

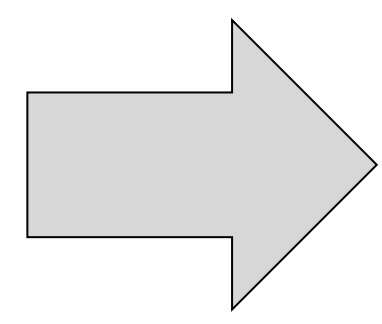
EXPRESSING plural meaning in Flemish Sign Language (VGT)

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Introduction

Plural in VGT



Possible forms of plural formation
Ways of expressing plural meaning

4 research questions:

1. Which are the **possible forms** of plural formation of noun signs in VGT?
2. Do particular noun signs have **different possible plurals**?
3. Which form of pluralisation is the **preferred** one in which context?
4. Are certain plural forms **obligatory** in certain contexts?

Overall results

Possible forms of plural formation of nominal signs in VGT:

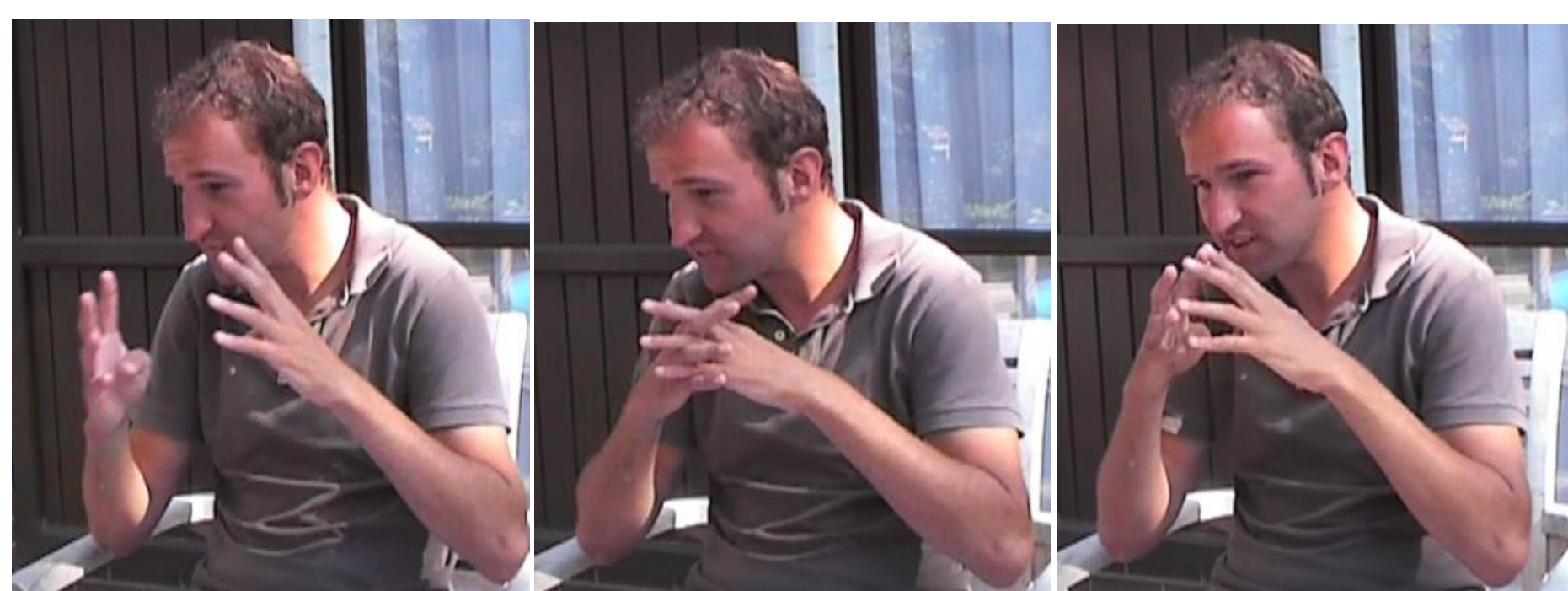
1. The **citation form** of the sign is changed

- 1.1. By changing the manual part of the sign: reduplication or double articulation (only to express dualis) → phonological restrictions
- 1.2. By changing the non-manual part of the sign

