One Emblem in Two Types of Talk: How Speakers and Signers use the 'Go' Gesture in a Chatino Community

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INTRODUCTION

Conventional gestures are a resource for developing signed language lexicons

In some cases, the gesture form and its mapped meaning are borrowed without alteration:

Mediterranean departure
demand/description gesture

Wilcox 2004 , from Wylie 1977

LSF lexical
sign, AU DEPART

ELIX 2013

In other cases, the form and/or meaning of the gesture is elaborated by signers:

'Money' gesture attested
In Mexico & Honduras

Meo-Zilio & Mejía 1980

The LSM verb, PAGAR , *to pay*

Shimbalker 2007

THE PROBLEM

These examples assume an invariant gesture form.

But many conventional gestures have multiple formational variants.

THE PROBLEM

Such gestures are rich resources for the creation of (potentially many) signed lexical items.

This potential has been largely unexplored.

See, however, Coppola 2007 & in prep

THE PRESENT CASE STUDY

Uses of the GO Gesture in the developing San Juan Quiahije Chatino Sign Language (SJQCSL)

INVESTIGATING TWO QUESTIONS

Are signers sensitive to variation in the form of the GO gesture?

Does this affect the creation of GO-based signs?

SETTING

The San Juan Quiahije Municipality

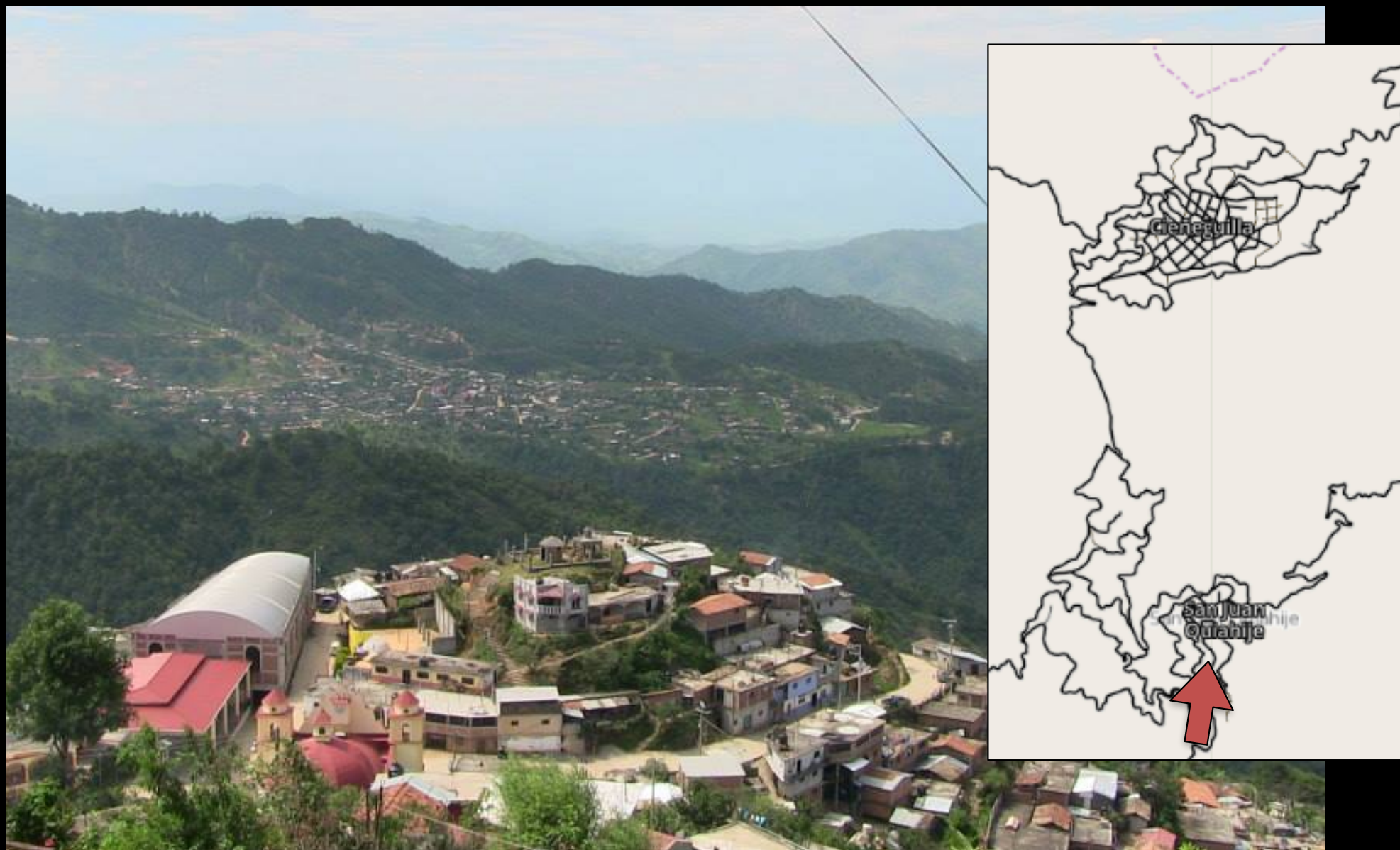2 villages in Oaxaca, Mexico: San Juan Quiahije & Cieneguilla

