



Parental other-repetition in Mandarin parent–child interaction

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the types and functions of parental other-repetition in Mandarin parent–child interaction from a discourse-pragmatic perspective. The subjects of this study were two Mandarin-speaking parent–child dyads. The data included six hours of natural conversations recorded when the children were between the ages of 2;1 and 3;1. Parental other-repetitions were classified into four repetition types: exact, reduced, modified, or expanded. The different types of repetitions were further analyzed to examine the pragmatic functions of Mandarin parental other-repetition within the framework of communicative exchanges. It was found that the parents used the different types of repetition for a variety of communicative purposes such as acknowledging the receipt of information, asking for clarification, asking for confirmation, targeting a next action, and reformulating the child's utterances. The results also showed that the parents' use of other-repetition reflected the particular nature of child-directed speech, and the parents' attempts to foster interaction.

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1. Introduction

Other-repetition, repetition of utterances by other speakers, has been noted as a pervasive phenomenon in language behavior (Johnstone, 1994). Other-repetition occurs frequently in adult conversation, and perhaps even more frequently in adult–child interaction. Many studies have been conducted to investigate the role of other-repetition in adult conversation (e.g., Tannen, 1987; Schegloff, 1997; Tsai, 2002; Svennevig, 2004) and in adult–child interaction (e.g., Uǰgiris et al., 1989; Tager-Flusberg and Calkins, 1990; Speidel and Herreshoff, 1989; Pérez-Pereira, 1994).

Research on other-repetition in adult conversation has treated the phenomenon of repetition as a communicative strategy. From a discourse/conversation analysis perspective, researchers have identified a variety of functions of other-repetition in adult conversation (Norrick, 1987; Johnstone, 1994; Tannen, 1987; Schegloff, 1997; Tsai, 2002; Svennevig, 2004). For example, Schegloff (1997) identified three actions which led to the implementation of other-repetition in English conversation, including initiating repair, registering receipt, and targeting a next action. Svennevig (2004), on the other hand, regarded other-repetition in a study of Norwegian as display of hearing, understanding, or emotional stance. In Tsai (2002), in an examination of repetition in Mandarin, other-repetition was identified as a type of reactive token, and it may initiate repair, indicate acceptance, or target the next action.

Research on other-repetition in adult–child interaction has mainly been concerned with its role in language acquisition. Children's other-repetition has often been referred to as 'imitation', and investigations have been done to determine the role of this imitative behavior in the learning of vocabulary and syntax. The results, however, have been inconsistent. While a number of studies have concluded that imitation plays no role or only a limited role in linguistic development (Moerk, 1977; Stine and Bohannon, 1983; Tager-Flusberg and Calkins, 1990), other studies have reported that imitation facilitates

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grammatical and lexical development (Corrigan, 1980; Snow, 1981, 1983; Kuczaj, 1982; Speidel and Nelson, 1989; Speidel and Herreshoff, 1989; Pérez-Pereira, 1994). As for other-repetition in child-directed speech, i.e., adult speech in addressing children, studies have been done from the perspective of modeling strategies or negative evidence. Previous studies have examined other-repetition in child-directed speech to determine whether such adult input may include any information concerning correct and erroneous language forms, and whether the findings provided evidence to oppose the 'poverty of stimulus' argument proposed by nativists (Nelson, 1977, 1981; Nelson et al., 1985; Bohannon and Stanowicz, 1988).

From a different perspective, it has been suggested that 'imitation' by children may play a more important role in the development of communicative competence than it does in the development of linguistic competence. Some researchers have thus made a distinction between imitation and repetition, and suggested that children's repetition may serve different communicative purposes, with imitation as one of them (Ochs Keenan, 1977; Casby, 1986; Greenfield and Savage-Rumbaugh, 1993; Bennett-Kastor, 1994; Huang, 2010). In other words, not all other-repetitions are imitations; other-repetition may be used for a variety of communicative functions in child language. Such a pragmatic perspective takes into account the fact that children are not only learners but also communicators. Since adults also use other-repetition for communicative purposes (Johnstone, 1994; Norrick, 1987; Schegloff, 1997; Tannen, 1987), children may just be trying to do the same thing. For example, when Mandarin-speaking two-year-old children's other-repetition was examined in Huang (2010), it was found that the children used other-repetition to perform a variety of pragmatic functions such as imitation, showing agreement/confirmation, or providing expansion.