2. A sign is **added**

- 2.1. A lexical sign from the established VGT lexicon is added:
 - a cardinal number TWO MONKEY TWO
 - another quantifier MANY VARIOUS BIKE
 - a collective sign FAR GROUP BIRD FLY
- 2.2. A sign from the productive lexicon:
 - a classifier construction
SOLDIER THREE "holding_gun" THREE CL "person"+++
 - a non-established collective sign STONE "pile"
- 2.3. A pointing sign/ sweep COW ps "there"++++
CANDY sweep

3. The sign has an **inherent plural meaning**: CHILDREN, CHIPS



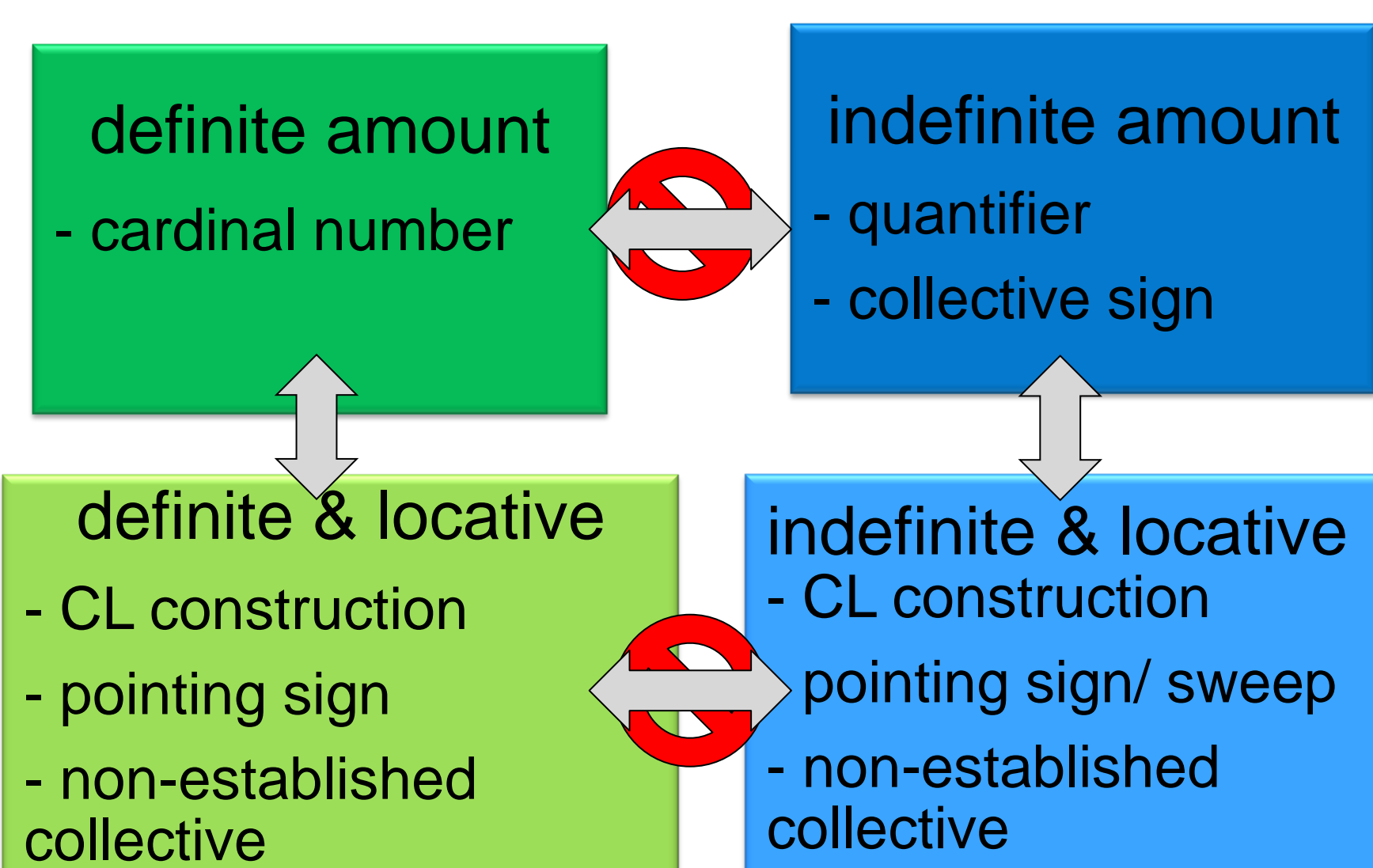
VGT sign CHIPS

Important findings

! Alternative strategies used in order to EXPRESS plural meaning

1. Coordinated noun phrase
YOUNG SHEEP OLD SHEEP
2. Coordinated adjective phrase
CAR BLUE_{LEFT} YELLOW_{RIGHT}
3. A classifier predicate
CAR "cars_drive_fast_and_park"
4. Modified verb sign: reduplication or double articulation (dualis)
PAN HANG+++++

