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A Caregiver's Perceptions and Practices in Relation to her Speech to an Under 2-year-old age Group in a Childcare Centre

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A CAREGIVER'S PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES IN RELATION TO HER SPEECH TO AN UNDER 2-YEAR-OLD AGE GROUP IN A CHILDCARE CENTRE

BY

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to investigate what a caregiver sees as her role in relation to young children's oral language development. This study examines her perceptions and beliefs, as well as the various activities that she thinks facilitate language development with under 2-year-old children. The main focus of the study is her language interactions with the children while they took part in three activities. The investigation involved qualitative case study research to collect the oral language interactions between the caregiver and the young children and the activities she provides.

The features of the caregiver's speech to young children were identified from the research literature. The study was carried out in a community based childcare centre with one caregiver and five under 2-year-old children who were in her care. Results from the investigation suggest that the caregiver's perceptions and beliefs, the activities she provides and her oral language interactions with the children have the potential to facilitate the children's language development in this childcare centre.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

(i)   incorporate without the acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or a diploma in any institution of higher education;

(ii)   contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or

(iii)   contain any defamatory material.

Signature _____

Date ___11-8-99_____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background and significance of the study

It has been reported by The National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) 1993 that the growing number of families in which one or both parents are working outside the home has resulted in greater numbers of Australian children being cared for in groups outside the home setting. The NCAC has documented that children may spend up to a cumulative total of 12,500 hours in childcare before starting school. Prompted by this information, the NCAC has set up the "Quality Improvement and Accreditation System" with the objective "to assist childcare providers and parents with the advice, support and training they need to help ensure that all children receive high quality care". The setting up of this system by the NCAC may be seen as a result of the increased understanding of the significance of early childhood education, and recognition of the "need to start looking more closely at how best to care for young children in the most common early childhood learning environment, which is the child care centre" (Foreword. NCAC, 1993).

In the NCAC System Handbook (1993), the first 15 of 52 principles focus on "quality interactions" between staff, parents, and children. Some of these principles include warm and friendly interactions between staff and children, equal treatment for all children and accommodation of individual needs.

According to Makin (1996), such quality interactions are difficult to measure, and as such, they need to be translated into quality practices such as verbal exchanges within the centres (p. 100). In her study featuring "quality talk" in early childhood programs, Makin (1996) notes that research on this topic has identified "appropriate talk", "initiating conversation" and "scaffolding" as high quality interactions between caregivers and children. However, the early childhood contexts for children under the age of five that she studied showed many limitations in verbal interaction when compared to primary classrooms. There was far less use of language for reasoning, predicting, problem solving and conversational options. Intellectual stimulation and real attempts to communicate were also less frequent than in primary classrooms, despite higher adult-child ratios, smaller group sizes, and child-centred curricula.

Makin (1996) further indicates that an important part of quality interaction depends on the perceptions and beliefs of the caregiver or teacher. If he or she creates a democratic classroom where there is no domination of commands, but there is talk that helps children understand the reasons for engaging in certain behaviours or activities, children will become competent learners.

Similarly, Stone (1993) asserts that one of the most important elements of the childcare centre is the caregiver. Caregivers direct the daily interactions between themselves and the children in their care, creating the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical environments that the children experience. Supporting this view is the National

Association for the Education of Young children's (NAEYC) statement which indicates that it is the quality of the caregiver that determines the effectiveness of programs in childcare centres (p.12). In particular, this association emphasises that the relationship between the caregiver and the child is the most important ingredient of childcare.

Balaban (1992) also views the caregiver's attitude and experience as an integral part of making the significant difference between 'acceptable' and 'high quality' childcare. She feels that as more children are enrolled in childcare centres at younger ages and for longer hours, a childcare professional, in caring for infants and toddlers should, ideally, not only have experience, but also a positive attitude. Balaban sees that the background experiences of each caregiver, such as her ideas about childrearing from her own childhood, culture, neighbourhood, parent and adult values, inevitably influences her daily interactions with infants and toddlers (p.66).

Another important attribute of the caregiver is her knowledge of child development. Balaban (1992) explains that such knowledge helps shape the caregiver's perceptions, influences her ability to respond in a broader context and enables her to behave in a positive manner with appropriate expectations of young children. She describes the professional caregiver as one who possesses the special qualities with the ability to elicit language especially for problem solving and to plan for smooth transitions throughout the day. Balaban further stresses that good caregivers provide interesting environments and experiences that include opportunities for children to learn new words, symbols and

information (p.67). Therefore, the role of the caregiver as a facilitator of language in young children is crucial.

Jalongo (1992) also states that, in learning a language, the provision of a positive talk environment is of vital importance. Here, the adult working with the children uses words to show affection and sincere interest in them. Verbal and non-verbal messages are used to extend invitations to children to interact. She sees it as vital to listen attentively to what children say, to use their interests as a basis for conversation and to take advantage of spontaneous opportunities to talk with each child informally.

Overall, Jalongo (1992) believes that oral language is important, as it is the starting point of language and the first language form that a child usually learns. Therefore, she asserts that the ability to converse with a young child is a critical skill for educators.

Purpose of the Study

As we have seen, good communication skills and the ability to form and maintain supportive relationships appear to be most important in fostering language development, positive self-concepts in children and in encouraging them to be curious, creative, and active learners. Hence, the role of the caregiver, her perceptions and teaching practices are salient factors in young children's development, particularly in relation to language acquisition. Thus, it seems important to examine the strategies that caregivers use and the activities they provide to support the development of young children's oral language.

The purpose of this study therefore, is to examine specifically a caregiver's oral language interactions with five children who are under 2-years-old, and the type of "talk environment" provided by her which has the potential to influence these children's oral language development.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Emergent Literacy

According to Teale and Sulzby (1989), some recent research has identified early reading, writing and oral language development of young children as "emergent literacy". The lower age range of children in emergent literacy studies includes children fourteen months of age and younger. Teale and Sulzby claim that literacy is not simply a cognitive skill to be learned, but that the social aspects of literacy are also of significance, and call for literacy learning to be investigated in the home as well as in community settings.

In their discussion of how young children learn language, Teale and Sulzby (1989) suggest that most children learn to read and write very early in life, and that literacy develops when children see it as functional and serving a purpose, for example, when they see adults reading a recipe for cooking or writing a shopping list. The authors also identify that the development of oral language, reading and writing in young children are interrelated and that they develop concurrently. They state, "oral language, reading and writing reinforce one another in development" (See Figure 1). Thus, it will be seen that the development of young children's oral language is an important component of emergent literacy.

Figure 1

The Interrelationship of Modes of Language in Emergent Literacy

From: Teale, W. & Sulzby, E. (1989). Emergent Literacy: New perspectives. (p. 4)

What is Language?

Emmitt and Pollock (1997) have defined language as a complex social practice. Language is used for constructing and sharing meaning through a number of verbal and non-verbal codes, and it influences what people think and how they think. Thus, Emmitt and Pollock claim that language provides ways for people to reflect on their thinking and to talk about their thinking, so that they can have greater control over their thoughts. Furthermore, they consider that "language, the meaning, what and how people think and learning are all very closely interrelated" (p.12). Emmitt and Pollock also indicate that language involves listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In her study of the oral language and literacy development of young children, Glazer (1989) similarly claims that language stimulates thought. She asserts that oral language is the basis for understanding and living within the world, and that oral language is a

vehicle for the development of reading and writing. She further states that young children need to learn language to express themselves, to communicate their needs and wants, and to socialise. Glazer further claims that young children will talk and communicate when they live and play in an environment that offers pleasant experiences that are interesting and exciting. They learn about the nature of language and acquire oral skills as they participate with others in social settings. Moreover, she proposes that young children's oral language will develop in an environment that encourages risk taking, and where people communicate with each other. It is from these interactions with adults that children develop concepts, for example, the meaning of "hot".

Young Children Learning Oral Language

In behaviourist learning theory, language was classified as a verbal behaviour and Skinner (cited by Garton & Pratt, 1998) attributed learning of language to environmental stimulation and reinforcement (p.14). Skinner was concerned only with observable behaviours and believed that a desirable behaviour could be systematically reinforced, whilst undesirable ones could be eliminated if the reinforcement was removed. His definition of a reinforcer included verbal forms such as "Good boy" or physical forms such as a kiss or hug as the cause of a behaviour recurring.

According to Garton and Pratt (1998), the behaviourists found parental reinforcement of children's language to be effective in helping children to verbalise words. They also found that despite the varied and inconsistent reinforcers parents supply, most children

learn language. Furthermore, some behaviourists have acknowledged that the **imitation** of parental speech is an important component of learning language (p.15).

However, there was inadequate explanation from behaviourist learning theory to account for language development. One of the major setbacks was that the child was seen as a passive recipient of environmental stimulation and reinforcement. There was no consideration that the child might be actively constructing language. Nonetheless, it seems important to acknowledge the role of the environment in language development and accept that some elements such as imitation may play a part in language development, and that reinforcement may assist in language learning (Garton & Pratt, 1998. p. 16).

Other research on language acquisition has attributed language learning to an innate ability, that is, something everyone is born with (McNeill (1966) and Chomsky (1968), cited by Garton & Pratt, 1998). Their theory was that in order for children to acquire a language, they first need to receive primary linguistic input in the form of sentences of the language they hear. They are then able to produce, as output, appropriate and grammatical sentences (p.21). McNeill and Chomsky claimed that this is possible because individuals have an inborn mechanism or "language acquisition device". They also claimed that all children are capable of being "native speakers" of the language of the community into which they are born and that the universal principles of the structure of language are contained in the child's mind and are triggered by linguistic input.

However, Garton and Pratt (1998) have presented some recent findings on language development, in which some modifications have been made to this theory. They concede that, while children are equipped with some important innate mechanisms for learning language, the processes of development, such as what develops, in what order and how these are specified linguistically, are determined by the linguistic environment of the child. It has been acknowledged that children from a very early age actively work on their linguistic input, and that language development does not occur in a social vacuum (Garton & Pratt, 1998. p.25). Thus, the language environment is seen as playing a very important role in children's language development.

The early work of Cazden (1965, cited by Garton & Pratt, 1998) suggests that the speech of adults in the environments of young children is highly important in the children's development. She found that a group of four 2- to 3-year-old children who had been exposed to **modelling** of appropriate language forms made more grammatical progress than a similar group whose utterances had been **expanded** into appropriate forms. Whilst Garton and Pratt present evidence that Cazden's research contains some methodological flaws, they review a wide range of research on the effects of adult speech on children's language development, all of which suggests that "adult input speech to children is causally related to children's language development".

Amongst the significant studies cited by Garton and Pratt are those by Snow (1972) and Cross (1975), which also suggest that maternal language or the mother's speech facilitates the language development of the young child. Further, there is also evidence

that mothers and indeed all adults, and older children speak differently to children in the early period of language development than in the later period. Such variation of speech, according to Snow is called "Motherese", that is, speech which is specifically directed to young children, aged from birth to three.

Child Directed Speech

In her studies of middle class mothers' speech to children, Snow (1972) defines "Motherese" as being structurally simpler in form than speech to other adults and characterised by very short utterances which are usually grammatically correct. These utterances are spoken clearly, modified with exaggerated intonation, contain fewer verbs, but have more content words and are generally repetitive. "Motherese" also includes making changes and adjustments according to the linguistic ability of the young children learning language. Snow, in her later research, she continued to find that children learnt language through hearing a relatively consistent, organised, simplified, and redundant set of utterances, quite similar to a well-designed set of language lessons (Snow, 1977). Thus, Snow (1977) claims that the features of "Motherese" used by parents or other caregivers appear to have a significant influence on the linguistic capabilities of the children in their care.

In her subsequent studies of the language heard by young children, Snow (1986) uses the term "Child Directed Speech" (CDS) in place of the term "Motherese". She has consistently found that the speech addressed to children aged 18 to 36 months is different

from speech to other adults, being simpler, more grammatical and with frequent repeated phrases. Mothers tend to use whole sentences and to paraphrase their own utterances. Also apparent in Snow's findings is the fact that mothers and children converse with one another frequently. Mothers do not talk **at** children, but **with** them, as their maternal utterances are directly preceded and followed by child utterances. Another finding worth noting is that, although the mothers in Snow's studies could speak proficiently, the children could dominate the conversation. For example, the child might introduce a topic or make a comment for the mother to expand on. These incidences may be interpreted as a mother following the child's lead in deciding what to talk about for the child's benefit.

Another characteristic Snow (1986) discovered in CDS is "expansion", which means giving full and correct expression of the meanings the child intended to communicate at the time. Moreover, the use of questions and clarifying remarks provide semantic extensions that involve incorporating the child's topic and adding new information. Snow (1986) therefore asserts that these features of CDS can help facilitate language development. She concludes that there is an implication that children who have learnt to talk quickly are those who have had considerable access to semantically related maternal utterances which facilitated their efficiency as speakers of language.

In her discussion on the relationship between CDS and language acquisition, Snow (1986) has emphasised the need for the child to be seen as an important agent in the language learning process, rather than just a recipient of adult speech input. She suggests

that research on child directed speech should focus on the combination of the social aspects of language development and aspects of cognitive and information processing. Snow proposes this as an alternative to studying aspects of language acquisition and child directed speech in isolation.

Some of the latest research on child language acquisition by Marcus, Vijayan, Bandi Rao and Vishton (1999) has shown the active role that very young children play in their acquisition of language. In a study of 7-month-old infants, these researchers conclude that even at this very young age, infants are able to "present, extract and generalise" abstract linguistic rules. Nevertheless, the authors caution that the two capacities they propose to account for their results, that is, one tool for tracking statistical relationships and another for manipulating variables, are insufficient by themselves to account for language learning. They conclude that it seems that consistent linguistic input must also play a part.

Moreover, in accordance with Snow's suggestions, Garton and Pratt (1998) agree that more adequate accounts of language development need to include the child playing a more active role in the process of acquiring language. Consideration needs to be given to the child's other abilities, such as their cognitive processes and the perceptual senses of seeing, hearing, and touch, and motor skills. Furthermore, social interaction needs to be acknowledged as having a significant influence on children's language development, as one of the major functions of language is to communicate with other people.

The Importance of Social Interaction

In describing the role of social interaction in oral language development in young children, Garton and Pratt (1998) adopt Vygotsky's view that children's language development takes place best in social settings. They state that Vygotsky's theory concerning the "Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD) helps in language learning. Vygotsky defines ZPD as the range of social interactions between children and adults whereby the adult or a more capable peer in collaborating with the child, helps the child move from an actual level of development toward their potential level. Vygotsky claims that children learn language from adults by assimilating the names of objects in the environment. As children ask adults questions, they not only acquire linguistic information, but also information about the world (Garton & Pratt, 1998).

"Children do not develop language if no one talks to them" (Curtiss, 1997, cited in Harris, 1992, p.44). In Harris's (1992) studies on language experience and early language development, Harris (1992) cites the theories of Bruner which propose that the young child learns language within the rich context provided by the social interaction that takes place between child and adult. This social interaction presents the child with a framework that provides vital support for the task of acquiring language. As the child takes part in the interaction, he or she is able to take account of the socio-interactional framework because the language directed to the child usually consists of explanation, narration and description of what the child is currently doing (p.29).

Harris (1992) continues to investigate both the language addressed to young children and the social context in which children are engaged. This social context refers to routine activities such as feeding and nappy changing that have the potential to assist the child to learn the language that accompanies social interaction. It provides an opportunity for the young child to learn about certain communicative functions which include the verbal and non-verbal aspects of interaction: for example, expressing themselves through the use of words and sounds, facial expressions and actions such as gazes and pointing to direct attention (p.34).