However, children are exposed to child-directed speech, not adult conversation. In order to better explain the pragmatic use of children's other-repetition, we need to examine whether other-repetition in child-directed speech is similarly communication-motivated. Interestingly, while other-repetition has been studied in terms of communicative purposes in adult conversation and in children's speech, little has been done to examine the communicative functions of other-repetition in adults' speech to children. In addition to the instructive function, we suspect that other-repetition in child-directed speech may also be motivated by communicative purposes. As suggested by Użgiris et al. (1989), maternal other-repetitions need to be considered not only as models of linguistic forms but also as acts in communicative exchanges, and need to be studied as part of verbal interaction sequences.

Among the few studies touching upon the communicative functions of other-repetition in child-directed speech are Użgiris et al. (1989) and Clark and Bernicot (2008). In Użgiris et al. (1989), 14 mother-child pairs were examined twice when the children were on the average 18 months 2 days and 24 months 12 days. The study described the links between the occurrence of various types of other-repetition by the mothers (i.e., exact, reduced, expanded or modified imitation) and the children's language skills. In addition, a pragmatic analysis of the mothers' other-repetition was also carried out. However, only the children's utterances were coded for pragmatic functions in the study; the mothers' other-repetitions were examined in terms of the functional categories of the repeated child utterances. In other words, the study analyzed maternal other-repetitions in relation to the functional categories of the children's utterances, rather than analyzing the pragmatic functions served by the mothers' own repetitive utterances.

In Clark and Bernicot (2008), spontaneous conversations by 42 French adult-child dyads, with children aged 2;3 and 3;6, were studied. It was found that the adults were significantly more likely to repeat to check and to correct both meaning and form for the younger children compared to the older ones. In addition, when the adults repeated the children's utterances, they were less likely to combine any further new material with their repeat when they talked to the younger ones than when they talked to the older ones. When the children re-repeated in the third turn, the older ones added new information significantly more often than the younger ones. It was suggested that adults and children as young as two relied on repetition as they talked so as to place information in common ground.

As seen above, more studies and more systematic investigations are needed to examine other-repetition in child-directed speech within the framework of communicative exchanges; studies concerning less-investigated languages are especially needed. This study thus attempts to serve this need. The present study is part of a larger project by the researcher on repetitive phenomena in Mandarin parent-child interaction. The pragmatic functions of Mandarin-speaking children's other-repetition have been analyzed, and the results are presented in Huang (2010). The purpose of the present study is to investigate the pragmatic functions of other-repetition in Mandarin parental speech (i.e., the major caregivers' speech) in order to better understand how Mandarin-speaking parents interact with their children when using other-repetition in communicative exchanges. By examining both children's and parents' other-repetition, we can obtain a more complete picture of how other-repetition serves as a communicative act in Mandarin parent-child interaction, and how other-repetition may reveal children's developing communicative skills. As repetitiveness is one of the distinguishing characteristics of child-directed speech (DePaulo and Coleman, 1986; Bohannon and Stanowicz, 1989), we expect that other-repetition in Mandarin parental speech will serve important communicative functions, and also reflect the particular nature of child-directed speech, i.e., the speech used in interaction with a partner with limited cognitive and verbal skills.

2. Methods

2.1. Participants and data

The participants in this study were two Mandarin-speaking parent-child dyads, who lived in the northern part of Taiwan. RON, a boy, was the only child in his family; LIN, a girl, had a younger sister. These two families were middle-class and all the

parents had received post-graduate education. The data were collected from the interactions between the children and their major caregivers, i.e., the interactions between RON and his father, and the interactions between LIN and her mother. The data used in this study consisted of six hours of natural parent–child conversations video-recorded in the homes of the families, with three one-hour sessions with each dyad. RON and his father's data were collected when the child was at the ages of 2;1, 2;6, and 3;0, and LIN and her mother's data were recorded when the child was at the ages of 2;1, 2;6, and 3;1. All of the data were collected in living rooms, and the two dyads were involved in similar activities during the data sessions, such as eating, reading books, and playing with toys. Other family members also occasionally participated in the interactions. The data were transcribed according to the CHAT conventions (MacWhinney, 2000).