! Combinations of all strategies

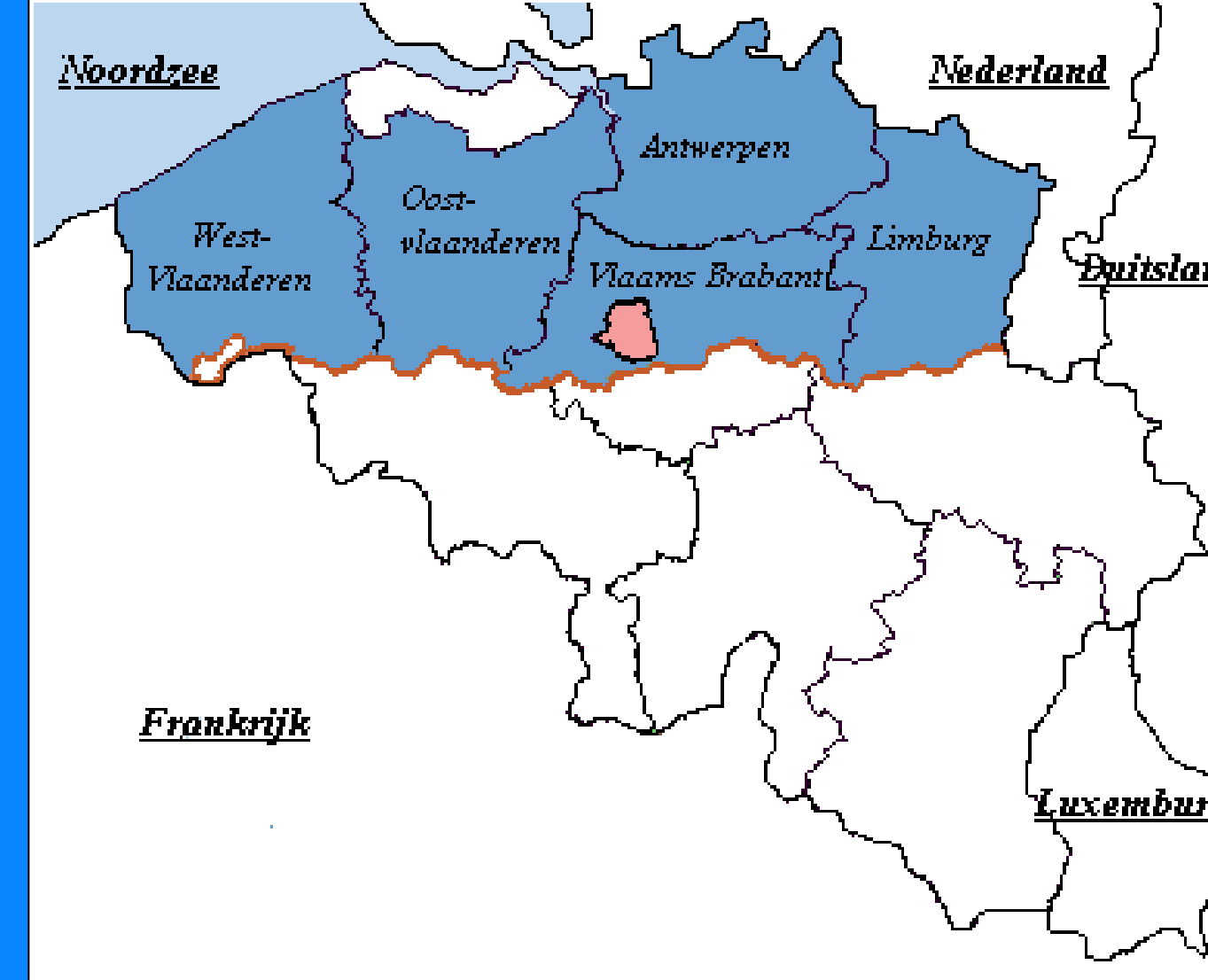


Classifier predicate expressing notion of plurality

CAR

"cars_drive_fast_and_park"