One of the interesting findings from Harris's (1992) investigations which is congruent with Snow's research (1986), is that most mothers respond to something said or done by the child, and they usually accompany their utterances with an action as additional cue to what they are saying. Additionally, mothers are spontaneous in initiating new activities and adapt their utterances and actions as their children's competence increases, so that they are less likely to provide non-verbal cues as the child's language develops. Harris (1992) also found a high percentage of maternal utterances that referred to an object which the child was currently attending to. Therefore, Harris claims that early language development would be facilitated if the language that the child hears consists of a high proportion of utterances that refer to an object or action that is the child's current focus of attention.

Also noted in Harris's research is that young children learn about language in the highly

familiar context of social exchanges with caretakers, that is, any adult who spends a great deal of time with the child (not only parents). Thus, it seems that the child's linguistic environment may have a particularly important role to play in the early stages of language development, and that the course of language development will be the outcome of an interaction between the child's own processing abilities and experience. In addition, the impact of the combination of cognitive, sensory and experiential learning with caregivers in a familiar social context is a significant means of language development in young children.

Children who are Learning English as a Second Language

According to Makin, Campbell & Jones-Diaz (1995), the process of learning a second language should be a positive one (p.52). The authors have identified that in helping young children learn English as a second language, the process of learning should be carried out in an 'additive' way, that is, a positive way where children can experience new friendships and gain knowledge without losing interest and values in their first language. How this can be carried out depends greatly on the attitudes, values and educational philosophies of the early childhood teachers and caregivers (Makin et al. 1995).

In order for children to learn English as a second language in an additive process, there should be links between home and school or centre. It is important to ensure the home language is maintained and developed and the new language is added to the children's

existing language repertoire (p.52).

The Role of the Caregiver and Strategies for Facilitating Language

Wells (1985) has suggested that more children would continue learning successfully if caregivers/teachers could 'teach' in a similar way to most parents. He recognises the importance of the caregiver's role in sustaining and encouraging the child's self-activated learning. Thus, Wells claims that by using more home-like strategies of "guidance and contingent responsiveness", caregivers could provide support and guidance in helping young children learn language. These home-like strategies have been identified by various researchers (Snow, 1972, 1977, 1986; Wells, 1985) as being elements of Child Directed Speech which include clear, well-structured utterances, frequent use of rephrasing and repetitions, clear articulation, arresting intonation patterns and fine-tuning to make the most of the conversational turns contributed by the child.

Adding to these strategies from his studies, Wells (1985) indicates that the adult, as speaker, should be aware of the developing capabilities of young children so that meanings and utterances can be adjusted to help children make sense of them. Moreover, children need feedback on the effectiveness of their own linguistic behaviour as well as requiring evidence about the language in use. Most of all, Wells claims that "young children need a considerable amount of experience in conversation". Thus, the quantity and quality of conversation is vital. The amount of conversation in which the adults talk about matters that are of interest and concern to children, such as what they are doing,

will enable children to achieve a higher rate of progress in their oral language learning. Keeping the utterances short and grammatically simple, using exaggerated intonation to hold the children's attention, emphasising the key words and limiting the topics talked about to what is familiar to young children are other strategies that adults can use to modify their speech when talking to young children. As Jalongo (1992) points out, "children's ability to imitate what they hear is greater than their ability to produce language independently" (p.93).

In addressing the issues of adults interacting with young children, Makin, Campbell & Jones-Diaz (1995) suggests that an important strategy an adult needs is to provide a supporting framework or 'scaffold' (Bruner 1977) for language acquisition. These supports include labelling, prompting, and expanding or recasting what the children have said.

In supporting children's early language, Jalongo suggests that the adult can use four basic types of semantically contingent speech in conversations with young children, encouraging extended conversations by:

1. Expansions - elaborating upon what the child says;

2. Semantic extensions - extending a topic and adding new information;

3. Asking questions - requesting more information from the children;

4. Providing answers to children's questions - leading them to discover the answers for themselves.

Sharing similar views about the role of the adult and older children in their studies on language acquisition in early childhood, Shopen & Shopen (1995) claim that when children participate in activities with children their own age, language development may be delayed. They assert that by participating in communicative events with older speakers, young children learn grammar and develop discourse ability. This viewpoint has interesting implications for childcare practice. In Western Australia, most childcare centres segregate children on the basis of age, so that during the day, children in these centres have very limited opportunities for interactions with children of different ages.

Tizard, Cooperman, Joseph & Tizard (1972) found that other influences on language development, such as organisational factors, affect the quality of conversations between caregivers and children. They claim that children in centre care with higher proportions of representational talk, that is, giving and requesting of information, and lower proportions of control talk, that is, controlling the behaviour of participants in conversation, performed better on tests of language development. It was identified that representational talk tended to occur when children were assembled in groups, and control talk tended to occur when children were alone. Thus, Tizard et al suggest that the amount of interaction which occurs when children are in groups may be the factor most responsible for differences in children's language development.

Research findings have overall found that interactions between the young child and parents, caregivers and siblings are crucial to language learning. It has been identified

that appropriate Child Directed Speech may enable the child to learn language swiftly and successfully. Additionally, it has been identified that the quality of conversation in the childcare centre may also have the potential to affect children's language development.

Childcare Environment

The effects of childcare environments on children's language development have been investigated by McCartney (1984) in order to determine whether the quality of the child care environment affects children's language development. One hundred and sixty-six children and their parents from nine childcare centres participated in her research. She contends that "a verbally rich environment, as manifested by opportunity to engage in conversations with adults, may facilitate language development". McCartney hypothesised that the amount of verbal interaction with the caregiver would be an important indicator of centre quality, and that the verbal environment provided by adults would affect language development.

From the investigations, McCartney found that childcare did exert a profound effect on language development. She concluded that children benefit from high quality day care, and that high quality day care can serve as an effective means of early childhood intervention. Although the question of "What is meant by high quality of the environment?" could not be answered definitively, there was some indication that verbal interaction with caregivers facilitated children's language development. McCartney also

found that children had higher comprehension scores in centres where the frequency of informative talk was high and where adults answered children's questions. She further explored the effects of the type of functional utterance. Children seemed to profit from experiences in which they were given information and requested to give information during group meeting times. Conversely, children seemed to be hampered by experiences in which their behaviour was tightly controlled. However, McCartney states that the interpretations of these findings remain tentative and qualitative studies of children's language are needed to determine just how environmental opportunity affects language development.

A study by Dunn, Beach and Kontos (1994) similarly focuses on the quality of childcare environments that appear to facilitate both oral language and literacy. The researchers hypothesised that children in childcare programs with rich literacy environments would display more advanced cognitive and language development. In exploring the quality of the literacy environment in relation to children's cognitive and language development, they found evidence to show that caregivers who held some form of carer's certification provided classrooms that were rated higher on the literacy quality scale. Thus, it appears that higher quality language and literacy environments in childcare may be provided by caregivers who have received some formal teacher training.

Another finding from the study of Dunn et al. (1994) states that the quality of the environment for language and literacy development in community-based childcare

programs was related to the number of literacy-related activities available. The observational data showed a low incidence of reading and writing activities. About one-third of the classrooms offered no literacy-related activities or materials to children during playtime. Although some literacy-related activities were noted in the childcare rooms, the lack of play materials and environmental print such as, posters, charts and labels, and the lack of emphasis on literacy-related activities during free play time, imply that literacy-related activities were not the main focus in these centres. Whilst the findings of this study are mostly focussed on literacy, they are pertinent to the present study as it was shown at the beginning of this chapter that, according to Teale and Sulzby (1989), oral language, reading and writing mutually reinforce each other in the early years.

A further very important variable that has the potential to impact on the language environment is the beliefs of the caregiver. As noted by Anstey and Bull (1996), the actions taken by teachers and caregivers to facilitate learning are influenced by their beliefs about learning and what works in a classroom or centre (p.11).

Summary

From the research literature discussed above, various aspects of the development of language in young children and the role of caregivers and their practices have been explored. In general, the findings on young children's oral language acquisition suggest that young children need verbal interaction within a social context with caregivers to

develop and learn about language. They also appear to need feedback on the effectiveness of their own linguistic behaviours. The quantity and quality of conversation with adults seem to be of vital importance. Features of CDS such as expansion, semantic extension and questioning techniques are some strategies that research suggests may be used to facilitate language learning. Organisational factors such as small groups and individual interactions appear to influence the quality of conversations between caregivers and children. These findings therefore imply that children's language development may be facilitated by the quality of the verbal interaction with caregivers in the home, community and in the child care context, which is the focus of this study.

As many young children now spend many hours in child care programs, it has been suggested that efforts to enhance the quality of environments available to children in childcare should be pursued. To gain more insights in this area, Dunn et al. (1994) have proposed that further studies are needed to specifically examine the relationships between children's language and literacy development, the language and literacy-related events they experience and the quality of the environments that support language and literacy in childcare programs.

Whilst the focus of Dunn et al.'s study was language and literacy, the inter-relationship of oral language and literacy has been shown to be extremely close. Thus, based on Dunn et al.'s recommendation, this study sets out to examine a caregiver's oral language interaction with five children aged under two in her care, and how she may be supporting

their oral language development. It will specifically investigate the features of her speech to children that research suggests may facilitate their language development (See Table 1(a) and 1(b)). Her language interactions will be investigated within three specific activities.

Table 1(a)

Features of Child Directed Speech (CDS) that research suggests may
facilitate young children's oral language development

CDS	Source
◆ Using short grammatical utterances spoken clearly	Snow (1986)
◆ Asking questions	Snow (1986), Jalongo (1992)
◆ Clarifying	Snow (1986), Jalongo (1992)
◆ Extending a topic	Snow (1986), Jalongo (1992)
◆ Giving and adding new information	McCartney (1984)
◆ Incorporating child's topic	Snow (1986), Harris (1992)
◆ Providing answers to child's questions	Snow (1986), Harris (1992)
◆ Elaborating on what the child says	Snow (1986), Garton & Pratt (1998)
◆ Rephrasing or recasting and modifying own utterances	Snow (1986), Garton & Pratt (1998)
◆ Exaggerated intonation	Snow (1986)
◆ Responding to what the child says or does frequently and accompanied by action as additional cue	Snow (1986)
◆ Repeating own utterances	Snow (1986)
◆ Providing feedback	Snow (1986), Wells, (1986)
◆ Modeling	Cazden (1965), Garton & Pratt (1998)
◆ Describing	Bruner (1975), Harris (1992)
◆ Labeling	Makin, Campbell & Diaz (1995)
◆ Prompting	Makin, Campbell & Diaz (1995)

Table 1(b)

Other factors that research suggests may
facilitate young children's oral language development

Other Factors	Source
◆ Extending the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)	Vygotsky (1978), Garton & Pratt (1998)
◆ Scaffolding in familiar context and routines	Bruner (1977), Garton & Pratt (1998)
◆ Caregiver's certification	Dunn et al. (1994)
◆ Number of literacy related activities	Dunn et al. (1994)
◆ Activities in groups or one-to-one	Tizard et al (1972)
◆ Caregiver's beliefs about language learning	Anstey & Bull (1996)

Research Questions:

The following questions were formulated to direct the investigation:

1. What does the caregiver see as her role in relation to the children's oral language development?

2. What activities does the caregiver provide which she thinks may facilitate the children's oral language development?

3. What is the nature of the caregiver's oral language interactions with the children within the different activities she provides?

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Method

Case study methodology, according to Burns (1990), has often been used in educational research, and it is usually qualitative in nature. This method of research involves observation of a particular group of people or an individual, such as a teacher or a student. Burns (1990) states that in case study research, a variety of observation and interview methods can be used as the major tools to collect data, thus enabling the researcher to focus on the subjects, contexts and settings of the study (p.365). Burns further states that using situational analysis will allow the researcher to study particular events by seeking the views of participants through interviews. These methods, Burns asserts, can provide significant insights to the understanding of events (p.368).

Merriam (1998) also indicates that case studies allow the researcher to get close to the subject of interest. This can be achieved through direct observation in natural settings and allows access to subjective factors such as thoughts, feelings and desires (p.32). The case study, anchored in real life situations, can result in a rich and holistic account that offers insights and highlights meanings which can be considered as tentative hypotheses to help structure future research (p.41).

The main focus of this study is the caregiver's provision of the language environment in a childcare setting. The case study method of research is employed in order to gather

concrete and contextual information that is vivid and sensory and taken from this specific context.

Research Design

This investigation was carried out with one caregiver and five young children aged under two in a community based childcare centre. A semi-structured interview was carried out to collect information on the caregiver's attitude towards language development and her relationship with the children. Information about her language interaction with the children and what she does to promote language development was collected through non-participant observations as well as through discussion of her reflections in informal interviews. A summary of the data sources used to answer the research questions is presented in Table 2:

Table 2

Data Sources to answer the research questions

	Methods
1. What does the caregiver see as her role in relation to the children's oral language development?	- semi-structured interview with the caregiver
2. What activities does the caregiver provide which she thinks may facilitate the children's oral language?	- observation during activity time - informal interviews - fieldnotes
3. What is the nature of the caregiver's oral language interaction with the children within the different activities she provides?	- observations - video recordings - informal interviews with the caregiver - transcripts

Participants

One caregiver and five children in a community-based childcare centre participated in this study. At the time of the study, the children observed were under 2-years-old.

The Caregiver

Amy (pseudonym) is an Australian of Taiwanese descent. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration as well as a Graduate Diploma in Social Science with a major in Children's Studies. Currently, she is studying for a Master's degree in Children's Studies. Amy joined Abel (pseudonym) Childcare Centre in 1997 as a qualified caregiver. She started working with the 5-year-olds and later in the year, carried out the 4-year-old program as well as the 2-to-3-year-old program. Three weeks before this study began, she was assigned to care for the infants who are under 2-years-old.

The Children

All children's names are pseudonyms. These children were chosen because they attended the centre everyday and Amy was their carer. Most of the background information was given by Amy, whilst the description of their characteristics and behaviours was mainly based on observations carried out during the collection of data.

Dan

Dan is 21 months old and a second child in the family. His brother, Aden, is one year older and attends the same childcare centre. Dan's father is Czechoslovakian and his

mother is an Australian-born Croatian. His father speaks his native language to the children while his mother tends to speak English at home.

In the Centre, Dan appears to be a cheerful and affectionate boy, eager and quick to respond to the caregiver. He addresses Amy by an approximation of her name, and his peers by their first names. He uses one word utterance such as "yes" or "no" in his replies to most questions directed to him. He imitates certain words, especially those which have one syllable and which the caregiver uses frequently, such as "dog", "cat", "sleep". He also communicates with broad smiles and nods. At times, he tries to console the crying babies by touching them or gesturing to them with his index finger to his lips to make the "Shhh.." sound.

Jayden

Jayden is a 23 months old boy and an only child in the family. Both of his parents are Anglo-Australian. Jayden can sing one or two words of his favourite songs, for example, "farm", "yee-ya-o" in "Old McDonald had a farm" and "down" in "London Bridge is falling down". He uses non-verbal gestures and facial expressions such as stretching out his hands, pointing with his fingers, shaking his head, frowning and crying out to communicate with adults and peers frequently. Both his parents have raised their concern about his oral language abilities. They were referred to professional advice and have been consulting a speech therapist.

Iris

Iris, a 20-month-old Iranian girl, has an older sister who is 5 years old. According to Amy, Iris's father speaks fairly good English and her mother speaks an Iranian dialect to the children at home. Iris has not spoken to anyone in the centre, but uses particular facial expressions and body gestures, such as smiles, frowning, the "surprise look" as well as the "look for approval" to acknowledge being spoken to. Iris's mother attributes Iris's lack of verbal language to long-term breast-feeding. Her mother said that Iris was still asking for breast milk (at the time of this study).

