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Tom Muskett & Richard Body (2013)
The case for multimodal analysis of atypical interaction: Questions, answers and gaze in play involving a child with autism
Clinical Linguistics & Phonetics

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Research Premise

• Argue that “neglecting to consider context-shaping aspects of participant conduct in clinical data aside from talk reinforces” leads to misinterpretation of the data
  • Eye gaze
  • Gesture
  • Other embodied action
  • Use of objects

• Research question
  • Is a child’s apparent inflexibility actually a “jointly-mediated product of her situated and action-oriented responses to contingencies arising within a particular interactional context?”
Research objective

• Present a two-layered CA account of a specific disordered communication phenomenon (an unusual pattern of question-answering) manifesting in a play interaction involving a child with autism
  • 1st layer: Talk
    • “Focus primarily on the talk between the participants”
    • “Demonstrated that reference to the sequential organization of this alone is insufficient to account for variations in the child’s interactional behavior”
  • 2nd layer: Multimodal
    • “Participants’ moment-by-moment use of multiple semiotic resources including talk, gaze, embodied action and object manipulation are considered as simultaneous, co-ordinated components of their conduct”
Layer 1 (Extract 1)

1. S  what have you made here
2. J  (9.0) ((J pushes a train of conjoined carriages across the table))
3. J  (lut-) (. ) Boco? (0.5) >Trouble< some >Trucks<?
4. J  (. ) Henrietta? (. ) and a coach.
5. J  (0.3)
6. T  wo:::w::
7. (0.3)
8. T  .hhh (. ) what they gonna do next?
9. T  (1.0)
10. J  they’re going tuh-
11. T  .hhh they have (. ) a lovely time.
12. T  .hhh and where do you think they’ll have a lovely time.
13. (3.6)
14. T  where are they going to have a lovely time?
15. (1.0)
17. (4.5)
18. J  and the:::re. (. ) is::::
20. J  .hhh while Boco pulls the trucks.
21. (0.6)
22. T  ri:::ght.
(J slowly pushes linked carriages across table, gazing at carriages)
(J lut-) (. Boco? (0.5) >Trouble< some >Trucks<? (. Henrietta? (. and a coach.
(0.3)
wo:::w::
(0.3)
.hhh
(.) what they gonna do {next?
{(J gazes to another train)
(1.0)
{(J rapidly shifts gaze back to linked carriages)
(they're going tuh-
{(J shifts back to other train)
.hhh they have (. a lovely time.
(3.6) (J pushes front train forward slowly, then removes hand, looks down, then {looks into bag)

(1.0) (J selects truck from bag, {closely examines it)

(4.5) (J continues to closely examine truck, slowly places it on table)

(0.6)