

### **The “baby schema” in sound symbolism research: Size and cuteness interact**

While research on sound symbolism, especially size sound symbolism, has gained increased attention during the last decades, interactions of visual dimensions have rarely been investigated. The present study offers such an investigation by combining size and cuteness. Cuteness, in its cognitive perspective comprised in the “baby schema”, correlates with size, e.g. big eyes, small stature. In a forced-choice task with pseudoword stimuli and 80 German speakers, participants decided which of five differently-sized versions of an alien creature matched a stimulus best, before judging all creatures for their cuteness on a five point scale. Results show that cuteness and size judgements interact: The cuter a creature was perceived, the smaller it was judged for items containing /i:, u:/ and the bigger it was judged for items containing /a:/ as nucleus. It appears that cuteness is associated with both smallness (small stature, decreasing /i, u/) and bigness (big eyes, increasing /a/).