

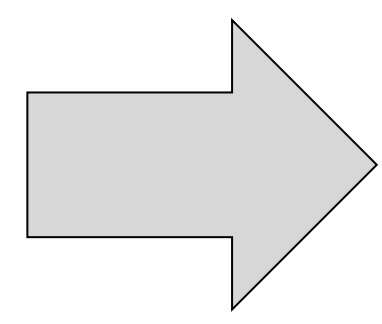
EXPRESSING plural meaning in Flemish Sign Language (VGT)

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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:

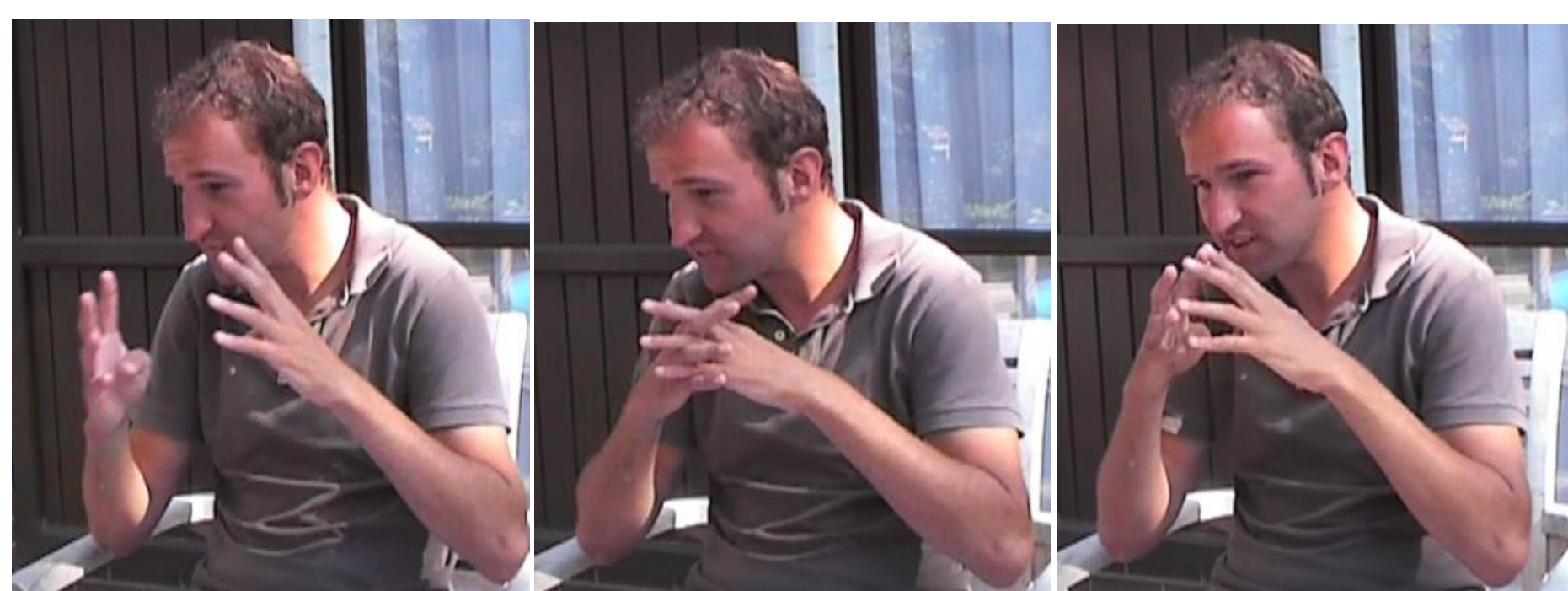
1. The **citation form** of the sign is changed

