in joint action is maybe enough to motivate encoding of reciprocity

Social organization

- Features of social organization in traditional Otomí culture
- Reciprocal kinship terms at an earlier language state

References

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- Talmy, L. (2000). *Toward a cognitive semantics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Different conceptions of mutuality

A mutual situation can be defined as a situation where... "the relation between A and B is the same as the relation between B and A." (Haspelmath 2007: 2088)

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Different conceptions of mutuality

A mutual situation can be defined as a situation where… "the relation between A and B is the same as the relation between B and A." (Haspelmath 2007: 2088)

- **Granularity**: what is "the same"?

Inter-speaker variation

- Considerable interspeaker variation
- Different conceptualisations

of the same situation
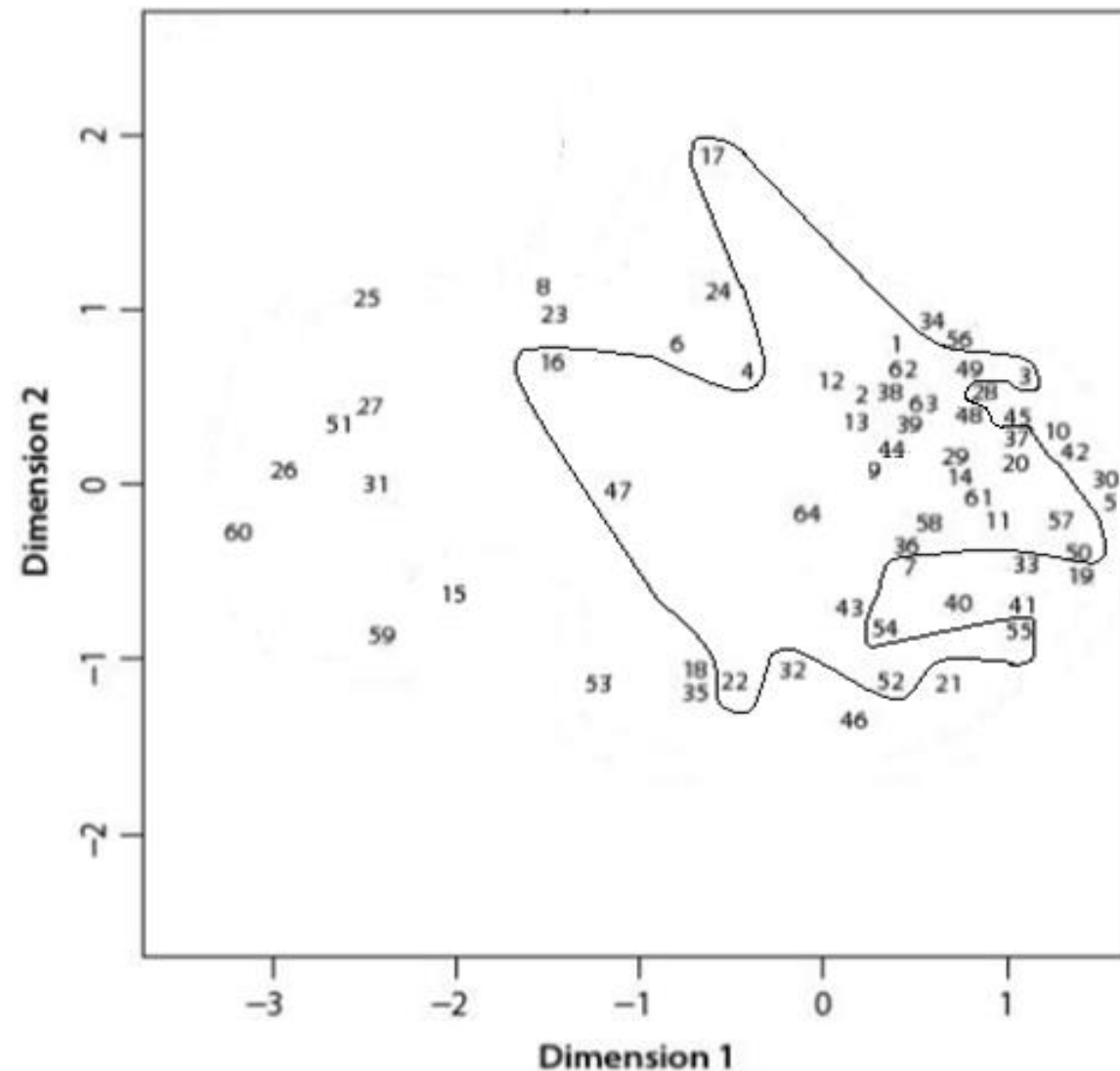
Referential or conceptual space?

