



Individual variation in gestural markers of uncertainty

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Roadmap

1. Project background.

2. Quantitative analysis

- Do speakers show variation in the choice of gesture form (tilt, shrug, puoh, combinations)
- Do speakers have a preference for one particular gesture form?

3. Qualitative analysis

- Were combination of forms more likely to appear medially in the narrative, following simple gestures?;
- Were combinations of forms used for emphasis? What was their function?

4. Conclusion



Project background

- Fractures in collective memory
- Ethnic/national/religious groups:
 - Polish x German x Jewish x Soviet/Russian;
 - Catholic x Evangelical x Jewish
- Focus on cemeteries:
 - existing x erased

„Collective memory and collective identity in urban landscape” National Science Centre, grant No: 2013/09/B/HS6/00374



Individual variation in gesture

When the same function, e.g. epistemic uncertainty, can be expressed by a different gestural form, e.g. shoulder shrug, head tilt, PUOH, speakers have a repertoire of forms to choose from to express their meaning. In this case, they may show a preference for one form. We call this preference gestural style.

(cf. Debras and Cienki 2012, Mueller 2004, Streeck 2009)

**speaker x gesture form x place in the narrative str. x
function**



Quantitative analysis

Gesture form	Raw frequency
SHOULDER	124
PUOH	88
HEAD_SHOULDER	65
HEAD	36
SHOULDER_PUOH	28
HEAD_PUOH	1
TOTAL	342



Speaker x gesture form*

*(part of table)

Speaker	HEAD	HEAD_SH	PUOH	SHOULD.	SH_PUOH	TOTAL
R16	1			3		4
R18	1	2		1		4
R44		2	2		7	11
R14	5	3	3	5		16
R03	3	1	2	11		17
R07			13	1	2	17
R23		7	1	16		24
R11	2	1	9	7	7	26
R05	3	5		24		32
R32	6	11	16	1		34
R13	7	16	13	30	7	73
TOTAL	32	57	82	115	27	314



Speaker x gesture form*

*overall results

No of gestures ≥ 4

2 speakers – 1 gesture form

9 speakers – more than 1 with a preference for 1

9 speakers – more than one, no preference

Study limitations:

Ethnographic data – different length of contributions

But:

3 speakers with $N \geq 10$, still no preference



Gestural style: Two speakers

Speaker	HEAD	HEAD_SH	PUOH	SHOULD	SH_PUOH
R11	0.077	0.038	0.346	0.269	0.269
R13	0.096	0.219	0.178	0.410	0.096

The gestural style (GS) is operationalised here as a relative frequency of particular gesture forms (N) to the overall number (TOTAL) of gestures performed by a given speaker ($GS = N / TOTAL$).



Qualitative analysis

- (1) Were combinations of forms more likely to appear medially in the narrative, following simple gestures?
- (2) Were combinations of forms used for emphasis? What was their function?



Distribution of complex gestures

	Sense unit	Gesture
1	mam groby radzieckie do grabienia do grabienia [I have Russian graves for raking for raking]	
2	Pójdzie pani? [Will you go?]	
3	Ja mówię [I'm saying]	HEAD
4	jak tam nie ma Stalina [If Stalin isn't there]	HEAD_SHOULDER
5	to mogę iść [I can go]	
6	I idą ludzie [And people go]	SHOULDER_PUOH
7	idą [They go]	
8	a niektórzy „nie, ja nie pójdę” [But some (say) „no, I won't go”]	

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**intensifying,
narrative peak**



Distribution of complex vs. simple gestures

- R11: in 4 out of 5 micro-narratives, the complex gesture follows a simple gesture.
- R13: in 4 out of 5 micro-narratives, the complex gesture precedes the simple gesture.



Function of complex gestures

12	No więc jak te pociągi jechały [so as these trains were driving]	SH_BOTH
13	nie wiem [I don't know]	
14	No więc wiesz [so you know]	SH_PUOH
15	Więc to jest tego [So that's that]	PUOH_BOTH

1	tak, to był ewangelicki [yes it was evangelical]	HEAD
2	ale np. tak zwany. nomen omen tak go brzydko nazywano [but, for instance, nomen omen, as it was unkindly called,	HEAD_SH
3	no ale tak go nazywano na Grunwaldzkiej	
4	ten park nazywano „parkiem sztywnych” za mojej młodości	
5	parkiem sztywnych bo tam właśnie był ten cmentarz Narożnik Grunwaldzkiej/ Reymonta czy Przybyszewskiego	



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Change of topic/
yielding the floor

1	tak, to był ewangelicki [yes it was evangelical]	HEAD
2	ale np. tak zwany. nomen omen tak go brzydko nazywano [but, for instance, nomen omen, as it was]	HEAD_SH
3	no ale tak go nazywano na Grunwaldzkie	
4	ten park nazywano „parkiem sztywnych” za mojej młodości	
5	parkiem sztywnych bo tam właśnie był ten cmentarz Narożnik Grunwaldzkiej/ Reymonta czy Przybyszewskiego	

Distancing



Conclusion

- speakers show some preference for some gesture forms over others
- complex gestures may appear initially, medially, and finally
- the initial and medial uses have been used for emphasis,
- the narrative final use combines emphasis with turn-ceding functions.