1   Parents Calibrate Speech to Their Children's Vocabulary Knowledge

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₁₁   Abstract

₁₂   Young children learn language at an incredible rate. While children come prepared with

₁₃ powerful statistical learning mechanisms, the statistics they encounter are also prepared for

₁₄ them: Children learn from caregivers motivated to communicate with them. Do caregivers

₁₅ modify their speech in order to support children's comprehension? We asked children and

₁₆ their parents to play a simple reference game in which the parent's goal was to guide their

₁₇ child to select a target animal from a set of three. We show that parents calibrate their

₁₈ referring expressions to their children's language knowledge, producing more informative

₁₉ references for animals that they thought their children did not know. Further, parents learn

₂₀ about their children's knowledge over the course of the game, and calibrate their referring

₂₁ expressions accordingly. These results underscore the importance of understanding the

₂₂ communicative context in which language learning happens.

₂₃   *Keywords:* parent-child interaction; language development; communication

₂₄   Word count: X

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Methods

We report how we determined our sample size, all data exclusions (if any), all manipulations, and all measures in the study.

Participants

Material

Procedure

Data analysis

We used for all our analyses.

Results

Discussion

36

References