2.2. Data analysis

The transcribed data were analyzed to investigate the forms and the functions of the parents' other-repetition. Both qualitative and quantitative analyses were conducted.

Other-repetition was defined as the complete or partial reproduction of a preceding utterance produced by another speaker. Parental other-repetitions were identified and classified into four types according to the faithfulness of the repetitions to the model utterances (Užgiris et al., 1989; Pérez-Pereira, 1994), as shown below.

- (1) Exact: The reproduction includes all of the words of the model utterance in the same order without any changes or additions. E.g., *dianhua. /dianhua.* (Telephone. / Telephone.)
- (2) Reduced: The reproduction involves omission of functors, morphemes or content words from the utterance or the target part of the utterance. E.g., *baozhe xiao wawa. /xiao wawa.* (Holding a little doll. / A little doll.)
- (3) Modified: Using part or all of an utterance as a model, the speaker changes the person of the verb, the pronoun, the order of the elements, or the complement, etc. E.g., *wo yao jiang. / ni yao jiang.* (I want to speak. / You want to speak.)
- (4) Expanded: One part of the utterance is repeated and another part is created by the speaker without a preceding model. E.g., *tiaowu. /ni yao tiaowu.* (Dance. / You want to dance.)

The data were coded by a trained research assistant, who was a native speaker of Mandarin and a graduate student of linguistics. In addition, one hour of data from each dyad were randomly selected and were independently coded by another trained research assistant, who was also a native speaker of Mandarin and a graduate student of linguistics. Cohen's Kappa was used to determine the inter-rater reliability, and the reliability for the coding was 92%.

Analyses were conducted to examine the distributions of the four types of other-repetition in the parents' speech. In addition, further analyses were conducted to examine the pragmatic functions expressed by the different types of parental other-repetition.

3. Results

3.1. The distributions of the types of other-repetition

Table 1 shows the number of total utterances and the number of other-repetitions in the parents' speech. As seen in the table, the data contained 1745 utterances by RON's father and 2529 utterances by LIN's mother. Among these utterances, 128 and 249 other-repetitions were observed in the two parents' speech, respectively. The number of other-repetitions per minute was 0.71 in RON's father's data and 1.38 in LIN's mother's data, and the proportions of other-repetitions in the two parents' speech were 7.34% and 9.85%, respectively.

In order to know whether the proportions of other-repetitions differed in the two parents' data, Chi-square analysis was conducted to examine the distributions. As seen in Table 2, the result reached statistical significance ($\chi^2(1) = 8.09, p < .01$). In other words, LIN's mother employed other-repetitions more frequently than RON's father.

Further analysis was conducted to examine the proportions of other-repetitions across the sessions in the parents' data. As seen in Table 3, while the Chi-square analysis indicated a slight significance in RON's father's data ($\chi^2(2) = 6.81, p = .033 < .05$), the Post Hoc multiple comparison test (Marascuilo and McSweeney, 1977) showed that no significant

Table 1
Frequencies of total utterances and other-repetitions (OR) across sessions.

Parents	Other repetitions	I	II	III	Total
RON's father	No. of total utterances	365	598	782	1745
	No. of OR	38	36	54	128
	No. of OR per min.	0.63	0.60	0.90	0.71
	% of OR	10.41	6.02	6.91	7.34
LIN's mother	No. of total utterances	827	950	752	2529
	No. of OR	101	73	75	249
	No. of OR per min.	1.68	1.22	1.25	1.38
	% of OR	12.21	7.68	9.97	9.85

Table 2
Frequencies and proportions of other-repetitions (OR).

