READING NOTES

HÖMKE ET AL. 2018 — 28 APRIL 2020

DO BLINKS MODERATE TURN-TAKING BEHAVIOR?

Backchannels (e.g. mm-hm) facilitate grounding and, when absent, are detrimental.
→ can listener blinks do something similar?

ABOUT BLINKS

- Infants blink rarely, but blink rate increases till adulthood
- Blinks happen more often than needed for keeping the eyes lubricated
- We blink ~13500 times per day: its one of our fastest & most frequent actions
- People blink less under high cognitive load ~ related to attentional disengagement
- Across species, larger social groups tend to have higher blink rates
- Voluntary blinks are longer & may play a communicative role
- Hömke et al. (2017): blinks tend to occur @ (potential) TRPs / TCU-ends
- long blinks (410 ms, top quartile) produced in mutual gaze, co-occurring w/ other backchannels

long blink ~ "I've received enough information for current purposes" (p. 3)
↑ hypothesized communicative meaning

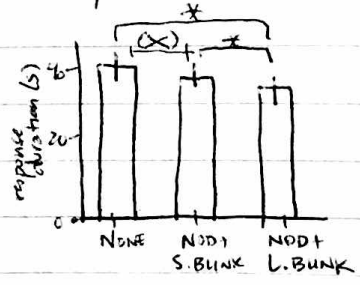
METHODS

- ptcps answered 18 open-ended Qs from 3 avatars, varied in their feedback style (none vs. nod-short blink vs. nod-long blink)
- ← feedback was initiated spontaneously by a confederate listener blind to condition
- ← participants completed an Empathy Quotient questionnaire to test whether high empathizers were more responsive to blinks (see p. 3 for rationale)

RESULTS

Participants produced shorter answers in response to long-blink + nod feedback than the other two conditions. (no diff w/ none vs short-blink+nod)

No effect of Empathy Quotient score.



(p. 8)
→ long listener blinks may be functionally involved in managing mutual understanding and indeed the management of floor (off the record)

together w/ observational data in Hömke et al (2017): long blinks are voluntary, organized in where they appear, and influence current speaker behavior

FUTURE STEPS

- local effects on production
- checking for true 'I got it' meaning
- vary avatar "style" w/i avatar
- investigate role of head nod
- better understand effects of expectations about avatars
- investigate link to functional load