RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

1	
2	
3	Evidence for shared conceptual representations for sign and speech
4 5	Samuel Evans ^{*1,2} , Cathy Price ³ , Jörn Diedrichsen ⁴ , Eva Gutierrez-Sigut ¹ & Mairéad MacSweeney ¹
6	
7 8 9 10 11	¹ Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, UCL ² Dept of Psychology, University of Westminster ³ Wellcome Trust Centre for Neuroimaging, UCL ⁴ Brain and Mind Institute, University of Western Ontario
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	Corresponding author:
22	
23	*Dr Samuel Evans
24	Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, UCL
25	Alexandra House
26	17 Queen Square
27 28	London WC1N 3AZ
29	Email: S.Evans1@westminster.ac.uk
30	
31	

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

32 Abstract

33	Do different languages evoke different conceptual representations? If so, greatest
34	divergence might be expected between languages that differ most in structure, such
35	as sign and speech. Unlike speech bilinguals, hearing sign-speech bilinguals use
36	languages conveyed in different modalities. We used functional magnetic resonance
37	imaging and representational similarity analysis (RSA) to quantify the similarity of
38	semantic representations elicited by the same concepts presented in spoken British
39	English and British Sign Language in hearing, early sign-speech bilinguals. We
40	found shared representations for semantic categories in left posterior middle and
41	inferior temporal cortex. Despite shared category representations, the same spoken
42	words and signs did not elicit similar neural patterns. Thus, contrary to previous
43	univariate activation-based analyses of speech and sign perception, we show that
44	semantic representations evoked by speech and sign are only partially shared. This
45	demonstrates the unique perspective that sign languages and RSA provide in
46	understanding how language influences conceptual representation.
47	
48	
40	
49	
50	
51	
52	
53	

54

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

55 Introduction

56 Conceptual knowledge is fundamental to human cognition. Recent evidence suggests that conceptual representations are flexible and contextually defined^{1,2}. 57 58 Does the language that we use influence the nature of stored conceptual 59 representations? If this is the case, we might predict that languages that differ most 60 in structure, such as sign and speech, would show the greatest divergence between 61 conceptual representations. Sign languages are visuo-spatial natural languages that 62 are distinct from surrounding spoken languages. Hearing people with signing deaf 63 parents are bilingual in sign and speech. These individuals offer a unique insight into 64 the influence of both modality and bilingualism on semantic processing.

65 Semantic cognition engages a distributed left lateralised fronto-temporoparietal network^{3,4}. Strong evidence for modality independent neural representations 66 67 comes from studies using multivariate cross-classification of functional Magnetic 68 Resonance Imaging (fMRI) data that show that neural patterns elicited by an item in 69 one modality (e.g., pictures) can predict patterns for the same item presented in a 70 different modality (e.g., spoken words). These studies have identified common 71 patterns within hearing participants for pictures, identifiable sounds and spoken and written words in the inferior temporal, parietal and prefrontal cortex^{5–7}. Data from 72 73 patients with semantic dementia also suggest an important role for the inferior anterior temporal lobe in semantic cognition, as a modality independent "hub"². 74 75 However, studies of the influence of modality on semantic processing in hearing 76 participants might reflect the eliciting of common oral language representations via visual and auditory stimuli^{8,9}. Therefore, contrasting representations evoked by sign 77 78 and speech in hearing sign-speech bilinguals, offers a stronger test of the influence

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

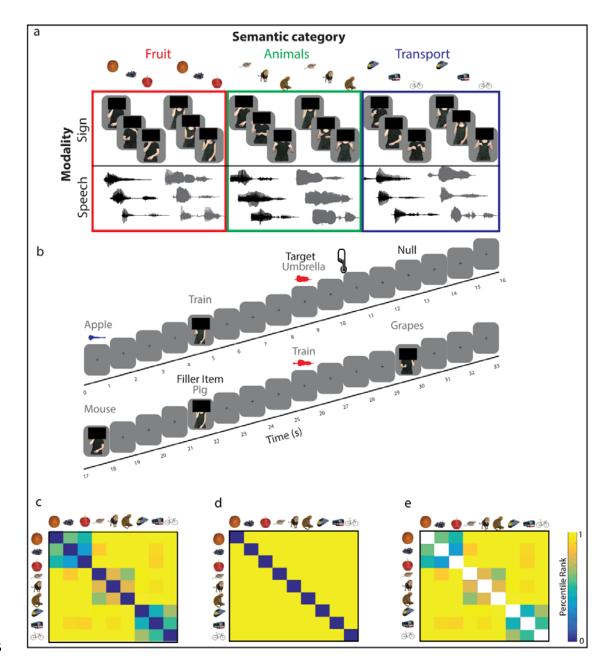
of modality on semantic processing, whilst also providing a unique perspective on
bilingualism.

81 How multiple languages are represented in a single brain is still not clear. Evidence for shared representations comes from cross-linguistic priming¹⁰ and 82 stroop-type tasks¹¹ in spoken language bilinguals. However, evidence from word 83 association and translation tasks suggest different or only partially overlapping 84 semantic representations between languages^{12,13}. At the neural level, fMRI studies 85 86 show both common and language specific activity elicited by the different languages of bilinguals^{14–18}. In these studies, the relative contribution of phonology, semantics 87 88 and syntactic processing has not been explicitly differentiated. Studies of bilinguals 89 to date have typically investigated across language representations within-90 *modality*, e.g. from speech to speech, or text to text. Only one study has attempted 91 the stronger test of cross classifying between *both* language *and* modality. They 92 found it was not possible to cross-classify neural patterns for individual written and heard words across different spoken languages¹⁹. 93

94 Sign and speech are conveyed in different modalities. Despite this, univariate 95 analyses of speech and sign perception reveal substantially overlapping brain networks^{20–26}. However, to date, the similarity of neural patterns evoked by 96 97 individual signs and spoken words has not been quantified. Here, using representational similarity analyses²⁷, we assess the evidence for shared and 98 99 language specific representations of individual conceptual items and semantic 100 categories, for speech and sign in hearing, early sign-speech bilinguals. Our 101 findings provide evidence for shared semantic representations at the level of 102 categories, but not for individual conceptual items. This suggests that visuo-spatial 103 languages and spoken languages evoke subtly different conceptual representations.

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

104



105

Fig. 1. Stimuli, experimental design and semantic models. (Fig. 1a) Early signspeech bilinguals were presented with 9 conceptual items that belonged to 3 semantic categories: fruit, animals and transport. Items were presented as signs and spoken words and were produced by male and female language models. Video stills and oscillograms are shown for the signs and spoken words respectively. Please note that the faces of the language models have

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

112 been obscured to comply with the policy of BioRxiv. Participants saw the 113 faces of the signers. (Fig. 1b) Within the scanner, participants attended to 114 speech and sign and pressed a button to identify items that were not in one of 115 the three target categories (e.g., umbrella). The dissimilarity between neural patterns evoked by the signs and spoken words were tau-a correlated with 116 different theoretical models. These models included (Fig. 1c) a semantic 117 feature model derived from the CSLB concept property norms²⁸. The color bar 118 reflects the degree of semantic dissimilarity between items. This semantic 119 120 feature model can be decomposed into two independent components: (Fig. 1d) 121 An item-based dissimilarity model that predicts that each item is uniquely 122 represented, e.g., an 'apple' is more dissimilar to other items than to itself and 123 does not predict any broader semantic relatedness between items and (Fig 1e) 124 a category-based model in which the between-item similarities are predicted 125 by the semantic feature model, but where the within-item similarities are not tested. White squares in this model indicate comparisons that were excluded. 126

127

128 **RESULTS**

129 In the scanner, hearing early sign-speech bilinguals were presented with 9 130 conceptual items from the 3 semantic categories: fruit, animals or transport. Each 131 item was presented as a sign or as a spoken word and was produced by a male or a 132 female language model (Fig. 1a). Participants were instructed to press a button to 133 detect occasional items, 8% of the trials, that were not from one of the 3 target 134 categories (Fig. 1b). Performance in the scanner indicated that participants were fully engaged with the semantic monitoring task (see Supplementary Information 1). 135 136 A univariate GLM analysis indicated that speech and sign language engaged similar fronto-temporal networks, consistent with previous studies²⁰⁻²⁴ (see Supplementary 137 138 Information 2).