	RON		LIN		χ^2	Post Hoc
	N	%	N	%		
OR	128	7.34	249	9.85	8.09**	R < L
Non-OR	1617	92.66	2280	90.15		R > L
Total	1745	100.00	2529	100.00		

** $p < .01$.**Table 3**
Frequencies and proportions of other-repetitions (OR) across sessions.

		I		II		III		χ^2	Post Hoc
		N	%	N	%	N	%		
RON's father	OR	38	10.41	36	6.02	54	6.91	6.81*	n.s.
	Non-OR	327	89.59	562	93.98	728	93.09		n.s.
	Total	365	100.00	598	100.00	782	100.00		
LIN's mother	OR	101	12.21	73	7.68	75	9.97	10.24**	I > II
	Non-OR	726	87.79	877	92.32	677	90.03		I < II
	Total	827	100.00	950	100.00	752	100.00		

* $p < .05$.** $p < .01$.

difference was found in the comparison of any two of the three sessions (i.e., I vs. II; II vs. III, or III vs. I). In other words, RON's father produced similar proportions of other-repetitions in all three data sessions. As for LIN's mother's data, the Chi-square analysis indicated significant difference ($\chi^2(2) = 10.24, p < .01$), and the Post Hoc multiple comparison test revealed that only the difference between Session I and Session II reached significance. That is, LIN's mother produced more other-repetitions in Session I than in Session II.

The parents' other-repetitions were further classified into the four different types mentioned above: exact, reduced, modified, and expanded. As seen in Table 4, RON's father employed reduced repetitions most frequently (38.28%) while LIN's mother used expanded repetitions most frequently (38.55%). In addition, the two parents also used exact repetitions frequently, and such repetitions occurred with the second highest frequency in both the parents' data (24.22% in RON's father's speech, and 28.92% in LIN's mother's speech). Statistical analyses were conducted to compare the two parents' uses of the different types of other-repetition. The Chi-square analysis revealed that the distributions of the types of other-repetition differed significantly in the two parents' data ($\chi^2(3) = 32.16, p < .001$). The Post Hoc multiple comparison test (Marascuilo and McSweeney, 1977) showed that the parents produced similar proportions of exact repetitions (24.22% vs. 28.92%) and modified repetitions (16.41% vs. 18.88%); however, RON's father produced reduced repetitions significantly more frequently than LIN's mother (38.28% > 13.65%) while LIN's mother produced expanded repetitions significantly more frequently than RON's father (38.55% > 21.09%).

Further analysis was conducted to examine the distributions of the types of other-repetition across the sessions in the parents' data. As seen in Table 5, while the Chi-square analysis indicated a slight significance in RON's father's data ($\chi^2(6) = 15.31, p = .018 < .05$), the Post Hoc multiple comparison test (Marascuilo and McSweeney, 1977) showed that no significant difference was found in the comparison of any two of the three sessions for any of the four types of other-repetition. In other words, the distribution patterns of the four types of other-repetitions were similar across the three data sessions in RON's father's data. As for LIN's mother's data, the results showed that the Chi-square analysis did not reach significance; consequently, the Post Hoc multiple comparison test also showed that no significant difference was found in the comparison of any two of the three sessions for all the four repetition types. Thus, LIN's mother's data also revealed similar distribution patterns across the three sessions.

Table 4
Frequencies and proportions of the types of other-repetition.

	RON		LIN		χ^2	Post Hoc
	N	%	N	%		
EXA	31	24.22	72	28.92	32.16***	n.s.
RED	49	38.28	34	13.65		R > L
MOD	21	16.41	47	18.88		n.s.
EXP	27	21.09	96	38.55		R < L
Total	128	100.00	249	100.00		

*** $p < .001$.

Table 5
Frequencies and proportions of the types of other-repetition across sessions.

