

# **Some Uses of Words, Syntax and Posture to Coordinate Understanding in Dialogue**

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A number of well-known theories of dialogue coordination propose that people match each other's verbal and non-verbal choices as a means of underpinning mutual understanding. This talk will present quantitative evidence drawn from a variety of dialogue corpora which shows that although people do repeat their own verbal and non-verbal behaviours above chance they match each other's behaviours systematically less than would be expected by chance. I argue that where repetitions do occur they are usually used to help modify or alter interpretation - by facilitating various forms juxtaposition or contrast between different people's contributions.