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

140 Shared semantic representations for speech and sign

141 Our criteria for identifying shared semantic representations for speech and 142 sign were as follows. First, using a searchlight analysis, we identified regions in 143 which there were reliably positive distances (see methods) between items within-144 *modality* (e.g. averaging the speech-speech distances and the sign-sign distances). 145 We calculated distances only between items from the different language models 146 (e.g. different speakers and signers respectively) to exclude similarities driven by 147 low-level perceptual properties. In the identified regions, we then tested for *shared* 148 semantic representations applying the following criteria: (A) a significant fit to the 149 semantic feature model in the *within-modality* distances (e.g. both the across 150 speaker, speech-speech, and the across signer, sign-sign, distances) and (B) a 151 significant fit of the semantic feature model to the *across-modality* distances (e.g. 152 speech-sign and sign-speech distances). We also expected, (C) no evidence of a 153 difference in strength of fit to the semantic model between speech and sign. (D) no fit 154 to a model predicting greater distances between items from a different, as compared 155 to the same speaker, in the speech-speech distances, or from a different, as 156 compared to the same signer, in the sign-sign distances and (E) no fit to a model 157 predicting sensitivity to the iconicity of sign, a perceptual feature present in sign but 158 not speech.

Reliable within-modality distances were identified in six clusters (Fig. 2a): (1)
in bilateral V1-V3 and the LOC [-14 -96 10], (2) the right anterior superior temporal
gyrus [58 -4 -2], (3) the left anterior superior and middle temporal gyrus [-60 -10 -2],
(4) the right middle temporal gyrus and MT/V5 [52 -68 6], (5) the right insular [36 -12
14] and (6) the left posterior middle and inferior temporal gyrus (left pMTG/ITG) [-48 62 -6].

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

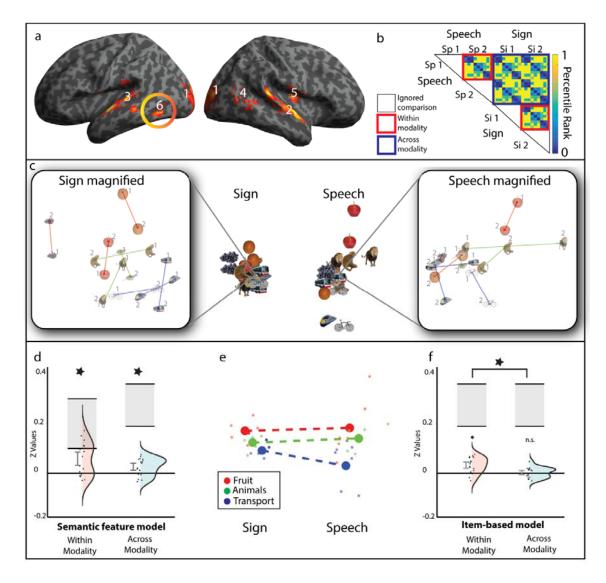
165	Only the response in the left posterior middle and inferior temporal gyri
166	(pMTG/ITG) cluster was consistent with shared semantic representations (see Fig.
167	2a cluster 6; Supplementary Information 3 for full details). In this cluster, there was a
168	significant fit to the (A) within-modality semantic feature model (t (16) = 3.622 , p =
169	0.001, $d_z = 0.879$, Fig 2d) and (B) across-modality semantic feature model (t (16) =
170	3.076, p = 0.004, d_z = 0.746, Fig 2d). Whilst there was (C) no evidence for
171	differential sensitivity in the encoding of semantics for speech and sign (t $(16) =$
172	0.400, $p = 0.694$, $d_z = 0.097$), (D) no sensitivity to the acoustic or visual features
173	associated with speaker (see model in Fig. 3e) or signer identity (see model in Fig.
174	4e), both ps > 0.063, or (E) no influence of the iconicity structure of sign in the sign-
175	sign or across-modality distances, both ps > 0.106 (see Supplementary Information 4
176	and Supplementary Fig. 2).

177 The fit of the semantic feature model (Fig. 1c) can be further decomposed into 178 item-based dissimilarity (Fig. 1d) and category-based dissimilarity (Fig. 1e). For within-modality distances, the left pMTG/ITG region showed a significant fit to both 179 the semantic category (t (16) = 1.980, p = 0.033, $d_z = 0.480$) and item-based model (t 180 (16) = 4.185, p = 3.50 x 10⁻⁴, d_z = 1.015). The critical analyses **across-modality**, 181 182 indicated that the category-based model showed a significant fit to the data (t (16) =183 2.509, p = 0.012, $d_z = 0.608$), whereas the item-based model did not (t (16) = 0.475, 184 p = 0.321, $d_z = 0.115$). There was no evidence of a difference in the strength of fit to 185 the category model in the *within-modality* as compared to the *across-modality* 186 distances (t (16) = 0.135, p = 0.894, dz = 0.033), suggesting that semantic categories were represented equally robustly within- and across-modality. By 187 188 contrast, the item model was a significantly better fit to the within-modality than the 189 *across-modality* distances (t (16) = 3.376, p = 0.004, dz = 0.819, Fig. 2f), providing

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

- 190 strong evidence that item-based representations are less robustly encoded across-
- 191 modality.
- 192 Together, these results suggest that semantic category structure drives the
- commonality between activation patterns for sign and speech in left pMTG/ITG.
- 194 Indeed, this can be seen in the Multidimensional Scaling (MDS) solution (Fig. 2c)
- used to visualise the similarity structure of the Representational Dissimilarity Matrix
- (RDM). Fig. 2e illustrates the similar ordering of the category centroids both within
- 197 and across each modality.

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations



199

200 Fig. 2. Shared semantic representations for speech and sign. (Fig. 2a) A 201 searchlight analysis identified brain regions containing positive within-202 modality representational distances, thresholded at p < 0.005 peak level, FDR 203 corrected at q < 0.05 at the cluster level. These regions are numbered according to the text in the results section. (Fig. 2b) Representational 204 205 distances in these regions were Tau-a correlated with the semantic feature 206 model within- and across-modality. The red boxes illustrate the within-207 modality distances, with the upper red box testing for abstracted speech representations (e.g. from speaker 1 to 2), and the lower red box testing for 208 209 abstracted representations for sign (e.g. from signer 1 to 2). The blue box contains all across-language distances. Each 9x9 submatrix of dissimilarities 210 211 is predicted from the semantic feature model (Fig. 1c). White boxes are

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

212 comparisons excluded from the analysis. The color bar reflects the predicted 213 strength of dissimilarity. Plots (Figs. 2c-f) show the response in cluster 6, the 214 left pMTG/ITG. (Fig. 2c) shows the non-metric MDS representation of the 215 response in left pMTG/ITG: the left panel shows within sign distances 216 magnified to make the representational structure clearer and the right panel 217 shows the equivalent speech representations. In these magnified images, 218 lines connect the same conceptual item produced by each speaker or signer, 219 marked as speaker/signer 1 or speaker/signer 2 on the figure. (Fig. 2d) In the 220 left pMTG/ITG, there was a significant fit to the semantic feature model in both 221 the within- and across-modality distances. Violin plots show distributions and 222 individual data points for the z transformed values, including the 90% 223 confidence interval and the noise ceiling (grey rectangle). The relative 224 contribution of item-based (Fig. 1d) and category-based (Fig. 1e) to this fit was 225 assessed. This showed there to be a significant fit to the category-based 226 model both within- and across-modality, without evidence of a difference in fit 227 when they were compared with one another. The MDS representation (Fig. 2e) 228 showing the mean centroid of each category within each modality for fruit 229 (red), animals (green), blue (transport), with dashed line connecting centroids 230 across-modality, highlights the within and across-modality category-based 231 dissimilarity. Plot (Fig. 2f) demonstrates that the item-based model was a significant fit to the within-modality, but not across-modality distances, and 232 233 that the item-based model was a better fit to the within- as compared to 234 across-modality distances.

235

236 Modality specific representations

Using a searchlight analysis, we tested for regions in which the average of the speech-speech distances were greater than the sign-sign distances and vice versa. This identified speech-specific and sign-specific processing regions. Within these regions we tested for *modality specific semantic representations* evidenced by (A) a fit to the semantic feature model (Fig. 1c) and (B) a fit to the semantic category

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

model (Fig. 1e) in the speech-speech or sign-sign distances for speech or sign
respectively and (C) no evidence of a fit to the speaker or signer identity model (see
the models in Fig. 3e and 4e). *Speech specific responses*For speech, the searchlight analysis revealed four clusters: (1) right anterior
STG extending to the temporal pole [58 -4 -2], (2) left anterior STG [-56 -8 2], (3)

right posterior STG/STS [58 -34 18] and (4) right putamen and insula [30 -10 10]

250 (see Fig. 3a). Within these regions, we tested for speech specific semantic

representations adjusting the critical alpha level to p < 0.013 to account for tests in

four clusters. In one of the four clusters, the right anterior STG [58 -4 -2] (Fig. 3a,

cluster 1), there was a significant fit to the semantic feature model (t (16) = 2.529, p

254 = 0.011, $d_z = 0.613$, see Fig 3b and Fig. 3h). This was driven by a fit to the item-level

model (t (16) = 5.229, p = 4.14 x 10^{-5} , d_z = 1.268, see Fig. 3c and Fig. 3h). This

region was additionally sensitive to the acoustic differences between speakers (t (16)

