

Snow 1977

5 MAY 2020



WHAT DRIVES CHANGE IN MATERNAL TALK TO (ENGLISH M-C) INFANTS?

Child-directed speech features:

- Simplicity (i.e. syntactic; MLU)
- redundancy (i.e. type ^{with full repetition} token ratio)
- high incidence of interrogatives
- focus on here-and-now
- more pausing
- higher pitch + exaggerated 'prosodic' contours
- baby talk words (many w/ phonological simplification)
- semantically constrained to a few sets of relations
- "emphatic" use of gestures
- greater fluency

Is CDS produced for attention/comprehension?

- no child feedback → change in CDS features (Snow 72a)
- diff levels of simplicity/redundancy → change in child response (Friedlander 68 + see text p 2)
- prosodic features attract infant attention → still today! ^{MANY BABIES} (Sachs, in press)

Hypothesis 1

ADULTS MODIFY THEIR SPEECH TO OPTIMIZE KIDS' RESPONSIVENESS
BY CONTINUALLY MONITORING THEIR ATTENTION & UNDERSTANDING,
AND ADJUSTING ACCORDINGLY.

BUT WHAT DO WE THEN MAKE OF:

- so many questions to infants? → greater fluency? → longer & more regular pauses?
- ↳ predicted to emerge in line w/ infant ability to recognize it - not earlier
- ↳ not linked to dev state?
- I don't understand these examples well

Hypothesis 2

explains why mothers talk to infants at all

ADULTS MODIFY THEIR SPEECH IN RESPONSE TO THE INFANT'S GROWING DISPLAY OF ABILITY AS A "CONVERSATIONAL PARTNER" IN RESPONSES & INITIATIONS WITHIN TURN-TAKING SEQUENCES

↳ focus on eliciting responses (or doing 'as if') and reciprocal actions

CHANGES TO SST 74:

- only 2 participants
- focus on passing rather than getting the floor (MOTs don't use floor-grabbing/keeping devices)
- (- MOT can "fill in" for INF, e.g. in providing the SPP of an adjacency pair)

DATASET

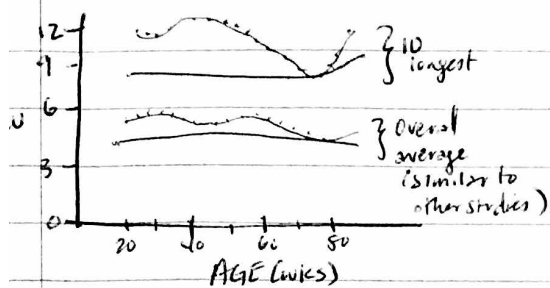
- Transcribed longitudinal recordings of two female infants and their mothers (1st born, middle-class English) : 0;3-1;0 every 2-3 weeks and from 1;6 every ~6 weeks (until ~1;7-1;9)
- 20 min videos w/ feeding + free play

RESULTS

surface structure definition:
 → SV-inversion/tag/Q-interaction → wh questions?

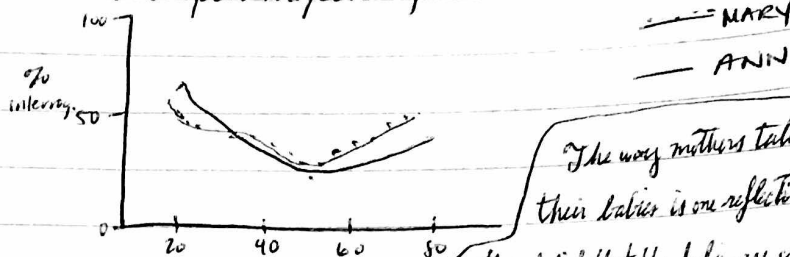
MLU of mothers' speech:

NO CHANGE w/ AGE



Interactions in mothers' speech:

U-shaped trajectory



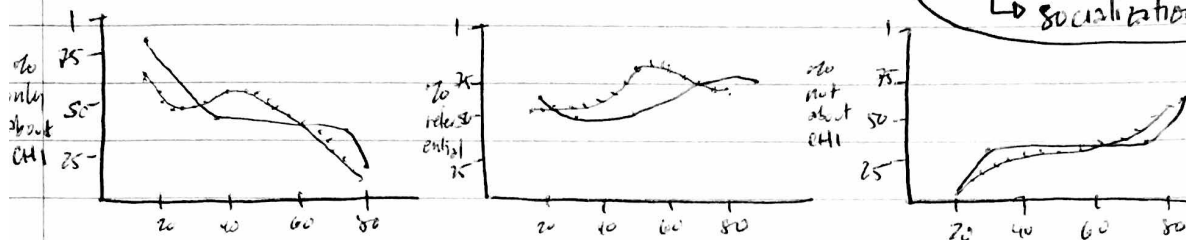
The way mothers talk to their babies is one reflection of

then belief that the babies are capable of reciprocal communication (not only reflects this belief, but also provides opportunities for reinforcing it by giving meaning within the ruler of conversational turn-taking to the infant behaviors that occur. (p. 21))

↳ socialization cycle

CHI-centric reference:

↳ child's feelings & experiences vs. mothers' vs. worldly entities/actions



0;3

- responses to 100% of burps, yawns, sneezes, coughs, coos, smiles & laughs ⇒ valid TCU forms
 ↳ elicit labels or stereotyped responses ↳ no intention needed
- potential TCUs that don't elicit those constrained responses? (flailing, head movements, crying)
- elicitation can be of specific responses (e.g. burping), indicated by change of topic after "SDP" is provided (e.g. 124 vts about burping - BURP-comment based on gaze shift)
- repetitiveness & high freq of Qs comes from pursuits in maintaining "as if" turn-taking w/ infant
- constant talk of child's wishes, needs, & intentions ⇒ presumption of volitionalness (w/ interactional layer)
- no attempts to initiate turn taking during feeding → evidence for genuine goal of eliciting responses

0;7

- increased participation of infant - shorter maternal turns, more exchange
- infants sometimes actively initiate a sequence
- vocalic or consonantal babble, smiles, laughs, whines ⇒ valid TCU forms ↳ no more vegetatives
- still CHI often failed to take up the floor in the right place → pursuits by MOT were still frequent

1;0

- similar to 0;7 but more reliable responding and more sequence initiation
- MOTs more often took babble as lexical, expanding ~~on~~ it
- overall increased periods of time in sustained joint attention - by 1;0 several kinds of multi-min activities

1;6

- CHI reliably responds, often w/ words
- MOT expects "appropriate" responses (providing corrections when deemed necessary)
- CHI allowed to interrupt w/ lexical initiations → MOT very willing to follow up on meaningful contributions