Filling the gap: A novel test to elicit nominal plurals in Sign Language of the Netherlands (NGT)

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Main findings:

• The gap-filling task worked as intended: it yielded pure plural forms that were not spatially distributed.
• NGT usually marks the plural by means of:
  1. Simple reduplication [repeating the noun at the same location]
  2. Sideward reduplication [repeating the noun combined with a sideward movement]

These processes are non-obligatory: nouns are often zero-marked. Simultaneous reduplication also occurs, but very rarely.

Advantages:

• Elicitation without written language, yet targeting the desired structure;
• Complementing previous findings;
• Plural of all types of (concrete) nouns can be targeted.

Potential drawbacks:

• Plurals are elicited only in certain semantic environments;
• No elicitation of abstract nouns;
• Sometimes, plurality was expressed on elements other than the noun.

REFERENCES


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