257 = 5.330, p = 3.39×10^{-5} , d_z = 1.293, see Fig. 3e and Fig. 3h) suggesting the

258 presence of speech form representations rather than speech selective semantic

representations (see Fig. 3f and Fig. 3g for MDS solution highlighting speaker-based

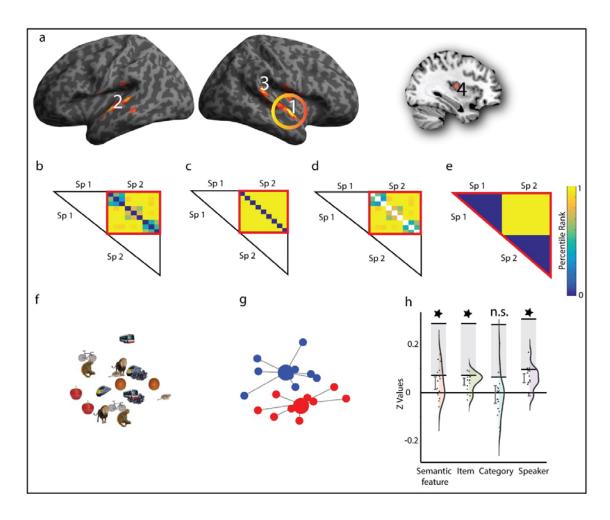
similarity). None of the four regions showed a response consistent with speech

specific semantic representations, as the category-based model (Fig. 3d) was not a

significant fit in any region (all ps > 0.110, see fit to the speaker model in the right
STG in Fig. 3h).

264

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations



265

266 Fig. 3. Speech-specific neural responses. (Fig. 3a) A searchlight analysis 267 identified regions with greater representational distances for speech 268 compared to sign, thresholded at p < 0.005 peak level, FDR corrected at q < 0.0050.05 at the cluster level. Clusters are numbered according to the text in the 269 results section. Models (Figs. 3b-e) show the within speech models that were 270 tested: (Fig. 3b) Within-speech semantic feature model, (Fig. 3c) Within-speech 271 272 item-based model, (Fig 3d) Within-speech category-based model and (Fig. 3e) 273 Between-speaker model. All models (Figs. 3b-d) test dissimilarities across 274 speaker (e.g. from speaker 1 to 2) in order to identify representations 275 abstracted from perceptual features. Color bar reflects predicted strength of 276 dissimilarity. White boxes are comparisons excluded from analysis. Plots 277 (Figs. 3f-h) show the response in cluster 1, the right anterior STG: (Fig. 3f) 278 Shows the non-metric MDS solution and (Fig. 3g) the same solution 279 highlighting speaker identity encoding. Large circles represent the centroids

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

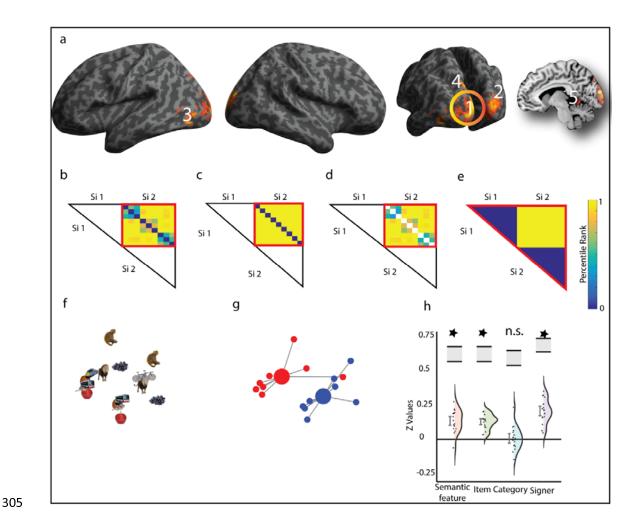
280 for items from speaker 1 (red) and speaker 2 (blue). Smaller circles represent 281 the observed response for each item. Grey lines connect each item to 282 centroid. (Fig. 3h) Violin plots show model fits for z transformed values for 283 each model, with distributions and individual data points and 90% confidence 284 intervals and noise ceiling (grey box shown). This shows a significant fit to 285 the semantic feature model, driven by item-based rather than category-based 286 similarity structure and additional sensitivity to speaker identity, consistent 287 with abstract spoken word form representations rather than modality specific semantic processing. 288

289

290 Sign specific responses

291 Greater representational distances for sign than speech were identified in five 292 regions: (1) a cluster spreading across left V1-V3 [-6 -98 16], (2) a cluster within right 293 V1-V3 [22 -90 16], (3) a cluster in the left LOC and MT/V5 [-44 -80 -6], (4) left 294 superior occipital gyrus and superior parietal lobule [-10 -84 42] and (5) left lingual 295 gyrus spreading to the cerebellum [-4 -48 -8] (see Fig. 4a). Within these regions, we 296 tested for sign-specific semantic representations, adjusting the critical alpha level to 297 p < 0.010 to account for tests in five clusters. Analogous to the findings for speech, 298 the response in these regions was not consistent with sign-specific semantic 299 representations, as the category-based model was not a significant fit in any region (all ps > 0.037). The response in clusters in the left V1-V3 and right V1-V3 cluster 300 301 were consistent with sign form representations characterised by a significant fit to the semantic feature model (both ps < 3.10×10^{-5}) but driven by item-based encoding 302 $(ps < 1.34 \times 10^{-7})$ with additional sensitivity to signer identity (both ps < 3.29 X 10^{-7}). 303 304 see Fig. 4).

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations



306 Fig. 4. Sign specific neural responses. (Fig. 4a) A searchlight analysis 307 identified regions with greater representational distances for sign compared to speech, thresholded at p < 0.005 peak level, FDR corrected at q < 0.05 at the 308 309 cluster level. Clusters are numbered according to the text in the results section. Models (Figs. 4b-d) show the within sign models: (Fig. 4b) Within-sign 310 311 semantic feature model, (Fig. 4c) Within-sign item-based model, (Fig. 4d) 312 Within-sign category-based model and (Fig. 4e) Between-signer model. 313 Models (Figs. 4b-d) test dissimilarities across signer (e.g. from signer 1 to 2) to identify representations abstracted from perceptual features. Color bar 314 315 reflects predicted strength of dissimilarity. White boxes are comparisons 316 excluded from analysis. Plots (Figs. 4f-h) show responses in cluster 1, the left 317 V1-V3. (Fig. 4f) Shows the non-metric MDS solution and (Fig. 4g) the same 318 solution highlighting the signer identity encoding in the left V1-V3 cluster. 319 Large circles represent the centroids for items from signer 1 (red) and signer 2

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

320 (blue). Smaller circles represent the observed response for each item. Grey 321 lines connect each item to centroid. (Fig. 4h) Violin plots show model fits for z 322 transformed values for each model fit, with distributions and individual data 323 points and 90% confidence intervals and noise ceiling (grey box shown). Plots 324 show a significant fit to the semantic feature model, driven by item-based 325 rather than category-based similarity structure and an additional sensitivity to 326 signer identity within the left V1-V3, consistent with abstract sign form 327 representations rather than modality specific semantic processing.

328

329 DISCUSSION On the basis of univariate analyses of fMRI data it has been 330 assumed that the same underlying semantic representations support the perception of spoken and signed languages²⁹. We tested this assumption, using RSA, to 331 332 quantify the similarity of neural patterns evoked by the same conceptual items 333 presented as BSL and spoken British English: two languages that differ in their 334 modality of expression. We tested for similarity at the level of individual items and 335 semantic categories. Shared category representations, that were abstracted from 336 surface acoustic and visual form, were found in the left pMTG/ITG. In this region, 337 both individual items and categories were encoded within-modality. Across-modality, 338 we found evidence for common coding of semantic categories. We did not detect 339 evidence of common item-level representations across modalities. Furthermore, 340 item-level encoding was significantly stronger within- as compared to across-341 modality. In sign-specific and speech-specific areas, mainly in visual and auditory 342 primary and association cortices respectively, there was evidence for modality 343 specific item-based representations. In these regions, we did not see evidence for 344 category-based structure and the representations retained sensitivity to auditory and 345 visual features, suggestive of phonological word and sign form representations 346 rather than language specific semantic representations. Taken together, our data

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

are consistent with shared semantic representations between speech and sign, at
only a broad level of semantic specificity. In the following sections, we discuss the
implications of these findings.