Methodology

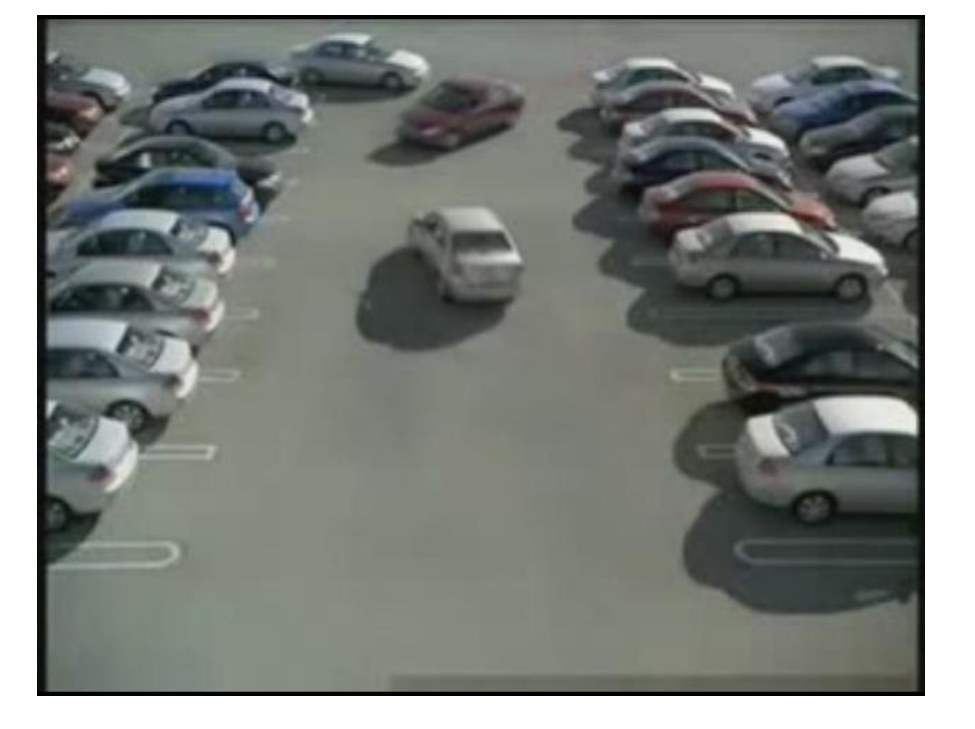


49 informants representing the 5 regional variants in VGT complying with:

- early acquisition of VGT
- education in a deaf school (at least at primary school level)
- daily usage of VGT (e.g. with parents, with partner, in the family, at work)
- active membership of the Flemish Deaf community

Elicitation materials: **156 pictures** of 39 objects (each object 4 pictures)

+ **2 films**
*commercial with cars



one object is displayed

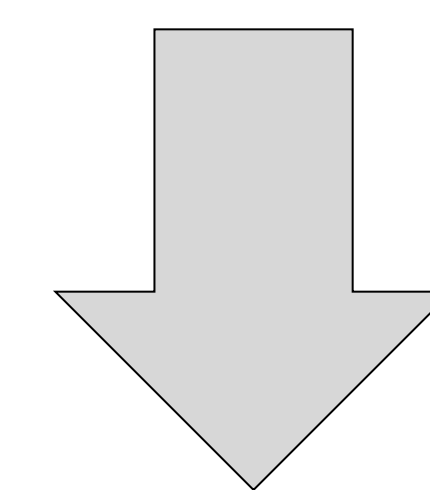
two objects are displayed

* cartoon with birds



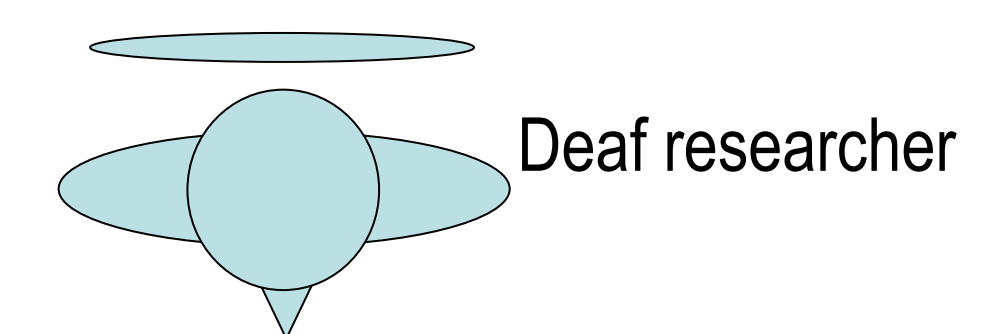
a countable number of objects is displayed