- 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



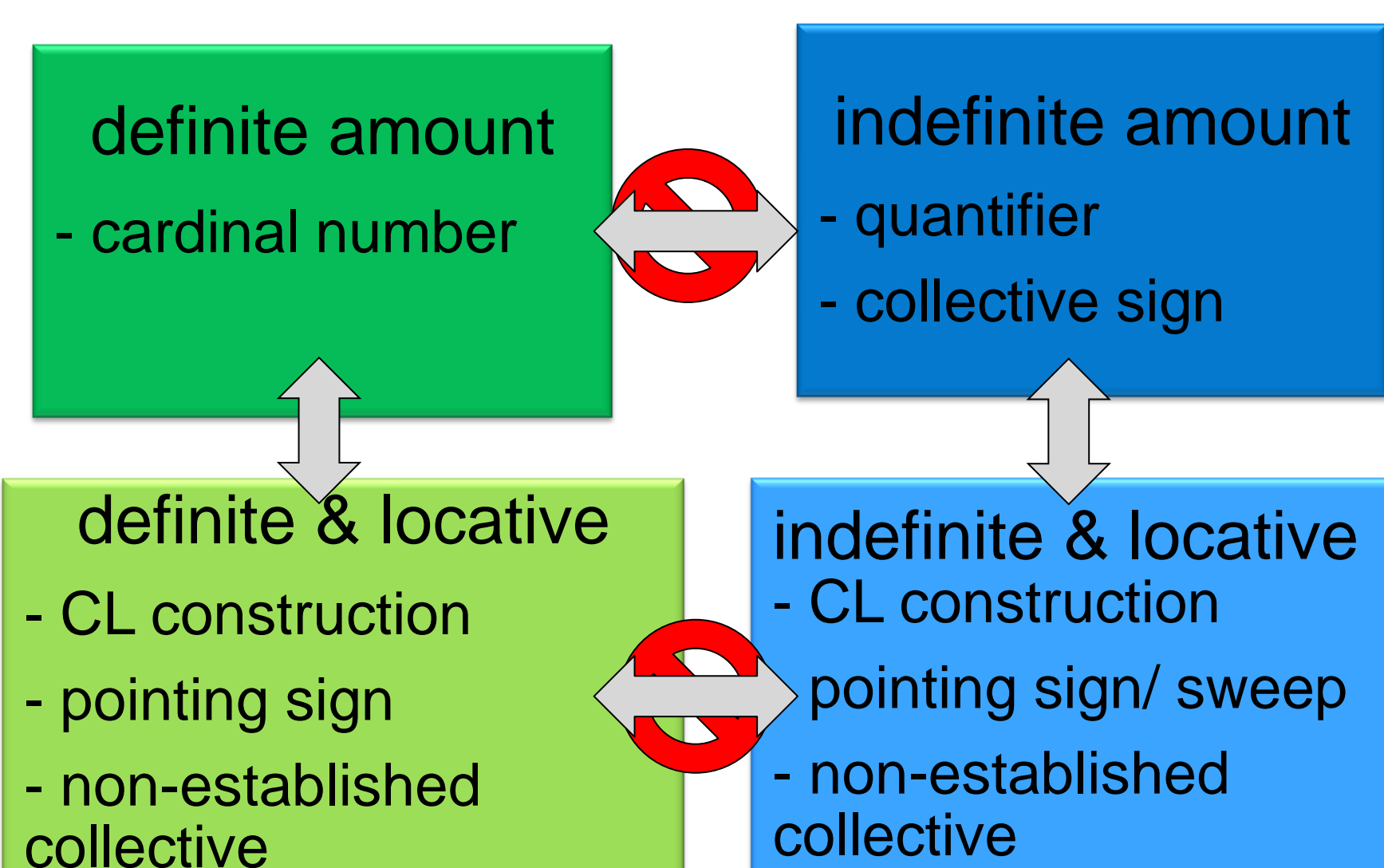
VGT sign CHIPS

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