350 Shared semantic representations in pMTG/ITG We identified shared 351 representations for semantic categories in sign and speech within the left pMTG/ITG. 352 This is consistent with studies showing common category representations for the 353 same items presented as pictures, environmental sounds, and spoken and written words in this region ^{5,7}. Indeed, activation of the left pMTG/ITG is associated with 354 355 the extraction of meaning from both the auditory and visual modalities. For example, it is activated when reading words³⁰, in the perception of semantically ambiguous 356 speech³¹ and during sign language perception ^{25,26,32}. 357

358 Common semantic coding for sign and speech was limited to category 359 representations and there was no evidence for direct correspondences between 360 individual spoken words and signs. Partially shared semantic representation 361 between languages is consistent with computational models of bilingualism, such as the Distributed Feature Model³³. These models predict a single semantic store, in 362 which each language weights semantic features independently^{13,33,34}. The factors 363 364 contributing to differing weights between signed and spoken languages may be 365 greater than, and different to, those contributing to divergence between spoken 366 languages. Studies of spoken language processing show that lexical-semantic 367 access is affected by the phonological structure of the lexicon. For example, words from dense phonological neighbourhoods activate semantic representations less 368 strongly³⁵ due to cascading activation between phonology and semantics³⁶. Indeed, 369 370 many computational models of speech processing do not make distinctions between form and meaning³⁷. Similar architectures have been suggested for sign 371

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

processing³⁸. As natural languages, signed and spoken languages have very
different phonologies and phonological neighbourhoods. This might affect the
strength and structure of semantic activation within sign and speech lexicons, with
the possible result of reducing the commonality of conceptual representations
between the languages.

Another possibility is that the influence of greater iconicity found in sign 377 languages³⁹ may reduce the degree of similarity between semantic representations 378 379 of sign and speech. However, this is an unlikely explanation for the lack of item-380 level correspondences between individual words and signs in the current dataset, as 381 we did not observe an effect of iconicity in the response in the left pMTG/ITG. There 382 are, however, more opaque form-meaning links that differ across speech and sign. 383 For example, the handshape "I" (extension of the little finger alone) denotes a 384 number of BSL signs that have negative connotations: bad, wrong, awful, poison⁴⁰. 385 Similarly, English words beginning with "gl" are often associated with light of low intensity: gleam, glow, glint, glimmer, glint³⁹. Canonical signs can also carry 386 387 additional layers of meaning that allow communication of the size, location, 388 movement and other features of the referent; aspects of meaning that cannot be 389 communicated by the paralinguistic features of the voice. Again, these features may 390 fundamentally change the nature of semantic representation. These potential 391 explanations for the lack of item-level correspondences need to be tested in future. 392 For example, based on these findings, we might predict differences in the 393 representation of specific semantic categories, for example, representations for tools 394 might be expected to differ between unimodal (e.g. speech-speech) and bimodal 395 (e.g. sign-speech) bilinguals, on the basis that signs evoke greater specificity in the 396 semantic features associated with how they are handled.

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

397	An alternative explanation is that the absence of shared item-level
398	correspondences reflects the finer spatial scale of neural representations for
399	individual items which might be beyond the resolution of fMRI ⁴¹ . However, this would
400	seem unlikely given the identification of within-modality item-level encoding. Equally,
401	it might also reflect our methodological choices. We asked participants to monitor for
402	category rather than item-level distinctions ⁴² . We decided to use a category-based
403	task to maximise the likelihood of finding commonality between the languages, which
404	we assumed would be more robust at a broader level of semantic specificity.
405	Another possibility is that we did not have a high enough signal to noise ratio in
406	areas in which across-modality item level representations might be expected. A
407	posterior-anterior gradient of function has been suggested within the inferior
408	temporal cortex that reflects a wider-to-narrower window of semantic specificity ^{2,43} .
409	The anterior inferior portion of the inferior temporal cortex is particularly susceptible
410	to signal drop out. Hence, the absence of shared item-level encoding might reflect
411	reduced signal quality in this region. However, tSNR maps for our data indicate
412	relatively good signal quality in most of the anterior inferior temporal cortex (see
413	Supplementary Information 3). Furthermore, drop out in the anterior inferior ATL
414	was similar to that found in the left pMTG/ITG and the superior ATL, regions in which
415	we found significant representational structure. We chose not to use a dual echo
416	sequence to mitigate against drop out ⁴⁴ , as our sequence was optimised for signal
417	quality in the posterior temporal cortex, the region most consistently activated by
418	both sign and speech in previous univariate studies. Future studies using dual echo
419	sequences and item-level discriminative tasks are necessary to exclude the
420	possibility that these methodological details obscured identification of item-level
421	correspondences in this study.

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

422	Modality specific representations Greater representational structure for
423	speech, than sign, was found in the bilateral superior temporal cortex and the right
424	insula. Within these regions, only a cluster in the right anterior superior temporal
425	cortex was a significant fit to the semantic model. This was shown to be driven by
426	the encoding of individual spoken words. A role for the anterior superior temporal
427	cortex in representing the identity of spoken words is consistent with studies in which
428	the intelligibility of speech has been parametrically varied or contrasted with non-
429	speech sounds ^{45,46} and the suggestion that spoken word representations are
430	detected in the more superior portion of the ATL ² . This region was additionally
431	sensitive to speaker identity, suggesting that spoken word forms and speaker
432	characteristics are jointly encoded. This is consistent with a role for the right anterior
433	superior temporal cortex in representing speaker identity ⁴⁷ and weak joint sensitivity
434	to spoken word and speaker identity in the right superior temporal cortex ⁴⁸ . The fact
435	that representations of spoken word forms were identified in the right, but not left
436	anterior STG, is unexpected. One possibility is that it is due to the greater
437	involvement of right hemisphere structures in language processing in early
438	bilinguals ⁴⁹ .

439 Regions containing greater representational structure for sign, than speech, were found in the bilateral occipital cortices, as well as in the left superior parietal 440 lobule. This is consistent with the greater visual and body-space processing 441 demands of sign language perception ²⁹ and the growing evidence for superior 442 443 parietal cortex involvement in sign perception and production⁵⁰. As for speech, a subset of regions showing greater representational structure for sign than speech 444 445 showed a significant fit with the semantic model, and this was driven by item-level 446 encoding, consistent with visual sign form representations. Paralleling the findings

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

447 for speech, a number of these regions also exhibited a joint sensitivity to the identity

448 of the sign and the signer.

449	Conclusions For the first time, we quant	tified the similarity of neural
450	representations for the same conceptual items	presented as sign and speech. We
451	found similarity between conceptual representa	ations, at the category level, in the left
452	pMTG/ITG. We did not find evidence for region	ns in which there were direct one-to-
453	one mappings between individual spoken word	s and signs. This may suggest that
454	sign and speech share partially, but not fully, or	verlapping semantic representations.
455	This result is unexpected. Evidence to date ha	s led researchers, including
456	ourselves, to propose extensive similarity in the	e neural processes underlying sign
457	and speech ²⁹ . Our findings suggest the need	to rethink this assumption and
458	highlight the unique perspective that sign langu	lage can provide on language
459	processing and semantic representation more	broadly.

460

461

462 Online Methods

463 Participants Ethical approval was granted by the UCL ethics committee. Data were 464 collected from 18 right handed early sign-speech bilinguals with no known 465 neurological, hearing or language learning impairments. One participant's data was 466 removed from the set due to an incidental finding, leaving a final data set of 17 467 participants (Mean age=33; range 20-52 years; female=12). Fifteen participants 468 learned British Sign Language (BSL) from a deaf parent and two from an older deaf 469 sibling. Two of the participants who learned sign language from a deaf parent did not learn BSL from birth; one, learned AUSLAN from birth and learned BSL from the 470 471 age of twenty-one, the other, was exposed to another sign language from birth,

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

472	before learning BSL from 3 years of age. As a group the participants self-reported
473	excellent signing ability (mean = 6/7, SD= 0.86, range = 4-7).

474	Stimuli Stimuli consisted of nine core items for which neural responses were
475	analysed. Each core item was presented 48 times across the whole experiment, in
476	different modalities (sign/ speech) and by different models (male/ female) (see
477	'paradigm' for more details). These nine items belonged to three categories: fruit
478	(orange, grapes and apple), animals (mouse, lion and monkey) and transport (train,
479	bus and bicycle). Items within each category were similar and were distinct from
480	other categories on the basis of their semantic features, as evidenced by the CSLB
481	concept property norms ²⁸ (see Fig. 1c). Items were chosen to ensure that the
482	categories were matched for age of acquisition (fruit $M = 3.78$; animals $M = 4.52$;
483	transport = 4.04), imageability (fruit M = 618; animals M = 610; transport M = 640),
484	familiarity (fruit M = 566; animals M = 521; transport M = 551) and the number of
485	syllables and phonemes in spoken English ^{$51-54$} . In addition, we ensured that the
486	BSL equivalents of the spoken words were matched across category for handshape,
487	location, movement and handedness, and that iconicity ⁵⁵ was similar across
488	categories (fruit M = 3.80; animals M = 3.92; transport M = 4.23; 1 low - 7 high
489	iconicity).

