The article presents a critical analysis of terminology used in NIME related papers, focusing mostly on the word “Gesture” and related vocabulary. It strives to clarify the meaning of the word as used in this academic environment. As the NIME community is an intersection of multiple disciplines, people attach all kinds of meanings depending of their scholarly formation. It finds three main semantic constellations of the word, those related to communication, control and metaphor.

The article raises an important issue, establishing the need to be clear in the way one communicates in order to get the message across with the least amount of ambiguity. However, there is a tendency of over-problematizing the use of the word “gestural”, as it is rarely used with expectations of having a single meaning. Its being loosely defined is one of the reasons it is used so much, and understanding doesn’t depend on a single word being used when it is constantly substituted by synonyms throughout the text.