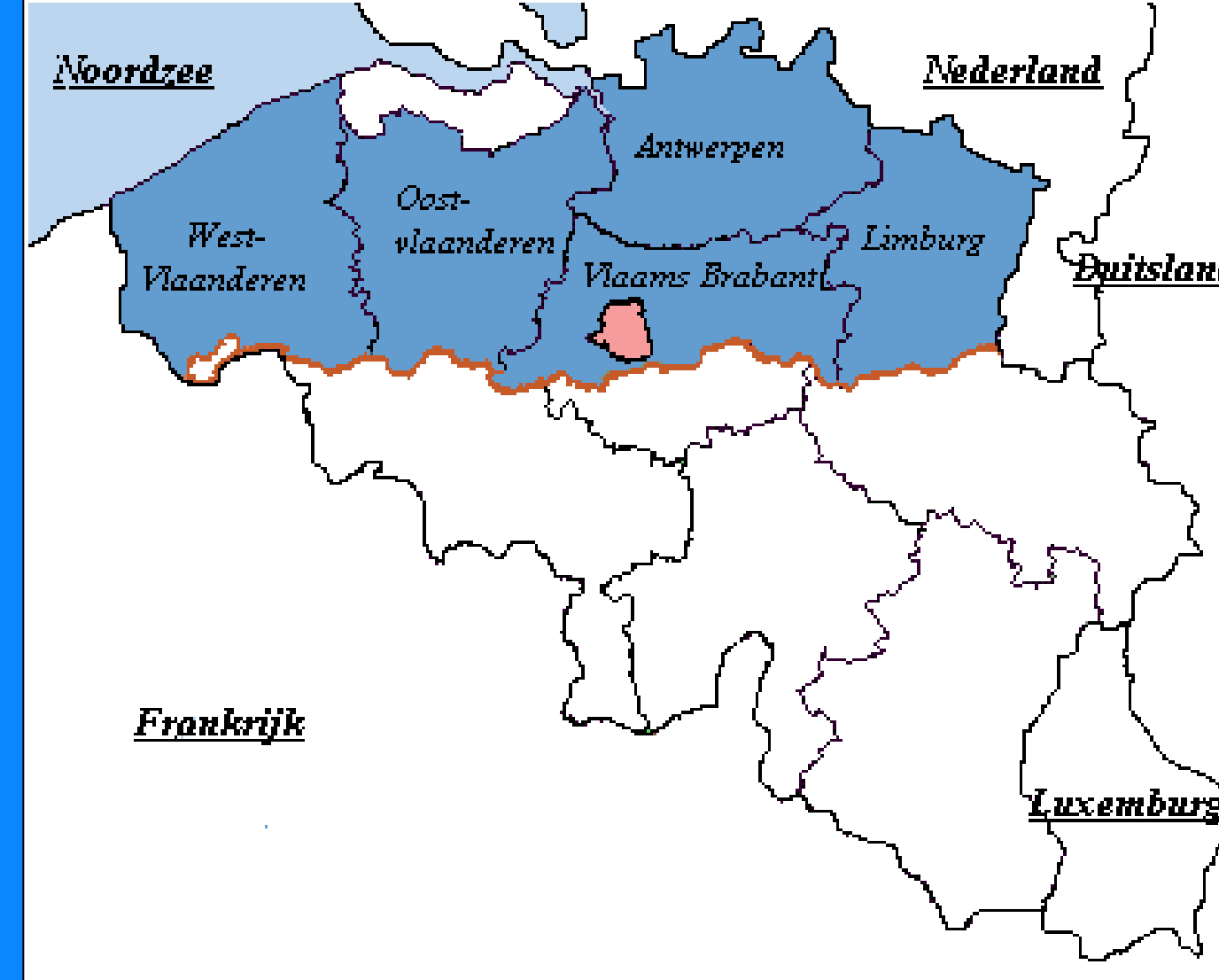


Classifier predicate expressing notion of plurality

CAR

"cars_drive_fast_and_park"