Speech samples were recorded by a male and female Southern British
English (SBE) speaker in an acoustically shielded booth with 16-bit quantisation and
a sampling rate of 22050 Hz using Adobe Audition. Spoken words were excised at
the zero crossing point. They were then filtered to account for the frequency
response of the Sensimetric headphones used in the scanner
(<u>http://www.sens.com/products/model-s14/</u>) and the overall amplitude was Root
Mean Square (RMS) equalised to ensure a similar perceived loudness (see Fig. 1a

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

497	for oscillograms). The mean duration of the auditory stimuli for the core items was
498	558ms (range = 323-865 ms), these sounds were similar in duration across semantic
499	categories (fruit M = 573 ms; animals M = 575 ms; transport M = 533 ms) and
500	gender of the speaker (male $M = 557$ ms; female $M = 564$ ms). The phonetic
501	distance between each of the spoken words was calculated using the Levenshtein
502	distance ⁵⁶ . This was achieved by calculating the number of phoneme insertions,
503	deletions and/or substitutions necessary to turn one word into the other, divided by
504	the number of phonemes in the longest word. The absolute value of the difference in
505	Levenshtein distance between each item was calculated. These distances did not
506	correlate with the semantic feature distances (r = 0.063 , n = 36 , p = 0.713), hence
507	semantic structure was not confounded with phonetic structure.

508 The BSL signs were all common variants in southern England as shown in the BSL SignBank⁵⁷ (http://bslsignbank.ucl.ac.uk/dictionary/). Signs were recorded with 509 510 a Sony Handycam HDR-CX130 on a blue background by a male and a female deaf 511 native signer with a sampling rate of 50 fps and an aspect ratio of 1920x1080. The 512 blue background was keyed out and replaced with a dark grey background. Videos were down-sampled to 30 frames per second and a resolution of 960 x 540 with 513 514 Adobe Premiere for presentation in the scanner. All signs were produced with 515 corresponding BSL mouthing. The signs were recorded in isolation such that the 516 hands returned to a neutral position resting on the knees between each sign. During editing, the start and end-points of a sign were identified as a 'hold' (very brief pause 517 518 in movement of the hands) to remove the transitional movement into and out of the 519 neutral hands on the lap. Still frames of the hold points at the beginning and end of 520 each sign, with duration of 333ms, were inserted to ensure that the signs were easily 521 perceived in the scanner. The mean duration of the sign stimuli was 1107ms (range

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

522	= 867-1400ms). The signs were similar in duration as a function of semantic
523	category (fruit M = 1079ms; animals M = 1055ms; transport M = 1128ms) and
524	gender of the signer (male $M = 1087ms$; female $M = 1086ms$).
525	An iconicity dissimilarity measure ⁵⁵ for the signs was calculated by taking the
526	absolute value of the difference between ratings of each item with every other.
527	These distances did not correlate with semantic feature similarity ($r = -0.126$, $n = 36$,
528	p=0.465), hence semantic structure was not confounded with iconicity.
529	Participants were shown 36 additional items in the scanner to facilitate a
530	semantic monitoring task (see Fig. 1b) for which neural activity was not analysed.
531	The additional items consisted of 18 items from outside the categories of fruit, animal
532	and transport, e.g. buildings, clothes, furniture and tools, which were included as
533	target filler trials. Plus, an additional 18 non-target filler trials, 6 per category, of
534	other types of fruit, animals or transport that were included to reduce habituation to
535	the nine core items (see 'Paradigm' below for details of number of presentations).
536	Each individual filler item was produced by only one of the speakers or signers, with
537	the number of items from each speaker and signer balanced. The full set of stimuli
538	are available here: https://osf.io/ek8ty/.
539	Prior to scanning, participants were familiarised with the signs and spoken
540	words. Participants saw each sign stimulus and heard each word produced by both

sign and speech models and were required to name each item in spoken English.

542 They were shown all core items, target and non-target fillers. Sign recognition was

high (core items: mean = 17/18, min = 15/18, max = 18/18; filler items: mean =

32/36, min = 21/36, max = 35/36). On the very few occasions that participants

545 interpreted a sign as a non-intended English word, due to regional variations in

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

546	signs, participants were told the intended spoken label and asked to repeat it. They
547	were then retested on all the items in the experiment to ensure retention. Seventeen
548	out of 18 participants required one round of correction, the remaining participant
549	required a second round. Participants practiced a mock version of the within
550	scanner task on a laptop prior to scanning.
551	Paradigm In the scanner, participants were required to attend to the signed and
552	spoken stimuli and to press a button when they encountered an item from outside
553	the categories of fruit, animals or transport, e.g. a target filler item (see Fig. 1b). The
554	handedness of the button press was counterbalanced across participants.
555	Data were collected in 6 runs. In each run, each of the 9 core items were
556	presented twice in each of the following formats: sign and speech; male and female
557	model. Therefore each core item was presented 8 times in each run (2x2x2), with 72
558	core trials in total (9 items x 8 instances). Within each run, core items were
559	presented as two concatenated mini blocks of 36 trials. Within each mini block items
560	were randomised with the constraint that the same concept (e.g., 'orange') could not
561	be presented consecutively, regardless of modality, to reduce habituation.

In addition, in each run there were 6 target filler trials (non fruits, transport or animals) for which participants were required to press a button and 6 non-target fillers ('other' fruits, transport or animal items). The total number of trials was balanced within run for modality (e.g. whether sign or speech) and language model (e.g. speaker and signer). The filler trials (target and non-target fillers) were interspersed within each run regularly but unpredictably. An additional, seven null trials lasting 4 seconds were regularly but unpredictably interspersed within the each

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

569	run. During these trials a white fixation cross was presented on a grey background
570	in the absence of sound or additional visual stimulation for 4 seconds.
571	In summary, each of 6 runs consisted of 91 trials (72 core trials, 6 target filler
572	trials, 6 non-target filler trials, 7 null trials). The order of modality of presentation of
573	the items (speech/sign) was counter balanced across pairs of participants, such that
574	items presented as signs to participant 1 were presented as speech to participant 2,
575	and vice versa. Each stimulus was presented for its natural duration and was
576	followed by a fixation cross lasting 3 seconds, before the start of the next trial.
577	After scanning, participants provided iconicity ratings on the sign stimuli that
577 578	After scanning, participants provided iconicity ratings on the sign stimuli that they had viewed in the scanner using the technique described by Vinson et al. ⁵⁵ .
578	they had viewed in the scanner using the technique described by Vinson et al. ⁵⁵ .
578 579	they had viewed in the scanner using the technique described by Vinson et al. ⁵⁵ . They then took part in a multiple arrangement task in which they arranged pictures of
578 579 580	they had viewed in the scanner using the technique described by Vinson et al. ⁵⁵ . They then took part in a multiple arrangement task in which they arranged pictures of the core and filler items "based on their similarity" using a drag and drop interface ⁵⁸ .
578 579 580 581	they had viewed in the scanner using the technique described by Vinson et al. ⁵⁵ . They then took part in a multiple arrangement task in which they arranged pictures of the core and filler items "based on their similarity" using a drag and drop interface ⁵⁸ . The Euclidean distances derived from this arrangement correlated highly with the
578 579 580 581 582	they had viewed in the scanner using the technique described by Vinson et al. ⁵⁵ . They then took part in a multiple arrangement task in which they arranged pictures of the core and filler items "based on their similarity" using a drag and drop interface ⁵⁸ . The Euclidean distances derived from this arrangement correlated highly with the CSLB concept property norms for the core items (r = 0.904, n = 36, p = 4.42 x 10 ⁻¹⁴),

585 Data Acquisition

586 Data was acquired with a 3-Tesla scanner using a Magnetom TIM Trio 587 systems (Siemens Healthcare, Erlangen, Germany) with a 32 channel headcoil. A 588 2D epi sequence was used comprising forty 3mm thick slices using a continuous 589 ascending sequence (TR=2800ms, TA=2800ms, FA= 90°, TE=30ms, matrix size= 590 64x64, in-plane resolution: 3mm x 3mm, interslice gap = 1mm). Six runs of data 591 were acquired each lasting ~6-7 minutes with around 136 brain volumes collected 592 per run; the exact number of volumes was dependent on the stimuli included in each

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

593	run. EPI data collection lasted around 45 minutes. This was followed by a fieldmap,
594	acquired using a double-echo FLASH gradient echo sixty-four slice sequence
595	(TE1=10ms, TE2=12.46ms, in-plane view 192x192 mm, in-plane resolution: 3mm x
596	3mm, interslice gap = 1mm). At the end of the session a high-resolution T1 weighted
597	structural image was collected using a 3D Modified Driven Equilibrium Fourier
598	Transform (MDEFT) sequence (TR=1393ms, TE=2.48ms, FA= 16°, 176 slices, voxel
599	size = $1 \times 1 \times 1$ mm).
600	In the scanner, stimuli were presented using the COGENT toolbox
601	(http://www.vislab.ucl.ac.uk/cogent.php) running in MATLAB. Auditory stimuli were
602	presented at the same comfortable listening level for all participants. Visual images
603	were presented using a JVC DLA-SX21 projector, with a screen resolution of
604	1024x768 and frame rate of 60Hz, using back projection onto a within bore screen at
605	a distance of 62cm from the participants' eyes.
606	Univariate Analysis Data were analysed using SPM12
607	(http://www.fil.ion.ucl.ac.uk/spm/). The first six images of each run were removed to