Jane

Jane is a 23-month-old girl who speaks only English at home. She has a 4 years old brother who also attends the Centre. Amy considers Jane's level of oral language to be much higher than that of her peers as she can speak in short sentences and can initiate and join in play and talk with other children. This was observed in her interaction with the caregiver during a "drawing" activity in a free play session. Jane appears to be observant, maintains eye contact with Amy and responds verbally to her frequently.

Candy

Candy is a 15-month-old girl who like the other child partiacipants attends the centre everyday, participated in one of the observed language interaction. Amy says that both Candy's parents speak to her in their native language at home, which is Italian. Although Candy is not responding verbally to Amy, she occasionally shakes her head when spoken

to. According to Amy, sometimes Candy tries to respond by uttering the "rrrrr" and "sss" sound with varied intonation and facial features such as frowning and nodding.

It appears that four out of the five children have particular language needs. As seen, three come from language backgrounds other than English and one has an identified language difficulty. As was seen in the literature review, language development in bilingual children may follow a somewhat different course from that of monolingual children.

The Context

The following information about Abel Childcare Centre was based on the Centre's 1998 "Parents Information Handbook". Abel Childcare Centre is a Community Based Centre run by a Management Committee consisting mainly of parents attending the Centre. It offers full-time, part-time, before and after school care, and occasional childcare services to a predominantly working-class community. The Centre operates from Monday to Friday, 7.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. Besides providing routine activities such as eating, toileting, resting/sleeping and security for the physical well being of children, the Centre also offers learning programs. The Handbook indicates that these programs include "daily timetables", "developmentally appropriate activities", the availability of materials and equipment for the various age groups (infants to 5-year-olds). It is licensed for 43 children and presently has a total of 8 staff comprising of a coordinator, 2 qualified caregivers, 3 assistants, a cook, and a cleaner. The building consists of an office, a reception area, a pantry, an infants' room, a toddlers' room, and two classrooms for the 4-

to 5-year-olds. There are two outdoor play areas, one of which is for the infants and toddlers.

The Centre's aim is "to provide a safe and caring environment which encourages social, emotional, physical and cognitive development through developmentally appropriate experiences". A particular feature of this Centre, which sets it apart from many other childcare centres in Western Australia is that it promotes the "Integrated Play System" which is a mixed age grouping for children aged 2-6 years throughout most of the day. This system allows the younger children to move freely into the four different play areas with the older children. These areas of play are designated *Creative, Dramatic, Construction/Manipulative* and *Outdoor.*

Each caregiver implements an individual program particularly Amy, who is the only bilingual caregiver in the centre. The philosophy of her program for the young children is to provide meaningful, child-initiated activities to help facilitate children's language learning.

The Infants'/Toddlers' Room

This room is situated next to the reception area and pantry, and is connected by a small window for easy serving of food and medication. The room is designed to accommodate 12 children. It is carpeted and divided into two areas, one for free play and the other for the mat and dramatic play areas. Most furniture and equipment are movable and are

arranged according to the theme or needs of the children, such as to create centres of interest, for example, home corner, construction and cooking area. There are two sleeping rooms and a nappy-changing area. A sliding glass door separates the activity area from the meal room. The outdoor play area has a big sandpit and two single seat swings. Painting and water play are conducted in the foyer leading to the outdoor play area. Currently enrolled in the infants' and toddlers' group are 11 children, ranging from 6- to 24-month-old; 5 attend the Centre on Wednesdays and Fridays, and 6 come full-time.

Ethical Considerations

Letters of consent with details and the purpose of this investigation were sent out to the coordinator of the childcare centre, the caregiver and the parents of participating children, in order to seek their informed consent before carrying out this study (See Appendix 2, 3 and 4).

Procedure

Prior to the visits, a proposed schedule to visit the centre was submitted to the centre's coordinator and caregiver (Appendix 1). This was done to assist the caregiver to plan the program on the day of the visit so as to minimise any disruptions that might occur. Although arrangements were made for some visits in the afternoon, all data were collected from the morning sessions. This was a result of the caregiver having to switch her duty roster due to staff turnover and most of the toddlers being picked up just after their nap time.

The process of the investigations began with a semi-structured interview with the caregiver. This enabled some background information regarding her educational background, beliefs and awareness of what constitutes young children's oral language development to be collected, as well as establishing a rapport with her. This interview session was audio recorded and documented in fieldnotes. The questions that were used to guide the interview can be found in Appendix 5. The activities carried out by the caregiver with the five children which were video-recorded and transcribed were chosen by the caregiver as activities in which language was particular important. The researcher as a non-participant observer made the recordings.

Analysing the Data

The audio recording and field notes of the initial interview were analysed to give detailed description of the caregiver's educational background, work experiences and her perceptions and beliefs. This information was reviewed and discussed with the caregiver. Descriptions of the physical environment of the Centre, the infants'/toddlers' room, and the background information on the children were documented in field notes to provide relevant information about the setting as well as the participants of this study. The video-recordings of the caregiver's language interactions during a planned outdoor activity, a meal time and an infant feeding session that were collected for the analysis were transcribed. This transcription included details of verbal and non-verbal language. The features and the organisational factors of the caregiver's talk environment and the children's responses were classified and tabled according to the activities. The children's

responses were included, as some facets of the caregiver's speech, such as expansions, were dependent upon the child's verbal and non-verbal behaviour.

When the caregiver was reflecting on why she used certain talk and actions with the children during the activities, questions such as the following were used to guide her:

- *Did you plan any specific learning outcomes for this activity?*
- *Why did you do this first?*
- *Why did you repeat the words and sentences while talking with the children?*
- *How do you think this might help facilitate children's oral language development?*

The caregiver's reflections and comments on her own practices during the activities, which she considered to have facilitated children's talk, were documented. The findings were reviewed and discussed by the caregiver and the researcher.

Reliability and Validity

Burns (1990) claims that an investigator can employ triangulation techniques to ascertain reliability and validity in case study research. Triangulation in educational research involves the use of two or more data-collection methods to check for consistency of the emerging findings. This helps prevent the researcher from accepting too readily the validity of the initial findings. Thus, to ensure reliability and validity of this study, the following data collection methods were used: i) non-participant observations, ii) semi-structured interview with the caregiver, and iii) specific reflections by the caregiver on

the observation as recorded by the researcher.

As it is also important to enable others to replicate this study, attempts were made to present clear and concise details of the process of how data were collected, organised and categorised. In addition, to minimise possible personal bias that might influence the final results of this study, the collection of different viewpoints, such as discussing some of the interpretations and explanations of the findings were carried out with the caregiver. Her reflections, views and comments were considered and reported.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Presented in this chapter are the results of the initial interview with the caregiver and her speech directed to children in the three activities provided by her. To present true and accurate results, the following steps were taken:

♦ A detailed description of the initial interview was discussed with and reviewed by the caregiver.

♦ The video recordings of the selected activities were transcribed and reviewed on various occasions in order to include as far as possible all nuances of body language, facial expression and intonation. Frequent references were made to the video recordings for affirmation. An utterance was defined as a complete verbalised idea, usually a sentence, that ended with a pause.

♦ The grammatical structures of Amy's utterances were identified.

♦ The features of Amy's speech to children were identified and categorised. Categorisations were based on the features of Child Directed Speech (CDS) as defined by Snow (1986) and other researchers as outlined in the literature review and listed in Table 1 (a). Other factors were discussed with reference to Table 1 (b).

♦ The features of the caregiver's utterances were interpreted by the observer, discussed with the caregiver and then revised in the light of these discussions.

Results: Initial interview with the caregiver

Amy began her career as a caregiver in 1990, working in a childcare centre as a volunteer and then as a non-qualified assistant. In January 1997, she joined Abel Childcare Centre as a qualified caregiver. In Abel Childcare Centre, Amy worked with the 5-year-olds and later in the year, carried out the 4-year-old program in addition to the 2-to-3-year-old program. Three weeks before this study began, she was assigned to care for the infants between 6 months and 2-years-old. She said that she enjoyed working and caring for the children, and was comfortable with the physical set up and low staff turnover in her workplace.

Amy advocates teamwork amongst her colleagues and tries to encourage them in keeping abreast of the latest developments in early childhood practice. She feels that caregivers should strive to provide optimal care for young children and that a good childcare centre should provide constant guidance and encouragement for the staff to fulfil this commitment.

Amy is also concerned about the quality of care that most centres are providing, particularly as the child-caregiver ratio is stipulated at four babies to each caregiver. From her experience Amy claims that more help is needed when caring for the very

young. Very often, she found that with more helpers in the room, she was more effective in carrying out activities with the children, particularly in literacy-related activities.

From her observations of young children's oral language development, Amy feels that the chronological age of a child often does not indicate the exact stage of his or her language ability. She declared:

> *"Age is not a big factor in language development. For example, Dan who is*
> *21 months old has more spoken language than Jayden, almost 2 years of age."*

When planning the program for the infants and toddlers, Amy tries to organise most of the learning activities in the morning, between 9.15 a.m. and 11.00 a.m. She has found that most children are more receptive and responsive during mat time and story time in the morning sessions. Moreover, she feels that the more teachable moments for informal oral language practices are during some of the routine caregiving activities such as the meals, nappy changing and after nap times. She thinks that these activities often provide opportunities for facilitating language learning.

Amy believes in incidental learning. Thus, she claims that she always attempts to be spontaneous, pointing out, labeling and repeating names of objects, equipment and toys inside the room as well as out in the playground.

As she is aware of the influence of social interactions in young children's development, Amy tries constantly to engage children as conversational partners during the day, in

group activities as well as the one-to-one interactions. Additionally, she is conscious of the effects of using environmental print to help children develop language and literacy. Thus, she uses picture cards, teacher-made charts and posters to discuss topics of interest initiated by the children. Puppets, songs and rhymes are some of her frequently used strategies to introduce activities to the children and as a tool to help maintain their interest.

Overall, Amy indicates that being flexible and spontaneous are important elements in the teaching of very young children. Rather than adhering to planned and structured programs, she believes in programs that are child-initiated, by following their lead and promoting a strong bond with the young child.

Amy expresses her beliefs in her own words:

> *"If the children are interested in something, I will look for songs and pictures to initiate learning, implementing a more child-oriented approach. In this aspect, my method tends to differ from the Centre which follows a theme rather than the children's interests. However, I will try to incorporate a small section of the areas, for example, Health & Safety into my activities in accordance with the Centre's curriculum. I will collect some pictures and songs to help discuss about how we can care for toys and equipment in our room, but I will move on to other areas of interest following the children's lead."*

Before this study began, Amy expressed some concern about the language responses of this group of under 2-year-old children. She cautioned that except for Jane whom she

considered to have some oral language and was likely to verbalise her responses when spoken to, the other four children would tend to display more facial and physical responses such as looking, smiling, nodding, sitting and carrying out directions. As was seen in the introduction to the children in the group, four out of the five children had specific language needs which had the potential to limit their verbal responses, in that, they either spoke English as a second language or had language delay.

Results: The caregiver's introduction to some activities she provides that she believes facilitate language development

Five activities that Amy carried out were observed in order to give a snapshot of the day to day activities in the Centre. However, because of the researcher's time constraints, only the first three activities were analysed in detail. In Amy's reflections, she felt that the activities had each provided different experiences for the children. As she cautioned, she did not expect many verbal responses from the five under-2-year-olds because she was aware that except for Jane, their ability to communicate through expressive oral language was limited. Nonetheless, she was encouraged by the frequency of children's non-verbal responses as this demonstrated their receptive language abilities.

Activity One: Outdoor "Riding a toy bus"

In the discussion, Amy expressed her preference for spontaneous, incidental and child-initiated programmes. She said that the setting of this activity, where four under-2-year-olds were allowed to mingle with the older children in a multi-aged group outdoor

activity and had initiated a play situation of riding in a toy bus, had provided a change of environment for the younger children. According to Amy, the younger children could experience different sound effects from the activity and play of the older children. Furthermore, Amy felt that the scenario of riding a toy bus with her four younger children had provided an opportunity for children to interact with her as well as with each other. She also felt that this was a meaningful activity as it was carried out following the children's interest. Amy stressed the need to ensure activities carried out with the children were meaningful. She said: "It has got to be meaningful in what they are doing."

According to Amy, it was important to her that children develop the ability to label things and follow directions in this type of activity. She thought this was a good opportunity to introduce new words to them. She said: "I try to use positive language, try to focus on extension, repetition and ask open-ended questions in order to reinforce the concept of names to help children recognise them." She also explained that the frequent use of the single verb and short phrase commands, such as "Look!", "Come!", "Sit down!", and, "Come this way!", ensured that children responded and followed her directions.

Activity Two: Morning Tea

In Amy's opinion, the social context of morning tea provided a time for children to listen to appropriate models of language. Therefore, she repeated, "Yes, please", and, "No, thank you", in her attempts to provide appropriate politeness models for the children to imitate as she served them tea. She said that it was important for the younger children as

well as the older ones to learn appropriate language for good manners and behaviours.
Amy stated that it was her intention to encourage verbalisation, thus she asked children
questions such as, "Do you want some water?", and, "Would like to have some jam?"
She used commands such as, "Come!", and "You can sit over here", to ensure they
followed directions.

Activity Three: Feeding Candy

Amy frequently made use of day to day routines or incidents that arose to help scaffold
language learning. In this observed activity, Amy was feeding Candy, the youngest child
in the group. She tried to be spontaneous and to implement incidental learning. She saw
the opportunity for language learning when Jayden, who was suspected of having
language difficulties came to watch her feed Candy, a 15-month-old child who babbled
when communicating with others.

Amy used questions such as, "Getting your nappy changed, Jayden?", and, "Where are
you going?", to retain Jayden's attention so that she could involve him in this interaction.
In questions such as, "What are you looking at?", and commands such as, "Candy, Candy
wave", it seems to be Amy's intention to include Candy in the "conversation".

Activity Four: "Drawing" with Jane

This activity took place during a free play session in the pre-nursery classroom where
various activities such as Playdough, Jigsaw puzzles, Block construction, Housekeeping

and Drama corner, a Library and the "Writing and Drawing" table were set up. The younger children were encouraged to move freely to activities of their choice and to interact with the pre-nursery children.

The observed interaction between Jane and Amy began when Amy noticed that Jane sat alone "drawing" with crayons on a piece of paper. Amy initiated conversation with Jane focussing on "drawing" flowers. In her reflections, Amy said that although Jane had always been responsive, able to speak in short sentences and could join in talk and play with her peers, she believed that this one-to-one interaction with Jane could further stimulate her interest in learning language as well as encourage her to practise descriptive language and increase her vocabulary.

In this activity, Amy used many utterances such as, "What are you drawing?", "Oh!", and, "Wah!", to initiate conversation with Jane. In her responses, Jane repeated all the colours and initiated some utterances accompanied by body movements, for example, "The grey one", pointing to it at the same time. She also asked a question, "Where's the circle?"

In her attempt to extend and elaborate on Jane's responses, Amy used utterances such as, "You show me where the circle is", "Oh!", "Right there!", "Clever girl", and, "Yes, that's the circle".

Activity Five: Cooking "Making pudding"

Amy and her aide Sue carried out a "cooking" session with the under 2-year-olds in the pre-nursery room. At the beginning of the session, Dan, Iris and Jayden sat in front of the table watching Amy and Sue display the ingredients and pouring them into the mixing bowl. Amy used utterances such as, "Cheese, smell it", and, "Got to add the cheese and then the sugar" to encourage participation. The children waited quietly for their turn to touch, smell and stir the mixture except Jayden, who started to climb the table to reach for the yoghurt.