Methodology

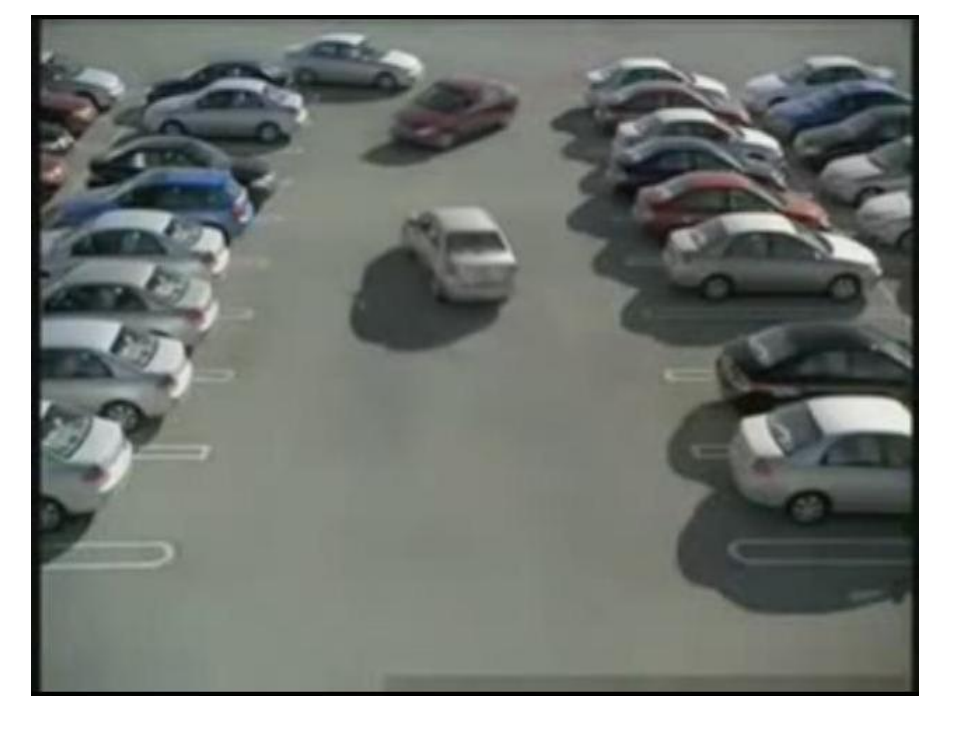


49 informants representing the 5 regional variants in VGT complying with:

- 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

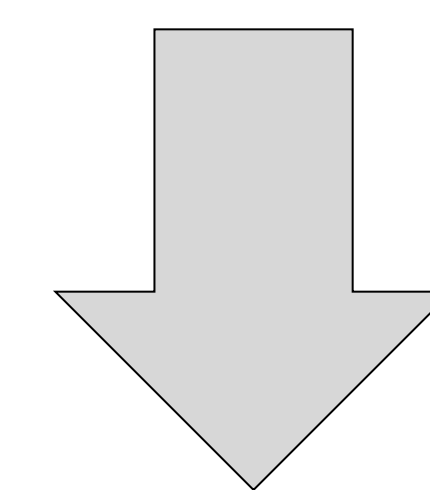
two objects are displayed

* cartoon with birds



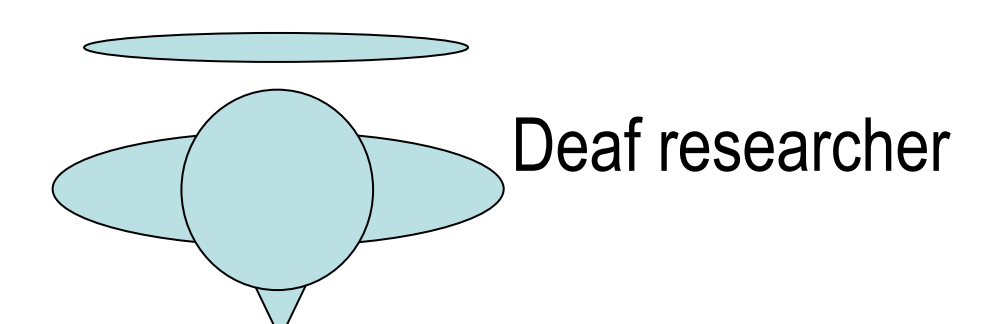
a countable number of objects is displayed