608 account for T1 equilibrium effects. The structural and functional images were 609 centred at the anterior commissure. Functional scans were slice time corrected to 610 the middle slice, realigned to the first image and unwarped using field maps. The 611 structural image was co-registered to the mean functional image. The parameters 612 derived from segmentation, using the revised SPM12 segmentation routines, were 613 applied to normalise the functional images that were re-sampled to 2x2x2mm. The 614 normalized images were then smoothed with a Gaussian kernel of 6-mm full-width 615 half maximum. Data were analyzed using a general linear model with a 360 second 616 high-pass filter and AR1 correction for auto-correlation. In the first level design 617 matrices, events were modelled with a canonical hemodynamic response function

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

626	Representational similarity analysis (RSA) At the first level, data were analysed
625	were taken to the second level to conduct one sample t-tests.
624	constituted an implicit baseline. Contrast images of [speech > rest] and [sign > rest]
623	movement regressors of no interest and the session means. The rest condition
622	target trials were absent for each modality (e.g. false alarms) (2 regressors), six
621	present in each modality (e.g. hits) (2 regressors) and button presses when the
620	non-target trials in each modality (4 regressors), button presses when the target was
619	included a regressor for the onset of the speech trials, sign trials, filler target and
618	marking the onset of the stimulus and duration in seconds. The design matrices

with SPM12. Analyses were conducted in native space. Images were slice time
corrected to the middle slice, realigned to the first image and unwarped using
fieldmaps, but were not normalised or smoothed. The images were segmented,

using the revised SPM12 segmentation routine, to estimate the transformation from

native space to MNI space and vice versa. In the first level model in native space,

the two repetitions of each core item presented in each modality and by each

speaker and signer were modelled as a separate regressor (36 regressors: 9 core

634 items x 2 modalities x 2 language models). Additional regressors were included

modelling the onset of filler target and filler non-target trials for each modality (4

regressors), plus button presses when the target was present in each modality (e.g.

hits) (2 regressors) and button presses when the target trials were absent for each

modality (e.g. false alarms) (2 regressors). This constituted 42 regressors per run,

plus 6 motion parameter regressors and 6 session means. A high pass filter set at
360 seconds and AR(1) correction was applied. RSA analysis was conducted with

the latest version of the RSA toolbox (<u>https://github.com/rsagroup/rsatoolbox</u>)⁵⁹. The

representational distances estimated from the first level betas were used to calculate

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

the cross-validated Mahalanobis (crossnobis) distances using the RSA toolbox⁵⁹. 643 644 These crossnobis distances employ multivariate noise normalisation that down-645 weight correlated noise across voxels, thereby increasing sensitivity to experimental effects⁶⁰. The cross-validation across imaging runs ensures that the estimated 646 647 distances between neural patterns are not systematically biased by run-specific 648 noise, which allows us to test the distances directly against zero (as one would test 649 cross-validated classification accuracy against chance). Therefore, the crossnobis 650 distance provides a measurement on a ratio scale with an interpretable zero value 651 that reflects an absence of distance between items.

A volumetric searchlight analysis⁶¹ was conducted using a spherical 8mm 652 653 searchlight containing 65 voxels, consistent with the parameters used in previous studies of language processing⁴⁸. In the searchlight analysis, the crossnobis 654 655 distance between each core stimulus and every other was calculated to generate a 656 Representational Dissimilarity Matrix (RDM) for every voxel and its surrounding 657 neighbourhood. The resulting RDM reflected sign-sign, speech-speech or speech-658 sign distances, that constitute within and across-modality dissimilarities. In the 659 searchlight analyses, the average of speech-speech and sign-sign distances (e.g. 660 combined within-modality distances) and the average of the speech-speech and 661 sign-sign distances separately were returned to the voxel at the centre of each 662 sphere in three separate searchlight analyses. Within-modality distances were 663 calculated only between items from the different language models (e.g. different 664 speakers and signers respectively) to exclude similarities driven by low-level 665 perceptual properties. Each participants' native space whole brain searchlight map 666 was normalised to MNI space. These maps were inclusively masked with a >20%667 probability grey matter mask, using the canonical MNI brain packaged with SPM12.

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

668	The resulting normalised, masked images were submitted to SPM12 for one sample
669	t-tests testing for greater than zero within-modality distances and paired t-tests
670	testing for differences between the speech-speech and sign-sign distances at the
671	second level. All statistical maps are presented at an uncorrected peak level
672	threshold of $p < 0.005$, FDR cluster corrected at $q < 0.05$ to identify regions of
673	interest for subsequent analysis.

674 The clusters identified from these analyses were used as Regions of Interest 675 (ROIs) in which to test theoretical models of brain function. Note that ROI analyses are advised when testing special populations in which sample sizes are necessarily 676 restricted⁶². Using ROIs that contain reliable representational structure, e.g. greater 677 678 than zero distances, provides an additional protection against spurious distance-679 model correlations in regions in which there is no reliable representational structure. 680 This approach is agnostic to the type of representational structure identified by the 681 searchlights ensuring that ROI selection and model validation are independent from one another, and hence this does not represent "double dipping"⁶³. 682

683 As each cluster contains multiple RDMs, one for each searchlight contained 684 within the cluster, the RDMs were averaged, to provide a single representative RDM 685 for each cluster, and each participant. These distances were then used to test 686 hypothetical models of brain function (described below). The non-parametric Tau-a 687 correlation was used in preference to Pearson or Spearman correlation as the models contained tied ranks⁵⁹. The resulting correlation coefficient was converted to 688 689 a Pearson's r value, then to a Fisher-transformed Z value, to permit parametric statistical analysis⁶⁴. Noise ceilings⁵⁹ were estimated within-modality and across-690 691 modality separately as appropriate for each model. The lower bound was estimated 692 by calculating the mean z converted Tau-a correlation coefficient between each

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

693 participant's RDM and the average RDM for the group excluding that participant (e.g. 694 leaving one participant out). This is an estimate of the fit that should be achieved if 695 the theoretical model captures all systematic variation in the RDM across subjects in 696 this region. The upper bound was estimated by calculating the mean z converted, 697 Tau-a correlation between each participant's RDM and the average RDM for the 698 group including that participant. This value constitutes a theoretical maximum of the 699 best possible fit that can be achieved between the data and a model with this region. 700 These limits provide a benchmark against which to assess the quality of model fit as 701 they reflect the bounds of the best possible model fit that could be expected given 702 the noise in the data.

703 Models

A semantic model was tested using the CSLB concept property norms²⁸ (Fig. 704 705 1c). This kind of feature-based semantic model can account for the ability to 706 categorize by semantic group, e.g. a zebra is an animal, and to tell-apart unique 707 items, e.g. that a zebra differs from a horse. As such, the similarities expressed by 708 the model can be decomposed into two independent components. One, an item-709 **based** model that predicts that each item is uniquely represented, e.g., an 'orange' is 710 more dissimilar to all other items than to itself, and does not predict any other 711 relatedness between items (Fig. 1d). The other, a model in which item-to-item 712 similarities are not tested, but category structure is predicted (Fig. 1e) – referred to 713 as a **category-based** model. An additional model testing for dissimilarities based on 714 speaker (Fig. 3e) and signer identity (Fig. 4e) was also tested, e.g. models predicting 715 trials from speaker/signer 1 to be more dissimilar than trials from speaker/signer 2, 716 and vice versa. The purpose of this model was to test for neural dissimilarities 717 based on lower level acoustic and visual features.

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

718	These models can be tested within-modality, e.g. correlated within speech-
719	speech and sign-sign distances combined or separately, or <i>across-modality</i> , e.g.
720	correlated with speech-sign distances. The testing of models using across-modality
721	distances is equivalent to cross decoding representational structure between speech
722	and sign, positive evidence provides support for common representational structure
723	across languages ⁶⁵ . Note that we only test for <i>across-modality</i> semantic
724	representations in areas in which there is evidence of within-modality
725	representational structure. As negative correlations are not plausible, greater than 0
726	model fits were assessed with one-tailed, one sample t-tests. Two-tailed paired t-
727	tests were used to assess differences in fit between models. Multidimensional
728	Scaling (MDS) was conducted to visualise the similarity structure of the RDMs by
729	calculating the averaged participant RDM and applying non-metric MDS, consistent
730	with the non-parametric correlational approach.