In her reflection, Amy explained that she did not expect any verbal responses from the children as her focus for this activity was to help children develop some listening skills, a part of learning language. She felt that participating in a meaningful activity such as cooking, children could expand their vocabulary as they are constantly hearing words like, "stirring", "pouring", "mixing" and the names of the ingredients. Thus, Amy feels that through having frequent access to cooking experiences (cooking sessions are held twice a week), children's language development can be enriched.

Results: The caregiver's language interactions

First, information is given to describe the setting of each activity. Next, the activity has been divided into three 'episodes'. Each episode begins with a transcript of the caregiver's speech and is followed by a detailed description of the context of the language interaction and the children's responses. The grammatical structure of

utterances and the features of the caregiver's speech to children are identified and presented as interpreted by the researcher. The features of the caregiver's speech have been in consultation with the caregiver. Annotated transcripts appear in Appendices 6, 7 and 8.

Activity 1: Outdoor "Riding a toy bus"

The Setting

The context of this activity is an outdoor playtime scheduled twice a week in Amy's program. This activity takes place from 9.00 to 9.20 a.m. in the larger playground that caters for the older children, where the under 2-year-olds play with the pre-nursery and nursery children. The playground is divided into three sections by trails. One section has a climbing frame and a big sandpit. The other is equipped with swings, slides, see-saws and concrete tunnels, and the third one is a lawn used for "parking" all the child-size toy cars, buses and tricycles. Children are free to ride these "vehicles" on the trails.

In this activity, there were approximately 9 pre-nursery (2- to 3-year-olds) and 11 nursery children (3- to under 5-year-olds) riding tricycles, playing in the sandpit and a "hide-&-seek" game. Dan and Jayden were standing at the sandpit watching the older children at play. Occasionally, they turned to look at the other children running and laughing as they played. Iris and Jane were standing near the lawn also staring at the older children. Throughout this activity, they were often silent and seemed to be over-whelmed by the noise and the busy environment of a large multi-aged group of children.

In the following transcripts, Amy's utterances are recorded. The children responses, as will be seen in the description were non-verbal and so do not appear in the transcript. A full transcript containing utterances and children's responses can be found in Appendix 6.

Episode 1: Getting on the bus

Transcript:

Amy: 1   Wo, crash!

2   "The wheels of the bus goes round and round, round and round."

3   Yeah.

4   Round and round.

5   Come on, Jayden.

6   Come this way.

7   Don't you want to come through the tunnel, Dan?

8   Don't you want to come in here?

9   We take you for one round, okay?

10   Oops!

11   It's heavier now.

Description

Amy noticed her younger children, Iris and Jane, trying to climb into a toy bus stationed on the lawn. Amy walked towards them and the girls looked at her as she pushed out the bus to the trail. She helped the girls into the bus and as she pushed it further, it went over a small bump. As the bus jerked, the girls shook and looked at Amy, and she exclaimed: "Wo, crash!" Amy continued to push and started to sing, "The wheels of the bus go round

and round, round and round, round and round". While she was singing, Iris smiled and swayed side by side. Jane also swayed and her lips moved, as if singing along with Amy.

As Amy pushed the bus towards the tunnel, Jayden, who was standing near Amy, looked at her and screamed with excitement. Amy turned and said to him: "Yeah, round and round." Jayden continued to look at her. Amy waved her hand and told him: "Come on Jayden, come this way." Jayden walked towards Amy. Just then, Dan came running, stopped in front of the tunnel and looked at Amy and the others. She turned to him asked: "Don't you want to come through the tunnel?" Dan remained standing and looked at Amy silently. Maintaining eye contact, Amy repeated the question: "Don't you want to come in here?" while pointing at the tunnel. Dan nodded and ran through the tunnel. As she was helping Dan into the bus, Amy saw Jayden still standing beside her. Amy asked him with rising intonation: "We take you for one round, okay?" Amy picked him up and helped him into the bus before waiting for his reply. She continued pushing the bus and exclaimed again: "Oops! It's heavier now." The children in the bus turned to look at Amy and then at Jayden who was sitting beside them.

Episode 2: During the ride

Transcript:

Amy: 1   Hang on a minute.
       2   You want the motor bike?
       3   Someone is on it.
       4   Look!

5	There's a yellow truck.
6	Do you want to hop down and go to the yellow truck?
7	Come!
8	Want to sit down or hop out?
9	Sit down.
10	Sit down, Iris.
11	Yeah.
12	Another bump.
13	Oh!
14	You are back!
15	It's heavy.
16	I need your muscles.
17	You want to help push?
18	Come!
19	Stand in the middle.
20	Let's push.

Description

As Amy pushed the bus past the lawn, Jayden suddenly stood up as if to get down and pointed at the toy vehicles. Dan, Jane and Iris looked at Jayden. Amy raised her voice a little and said to Jayden: "Hang on a minute". Jayden continued to stare and point in that direction. Following Jayden's direction with her eyes, Amy asked: "You want the motor bike?" As Jayden looked at the bike which was being ridden by an older child, Amy told him: "Someone is on it." Then very quickly, she pointed at the yellow truck and exclaimed: "Look!" Immediately, Jayden looked in the direction where Amy was pointing. Amy continued: "There's a yellow truck!" Jayden looked at Amy and then the

truck. Amy asked: "Do you want to hop down and go to the yellow truck?" Jayden nodded and Amy told him: "Come." At the same time, she carried him out of the bus. Jayden turned and walked towards the truck.

As Jayden was stepping out of the bus, Iris stood up while Dan and Jane were still seated, observing Jayden and Amy. Amy looked at Iris and asked: "Want to sit down or hop out?" Iris did not respond and Amy commanded immediately: "Sit down. Sit down, Iris!" Iris sat down instantly. Amy exclaimed, "Yeah", and continued to push the bus with Iris, Dan and Jane sitting in it. The children looked around, watching the older children playing. Suddenly, the bus jerked again and stopped. Amy explained: "Another bump." The children turned and looked at the bump on the trail. When Amy and the bus were approaching the tunnel, she met Jayden again and exclaimed: "Oh, you are back!" Jayden walked up to Amy and looked at his friends sitting in the bus. Amy looked at him and said: "It's heavy, I need your muscles." Jayden looked at Amy but did not reply. She asked: "You want to help push?" Jayden nodded and walked closer to Amy. Amy told him: "Come, stand in the middle!" Amy held his hand, led him between the bus and herself, and said: "Let's push."

Episode 3: Going to the gate

Transcript:

Amy:	1	We are going to push the bus back to the gate.
	2	And we'll have morning tea.
	3	We're going to have some yummy pikelets.

4   Do you like pikelets?

5   Going through the tunnel!

6   Watch my head!

7   Through the tunnel!

8   Okay.

9   Nearly there.

10   Nearly there.

11   Now we're stopping at the gate.

12   Okay, Jayden, well done!

Description

After riding one round along the trail with the help of Jayden, and as they approached the tunnel again, Amy announced to the children: "We're going to push the bus back to the gate." Dan and Jane looked first at the gate and then at Amy, while Iris was looking at Jayden pushing the 'bus'. Amy looked at the children saying: "And we'll have morning tea." She continued: "We're going to have some yummy pikelets." Dan and Jane watched two older children passing by, heading for the room. Amy directed the question to them: "Do you like pikelets?" The children did not reply but looked at her and smiled.

When they reached the tunnel, Amy bent forward and lowered her head, saying: "Going through the tunnel!", "Watch my head!" and "Through the tunnel!" All four children watched and imitated her movements, and just before reaching the gate, Dan, Jane and Iris started to move, trying to stand up in the bus. Amy noticed their movements and said to them: "Okay", "Nearly there" and "Nearly there". As they reached the gate, Amy said:

"Now we're stopping at the gate." The children stood up and Amy helped them out of the bus. She looked at Jayden saying: "Okay, Jayden, well done!" At this time, all the other children were walking back to the pre-nursery room for morning tea. Amy ushered Dan and Jane in front of her whilst holding Jayden's and Iris's hands as she led them towards the room, following the other children.

Grammatical structure of Amy's utterances

During these three episodes, Amy spoke 43 utterances which were mainly short (See Appendix 6). However, whilst most contained four words or fewer, some were considerably longer and up to 12 words in length, one of which was a song. Her utterances were mostly complete sentences but some were shortened, with the subject and verb omitted such as "Round and round' (Utterance 4, Episode 1 (E1)), "Another bump'(Utterance 12, E2), "Through the tunnel'(Utterance 7, E3) and, 'Nearly there', 'Nearly there' (Utterances 9 & 10, E3). There were utterances that contained only one word, such as using a verb as a command, for example, 'Come!" and "Sit down!" (Utterances 7 & 9, E2). There were also one-word exclamations such as 'Wo!', 'Oops!'(Utterances 1, 10, E1), and 'Oh!' (Utterance 13, E2), and the single words 'Yeah' (Utterance 11, E2) and 'Okay' (Utterance 8, E3) for affirmation.

Features of Amy's speech to children as interpreted by observer

Some features of Amy's speech to the children were identified, based on the features of Child Directed Speech (CDS) defined by Snow and other researchers as outlined in the

literature review (see Table 1a).

The features of CDS found in her speech to children were:

♦ Asking questions, e.g. "You want the motor bike?" (Utterance 2, Episode 2 (E2))

♦ Repeating her own utterances, e.g. " Sit down!" "Sit down, Iris!" (Utterances 20 & 21, E2)

♦ Labeling, e.g. "There's a yellow truck." (Utterance 5, E2)

♦ Prompting, e.g. "Come!" (Utterances 7 & 18, E2)

♦ Giving feedback, e.g. "Okay, Jayden, well done!" (Utterance 12, E3)

♦ Extending a topic, e.g. "I need your muscles." (Utterance 16, E2)

♦ Adding and giving new information, e.g. "We're going to push the bus back to the gate." (Utterance 1, E3)

♦ Clarifying children's actions and intentions, e.g. "Want to sit down or hop out?" (Utterance 8, E2).

♦ Responding to what the child says or does, e.g. "Hang on a minute." (Utterance 1, E2)

♦ Recasting, e.g. "Don't you want to come in here?" (Utterance 8, E1)

Features of CDS that were not found in Amy's speech to children in this activity were: "incorporating the children's topic", "providing answers to children's questions", and, "eleborating on what children say". This was because the children did not engage in verbal conversation during this outdoor activity.

An examination of her utterances showed that Amy asked questions frequently to respond to children's actions as well as to clarify their intentions. Asking questions such as,

"Don't you want to come through the tunnel, Dan?", "We take you for one round, okay?", and, "Do you want to hop down and go to the yellow truck?", had apparently elicited children's responses which were mainly non-verbal. When labeling the objects with a rise in intonation such as 'tunnel', "motor-bike", "yellow-truck" and "gate", Amy was apparently drawing children's attention to new words. The frequent use of questions and labeling of objects appeared to encourage children to participate in the activity and to follow Amy's directions.

Similarly, the frequent use of short commands, some of which contained only a verb, often with repetition or recasting appeared to be meant for precise and clear directions for children to follow. For example, after Amy commanded "Come!", "Sit down!", "Stand in the middle!" and "Let's push!", Jayden and Iris followed her directions.

The use of exclamations with exaggerated intonation such as "Look", "Oh", and "Oops" seemed to have the effect of attracting and redirecting children's attention and focus. It was noted that after an exclamation, Amy usually extended her topic and gave new information to children. For example, utterance 16, "There's a yellow truck" was spoken immediately after "Look". Utterances such as, "It's heavier now", "I need your muscles", and, "We're going to have some yummy pikelets", appeared to encourage children to participate and to prepare them for the transition to the next activity. Amy's praise to Jayden for 'helping' could be seen as an attempt to provide feedback to all the children to encourage more participation. Furthermore, in her effort to extend children's language

and to encourage children's responses, Amy recast her statements into more specific commands, such as "Come this way!" and "Let's push!"

Children's Observed Responses

As shown in Appendix 6, many of Amy's utterances classified in accordance with the features of CDS listed in Table 1 seemed to evoke observable responses from the children. Although there were no verbal utterances, children responded frequently with physical movements such as standing, walking, nodding, and carrying out directions. Their responses also included a number of facial features such as eye contact and smiles. For example, questions such as, "Don't you want to come through the tunnel, Dan?", elicited eye contact from the child (Utterance 7, E1). When a question was rephrased or recast, "Don't you want to come in here?" (Utterance 8, E1), Dan was prompted to carry out the directions. It is noted that the use of the negative 'don't' made these questions rhetorical so that a particular response was required.

Jayden responded with a nod when Amy tried to clarify his intention by asking, "Do you want to hop down and go to the yellow truck?" (Utterance 6, E2). Jayden smiled in response to Amy's feedback, "You are back!" (Utterances 14, E2) and, "Okay, Jayden, well done!" (Utterance 12, E3). Dan and Jane also smiled at Amy when she asked, "Do you like pikelets?" (Utterance 4, E3). Recasting utterances such as "Come this way" (Utterance 6, E1), and "Let's push" (Utterance 20, E2) appeared to encourage participation in the activity. Children carried out the required behaviour several times

when Amy repeated short commands such as "Come!"(Utterance 7, E1) and "Sit down, Iris" (Utterance 10, E1).

Labeling objects such as "tunnel" (Utterance 7, E1), "yellow truck" (Utterance 6, E2), "muscles" (Utterance 16, E2) and "gate" (Utterance 1, E3) appeared to focus children's attention as they often responded by looking at Amy as well as in the direction of the objects mentioned. The children watched and imitated her when Amy gave the information, "Going through the tunnel!", and, "Watch my head!" (Utterances 5 and 6, E3). Jayden also screamed with excitement as Amy sang, "Wheels of the bus". Many of Amy's responses to children's behaviours which included exclamations such as, "Oh!" (Utterance 13, E2), and the affirmation,"Yeah" (Utterance 11, E2) appeared to arouse children's attention. They responded by making eye contact with her as well as using body movements.

However, there were some utterances that the children did not respond to. For example, when Amy repeated part of the song in a short phrase without verbs, "Yeah!" and "Round and round" (Utterances 3 & 4, E1), the children were quiet. This was probably because these two utterances did not require any response and Amy turned away immediately to address Jayden who was observing them. Jayden did not respond to the question, "We take you for one round, okay?" (Utterance 9, E1). Amy's question to Iris, "Want to sit down or hop out?" (Utterance 8, E2) also did not receive any response from the child. In this instance, Jayden and Iris might have needed more time and encouragement to

respond to the utterances, particularly as utterance 8, E2 required only one of two alternative actions.

As we have seen, the interaction with the children in episodes 1 and 2 was mainly concerned with the bus ride. Amy labeled vehicles such as, "motor bike", and, "yellow truck" that were seen in the playground and many utterances were questions, commands and partial statements to direct children to participate in this activity, e.g., "Do you want to come through the tunnel?", "Look!", "Come this way!" and "Let's push!". In episode 3, the interaction appeared to focus on preparing the children for the next activity. Amy gave information to the children, "We're going to push the bus back to the gate", "And we'll have morning tea", and, "We're going to have some yummy pikelets", to prepare them for morning tea.

According to Amy, as her main intention for this activity was to help extend children's language, she tried to introduce new words to them. This was evident in utterances such as, "Another bump", "It's heavy", "It's heavier now", "I need your muscles", "Stand in the middle", and, "Let's push".