Combined Pop. 3,628

(INEGI 2012)

- Deaf individuals: 11
  — 6 adults (2 female)
  — 5 children (all female)

The San Juan Quiahije Municipality

COMMUNICATIVE RESOURCES:

San Juan Quiahije Chatino (QC)

- Zapotecan branch of the Oto-Manguean lang. stock

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San Juan Quiahije Chatino Sign Language (SJQCSL)

- Language Isolate

Focus on: the GO gesture

An **emblem**

Ekman & Friesen 1969;

Hanna 1996

near the status of a
quotable gesture

Kendon 1998;

Brookes 2004, 2014

That can reflect the path and goal of motion
with **directional precision**   Haviland 2005

FOCUS ON: THE **GO GESTURE**

To be recognizable as a GO gesture, a token must show one or both of these movements:

➢ Upward arc

➢ Wrist flip

Cf. Payrató 2003

THE CASE STUDY

DATA 44 'local environment' interviews   Cf. Kita 2001

42 hearing QC speaker-gesturers   2 deaf SJQCSL signers

ANALYSIS

1. Identified tokens of the GO gesture from movement + context of talk

2. Coded the handshape (HS) of each token

3. Identified the referent of the gesture via accompanying speech or signing

TRENDS:

HEARING QC SPEAKER-GESTURERS

370 GO tokens

produced by 42 speakers in 11:07 of recorded talk

Used to describe

➢ the act of leaving
➢ movement toward goal
➢ roads and routes

GO HANDSHAPE VARIANTS
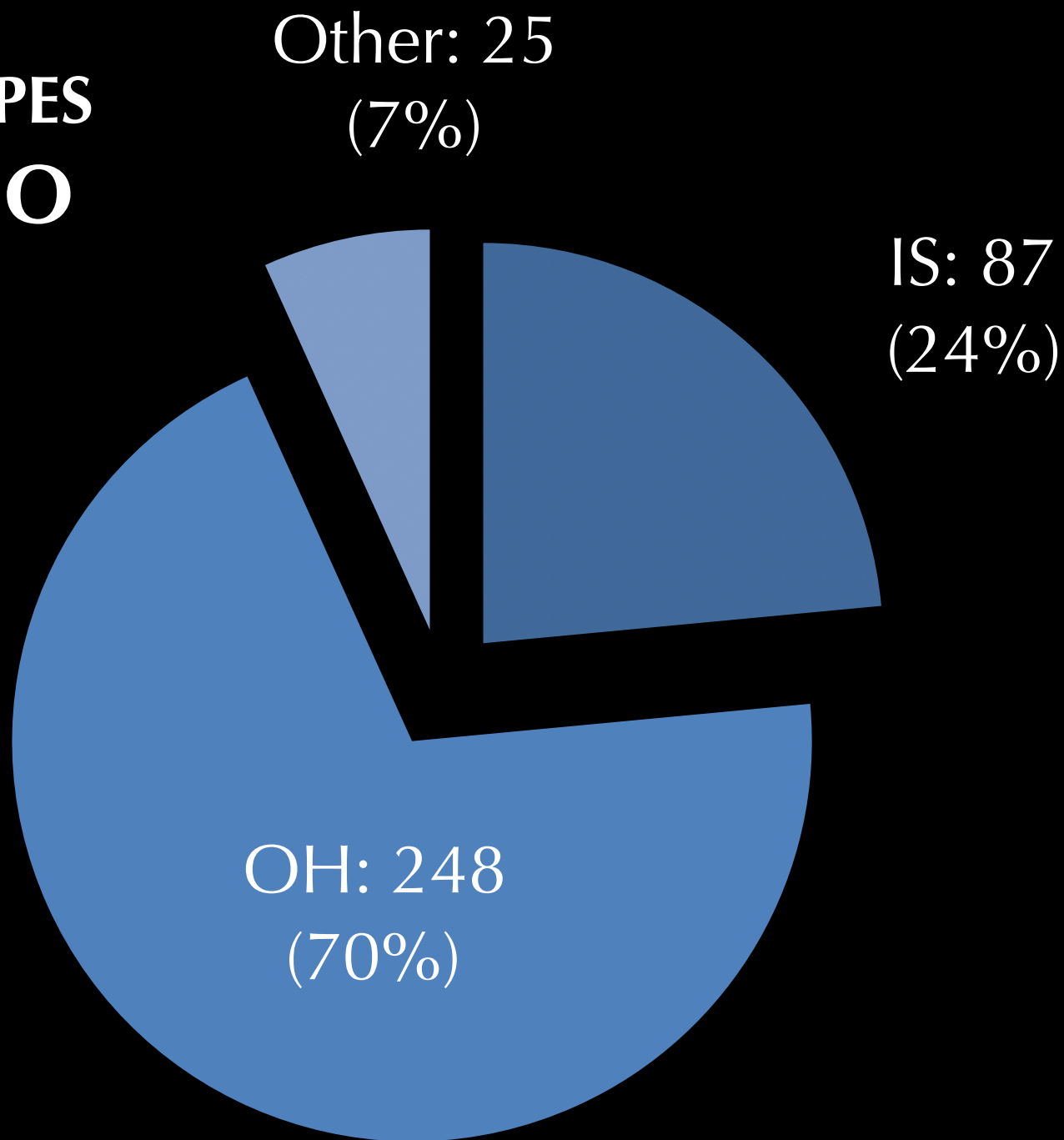
Open
Hand

(OH)

GO HANDSHAPE VARIANTS

Index
Point

(IP)

HANDSHAPES OF 370 GO TOKENS

Other: 25 (7%)

IS: 87 (24%)

OH: 248 (70%)

THE RESULTS SUGGEST THAT DEAF SIGNERS MUST BE EXPOSED TO:

- A high-frequency GO variant: OH-HS

- A low-frequency GO variant: IP-HS

Are signers sensitive to variation in the form of the GO gesture?

Does this affect the creation of GO-based signs?

Trends:

deaf SJQCSL signers

Sendo

30 years old
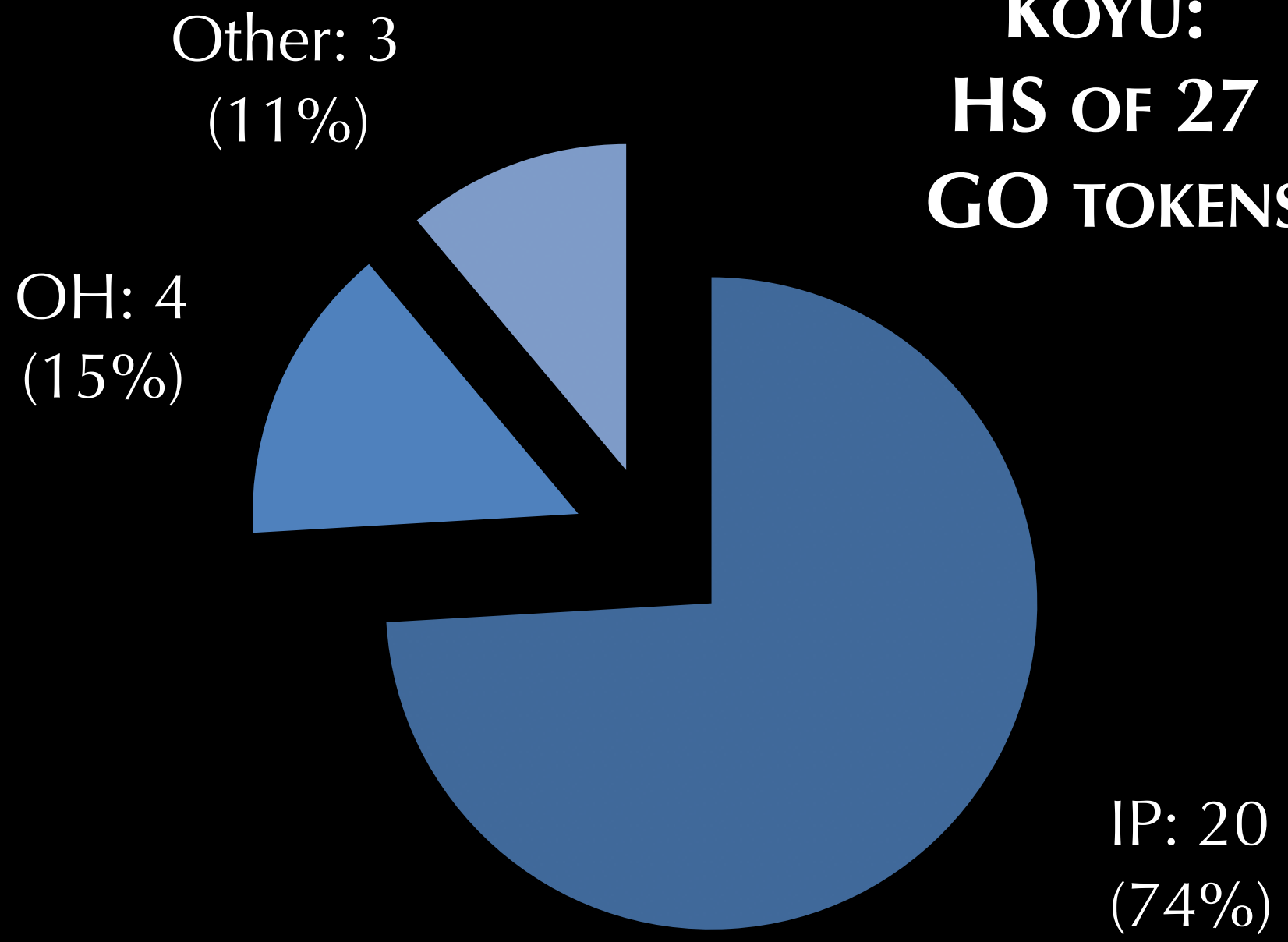
Koyu

55 years old

BOTH SIGNERS USE GO AS A VERB

GO describes:

> ➢ the act of leaving
> ➢ movement toward goal
> ➢ roads and routes

27 tokens of GO produced in 34.5 minutes of talk

Other: 3
(11%)

OH: 4
(15%)

KOYU:
HS OF 27
GO TOKENS

IP: 20
(74%)

GO$_{IP}$

KOYU: (I) didn't GO$_{IP}$ there, (I) didn't GO$_{IP}$ there, I didn't GO$_{IP}$ there