an non-countable number of objects is displayed

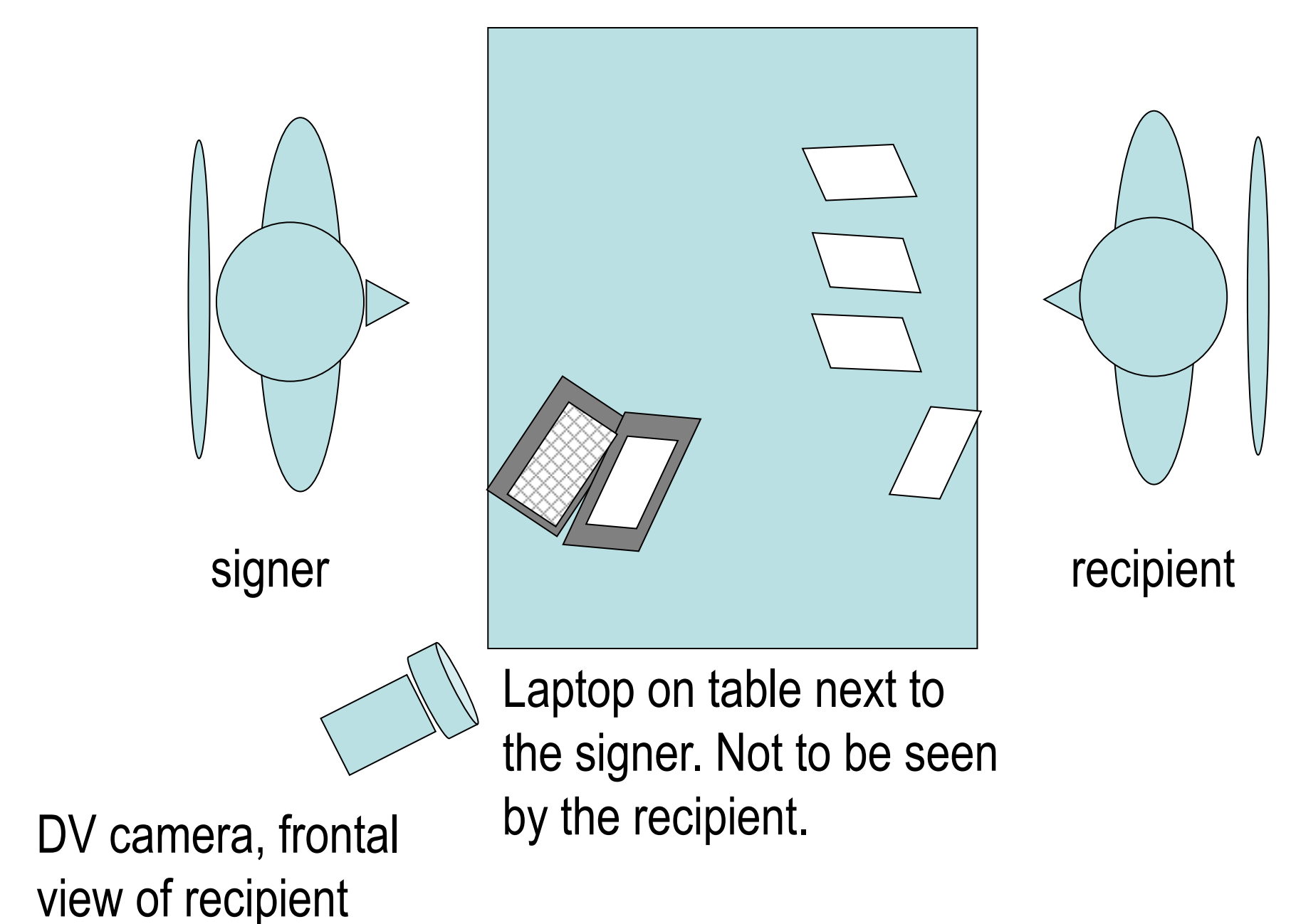


12 hours VGT data analysed in ELAN

DV camera above hands of signer



DV camera, frontal view of signer



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