		I		II		III		χ^2	Post Hoc
		N	%	N	%	N	%		
RON's father	EXA	11	28.95	8	22.22	12	22.22	15.31*	n.s.
	RED	16	42.11	11	30.56	22	40.74		n.s.
	MOD	9	23.68	9	25.00	3	5.56		n.s.
	EXP	2	5.26	8	22.22	17	31.48		n.s.
	Total	38	100.00	36	100.00	54	100.00		
LIN's mother	EXA	33	32.67	20	27.40	19	25.33	n.s.	n.s.
	RED	15	14.85	13	17.81	6	8.00		n.s.
	MOD	16	15.84	10	13.70	21	28.00		n.s.
	EXP	37	36.63	30	41.10	29	38.67		n.s.
	Total	101	100.00	73	100.00	75	100.00		

* $p < .05$.

3.2. The pragmatic functions of other-repetitions

This section provides an in-depth, qualitative analysis of the pragmatic functions of the parents' other-repetitions. The parents' uses of the four types of other-repetitions were examined in detail within the contexts of communicative exchanges. In addition, the frequencies of occurrences for the different functions were also analyzed.

3.2.1. Exact repetition

The analysis revealed that the major functions of exact repetition in the parents' speech included (1) acknowledging the receipt of information, (2) asking for clarification, and (3) asking for confirmation.

(1) Receipt of information

An important function of the parents' exact repetition was to acknowledge the receipt of information. That is, the parents signaled that they had paid attention to what the children had said and acknowledged that the information expressed in the children's preceding utterances had been heard by them. Excerpts 1 and 2 illustrate this function of exact repetition by the parents.

In Excerpt 1, RON was hiding under a chair in the living room. His father first pretended that he did not see RON, and tried to search for him. When RON stuck his head out from under the chair, his father walked over and tried to pull him out.

Excerpt 1 (RON #2, 2;1)¹

- *RON: 再 高 一點.
zài gāo yìdiǎn.
more high a little
'A little higher'.
- *FAT: +^ 再 高 一點 [% 將 RON 拉得更高]. ←
+^ zài gāo yìdiǎn [% Pulling RON up].
more high a little
'A little higher'.

As seen above, the child's utterance in Line 1 was echoed by the father in the next line. The exact repetition indicated that the father had received the information. In fact, we observed that the father not only acknowledged the child's request but also complied with the request.

Excerpt 2, from LIN's data, also demonstrates the function of acknowledging the receipt of information. In this excerpt, LIN and the mother were engaged in a pretend play. LIN was talking about how she would go to a bank.

Excerpt 2 (LIN #1, 2;1)

- *LIN: 坐 計程車 -: .
zuò jìchéngchē -: .
take taxi
'Take a taxi'.

¹ Each utterance in the excerpts is presented in a set of four lines: Line 1 shows the Chinese characters; Line 2, the pinyin romanization; Line 3, a word-by-word gloss, and Line 4, a free translation.

- *MOT: 坐 計程車 -: . ←
 zuò jìchéngchē -: .
 take taxi
 'Take a taxi'.
- *LIN: +, 又 搭 公車.
 +, yòu dā gōngchē.
 then take bus
 'Then take a bus'.
- *MOT: 又 坐 [//] 搭 公車. ←
 yòu zuò [//] dā gōngchē.
 then take take bus
 'Then take, take a bus'.

As seen in the excerpt, LIN's utterances in Line 1 and Line 3 were repeated by her mother. The mother's exact repetitions in Line 2 and Line 4 indicated her receipt of the information. Interestingly, in Line 4, the mother made a self-initiated repair to replace the original verb *zuo* with another verb *da*. In fact, both verbs express similar meanings when combined with *gongche*; both *zuo gongche* and *da gongche* can be translated as 'taking a bus'. The mother's repair indicated that it was not only the repetition of the child's meaning but also the repetition of the child's form that was intended by the mother. Through the exact repetitions, the mother demonstrated her attentiveness and responsiveness to the child's utterances.

As seen above, the parents used exact repetition to acknowledge the receipt of information; however, such acknowledgement did not necessarily mean that the parents agreed with the children. The parents sometimes would show their explicit disagreement in the subsequent utterances, as seen in Excerpt 3.

In Excerpt 3, LIN and the mother were reading a story book. LIN was naming the things that she saw in the book.