However, the frequent use of the single verb and short phrase commands such as "Look", "Come", "Sit down", and "Come this way", seemed to indicate that it was also important to her that the children participated in the activity and responded to her.

Activity 2: Morning Tea

The Setting

This activity is carried out daily between 9.30 and 9.55 a.m. in the pre-nursery room where the under 2-year-olds have their morning tea together with the pre-nursery children. Although the room has a meals area that faces the playground, the morning tea is usually taken in the activity area where chairs and tables are joined together in a row so that the children can sit facing each other. Amy, together with her aide Sue and the Pre-nursery caregiver, Bev attend to the children.

After children are settled for tea, it is usual that Bev makes preparation for another activity at the other side of the room. After tea, the older children are encouraged to join the next activity whilst the younger ones can either do the same or return to the playground.

In this context, the two caregivers and the aide attended to 6 under 2-year-olds and 9 pre-nursery children. While Amy and Sue were preparing the milk and pikelets for serving, Bev supervised the children to ensure a smooth transition to the next activity, a flannel board story.

The full transcript and children's responses can be found in Appendix 7.

Episode 1: Settling down for tea

Transcript:

Amy:	1	Oh!
	2	Yummy morning tea.
	3	We're having pikelets.
	4	I'm putting them in the middle.
	5	Come!
	6	You can sit over here.
	7	Do you want some water?
	8	Come!
	9	Sit here, Iris!
	10	Would like to have some jam?
	11	Good girl.
Iris:	12	(Thank you)

Description

Amy and Sue began to serve when they saw that most children were seated. Looking at Jayden and Iris who were still walking towards her, Amy exclaimed: "Oh, yummy morning tea". Some of the older children sitting at the table looked at her. Amy announced, "We're having pikelets", "I'm putting them in the middle." After placing the pikelets on table, she saw Jayden standing beside a table staring at her. Amy commanded: "Come!", "You can sit over here", pointing to an empty seat beside her. Jayden walked towards the chair and sat down. Still watching him, Amy asked: "Do you want some water?" Jayden nodded and Amy handed a cup to him. Next, Amy saw Iris walking into the room, and she commanded: "Come!", "Sit here, Iris" pointing to empty chair. Iris sat

as directed. Amy praised her saying: "Good girl!", as she handed a piece of pikelet to Iris.

"Would you like to have some jam?" Amy asked. Iris nodded and murmured an approximation of 'thank you'.

Episode 2: Encouraging good manners

Transcript:

Sue:	1	Sit down, Jayden.
	2	Would you like some jam?
Amy:	3	Yes, please.
	4	No, thank you.
	5	Umm. Yummy milk.
	6	Meg, would you like to sit next to Mandy?
Sue:	7	Ben, more jam in your pikelet?
Amy:	8	Yes, please.
Ben:	9	Yes, please.
Sue:	10	Lovely manners.
Amy:	11	Nat, would you like to have some more?
	12	Could we have some more, please?
Sue:	13	Sure, there you are.
Amy:	14	Thank you, Sue.

Description

Whilst Amy was serving Iris, Sue saw Jayden standing up from his chair. Sue looked and said: "Sit down, Jayden", "Would you like some jam?" Jayden sat down and was quiet. Amy turned and said to him: "Yes, please." Jayden stared at her but did not respond. Amy continued to say: "No, thank you" without waiting for any response, she handed

him another piece of pikelet with jam. Jayden reached out, looking at the pikelet and took it.

Amy turned and smiled at the other children, saying: "Umm, yummy milk." Most of them stared at her. When she noticed a pre-nursery girl walk in, she looked and addressed her: "Meg, would you like to sit next to Mandy?" Meg nodded and walked over to the empty chair and sat beside Mandy.

Meanwhile, Sue saw a pre-nursery child reaching out for another piece of pikelet and asked: "Ben, more jam in your pikelet?" Ben nodded. Whilst serving Meg, Amy glanced at Ben and said to him: "Yes, please." Ben looked at Sue and echoed: "Yes, please." "Lovely manners", Sue replied while spreading the jam on his pikelet. Ben looked pleased. When Amy spotted a pre-nursery child raising his hand, Amy asked immediately: "Nat, would you like to have some more?" and the child nodded. Amy spoke to Sue: "Could we have some more please?" Sue replied: "Sure, there you are", and handed Amy another plate of pikelets. Amy responded: "Thank you, Sue", as she took the plate from Sue. Nat and some of the older children looked at them.

Episode 3: Preparing for the next activity

Transcript:

Amy: 1   Jayden, when you have finished, you can go to the playroom with Sue.

Description

This morning, Bev had prepared a flannel board story and most of the children including Dan, Jane and Iris walked over to her as soon as they finished tea. At this moment, Jayden looked as if he was about to leave his chair with a pikelet in his hand. Amy, whilst cleaning up saw him and spoke to him: "Jayden, when you have finished, you can go to the playroom with Sue." Jayden sat down and put the whole piece of pikelet into his mouth, got out of his chair and ran over to Bev. Amy followed the children and sat down beside Jayden for the story.

Grammatical Structures of Amy's Utterances

There were 26 utterances of which Amy spoke 21. Sue, the aide, contributed 3 utterances (Episode 2 (E2), Utterances 1, 7 and 10) in response to the children and one (utterance 13, E2) to Amy. A pre-nursery child made one utterance in response in this activity (see Appendix 7).

In this context, the average length of Amy's utterances was approximately 5 words. These utterances were mainly short complete sentences, such as, "We're having pikelets", and, "You can sit over here" (Utterances 3 and 6, E1). Questions were frequently used and contained an average of 6 to 7 words, but there were questions that had 8 to 9 words, for example, "Meg, would you like to sit next to Mandy?" (Utterance 6, E2). Some of her utterances were short, such as "Good girl"(Utterance 10, E1), "Yes, please", and, "No, thank you" (Utterances 3 & 4 , E1). Short commands with verbs such

as "Come!", "Sit here, Iris!" (Utterances 8 & 9, E1) were also used frequently. The one-word exclamation "Oh!" was found in this activity.

Features of Amy's Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer

The features of Amy's speech to this mixed-age group of children, based on the features of CDS were identified as follows:

♦ Asking questions, e.g. "Do you want some water?" (Episode 1 (E1), Utterance 7)

♦ Labeling, e.g. "Umm yummy milk" (E2, Utterance 5,)

♦ Giving information, e.g. "We're having pikelets" (Utterance 3, E1)

♦ Giving feedback, e.g. "Good girl" (Utterance 10, E1)

♦ Modeling, e.g. "Could we have some more, please?" (Utterance 12, E2)

♦ Prompting, e.g. "Come", "You can sit over here" (Utterances 5 & 6, E1)

♦ Clarifying, e.g. "Meg, would you like to sit next to Mandy?" (Utterance 6, E2)

♦ Responding to what the child says or does, e.g. "Nat, would you like to have some more?" (Utterance 11, E2)

As shown in Table 3a, the features of CDS that were not found in Amy's speech to children included: "extending a topic, incorporating child's topic", "providing answers to child's questions", "elaborating on what the child says", "rephrasing" or "recasting own utterances", "repeating her own utterances" and "describing".

As can be seen in Appendix 7, Amy used many questions for various purposes such as to respond to the children's non-verbal behaviours and expressions, and to clarify their intentions as well as modeling good manners. For example, the question, "Would you like to have some jam?" (Utterance11, E1) seemed to be a response to Iris's facial

expression as she who was then holding a piece of pikelet in her hand and looking at the pikelet. The question, "Meg, would you like to sit next to Mandy?" (Utterance 6, E2) was used to clarify an older child's intentions and, "Could we have some more, please?" (Utterance 12, E2) was apparently used for modeling good manners. It was noted that Amy used higher pitch for the word 'please'.

"Yummy morning tea" (Utterance 2, E1), "Yummy milk" (Utterance 16), "We're having pikelets", and, "I'm putting them in the middle" (Utterances 3 & 4, E1), were utterances that Amy used to label, give and add information for the children as well as reminding them of the activity and providing them with the opportunity to listen to new words. In her attempt to encourage good manners, Amy used short utterances to model appropriate responses such as, "Yes, please", and, "Thank you, Sue" (Utterances 3 & 4, E2). It was also noted that commands with verbs such as "Come!", "Sit here" (Utterances 8 & 9, E1) and the exclamation 'Oh!' (Utterance 1, E1) were used in prompting children for physical responses.

Children's Observed Responses

As indicated in Appendix 7, many of Amy's utterances elicited children's responses, which included carrying out Amy's directions physically, such as sitting down, turning around and nodding their heads. Some children tended to respond more with their facial expressions. For example, the children continued to look at Amy and the plate of pikelets in response to Amy's statement, "I'm putting them in the middle" (Utterance 4, E1).

Most children were quick to respond to her prompting to carry out a direction by using commands such as "Come!", "Sit down!", and the exclamation "Oh!", as well as her asking questions to clarify their intentions. These responses were physical behaviours that included sitting down on a chair and nodding. In terms of the utterances that were intended to serve as models of good manners and appropriate responses, most children responded and one of the older children imitated Amy. He repeated after Amy, "Yes, please." (Utterance 11, E2). Only one question was addressed to Jayden, "Would you like some jam?" (Utterance 2, E2), and he did not respond. Perhaps Jayden needed more time and encouragement to respond.

In this routine activity, the assumed topic of 'conversation' was settling the children and informing them that they were having pikelets for morning tea. To ensure all the children were seated and having tea, Amy commanded them to "Sit over here" and asked them if they wanted water, more pikelets and jam. In episode 2, Amy continued to ask questions such as, "Would you like some jam?", to ensure that all the children were being served. Amy directed Jayden to the next activity in episode 3.

It was apparent that Amy's objective in this particular context was to encourage children to develop good manners as well as to help children extend their oral language. It was seen that Amy repeatedly modeled, "Yes, please", and "No, thank you", for the children. Amy stated that although meal times were routine activities, she felt that they provided teachable moments, particularly for language learning. Overall, it seemed that the main

focus in this situation was to model good table manners for the children to follow as well as to ensure children carried out her directions.

Activity 3: Feeding Candy

The Setting

This is a routine 'one-to-one' activity whenever the individual children aged from birth to less than 18 months needed to be fed. In this context, Amy carried Candy, a 15-months-old baby girl who just had a bottle of milk, to the meals area of the infants'/toddlers' room between 9.55 and 10.05 a.m. The meals room is located in between the infants'/toddlers' room and the foyer that leads to the smaller playground that caters for the younger children.

Amy placed Candy, who had just started to walk, on a chair at the table facing the playground. She sat beside the baby, facing her and started to feed her a bowl of cereal for breakfast. Whilst most of the other children were out in the playground supervised by Sue, Jayden, who just had his nappy changed, ran towards Amy and watched her feeding the baby.

A full transcript with children's responses can be found in Appendix 8.

Episode 1: Feeding and talking

Transcript:

Amy: 1   Wow!

      2   You look cute!

3	Getting your nappy changed, Jayden?	.
4	Where are you going?	
5	You are going outside?	
6	Yum, nice cereal.	
7	What?	
8	What are you looking at?	
9	Oh!	
10	You are looking at Jayden.	

Description

When Amy saw Jayden staring at them, she exclaimed: "Wow!" Both Amy and Jayden maintained eye contact. "You look cute!" Amy continued to look at Jayden. Jayden bent down his head looking at his body whilst Candy looked back and forth between the two, seemingly trying to grasp the conversation. Amy commented with raised intonation: "Getting your nappy changed, Jayden?" Jayden nodded and turned away as if to head for the playground. Amy asked quickly: "Where are you going?" Jayden turned back and looked in her direction. Seeing Jayden's response, she continued to ask: "You are going outside?" Jayden did not move, but Candy continued to observe them. Amy seemed to notice Candy's eye movement, turned to her and tried to feed her another spoon of cereal. Candy did not open her mouth, probably because she still had a mouthful of the previous spoon of cereal. Amy looked at her and said: "Yum, nice cereal." Candy seemed to be still chewing and gazing at Jayden. Amy asked: "What?" Candy maintained her gaze in Jayden's direction. Amy asked again: "What are you looking at?" At last, Candy turned to look at Amy and very quickly, she turned back to Jayden's direction. Following

Candy's gaze, Amy exclaimed: "Oh!" and continued: "You are looking at Jayden."
Candy did not move, still looking at Jayden.

Episode 2: Candy waving

Transcript:

Amy:	1	Candy, Candy wave.
	2	Jayden, look here!
	3	Candy is waving at you.
	4	Yeah!
	5	What am I doing, Jayden?
	6	Look!
	7	I am feeding the baby.
Jayden:	8	Baby.
Amy:	9	Yes!
	10	Feeding the baby.

Description

Meanwhile, Jayden had turned and started to walk towards the playground once again. Amy took the baby's right hand and waved it at him. Amy raised her voice slightly saying: "Candy, Candy wave", followed by, "Jayden, look here!" He stopped and turned back to look at Candy and Amy. Amy announced: "Candy is waving at you." Jayden walked closer to them and Amy responded: "Yeah!". Immediately, Amy directed a question to him: "What am I doing, Jayden?" Jayden continued to stare at them. "Look!" she prompted, "I am feeding the baby", she said while bringing another spoonful of cereal towards Candy's mouth. Jayden did not move but echoed: "Baby!" Amy seemed

excited and affirmed: "Yes!" She elaborated: "Feeding the baby." Jayden continued to watch Candy eating her cereal.

Episode 3: Going to the playground

Transcript:

Amy: 1   Candy is having her yummy.

2   Do you want some?

3   Some for you?

4   Nearly finish!

5   Nearly finish!

Description

Whilst Jayden was still watching, Amy continued to feed Candy. Candy started to look around and did not appear to be eating much. Amy turned and said to Jayden: "Candy is having her yummy." Jayden looked at Candy and Amy asked him: "Do you want some?" Jayden looked at bowl of cereal but did not respond. Amy asked again: "Some for you?" showing him a spoonful of cereal. Candy turned to look at them. Jayden was quiet for a while and then turned and ran towards the playground. At the same time, Candy tried to turn around in her chair. Immediately, Amy held the baby's arm and looked at her saying: "Nearly finish!" Candy stopped moving and took the spoonful of cereal into her mouth as Amy handed it to her. Amy said again: "Nearly finish", and tried to give her another spoonful. This time, Candy turned away. Amy got out of her chair and put the bowl away. She took off Candy's bib and instantaneously, Candy tried to slide down from her

chair. Amy did not stop her but watched her as she 'wobbled' out of the room to the playground. Amy followed the children to the playground after tidying up.

Grammatical Structure of Amy's Utterances

There were 25 utterances in this activity and Amy spoke all apart from one response from Jayden. The average length of the utterances was 3 to 4 words and they were mostly short complete sentences (see Appendix 8). These utterances included partial statements without verbs such as, "Yum, nice cereal" (Utterance 6, E1). There were also one-word utterances used for exclamation and affirmation, such as "Wow!", "Oh!" (Utterances 1 & 9, E1), "Yeah" and "Yes" (Utterances 4 & 9, E2). However, most of the questions used contained 4 to 5 words except for the one-word question "What?" (Utterance 7, E1) and a recast with 3 words "Some for you?" (Utterance 3, E3). In this context, only one short command with the verb "Look!" was used (Utterance 2, E2).