CONTEXT: a 'local environment' interview

KOYU: (I) didn't GO$_{IP}$ there, (I) didn't GO$_{IP}$ there, I didn't GO$_{IP}$ there

GO_{OH}

GO~OH~

KOYU: (the road will)
GO~OH,~ on this side,
(there is a) school
on this side

K: (the road will) GO$_{OH,}$ on this side, (there is a) school on this side

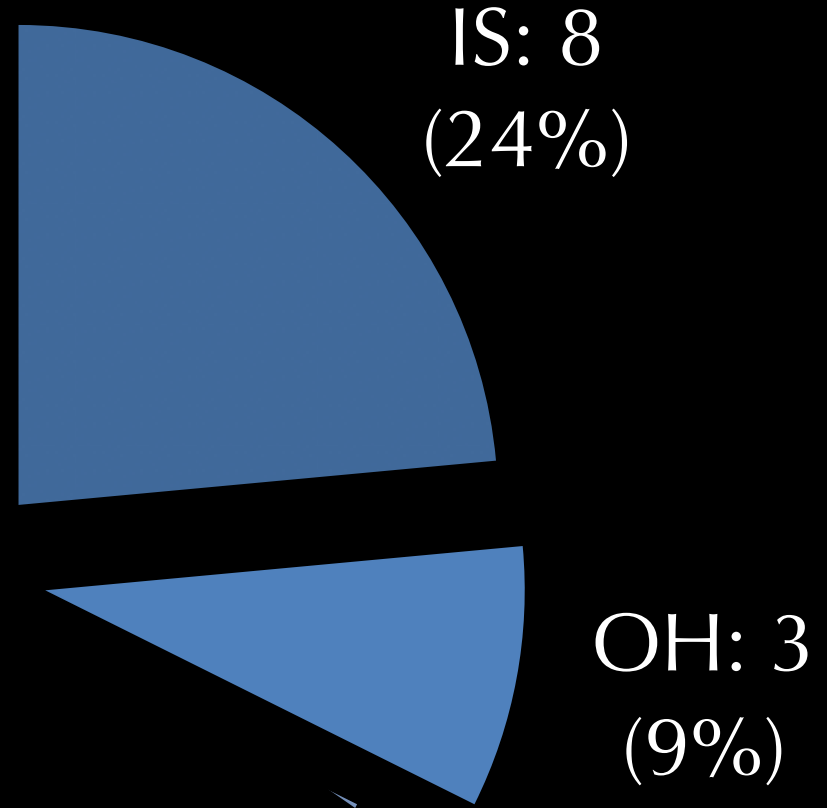| Hearing Speaker-Gesturers	Koyu
Frequent Form (OH)	→ Restricted function (Classifier construction)
Less Frequent Form (IP)	→ General Function