- MDS-map wants to visualise conceptual/semantic space

- However, it marks referential space

- The same contrast can be marked with vastly different concepts

What about clip 10
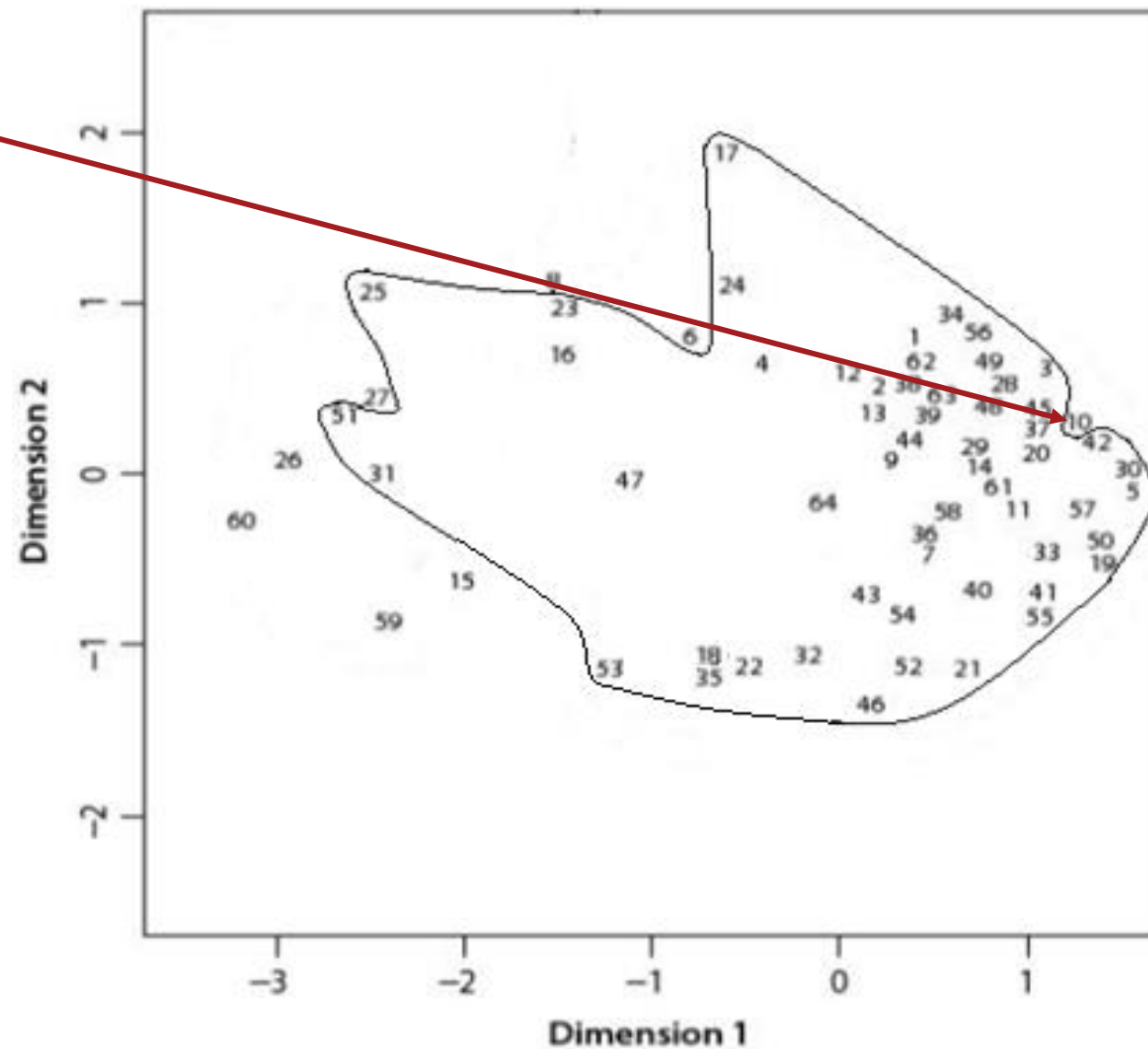
Patterns of extension – what is not included?

- What about the rest?

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10	**Strong**	**Symmetrical**	**Sequential**	**2**	**Delouse**
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26		**Asymmetrical**		**2**	**Give**
27		Asymmetrical		2	Follow
59		Asymmetrical		2	Bump.into
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What about the rest?

26

64

Clip	Configuration	Symmetry	Temporality	Number of participants	Type
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8	Chain	Symmetrical	Simultaneous	4	Next.to
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8	Chain	Symmetrical	Simultaneous	4	Next.to
10	Strong	Symmetrical	Sequential	2	Delouse
15	Chain	Asymmetrical	Simultaneous	4	Next.to
26		Asymmetrical		2	Give
27		Asymmetrical		2	Follow
59		Asymmetrical		2	Bump.into
60	Radial	Asymmetrical	Simultaneous	4	look

What about the rest?

Clip	Configuration	Symmetry	Temporality	Number of participants	Type
6	Pair	Asymmetrical	Simultaneous	4	Delouse
8	**Chain**	**Symmetrical**	**Simultaneous**	**4**	**Next.to**
10	Strong	Symmetrical	Sequential	2	Delouse
15	Chain	Asymmetrical	Simultaneous	4	Next.to
26		Asymmetrical		2	Give
27		Asymmetrical		2	Follow
59		Asymmetrical		2	Bump.into
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27		Asymmetrical		2	Follow
59		Asymmetrical		2	Bump.into
60	Radial	Asymmetrical	Simultaneous	4	look