Features of Amy's Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer

In this activity, the features of Amy's speech were identified according to the features of CDS outlined in Table 1:

♦ Asking questions, e.g. "Where are you going?" (Episode 1 (E1), Utterance 4)
♦ Giving feedback, e.g. "You look cute" (Utterance 2, E1)
♦ Clarifying, e.g. "Getting your nappy changed, Jayden?" (Utterance 3, E1)
♦ Prompting, e.g. "Jayden, look here!" (Utterance 2, E2)
♦ Recasting, e.g. "What", "What are you looking at? (Utterances 7 & 8, E1)
♦ Responding to what the child says or does, e.g. "Wow!" (Utterance 1, E1)

- ◆ Modeling, e.g. "I am feeding the baby" (Utterance 7, E2)
- ◆ Giving information, e.g. "Candy is waving at you" (Utterance 3, E2)
- ◆ Extending a topic, e.g. "What am I doing, Jayden?" (Utterance 5, E2)
- ◆ Elaborating, e.g. "Feeding the baby" (Utterance 10, E2)
- ◆ Repeating her own utterances, e.g. "Nearly finish", "Nearly finish" (Utterances 4 & 5, E3).

The feature most frequently used by Amy in this situation was asking questions. The questions Amy asked, such as "Where are you going?", "You are going outside?", and "What are you looking at?", (Utterances 4, 5 and 8) were apparently intented to clarify the children's behaviour, and to initiate interaction with them. In asking, "What am I doing, Jayden?" (Utterance 5, E2) Amy's intention also appeared to be extending the topic of Jayden's interest, which was 'feeding the baby'. The questions, "Do you want some?", and the recast "Some for you?", seemed to be another of Amy's efforts in trying to extend the topic in order to maintain his interest.

The use of very short utterances such as, "Yum, nice cereal" (Utterance 6, E1), "Candy, Candy wave", and "Jayden, look here!" (Utterances 1 & 2, E2) was another feature of Amy's speech to the children. It seemed to be her intention to prompt the children to carry out her directions, e.g. encouraging the baby to eat. It seemed that Amy used the exclamations "Wow!" and "Oh!" to respond to the children's presence and movements. It was also apparent that Amy tended to use short utterances in her feedback to children, for example, the use of "You look cute" (Utterance 2, E1), "Yeah!", and "Yes!" (Utterances 4 & 9, E2). The short and simple grammatical sentence, "I am feeding the baby",

(Utterance 7, E2) was used as a model for the children to imitate. Besides giving information to the children, seemingly, Amy's intention was also to encourage some verbal responses from the children, particularly Jayden. Amy appeared excited when Jayden echoed, 'Baby'. She attempted to elaborate his utterance by repeating the phrase, "Feeding the baby" immediately. Her attempts to elicit children's responses were apparently seen again when she recast two of her questions, "What are you looking at?" (Utterance 8, E1), and, "Some for you" (Utterance 3, E3).

The features of CDS that were not found in Amy's utterances were: "incorporating the child's topic, "providing answers to child's questions", "describing" and "labeling" (See Table 3a).

Children's Observed Responses

In this context, the responses from the children involved facial features and body movements, rather than verbal language. The children often made eye contact with Amy as well as turning their bodies in her direction. As seen in Appendix 8, the only verbal response was the word "baby" which came from Jayden after Amy modeled the short complete sentence, "I am feeding the baby".

The children's responses to Amy's questions were mainly gazes, stares and turning towards her direction. Nevertheless, their body language seemed to indicate their observation and involvement in the interaction. Amy in turn, maintained eye contact with

them to encourage more responses, for example when Candy responded to her question, "What are you looking at?", by turning back to Jayden, Amy seemed to take this movement as a reply.

Giving feedback with short statements such as, "You look cute", and acknowledging children's responses with the exclamation "Oh!", and affirmations "Yeah!", and "Yes!" each elicited non-verbal responses from the children. Jayden responded by distinctly bending his head to look at his body in his response to, "You look cute". Amy acknowledged Candy's response to her question, "What are you looking at?", with "Oh!", and gave feedback to Candy when she waved at Jayden by exclaiming, "Yeah!" She also affirmed with "Yes", in her feedback to Jayden when she gave feedback to him for repeating "Baby".

When Amy gave information to Jayden, "Candy is waving at you" (Utterance 3, E2), Jayden responded by walking closer towards them. The questions such as, "What am I doing, Jayden?" (Utterance 5, E2), and "Do you want some?" (Utterance 2, E3), were used to extend the topic and maintain Jayden's interest. Jayden, in his response, looked at Amy and the bowl of cereal. Both children also responded to the use of short commands when Amy prompted them to carry out her directions. Jayden responded to Amy's prompting, "Jayden, look here", and "Look!" (Utterances 2 & 6, E2).

Whilst Jayden responded to all of Amy's utterances that were addressed to him, Candy

did not respond to, " Yum, nice cereal", the question, "What?", and "Nearly finish". This was perhaps because Candy was more interested in observing Jayden's behaviour and wanted to join him in the playground. It was noted that Candy continued to look in Jayden's direction and 'wobbled' away following Jayden at the end of her feed.

Although this was a one-to-one interaction with Candy, Amy was apparently trying to involve Jayden in the interaction. As seen in episode 1, many of Amy's utterances were statements and questions, giving feedback to Jayden and clarifying his intentions, in order to keep him in the room and to maintain his interest in watching her feed Candy.

In episode 2, Amy commanded Candy to wave at Jayden, and in turn, tried to prompt Jayden to respond to the younger child. The words she used were "waving", and "look here". Amy continued to encourage Jayden to respond to her verbally. She asked questions such as, "What am I doing?", and modeled the answer, "I am feeding the baby", to encourage Jayden to imitate her. After Jayden repeated "baby" after her, Amy appeared to refocus her attention on Candy. In episode 3, Amy reiterated to the children that "Candy is having her yummy", and told Candy that she, "Nearly finish" her cereal, although she continued to engage Jayden in her 'conversation' by asking him if he would like some cereal.

As we have seen, Amy tried to use flexible, spontaneous and incidental learning in her programme. Thus, she took this feeding session as an opportunity to model appropriate

language to the two children and to encourage them to interact with her as well as with each other. Amy had expressed that Candy, who was then still 'babbling' in her response, needed more exposure to oral language. Involving Jayden in this activity, she thought, would benefit both children as Jayden, who seemed to have some language difficulties, also needed encouragement to verbalise responses.

Summary

In this chapter, the following results have been presented: the initial interview with Amy, the caregiver; a description and her justification of some of the activities that she uses to encourage children's language development in the childcare centre; and the analysis of the transcripts of three of her interactions with the children. In the next chapter, answers to the three Research Questions will be presented and discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Research Question 1:

What does the caregiver see as her role in relation to the children's oral language development?

Evidence from research (Balaban, 1992) shows that a caregiver's attitude, experience and knowledge influences her daily interactions with young children. Further, Anstey and Bull (1996) suggest that a teacher's beliefs have strong influence on her practice. Thus, in order to gain insights about Amy's role as a caregiver in relation to young children's oral language development, her perceptions and beliefs as a qualified caregiver need to be discussed.

<u>Amy's role as caregiver</u>

From the results of the initial interview, Amy indicated that she believes a childcare centre and its staff should strive to provide their best to care for young children. She believes that the staff should work as a team, maintaining good work attitudes and keep themselves up-to-date through professional development. She also feels that the child-caregiver ratio, which is stipulated at four babies to each caregiver, should be revised. From her experience, Amy claims that more help is needed when caring for the very young. She found that when she had more help, she could concentrate in planning and carrying out activities effectively, in particular, language and literacy-related activities.

In teaching the very young, Amy considers flexibility and spontaneity as important elements. Rather than adhering to planned and structured programmes, the activities carried out with young children should be child-initiated, following their lead to provide meaningful activities which can help facilitate children's language learning. Amy's perceptions and beliefs seemed to be consistent with the views of Balaban (1992), Makin (1996) and Stone (1993) who believe that a competent caregiver should possess a positive attitude, good knowledge and experience in caring for young children. According to Balaban (1992), a good caregiver who possesses these qualities are elicitors of language, of problem solving, and of playing (p.68).

In facilitating young children's language development, Amy sees herself as a facilitator who attempts to provide an interesting learning environment and child-initiated and age-appropriate activities for the under-two-year-old children.

In terms of an interesting environment, the five activities described in the previous chapter showed a range of activities and contexts for language. These were: "Riding a toy bus" outdoors, morning tea, feeding a young child, "Drawing" with Jane and a cooking session with the children. Some of these activities were initiated by the children and in "Riding a toy bus", Amy participated in the play situation initiated by the children and extended it. Amy provided small group activities and one-to-one interactions where children were encouraged to interact with the older children as well as with other adults. Children's participation in the activities and carrying out her directions were seen to be

important by her. As she mentioned, young children need to be involved in social interaction with other children as well as with adults where "scaffolding" (Bruner, 1975) can take place.

Amy felt that in multi-age group activities which are encouraged in the centre, children's language development is likely to take place as they are placed in the "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1976). Amy said, "It provides more stimulation and the children can be with the older ones who are probably more competent in their language. They can model their language and behaviour for the younger to imitate". Unfortunately in the session observed, the under-2-year-olds appeared overwhelmed by the presence of the older children so that it could not be ascertained whether or not the presence of the older children did scaffold the language of the younger children.

Amy's stated preference for flexible, spontaneous and incidental learning, and her belief that language learning can take place during the routine activities such as meal times supports the work of Bruner (1975) and Harris (1992), who similarly claim that such social contexts have the potential to assist the child to learn the verbal and non-verbal aspects of interaction.

As Amy is a highly qualified caregiver who possesses wide knowledge of child development and of the needs of very young children, she is aware that it is important to

provide not only interesting environments for children to master perceptual, spatial and fine motor skills but also experiences that enable language learning.

Research Question 2:

What activities does the caregiver provide which she thinks may facilitate the children's oral language development?

In the initial interview, Amy indicated that the activities which she thinks may facilitate children's oral language development are activities that:

1. Take place in small group or one-to-one environments where children can interact with adults and older children.

2. Are child-initiated, meaningful, spontaneous, following the children's interest, and allow for incidental learning.

3. Provide opportunities for labeling the environment, modeling appropriate behaviours and language where children are informed of what they see and hear, and which allow for imitation.

4. Use songs and rhymes, pictures, puppets, flash cards, posters and materials for creative play, e.g. crayon, blocks, clay, sand, paints and scraps, to enhance learning.

In the three activities that were analysed, Amy showed evidence of her first three criteria for language facilitation. There was evidence of her fourth criteria in the drawing activity that was not analysed.

In the discussion of the three activities analysed, Amy thought the settings of each activity had provided different experiences for the children. She felt that having participated in the activities, the five children had gained some experience in language. Amy made observations about the language interactions in the following activities that were analysed.

Activity one: Outdoor "Riding a toy bus"

The under-2-year-olds initiated an outdoor activity, "Riding a toy bus" in a multi-aged group outdoor setting where children experienced a change of environment, that is, from their smaller playground to the larger one that caters for the older children. In this setting, the children experienced different sound effects from the activity and play of the older children, such as their laughter, talk with each other as well as their conversation with adults. The younger children were seen observing the older children at play before and during "Riding a toy bus", albeit silently.

Although this activity involved only four of the younger children, there were many opportunities for them to interact with Amy and each other during the 'ride'. The children

responded to her utterances. This activity was meaningful for the children because it was initiated by them and followed their interest. Amy's practices shown in this activity seemed to support Jalongo's (1992) claim that it is vital to provide a positive talk environment for children to interact, and to observe attentively what they say or do in order that their interests can be a basis for creating opportunities for spontaneous and incidental learning (P.105).

Activity two: Morning tea

In the context of morning tea, the children were expected to sit at their places whilst eating and drinking. Through the use of commands combined with usual prompts, the children were learning to follow directions. Amy thought that while the children were seated and served, it was a good time for them to listen to "appropriate" models of language and behaviours. She modeled, "Yes, please", and "No, thank you", several times and encouraged children to verbalise these politeness structures in their responses, although the younger children did not make verbal responses.

In this activity, Amy's objectives appeared to have conformed to the suggestions made by Cazden (1965), cited by Garton and Pratt (1998) that the speech of adults in the environments of young children is important. Amy's modeling of appropriate language forms seemed to be a reflection of Cazden's (1965) research in which Cazden claims that "adult input speech to children is causally related to children's language development."

(p. 23). However, as only an older child made a verbal response and Iris, one of Amy's younger children made an approximation of "Thank you", the effects of Amy's modeling were not apparent. Nonetheless, Amy commented that when the pre-nursery children responded to her, she felt that some learning had taken place. In this situation, she believed that the older child who repeated, "Yes, please", had provided some "scaffolding" (Bruner, 1977) for the younger ones to imitate, although none of them did so on this occasion.

Activity three: Feeding Candy

Although this activity was meant to be a one-to-one interaction with Candy, Amy felt that involving Jayden in the 'conversation' would provide more exposure for him to oral language, and would encourage him to be more responsive verbally. Amy also thought that Candy, who was just beginning to talk, would benefit from this interaction. Amy said that questions such as, "Where are you going?", and "You are going outside?" were specifically directed to Jayden with the intention of encouraging his verbal communication. Simultaneously, she tried to stimulate Candy's interest in words so that she would be able to imitate and communicate verbally.

When reflecting on her own speech and actions, Amy felt that Candy should have been more involved in the 'conversation' and that she should have directed more questions to Candy in order to elicit more child responses. Amy realised that Candy should have been

more involved in her 'conversation' with the children. Amy said: "I think I could have done more for her", and "I should try to elicit more responses and direct more questions to her". Amy added, "A lot of time, although I'm talking to her, she won't know that, because I'm not looking at her", and, "Yes, she is watching Jayden and smiling and following my gazes". Nonetheless, Amy seemed pleased with Jayden's response when he repeated the word, "Baby" in this activity.

Amy's consciousness of the values and benefits of talking with the children in this activity appeared to reflect her knowledge that children need to converse with an adult, and be exposed to adult expansions on what they intended to express, as well as being participants in the language learning process (Snow, 1986).

Table 3a

**Features used in the caregiver's speech
to children as observed in the three activities**

Features of Caregiver's Speech	Number of Occurences		
	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3
◆ Asking questions	7	7	8
◆ Clarifying	3	4	4
◆ Extending a topic	4	x	2
◆ Giving and adding new information	14	3	2
◆ Incorporating child's topic	x	x	x
◆ Providing answers to child's questions	x	x	x
◆ Elaborating on what the child says	x	x	1
◆ Rephrasing or recasting and modifying own utterances with exaggerated intonation	3	x	2
◆ Responding to what the child says or does frequently, and accompanied by action as additional cue	6	2	2
◆ Repeating own utterance	4	x	1
◆ Giving feedback	3	2	3
◆ Modeling	x	6	2
◆ Describing	x	x	x
◆ Labeling	3	2	x
◆ Prompting	6	7	5
❖ Using short grammatical sentences spoken clearly was apparent in all activities			

Key: x = not found in the utterances

Table 3b

**Features of the caregiver's speech to children and
their responses as observed in the three activities**

Features of caregiver's speech	Number of occurrences		
	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3
◆ Asking questions	5	5	6
◆ Clarifying	2	3	4
◆ Extending a topic	4	x	2
◆ Giving and adding new information	12	3	2
◆ Incorporating child's topic	x	x	x
◆ Providing answers to child's questions	x	x	x
◆ Elaborating on what the child says	x	x	1
◆ Rephrasing or recasting and modifying own utterances with exaggerated intonation	3	x	2
◆ Responding to what the child says or does frequently, and accompanied by action as additional cue	5	2	1
◆ Repeating own utterance	3	x	x
◆ Giving feedback	2	1	3
◆ Modeling	x	6	1
◆ Describing	x	x	x
◆ Labeling	3	2	x
◆ Prompting	3	7	4
❖ Using short grammatical sentences spoken clearly was Apparent in all activities			

Key: x = not found in the utterances

Research Question 3:

What is the nature of the caregiver's oral language interaction with the children within the different activities she provides?