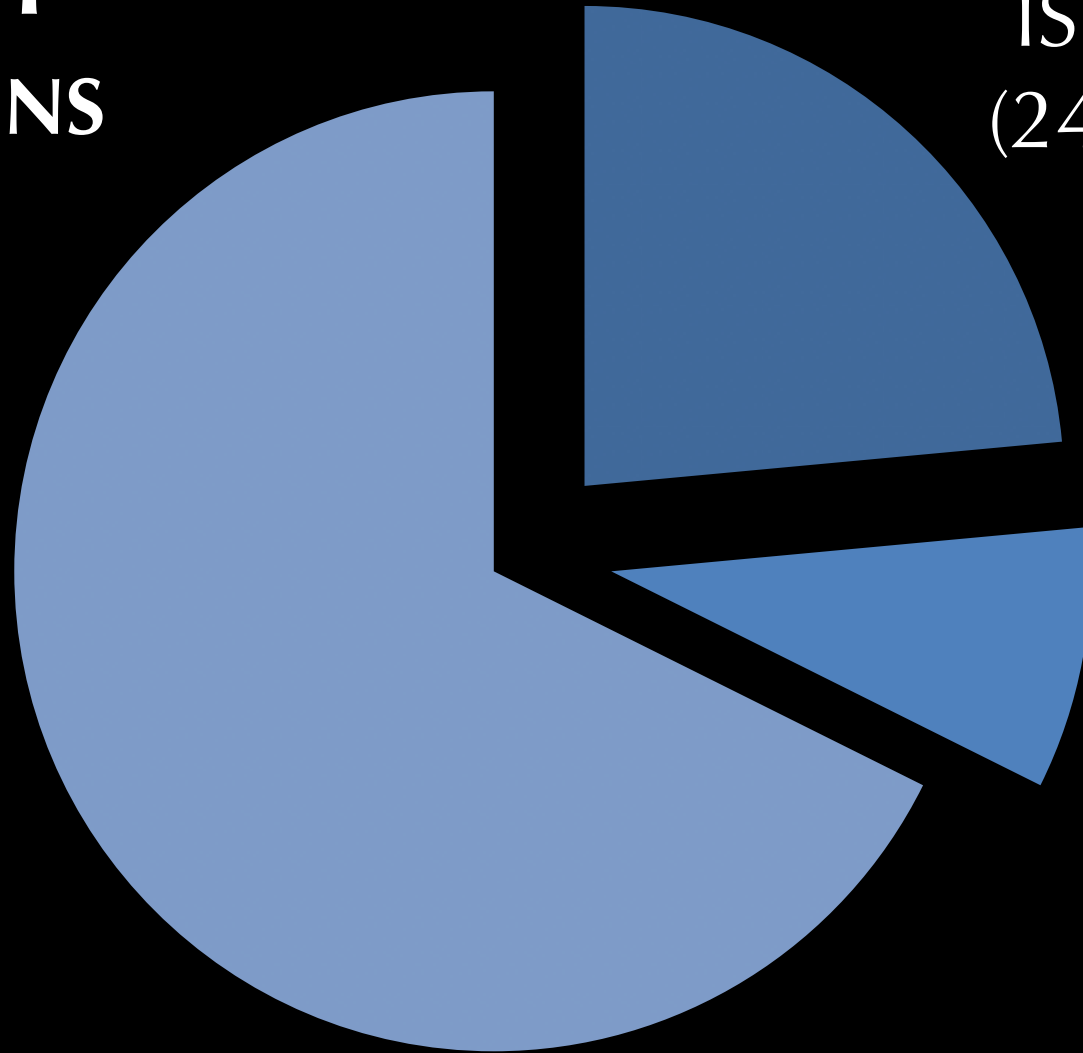34 tokens of GO produced in 30.5 minutes of talk

SENDO:
HS OF 34
GO TOKENS

IS: 8
(24%)

OH: 3
(9%)

SENDO:
HS OF 34
GO TOKENS

IS: 8
(24%)

OH: 3
(9%)

WALK: 23
(68%)

GO_{WALK} AND GO_{IP}

SENDO: GO$_{WALK}$-there (or) GO$_{IP}$-there

LYNN: (you) don't GO$_{OH}$-there?

SENDO: no, (but you) GO$_{IP}$-there

CONTEXT: describing routes from a building site to the village center

S: GO_{walk}-there (or) GO_{IP}-there   L: (you) don't GO_{OH}-there?   S: no, (but you) GO_{IP}-there

GO~OH~

SENDO: They said he saw him, dead, and quickly left (GO~OH~)

CONTEXT: describing how a murderer fled the community

S: They said he saw him, dead, and quickly left (GO$_{WALK}$)

Hearing Speaker-Gesturers

Sendo

Frequent Form (OH)

→ Restricted function (describes only leaving)

Less Frequent Form (IP)

→ General Function for this form and a related form with a modified HS

Review

- Hearing Gesturers use multiple variants of the GO gesture

- Deaf signers have adopted and/or modified adapted multiple variants of the gesture to create:

  - Verbs meaning 'to go'
  - A verb meaning 'to leave'
  - A classifier depicting roads

Remaining questions relate to the motivation for selecting particular variants for lexicalization

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Questions? Comments?

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