731

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

733 Tables

Table 1: MNI coordinates for RSA analyses – 3 local maxima more than 8 mm apart

Region	X	Y	Ζ	Extent	Z Value
Within-modality representational structure					
Right superior temporal gyrus	58	-4	-2	1545	5.283
Right inferior parietal lobule	64	-30	14		4.968
Right superior temporal gyrus	52	-2	-8		4.861
Left superior occipital gyrus	-14	-96	10	2629	4.677
Right superior occipital gyrus	14	-100	16		4.479
Right cuneus	6	-92	22		4.226
Left superior temporal gyrus	-60	-10	-2	1276	4.500
Left middle temporal gyrus	-64	-30	6		4.476
Left middle temporal gyrus	-64	-44	2		4.175
Left inferior temporal gyrus	-48	-62	-6	172	4.361
Left middle occipital gyrus	-42	-64	0		3.122
Right insula	36	-12	14	194	4.178
Right putamen	30	-8	10		4.160
Right middle temporal gyrus	52	-68	6	279	3.954
Right middle temporal gyrus	56	-48	0		3.748
Right middle temporal gyrus	54	-54	6		3.574
Greater representational structure for					
speech compared to sign					
Right superior temporal gyrus	58	-4	-2	754	4.877
Right superior temporal gyrus	52	0	-8		4.779

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

Right superior temporal gyrus	60	-12	4		3.590
Left superior temporal gyrus	-56	-8	2	743	4.484
Left superior temporal gyrus	-62	-30	10		4.253
Left superior temporal gyrus	-62	-2	0		3.720
Right Putamen	30	-10	10	146	4.364
Right Insular	40	-12	10		3.354
Right superior temporal gyrus	58	-34	18	285	4.160
Right superior temporal gyrus	66	-32	14		3.763
Right superior temporal gyrus	56	-26	0		3.722
Greater representational structure for sign					
compared to speech					
Left cuneus	-6	-98	16	1145	4.623
Left middle occipital gyrus	-12	-102	4		4.019
Left cuneus	-8	-94	28		3.830
Right superior occipital gyrus	22	-90	16	969	4.375
Right lingual gyrus	16	-84	-4		3.976
Right cuneus	16	-100	12		3.655
Left inferior occipital gyrus	-44	-80	-6	264	4.107
Left middle occipital gyrus	-50	-72	-2		3.937
Left middle occipital gyrus	-42	-80	4		3.449
Left cerebellum	-4	-48	-8	116	3.808
Left lingual gyrus	-10	-56	-2		3.767
Left cerebellum	-4	-50	0		3.102
Left superior occipital gyrus	-10	-84	42	127	3.781
Left superior occipital gyrus	-16	-78	40		3.396
Left superior parietal lobule	-26	-80	48		3.172

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

735 DATA AVAILABILITY

- 736 At the time of data collection participants did not consent to sharing their data via an
- open repository. Therefore, the data of this study are not publicly available.
- However, the data are available from the corresponding author upon request.

739

740 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 741 This research was funded by a Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellowship
- awarded to MM [100229/Z/12/Z]. CP is supported by a Wellcome Trust Principal
- 743 Research Fellowship [097720/Z/11/Z]. We would also like to acknowledge support
- from an Economic and Social Research Council Research Centre Grant (Deafness
- 745 Cognition and Language Research Centre (DCAL) [RES-620-28-0002] and a
- 746 Wellcome Trust Centre Grant (203147/Z/16/Z). Thank you to Monika Grigorova and
- 747 Will Dawson for help in collecting this data.

748

749 AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

- S.E., M.M., J.D., C.P. & E.G. designed the study. S.E. collected the data. S.E., J.D.,
- 751 M.M. analysed the data. All authors contributed to writing the article.

752

753 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

754 The authors declare no competing financial interests

755

756

757

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

758 **REFERENCES**

759	1.	Kiefer, M. & Pulvermüller, F. Conceptual representations in mind and brain:
760		Theoretical developments, current evidence and future directions. Cortex 48,
761		805–825 (2012).
762	2.	Lambon Ralph, M., Jefferies, E., Patterson, K. & Rogers, T. T. The neural and
763		computational bases of semantic cognition. Nat. Rev. Neurosci. 18, 42-55
764		(2016).
765	3.	Binder, J. R., Desai, R. H., Graves, W. W. & Conant, L. L. Where Is the
766		Semantic System? A Critical Review and Meta-Analysis of 120 Functional
767		Neuroimaging Studies. Cereb. Cortex 19, 2767–2796 (2009).
768	4.	Price, C. J. A review and synthesis of the first 20years of PET and fMRI
769		studies of heard speech, spoken language and reading. Neuroimage 62, 816-
770		847 (2012).
771	5.	Fairhall, S. L. & Caramazza, A. Brain Regions That Represent Amodal
772		Conceptual Knowledge. J. Neurosci. 33, 10552–10558 (2013).
773	6.	Shinkareva, S. V, Malave, V. L., Mason, R. a, Mitchell, T. M. & Just, M. A.
774		Commonality of neural representations of words and pictures. Neuroimage 54,
775		2418–25 (2011).
776	7.	Simanova, I., Hagoort, P., Oostenveld, R. & van Gerven, M. A. J. Modality-
777		independent decoding of semantic information from the human brain. Cereb.
778		<i>Cortex</i> 24 , 426–34 (2014).
779	8.	Araújo, S., Fernandes, T. & Huettig, F. Learning to read facilitates the retrieval
780		of phonological representations in rapid automatized naming: Evidence from

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

- ⁷⁸¹ unschooled illiterate, ex-illiterate, and schooled literate adults. *Dev. Sci.*
- 782 e12783 (2018). doi:10.1111/desc.12783
- 9. Anthony, J. & Francis, D. Development of Phonological Awareness skill. *Curr.*
- 784 Dir. Psychol. Sci. **14**, 255–259 (2005).
- 10. Chen, H.-C. & Ng, M.-L. Semantic facilitation and translation priming effects in
- 786 Chinese-English bilinguals. *Mem. Cognit.* **17**, 454–462 (1989).
- Preston, M. S. & Lambert, W. E. Interlingual interference in a bilingual version
 of the stroop color-word task. *J. Verbal Learning Verbal Behav.* 8, 295–301
- 789 (1969).
- Kolers, P. A. Interlingual word associations. *J. Verbal Learning Verbal Behav.*2, 291–300 (1963).
- Duyck, W. & Brysbaert, M. Forward and backward number translation requires
 conceptual mediation in both balanced and unbalanced bilinguals. *J. Exp.*
- 794 Psychol. Hum. Percept. Perform. **30**, 889–906 (2004).
- 795 14. Chee, M. W. L., Soon, C. S. & Lee, H. L. Common and segregated neuronal
 796 networks for different languages revealed using functional magnetic resonance
 797 adaptation. *J. Cogn. Neurosci.* **15**, 85–97 (2003).
- Xu, M., Baldauf, D., Chang, C. Q., Desimone, R. & Tan, L. H. Distinct
 Distributed patterns of neural activity are associated with two languages in the
 bilingual brain. *Sci. Adv.* 3, (2017).
- 16. Crinion, J. *et al.* Language control in the bilingual brain. *Science (80-.).* **312**,
 1537–1540 (2006).
- 17. Buchweitz, A., Shinkareva, S. V., Mason, R. A., Mitchell, T. M. & Just, M. A.

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

- 804 Identifying bilingual semantic neural representations across languages. Brain
- *Lang.* **120**, 282–289 (2012).
- 18. Correia, J. et al. Brain-Based Translation: fMRI Decoding of Spoken Words in
- 807 Bilinguals Reveals Language-Independent Semantic Representations in
- 808 Anterior Temporal Lobe. J. Neurosci. **34**, 332–338 (2014).
- 19. Van de Putte, E., De Baene, W., Price, C. J. & Duyck, W. "Neural overlap of L1
- and L2 semantic representations across visual and auditory modalities: a
- decoding approach". *Neuropsychologia* **113**, 68–77 (2018).
- 20. MacSweeney, M. et al. Neural correlates of British sign language
- 813 comprehension: spatial processing demands of topographic language. TL -

14. J. Cogn. Neurosci. **14 VN-r**, 1064–1075 (2002).

- 21. Petitto, L. A. et al. Speech-like cerebral activity in profoundly deaf people
- processing signed languages: Implications for the neural basis of human

817 language. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. 97, 13961–13966 (2000).