As can be seen in Table 3a that Amy's oral language interaction with the children included many of the features of CDS as outlined in the literature review (Table 1a). Table 3a presents the features of the caregiver's speech and 3b indicates the children's responses as observed in the three analysed activities. The nature of the interaction within each activity is discussed as follows:

Activity one: Outdoor "Riding a toy bus"

Amy initiated this outdoor activity "Riding the toy bus" with four children. The subject of conversation involved naming toy vehicles such as "motor-bike" and "yellow truck", asking questions, "Don't you want to come through the tunnel?", using commands, "Come", and partial statements, "Sit down!" to prompt and direct children to participate in this activity. The conversation also focussed on giving information to children to prepare them for the next activity, e.g. "We're going to push the bus back to the gate". Amy repeated and recast some questions and commands to ensure children understood her and carried out the directions. She tried to extend the topic of conversation by saying, "I need your muscles" to encourage Jayden to participate and she gave him positive feedback such as, "Well done, Jayden" when he joined in.

Amy's intentions were to introduce new words to the children in order to help them increase their vocabulary. It also seemed important to her that the children participated in this activity and responded to her. Table 3b showed that the children participated in the activity and responded to most of the utterances, although not verbally.

Activity two: Morning tea

At morning tea, Amy used short, simple and partial statements and commands such as, "You can sit over here", and "Sit here, Iris", to prompt the children to settle down for morning tea. Whilst children were seated and served, Amy modeled appropriate language, "Yes, please", and "No, thank you," as politeness forms. Amy's intentions were to provide appropriate language for the children to imitate. It was also important to her that the children follow her directions. She used commands such as, "Come!", frequently to ensure children responded to her by sitting down beside her as she had intended. The children at first responded with gazes, but eventually, after some prompting, the pre-nursery children responded to her verbally.

Activity three: Feeding Candy

Amy's 'conversation' whilst feeding Candy was focussed on Jayden's interest when he came to watch her feed. She asked questions about Jayden's nappy change and gave him information about Candy, who was having cereal for breakfast. She posed questions such as, "Getting your nappy changed?", "Where are you going?", "You are going outside?",

and "What am I doing?", to Jayden as she tried to involve him in the activity and encouraged him to respond to her verbally.

It was also Amy's intention to provide an opportunity for Candy to interact with her and Jayden besides prompting her to eat. She asked Candy, "What are you looking at?", and prompted her to wave at Jayden. Except for one verbal response from Jayden, the word "baby", which he repeated after Amy, the responses from the children were facial features and physical movements such as smiling, frowning, following Amy's gazes and carrying out her directions. The features of child directed speech (CDS) that Amy used seemed to be similar to those defined by Snow (1986) as speech to children which is structurally short, simple, repetitive, contains questions, clarification and gives new information.

Discussion of the caregiver's oral language interactions with the children

There were many similarities in the caregiver's oral language addressed to the children in the three activities that were observed and analysed. These similarities are outlined below.

♦ Even though the activity itself might have been planned, for example, morning tea and outdoor play, the caregiver's speech was spontaneous and not planned beforehand.

- The language interaction was concerned with the "here and now" and referred to what the child was doing, had just done, or was going to do next. As such, it was immediately meaningful to the children and followed their interests.

- The caregiver, who was a highly trained professional, intended that her language interaction would facilitate the children's language development. Her speech was very deliberate and was often accompanied by gestures and eye contact. She was aware of the specific language needs of her group of children, three of whom spoke English as second language, and one of whom had identified language difficulties.

- The caregiver's language interaction usually elicited a response from the children, although, apart from two verbal utterances on different occasions, the responses were non-verbal.

- The caregiver displayed most the features of Child Directed Speech (CDS) as outlined in the research literature. Her language interactions within each activity could be seen as "mini language lessons" (Snow, 1977) in which very simple language structures and vocabulary were modeled to the children and a response was usually required.

- Within each activity, the caregiver's language contained implicit values that were most likely being transmitted to the children. In the first activity, joining in the

activity appeared to be most valued; in the second activity, "polite" forms of behaviour and speech appeared to be highly valued; and in the third activity, making an appropriate verbal response seemed to be important.

In addition to the features of CDS observed in the caregiver's language interaction with the children, other factors shown in the literature to facilitate young children's oral language development were noted.

- The caregiver had strong beliefs about language learning in young children and tried to act in accordance with those beliefs.

- The caregiver provided a number of literacy related activities, two of which were observed for the study, but not analysed.

- There was a mix of small group, large group and individual language interactions.

- The caregiver had more than the required qualification for her position as carer and had studied child development (including language) to a high level.

- The caregiver could be seen to be using scaffolding and extended the children's zone of proximal development.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

Issues arising from the results

In this study, the perceptions and language practices of one caregiver, Amy have been examined in relationship to a small group of under 2-year-old children in a childcare centre. The main conclusions of the study are outlined below.

♦ Amy seemed to be constantly trying to help young children develop oral language skills. She was conscious of the fact that helping children learn is an integral part of caring for them in an institutional group setting.

♦ The activities she provided seemed to have offered a variety of experiences for the children within different talk environments where children and adults interact with one another. All the three activities seemed to have the potential to be informal oral language lessons.

♦ Many of Amy's utterances to children were identified as similar to the features of Child Directed Speech which according to Snow (1986), are features of speech that provide support and guidance in helping children learn language. The use of clear, well-structured utterances, frequent use of rephrasing, recasting, giving feedback and

repetition are strategies identified by researchers that have the potential to assist children's language development (Wells, 1985).

♦ Amy's responses to children were accompanied by actions such as pointing at the object of children's interest and facial features that included smiling and maintaining eye contact with the children. Her language interactions with the children appeared to have encouraged children's participation and non-verbal responses.

♦ Amy's organisational skills seemed to reflect her knowledge and experience as a caregiver which is consistent with the studies of Tizard et al. (1972) that suggest the amount of interaction which occurs when children are in groups may be the factor most responsible for children's language development.

♦ Amy's competency as a caregiver, seeing herself as a facilitator in helping children learn language, was most likely influenced by her educational background and professional training in child studies.

Constraints in this study

The limitations of this study are:

♦ The data were collected from a single source which involved only one caregiver in a community-based childcare centre.

♦ The age-range of children was narrow as all participants were aged between 15 and 23 months.

♦ It is possible that the lack of verbal responses from the children was due to their individual stages of language development as English as second language (ESL) or language delayed learners. Their linguistic status may well have impacted upon Amy's interaction with them in term of her speech and expectation of verbal responses. Thus, it is not possible to generalise these findings to other caregivers in other childcare settings.

Suggestions for Further Research

In order to search for more information on how caregivers can help facilitate oral language development in young children, the following are some avenues for future study in this area of research:

♦ To collect data from at least three or more caregivers in various childcare settings.

♦ To ensure that they are from different ethnic groups and educational backgrounds.

♦ To observe a wide variety of activities throughout the day in the centre.

♦ To compare and contrast the different activities carried out and the language interactions with children from the different caregivers from the various centres.

Implications for Caregivers

The following implications for caregivers in childcare centres in relation to children's language development are presented on the basis of the findings from this study.

- There is a need for trained carers to work with children in childcare settings, who have knowledge of language development in young children.

- There is a need for carers to have the knowledge to evaluate the language needs of individual children, particularly those whose language development may be progressing differently from that of other children.

- There is a need for carers to have knowledge about the types of activities that may assist the development of language in young children.

- There is a need for carers to take part in young children's play so that they can take advantage of "teachable moments" which arise spontaneously from children's day to day activities.

- In order to allow young children to make verbal responses, it seems that it may be important for caregivers to give the children "wait time" so that they can formulate responses.

♦ Since it appears that carers' beliefs are important in helping them determine their practice, it seems crucial that their training include a strong language component and that they continue their professional development after their initial training is completed.

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PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR DATA COLLECTION AT ABEL CHILDCARE CENTRE

SEPTEMBER 1998

1st week	-	Tuesday, 1/9	9 to 11.30 a.m.
		Thursday, 3/9	9 to 11.30 a.m.
2nd week	-	Tuesday, 8/9	1.30 to 3.00 p.m.
		Friday, 11/9	9 to 11.30 a.m.
3rd week	-	Thursday, 17/9	1.30 to 3.00 p.m.
		Friday, 18/9	9 to 11.30 a.m.
4th week	-	Tuesday, 22/9	9 to 11.30 a.m.
		Thursday, 24/9	1.30 to 3.00 p.m.
5th week	-	Wednesday, 30/9	9 to 11.30 a.m.

- The above visits can be re-arranged between the centre, caregiver and the researcher.

Prepared by: Irene Wong
13.8.98

Mrs J. Smith   Irene Wong
Coordinator   5 Greenpark Rise
Abel Childcare Centre   St Paul's Estate
                                                Bibra Lake, W.A. 6163
                                                12 August 1998

Dear Mrs J. Smith

I am a Bachelor of Education (Honours) student at the Edith Cowan University, Churchlands Campus. I am conducting a study on young children's oral language development within a childcare setting. I am writing to seek your consent to allow your caregiver, Miss Amy to participate in this investigation which has the following purposes:

- To identify the role of the caregiver in a child care setting and her perceptions of children's oral language development.

- To see what activities the caregiver provides to promote oral language development.

- To discuss with the caregiver which particular strategies appear to promote talk in the childcare centre.

In this letter, I will describe what is required of Amy and what may be the benefits to her and the centre in order that you can make an informed decision about giving your consent for her participation in the study. I will be most willing to discuss and answer any queries pertaining to this study before you make a final decision. Please feel free to call me anytime at your convenience.

What I am asking from Amy

1. Amy will be interviewed on several occasions, sometimes during her break or if she prefers, after operational hours, within the period of the study. The interview sessions will not be longer than an hour and will focus on her work.

2. I will need to make observations when Amy is working with her group of 0-2-year-old children during the normal operational hours. The observations will be carried out 2 - 3 times a week for one month. Amy can rearrange the length and time of the observations at her convenience. I will share with Amy what I have observed in the interviews soon after each visit. There will be times when, with Amy's guidance, I will audio and video record some of the interactions between Amy and the children during activities. These recordings will only be carried out with the agreement of Amy.

3. My observations and interpretations will be shared regularly with Amy in order to receive her comments and advice on these.

4. Amy will not need to do anything extra to the normal routine. There will be no added workload beyond our discussions on the observations, interviews and interpretations.

What might be the benefits of the process?

• The opportunity for Amy to reflect upon her teaching practices specifically the oral environment she provides, and the interactions with children.

My obligations

I will only collect data that Amy thinks would be particularly helpful for the purposes of the study. Amy can withdraw from the study at any time. Anything that I write about the centre will be kept in strictest confidence. Pseudonyms will be used in all written material so that Amy, the children and the centre can not be identified.

All names on any illustrative material provided to me will be removed. Any audio or video recordings which I make will only be accessible to Amy, my supervisor and myself. They will be kept in a secure, locked place during the period of the study and will be erased once the final report of the study is completed.

What will be the outcomes from the study?

In addition to the potential benefits to Amy's teaching practice, a report will be written which will describe the activities she has provided, and the nature of the oral interactions between Amy and the children. This report will be particularly helpful to other caregivers who are developing skills to provide a supporting framework for young children's oral language development.

I would be most delighted and grateful if you could grant your consent. Should there be any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 94343886, or my supervisor Dr Mary Rohl at 92738366.

Yours sincerely,

Informed Consent

If you have any questions concerning the research project described in the foregoing letter, please direct these to:

Irene Wong

-- (Researcher)

5 Greenpark Rise, St Paul's Estate, Bibra Lake, W.A. 6163

At --

94343886   *94343886*

Tel. ------------------------------------- Fax ---------------------------------------

Agreement

I have read the foregoing letter which details all aspects of the research project and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I give my consent that Amy, the caregiver with whom the researcher wishes to work, can participate in the study, knowing that Amy may withdraw at any time.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided that the child care centre, Amy and the group of children will not be identifiable.

--   (Coordinator)   ----------------------
Date

--   (Researcher)   ----------------------
Date

Miss Amy   Irene Wong
Abel Childcare Centre   5 Greenpark Rise
                                            St Paul's Estate
                                            Bibra Lake, W.A. 6163
                                            12 August 1998

Dear Colleague,

I am a Bachelor of Education (Honours) student at the Edith Cowan University, Churchlands Campus. I am conducting a study on young children's oral language development in a childcare centre. I am writing to ask if you would participate in this investigation which has the following purposes:

- To identify with you your role as a caregiver and your perceptions of children's oral language development.

- To look at the activities you provide to promote oral language development.

- To discuss with you what strategies appear to promote children's talk in the centre.

This is a long letter, but I want to make clear what would be expected of you so that you can make an informed decision about participating in this study. I will be happy and most willing to discuss any issues with you once you have read this letter and before you make a final decision. Should you have any questions, please call me anytime at your convenience.

What I will be asking from you

1. I will be interviewing you on several occasions during your normal working days, or if you prefer, it may be after operation hours. The time which is most convenient to you for these sessions can be arranged. The interviews will not be longer than an hour and will be carried out informally as conversations about your work.

2. I will also need to make observations when you are carrying out activities with the children. Each observation period will be 3 to 4 hours, twice a week and 1 to 2 hours, once a week for a month. The time and length of these observations can be arranged at your convenience. I will be sharing with you what I have observed during the interviews. To do this, we will have the discussions as soon as possible after each visit. With your guidance, there will be times that I may audio and video record your

3. Interactions with the children during the activities. This will only be carried out if you are agreeable with this.

4. All observations and interpretations will be shared with you in order to receive your comments and advice on these.

5. I would be pleased to receive from you any material which you think will be useful to me in relation to the children's progress, such as your program, profiles of the children or any relevant material you think will serve the purposes of the investigation.

This may seem to involve a lot of work. However, there is no need to do anything extra to your normal routine beyond your comments and feedback during the interviews on my observations and interpretations.

What you may gain from this experience?

- The opportunity to reflect upon your teaching practices such as the oral environment you provide, and your interaction with children.

- Assistance with data collection on your children's oral language development.

While working with you, I will observe, listen and then interpret with you what I have heard and observed.

Your Rights

I will collect data only if you think it would be helpful for the purposes of the study. You can withdraw from the study at any time you wish. Anything that is written about your work will be given to you for your feedback, amendments, and approval before it is made available to any person beyond my supervisor and us. Pseudonyms will be used on all written materials so that you, your children and the child care centre cannot be identified.

All names will be removed from any illustrative materials you provide. Any audio or video recordings which I make will only be accessible to my supervisor and us. They will be kept in a secure, locked place during the period of the study and will be erased once the final report of the study is completed and made available.

What will be the outcomes from this study?

In addition to the potential benefits to your own work as a caregiver and how you may plan for this in the future, I will be writing a report which describes your perceptions and practices, such as strategies used to promote children's oral language development. This report will be particularly helpful to other caregivers who are developing skills to provide a supporting framework to promote children's oral language development

I would be delighted and grateful if you could take part in my study. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly. We can further discuss this letter and the consent details on the next page before you make a final decision.

Yours sincerely,
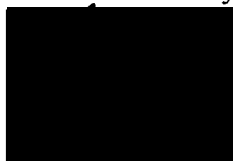
Informed Consent

If you have any questions concerning the research project described in the foregoing letter, please direct these to:

Irene Wong

_____ (Researcher)

5 Greenpark Rise, St Paul's Estate, Bibra Lake, WA 6163

At _____

94343886   *94343886*

Tel. _____   Fax _____

Agreement

I have read the foregoing letter which details all aspects of the research project and any questions I have asked are satisfactorily answered. I agree to participate in this study, fully aware that I may withdraw at any time.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided that the child care centre, my children and myself are not identifiable.