an uncountable number of objects is displayed

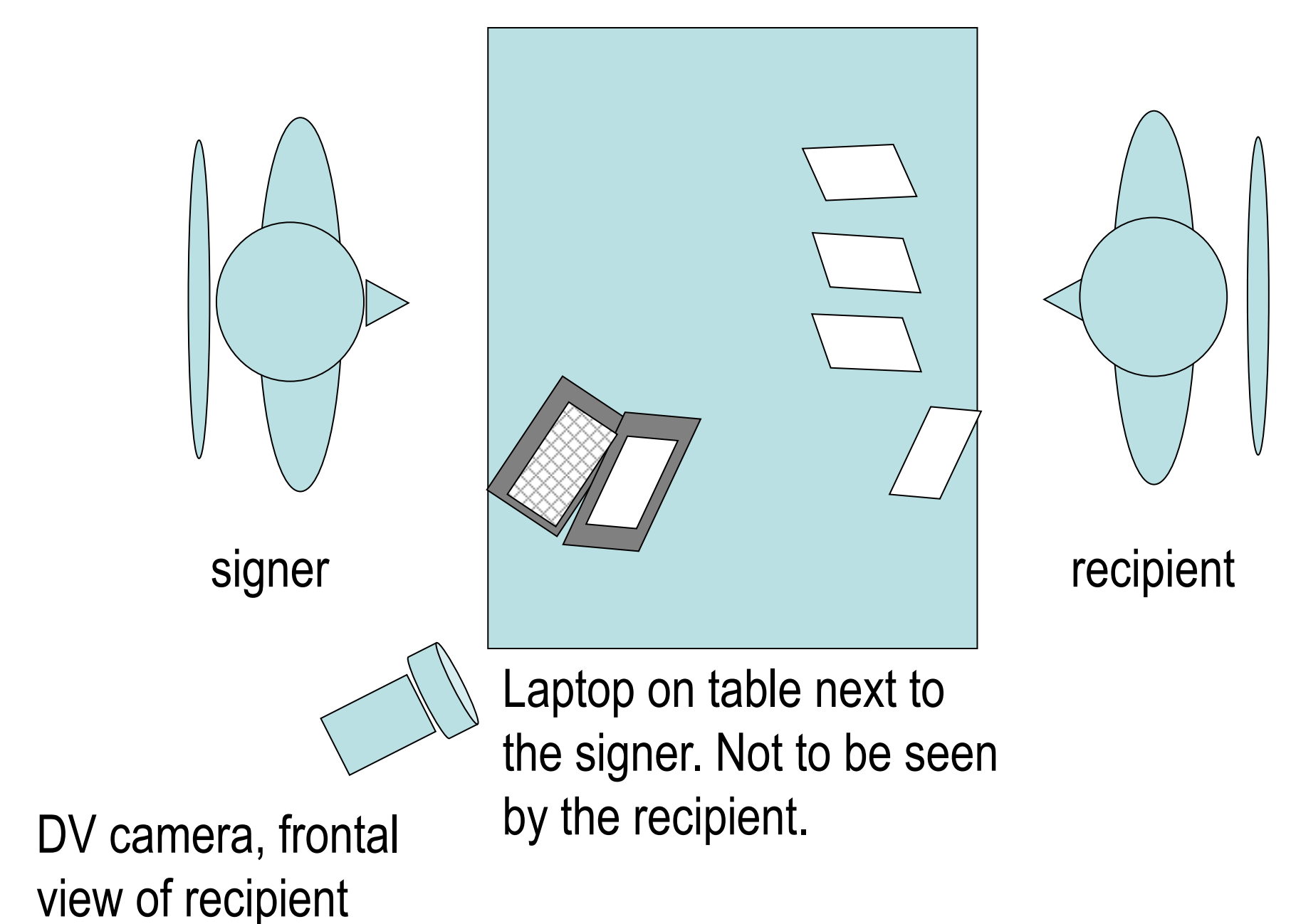


12 hours VGT data analysed in ELAN

DV camera above hands of signer



DV camera, frontal view of signer



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