- 818 22. Emmorey, K., McCullough, S. & Weisberg, J. Neural correlates of
- fingerspelling, text, and sign processing in deaf American Sign Language-
- English bilinguals. *Lang. Cogn. Neurosci.* **30**, 749–767 (2014).
- 23. Sakai, K. L., Tatsuno, Y., Suzuki, K., Kimura, H. & Ichida, Y. Sign and speech:
- Amodal commonality in left hemisphere dominance for comprehension of sentences. *Brain* **128**, 1407–1417 (2005).
- Soderfeldt, B., Ronnberg, J. & Risberg, J. Regional Cerebral Blood Flow in
 Sign Language Users. *Brain Lang.* 46, 59–68 (1994).
- 25. MacSweeney, M. *et al.* Dissociating linguistic and nonlinguistic gestural

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

827 communication in the brain. <i>I</i>	<i>Neuroimage</i> 22, 1605–18 (2004).
--	--

- 26. MacSweeney, M. *et al.* Lexical and sentential processing in British Sign
- Language. Hum. Brain Mapp. **27**, 63–76 (2006).
- Kriegeskorte, N., Mur, M. & Bandettini, P. Representational similarity analysis connecting the branches of systems neuroscience. *Front. Syst. Neurosci.* 2, 4
 (2008).
- 28. Devereux, B. J., Tyler, L. K., Geertzen, J. & Randall, B. The Centre for

834 Speech, Language and the Brain (CSLB) concept property norms. *Behav.*

835 *Res. Methods* **46**, 1119–1127 (2014).

- MacSweeney, M., Capek, C. M., Campbell, R. & Woll, B. The signing brain:
 the neurobiology of sign language. *Trends Cogn. Sci.* 12, 432–40 (2008).
- 838 30. Price, C. J., Wise, R. J. S. & Frackowiak, R. S. J. Demonstrating the implicit
 839 processing of visually presented words and pseudowords. *Cereb. Cortex* 6,
 840 62–70 (1996).
- 31. Vitello, S., Warren, J. E., Devlin, J. T. & Rodd, J. M. Roles of frontal and
- temporal regions in reinterpreting semantically ambiguous sentences. *Front. Hum. Neurosci.* 8, 1–14 (2014).
- Macsweeney, M. *et al.* Neural systems underlying British Sign Language and
 audio-visual English processing in native users. *Brain* **125**, 1583–1593 (2002).
- 33. de Groot, A. M. B. Determinants of Word Translation. *J. Exp. Psychol. Learn. Mem. Cogn.* 18, 1001–1018 (1992).
- 848 34. Van Hell, J. & De Groot, A. Conceptual representation in bilingual memory:
- Effects of concreteness and cognate status in word association. *Biling. Lang.*

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

- 850 *Cogn.* **1**, 193–211 (2003).
- 35. Marslen-Wilson, W. Activation, Competition, and Frequency in Lexical Access. *Cogn. Model. Speech Process. Psycholinguist. Comput. Perspect.* 148–172
 (1995).
- 36. Apfelbaum, K. S., Blumstein, S. E. & Mcmurray, B. Semantic priming is
- affected by real-time phonological competition: Evidence for continuous cascading systems. *Psychon. Bull. Rev.* **18**, 141–149 (2011).
- 857 37. Gaskell, M. G. & Marslen-Wilson, W. D. Integrating Form and Meaning: A
- Distributed Model of Speech Perception. *Lang. Cogn. Process.* 12, 613–656
 (1997).
- 38. Caselli, N. K. & Cohen-Goldberg, A. M. Lexical access in sign language: A
 computational model. *Front. Psychol.* 5, 1–11 (2014).
- 39. Perniss, P., Thompson, R. L. & Vigliocco, G. Iconicity as a general property of
 language: Evidence from spoken and signed languages. *Front. Psychol.* 1, 1–
 15 (2010).
- 40. Marshall, C., Rowley, K. & Atkinson, J. Modality-Dependent and -Independent
 Factors in the Organisation of the Signed Language Lexicon: Insights From
 Semantic and Phonological Fluency Tasks in BSL. *J. Psycholinguist. Res.* 43,
 587–610 (2013).
- 41. Gardumi, A. *et al.* The effect of spatial resolution on decoding accuracy in fMRI
 multivariate pattern analysis. *Neuroimage* **132**, 32–42 (2016).
- 42. Bonte, M., Hausfeld, L., Scharke, W., Valente, G. & Formisano, E. Taskdependent decoding of speaker and vowel identity from auditory cortical

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

873	response patterns. J. Neurosci. 34, 4548–57 (2014).

- 43. Clarke, A. & Tyler, L. K. Understanding What We See: How We Derive
- 875 Meaning From Vision. *Trends Cogn. Sci.* **19**, 677–687 (2015).
- 44. Halai, A. D., Welbourne, S. R., Embleton, K. & Parkes, L. M. A comparison of
- dual gradient-echo and spin-echo fMRI of the inferior temporal lobe. *Hum.*
- 878 Brain Mapp. **35**, 4118–28 (2014).
- 45. Evans, S. What has replication ever done for us? Insights from neuroimaging
 of speech perception. *Front. Hum. Neurosci.* **11**, (2017).
- 46. Evans, S. & McGettigan, C. Comprehending auditory speech: previous and
- potential contributions of functional MRI. *Lang. Cogn. Neurosci.* **32**, (2017).
- 47. von Kriegstein, K., Eger, E., Kleinschmidt, A. & Giraud, A. L. Modulation of
- neural responses to speech by directing attention to voices or verbal content. *Cogn. Brain Res.* **17**, 48–55 (2003).
- 48. Evans, S. & Davis, M. H. Hierarchical organization of auditory and motor
- representations in speech perception: Evidence from searchlight similarity
 analysis. *Cereb. Cortex* 25, (2015).
- 49. Połczyńska, M. M., Japardi, K. & Bookheimer, S. Y. Lateralizing language
 function with pre-operative functional magnetic resonance imaging in early
 proficient bilingual patients. *Brain Lang.* **170**, 1–11 (2017).
- Emmorey, K., Mehta, S., McCullough, S. & Grabowski, T. J. The neural circuits
 recruited for the production of signs and fingerspelled words. *Brain Lang.* 160,
 30–41 (2016).
- 51. Davis, C. J. N-Watch: A program for deriving neighbourhood size and other

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

896		pyscholinguistic statistics. Behav. Res. Methods 37, 65–70 (2005).
897	52.	Kuperman, V., Stadthagen-Gonzalez, H. & Brysbaert, M. Age-of-acquisition
898		ratings for 30,000 English words. Behav. Res. Methods 44, 978–990 (2012).
899	53.	Wilson, M. The MRC Psycholinguistic Database: Machine Readable
900		Dictionary, Version 2. Behav. Res. Methods, Instruments Comput. 20, 6–11
901		(1988).
902	54.	Cortese, M. J. & Fugett, A. Imageability ratings for 3, 000 monosyllabic words.
903		Behav. Res. Methods, Instruments, Comput. 36, 384–387 (2004).
904	55.	Vinson, D. P., Cormier, K., Denmark, T., Schembri, A. & Vigliocco, G. The
905		British Sign Language (BSL) norms for age of acquisition, familiarity, and
906		iconicity. Behav. Res. Methods 40, 1079–1087 (2008).
907	56.	Levenshtein, V. I. Binary codes capable of correcting deletions, insertions, and
908		reversals. Soviet Physics Doklady 10, 707–710 (1966).
909	57.	Fenlon, J., Cormier, K. & Schembri, A. Building BSL SignBank: The lemma
910		dilemma revisited. Int. J. Lexicogr. 28, 169–206 (2015).
911	58.	Kriegeskorte, N. & Mur, M. Inverse MDS: Inferring dissimilarity structure from
912		multiple item arrangements. Front. Psychol. 3, 1–13 (2012).
913	59.	Nili, H. et al. A toolbox for representational similarity analysis. PLoS Comput.
914		<i>Biol.</i> 10 , e1003553 (2014).
915	60.	Walther, A. et al. Reliability of dissimilarity measures for multi-voxel pattern
916		analysis. Neuroimage (2015). doi:10.1016/j.neuroimage.2015.12.012

RUNNING HEAD: Influence of modality on conceptual representations

918		brain mapping. Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U. S. A. 103, 3863-3868 (2006).
919	62.	Poldrack, R. et al. Scanning the Horizon: challenges and solutions for
920		neuroimaging research. Clim. Chang. 2013 - Phys. Sci. Basis 1, 1–30 (2016).
921	63.	Kriegeskorte, N., Simmons, W. K., Bellgowan, P. S. F. & Baker, C. I. Circular
922		analysis in systems neuroscience: the dangers of double dipping. Nat.
923		<i>Neurosci.</i> 12, 535–540 (2009).
924	64.	Walker, D. A. JMASM9: Converting Kendall's Tau For Correlational Or Meta-
925		Analytic Analyses. J. Mod. Appl. Stat. Methods 2, 525–530 (2017).
926	65.	Kaplan, J. T., Man, K. & Greening, S. G. Multivariate cross-classification:
927		applying machine learning techniques to characterize abstraction in neural
928		representations. Front. Hum. Neurosci. 9, 151 (2015).
929	66.	Nichols, T., Brett, M., Andersson, J., Wager, T. & Poline, J. B. Valid
930		conjunction inference with the minimum statistic. Neuroimage 25, 653-660
931		(2005).

933