_____ (Participant) _____ Date

_____ (Researcher) _____ Date

Letter of Consent

Irene Wong
5 Greenpark Rise
St Paul's Estate
Bibra Lake WA 6163
16 August 1998

Dear Parents,

I am an early childhood teacher and a Bachelor of Education (Honours) student at the Edith Cowan University, Churchlands Campus. I am interested in researching the oral language development of young children. The purpose of this study is to investigate the types of oral language interactions between the caregiver and the children. The study will focus on the role of the caregiver, the strategies she uses and the activities she carries out with the children to promote their oral language development.

I will need to visit the centre to observe the interactions between the caregiver and the children during morning activities twice a week, and during one of the afternoon activities for about one month. Discussions with the caregiver will provide further information regarding the activities which appear to promote children's oral language development. Some of these sessions will be audio and video recorded. Arrangements to carry out all these sessions will be made at the convenience of the caregiver and the children.

There will be no physical, emotional or academic harm to the children. All written materials pertaining to the study will be kept in strictest confidence. Pseudonyms will be used in the report and no identifiable information will be divulged. The use of all audio and video recordings will only be accessible to the researcher, caregiver and my supervisor for the purpose of this study, and will be erased when the report is completed.

I am writing to seek your consent to your child participating in this study. You will be free to withdraw your child from the study at any time. Please fill in the attached form and return it to the caregiver if you consent to your child participating in the study. Should you need more information, please do not hesitate to contact me on 94343886, or my supervisor Dr Mary Rohl on 92738366.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Consent Form

I ...., give permission for my child ....
to participate in the study conducted by Irene Wong entitled "A Caregiver's
Perceptions and Practices in relation to her speech to an under 2-year-old
age group in a day care centre".

I am aware of the procedures and that I may withdraw my child at any time.
I agree that the data gathered may be published provided that my child is not
identifiable.

Signed ....   Date ....

Researcher ....   Date ....

Questions used to guide the caregiver during the initial interview:

- Tell me something about yourself as a child caregiver (including qualifications and professional development).

- How did you come to be a day caregiver?

- How do you think children learn language?

- How do you see yourself as a caregiver contributing to the language development of young children in your care?

- What activities do you find most appropriate for the development of oracy? Why?

- Is there a best time where children are most receptive and responsive to eg. mat time, story time?

- Do you plan the language you use or is it intuitive?

- Would you like to add anything else?

- The caregiver will be asked to expand on answers with prompts such as "Would you tell me more about .....?)

Analysis of Language Interaction

Activity 1: Outdoor   **Time: 9.00 to 9.20 am**

Description:

This is a multi-aged group activity where Amy's younger children play in the larger playground with the older children (2- to under 5-year-olds). During this activity Amy saw Iris and Jane, 2 of the younger ones, trying to climb into a toy bus. She approached them, pushed the bus out from the lawn to the trail and helped the children into the bus. As she pushed the bus further, it went over a bump. The children looked at Amy as they shook with the bus. Amy looked at them and the following interaction took place.

Transcript: Episode 1: Getting on the bus

Utterance Number	Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features of speech to children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Observed Responses
Amy: 1	Wo, crash!	Exclamation	Responding to children's gazes.	Iris and Jane looked at Amy.
2	"The wheels of the bus goes round and round, round and round."	[Singing]	Extending a topic.	Jayden screamed with excitement. Iris and Jane turned to look in the direction of the scream.
3	Yeah.	Affirmation	Responding to the screaming.	Jayden looked at Amy.
4	Round and round.	Partial statement	Repetition.	Jayden continued to look at Amy.
5	Come on Jayden.	Command	Prompting	Jayden continued to look at her.
6	Come this way.	Command	Recast	He walked towards her.
7	Don't you want to come through the tunnel, Dan?	Question	Clarifying.	Dan looked at her and then the tunnel.
8	Don't you want to come in here?	Question	Recast	Dan nodded and ran through the tunnel.

Outdoor Activity - Episode 1: Getting on the bus (continued)

Utterance Number		Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features of speech to children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's observed Responses
Amy:	9	We take you for one round, okay?	Question	Giving information	Jayden did not respond.
	10	Oops!	Exclamation	Extending a topic	Children looked at her.
	11	It's heavier now.	Statement	Adding new information	Children looked at Jayden who sat beside them.

Outdoor Activity – Episode 2: During the ride

Utterance Number		Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features of speech to children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's observed Responses
Amy:	1	Hang on a minute.	Command	Responding to Jayden standing in the bus	Jayden stood still in the bus, pointing the direction of a toy bike.
	2	You want the motor bike?	Question	Responding to Jayden's behaviour.	Jayden continued to look at the bike.
	3	Someone is on it.	Statement	Giving information	Jayden stared at the bike.
	4	Look!	Command	Extending a topic	Jayden turned to look at Amy.
	5	There's a yellow truck.	Statement	Adding new information/ labeling	Jayden looked at the truck.
	6	Do you want to hop down and go to the yellow truck?	Question	Clarifying	Jayden nodded.
	7	Come!	Command	Prompting	Jayden ran towards the truck after being carried out of the bus.
	8	Want to sit down or hop out?	Question	Clarifying	Iris remained standing in the bus.
	9	Sit down.	Command	Prompting	Iris did not respond. Dan and Jane looked at Iris and Amy.
	10	Sit down, Iris.	Command.	Repetition	Iris sat down.
	11	Yeah.	Affirmation	Giving feedback.	Children looked away and watched the older ones playing.

Outdoor Activity – Episode 2: During the ride (continued)

	Utterance Number	Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Probable Functions as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Responses as observed
Amy:	12	Another bump.	Partial statement	Giving information	Children turned to look at the bump on the trail.
	13	Oh!	Exclamation.	Responding to Jayden's reappearance.	Jayden looked at Amy and the children in the bus.
	14	You are back!	Statement	Giving feedback.	Jayden smiled.
	15	It's heavy.	Statement	Adding new information.	Jayden looked at Amy and then the bus.
	16	I need your muscles.	Statement	Extending the topic/labelling.	He stared at her muscles.
	17	You want to help push? Amy.	Question	Prompting.	Jayden nodded and walked towards
	18	Come!	Command	Prompting.	Jayden walked closer to Amy.
	19	Stand in the middle.	Command	Giving information.	Jayden stood in between Amy and the bus.
	20	Let's push.	Command	Recast.	Jayden put his hand on the bus, appeared to be pushing the bus.

Outdoor Activity – Episode 3: Going to the gate

Utterance Number		Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Probable Functions as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Responses as observed
Amy:	1	We're going to push the bus back to the gate.	Statement	Giving information/labelling.	Dan and Jane looked in the direction of the gate. Iris looked at Jayden.
	2	And we'll have morning tea.	Statement	Giving information.	Dan and Jane watched 2 older children walked past , headed towards the room.
	3	We're going to have some yummy pikelets.	Statement	Giving information.	Dan and Jane turned to look at Amy.
	4	Do you like pikelets?	Question	Extending the topic.	Jayden, Jane and Dan smiled at Amy.
	5	Going through the tunnel!	Statement	Giving information.	All the children lowered their head while going through the tunnel.
	6	Watch my head!	Statement	Giving information.	All the children bent forward to imitate Amy.
	7	Through the tunnel!	Statement	Repetition.	Jane, Dan and Iris looked at Amy and Jayden.
	8	Okay.	Affirmation	Prompting.	Children looked at her.
	9	Nearly there.	Partial statement	Giving information.	Dan and Iris tried to stand up in the bus.

Outdoor Activity – Episode 3: Going to the gate (continued)

	Utterance Number	Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Probable Functions as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Responses as observed
Amy:	10	Nearly there.	Partial statement	Repetition.	Dan and Iris sat down.
	11	Now we're stopping at the gate.	Statement	Giving information.	The children stood up and Amy helped them out of the bus.
	12	Okay, Jayden, well done!	Statement	Giving feedback.	Jayden and Amy smiled at each other while the others stood there and watched them.

(Amy led the children to the pre-nursery room for morning tea.)

Analysis of Language Interaction

Activity 2: Morning Tea   **Time: 9.30 to 9.45 am**

Description:

This is a daily routine where the under 2-year-olds usually have their morning tea with the pre-nursery children. Amy, Sue, her aide and the pre-nursery caregiver, Bev attended to 15 children (6 below 2-year-olds and 9 pre-nursery children). Whilst most of the other children were ready for tea, Amy saw Jayden and Iris walked towards her.

Transcript: Episode 1: Settling down for tea

	Utterance Number	Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features of Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Observed Responses
Amy:	1	Oh!	Exclamation.	Prompting	Children who were seated looked at Amy.
	2	Yummy morning tea.	Partial statement	Labeling	The children continued to look in her direction..
	3	We're having pikelets.	Statement.	Giving information	Some children looked at Amy while the others looked at the plate of pikelets.
	4	I'm putting them in the middle.	Statement.	Adding new information	Some older children including Dan and Jane continued to look at Amy as she placed the plate on the table.
	5	Come!	Command	Prompting.	Jayden looked at her.
	6	You can sit over here.	Statement	Prompting	Jayden walked to the direction where Amy was pointing.

Activity 2: Morning Tea – Episode 1 (continued)

Utterance Number		Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features of Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Observed Responses
Amy:	7	Do you want some water?	Question	Clarifying	Jayden nodded.
	8	Come!	Command	Prompting.	Iris looked at Amy while standing beside her.
	9	Sit here, Iris.	Command	Prompting.	Iris sat beside Amy.
Amy:	10	Good girl.	Phrase	Giving feedback	Iris took the pikelet that Amy gave to her.
	11	Would like to have some jam?	Question	Clarifying	Iris nodded and seemed to be approximating 'Thank you'
Iris:	12	(Thank you)			

Morning Tea – Episode 2: Encouraging good manners

	Utterance Number	Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Observed Responses
Sue:	1	Sit down, Jayden.	Command	Prompting	Jayden sat down.
	2	Would you like some jam?	Question	Clarifying	Jayden did not respond.
A:	3	Yes, please.	Affirmation	Modeling	Jayden looked but remained quiet.
	4	No, thank you.	Negative	Modeling	Jayden looked at the pikelet that Amy gave and took it.
	5	Umm. Yummy milk.	Partial statement	Labeling	Children looked at Amy and the milk.
	6	Meg, would you like to sit next to Mandy?	Question	Responding to an older child	Meg nodded, walked over to the empty chair and sat down beside Mandy.
Sue:	7	Ben, more jam in your pikelet?	Question	Clarifying	Ben nodded.
Amy:	8	Yes, please.	Partial statement	Modeling	Ben looked at Sue.
Ben:	9	Yes, please.			Ben echoed.
Sue:	10	Lovely manners.	Partial statement	Giving feedback	Ben smiled.
Amy:	11	Nat, would you like to have some more?	Question	Responding to child's raised hand)	Nat nodded.
	12	Could we have some more, please?	Question	Modeling	Nat looked at Amy.

Morning Tea – Episode 2: Encouraging good manners (continued)

Utterance Number		Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Observed Responses
Sue:	13	Sure, there you are.	Statement.	Modeling	Dan and Iris looked at Sue.
Amy:	14	Thank you, Sue.	Partial statement	Modeling	Dan, Iris, Jane and some of the older children looked at Amy and Sue during their conversation.

Morning Tea – Episode 3: Preparing for the next activity

Utterance Number	Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Observed Responses
Amy: 1	Jayden, when you have finished, you can go to the playroom with Sue.	Statement.	Prompting and giving information	Jayden sat down to finish his pikelet, got out of the chair and ran over to join the others.

(Amy followed and sat down beside Jayden for Bev's flannel story.)

Analysis of Language Interaction

Activity 3: Feeding Candy

Time: 9.55 to 10.05 a.m.

Description:

Feeding younger children, aged from birth to less than 18 months is a routine activity that Amy does a couple of times daily. In this context, Amy was feeding Candy, a 15-month-old girl while most of the other children were out in the playground with Sue, her aide. Jayden had just had his nappy changed. He ran towards Amy and looked at her feeding Candy cereal.

Transcript: Episode 1: Feeding and talking

	Utterance Number	Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features of Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Observed Responses
Amy:	1	Wow!	Exclamation	Responding to Jayden's gaze.	Jayden came closer to Amy and looked at her. Amy and Candy looked at him.
	2	You look cute.	Statement	Giving feedback	Jayden bent his head and looked at himself. Candy stared, seemed to be observing Jayden and Amy.
	3	Getting your nappy changed, Jayden?	Question	Clarifying	Jayden nodded and turned away, as if going to the playground.
	4	Where are you going?	Question.	Clarifying	Jayden turned back and looked at Amy and Candy.
	5	You are going outside?	Question.	Clarifying	Jayden stood still and Candy continued to look back and forth at Jayden and Amy. The baby did not open her mouth and Amy tried to feed her again.

Feeding Candy – Episode 1 (continued)

Utterance Number	Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features of Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Observed Responses
Amy: 6	Yum, nice cereal.	Partial statement	Prompting	The baby did not respond as she was still chewing the previous spoon of cereal.
7	What?	Question.	Clarifying	Candy did not look away from Jayden's direction.
8	What are you looking at?	Question	Recast	Candy turned to Amy but turned back quickly to look at Jayden again..
9	Oh!	Exclamation.	Responding to Candy's movement.	Jayden was still standing near the door watching them.
10	You are looking at Jayden.	Statement.	Modeling	Candy continued to stare. Jayden turned away and seemed to be walking to the playground.

Feeding Candy – Episode 2: Candy waving

Utterance Number		Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features of Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Observed Responses
Amy:	1	Candy, Candy wave.	Command	Prompting	Jayden turned.
	2	Jayden, look here!	Command	Prompting	Jayden looked at them.
	3	Candy is waving at you.	Statement	Giving information	Jayden walked a little forward when Amy took Candy's right hand and waved at him.
	4	Yeah!	Affirmation	Giving feedback	Jayden walked closer to them.
Candy.	5	What am I doing, Jayden?	Question.	Extending a topic	Jayden looked at Amy and then at
	6	Look!	Command	Prompting	Jayden looked but did not move.
	7	I am feeding the baby.	Statement.	Modeling	Jayden spoke and looked at Candy.
Jayden	8	Baby.			
Amy:	9	Yes!	Affirmation	Giving feedback	Jayden glanced at Amy.
	10	Feeding the baby.	Partial statement	Elaborating	Jayden continued to watch Amy bringing a spoonful of cereal to Cindy's mouth.

Feeding Candy – Episode 3: Going to the playground

Utterance Number		Utterances	Grammatical Structure of Utterances	Features of Speech to Children as Interpreted by Observer	Children's Observed Responses
Amy:	1	Candy is having her yummy.	Statement	Giving information	Jayden was quiet but still watching. Cindy turned back to look at them again.
	2	Do you want some?	Question	Extending the topic	Jayden looked at the bowl of cereal. Candy continued to watch them.
	3	Some for you?	Question	Recast	Jayden did not respond verbally but turned and ran to the playground. Candy tried to turn around in her chair.
	4	Nearly finish!	Partial statement	Prompting	Candy stopped moving and took the spoonful of cereal into her mouth.
	5	Nearly finish!	Partial statement	Repeating her own utterances	Candy turned away from the spoonful of cereal, slid down from her chair and 'wobbled' to the playground as soon as Amy wiped her.

(After tidying up, Amy followed the children to the playground.)