Excerpt 3 (LIN #6, 2;6)

- *LIN: 媽媽 -: .
 māma -: .
 Mommy
 'Mommy.'
- *LIN: 睡美人 的 城堡 [%指著故事書].
 shuìměirén de chéngbǎo [% pointing at the story book].
 Sleeping Beauty GEN castle
 'Sleeping Beauty's castle'.
- *MOT: 呵呵 # 睡美人 的 城堡. ←
 Hehe # shuìměirén de chéngbǎo.
 (laugh) Sleeping Beauty GEN castle
 'Hehe, Sleeping Beauty's castle'.
- *LIN: 媽媽.
 māma.
 mommy
 'Mommy'.
- *MOT: 嗯.
 mm.
 PRT
 'mm'.
- *LIN: 蛇 [%指著故事書].
 shé [% pointing at the story book].
 Snake
 'Snake'.
- *MOT: 蛇. ←
 shé.
 Snake
 'Snake'.

*MOT: 這 是 恐龍 的 尾巴。 ←
 zhè shì kǒnglóng de yǐbā.
 This be dinosaur GEN tail
 'This is a dinosaur's tail'.

The mother gave two exact repetitions in this excerpt: one in Line 3 and the other in Line 7. In Line 7, the mother repeated the child's preceding utterance *she* 'snake' to acknowledge her receipt of the information; however, in the following utterance, the mother explicitly corrected what the child had said. Thus, even when the information the child provided was not correct, the mother still acknowledged her receipt of the information by giving an exact repetition before offering the correction.

(2) Request for clarification

In addition to acknowledging the receipt of information, the parents' use of exact repetition can also function as a request for clarification. This type of repetition signaled that the parents had a problem in understanding the children's utterances; the parents thus asked the children to provide related information to clarify the sources of trouble. When exact repetition was used to indicate a request for clarification, it was usually produced with a rising intonation, and was often followed by further clarification questions, as shown in Excerpts 4 and 5.

In Excerpt 4, RON and his father were playing with some building blocks. They were using the building blocks to form some English letters. The father was trying to figure out which letter the child was trying to form with the building blocks.

Excerpt 4 (RON #25, 3;0)

*FAT: 這 又 是 什麼 ?
 zhè yòu shì shénme ?
 This then be what
 'What is this then?'

*RON: gōu .
 /gou/
 'gou'.

*FAT: gōu ? ←
 /gou/
 'gou?'

*FAT: 什麼 gōu 啊 ?
 shénme gōu a ?
 What /gou/ PRT
 'What do you mean by 'gou'?'

In Line 2, RON's response to his father's question was not comprehensible, and it sounded like a /gou/ sound. The father used exact repetition with a rising intonation in Line 3 to request clarification. The father's need for clarification from RON was made even more explicit by his next utterance when he further asked RON what he meant by /gou/.

While in Excerpt 4 the parent's request for clarification was due to a problem in understanding the intended meaning, in Excerpt 5 the request for clarification resulted from a problem in understanding the relation between the expressed meaning and the target referent. In this excerpt, LIN was playing with a toy kitchen set and was cooking a toy tomato on the stove. When LIN's mother asked the child what she was cooking, the child's reply 'cooking a hamburger' was confusing to the mother.

Excerpt 5 (LIN #1, 2;1)

*MOT: 那 你 現在 在 煮 [] 煮 什麼 呢 ?
 nà nǐ xiànzài zài zhǔ [] zhǔ shénme ne ?
 then you now DUR cook cook what PRT
 'What are you cooking now?'

*LIN: 煮 -: 漢堡.
 zhǔ -: hànǎo.
 cook hamburger
 'Cooking a hamburger'.

*MOT: 煮 漢堡 ? ←
 zhǔ hànǎo ?
 cook hamburger
 'Cooking a hamburger?'

*MOT: 那 這 個 是 什 麼 [% 指著爐上的蕃茄] ?
 nà zhè ge shì shénme [% pointing at a tomato on the stove]?
 then this CL be what
 'Then what is this?'

As seen in Line 3, the mother repeated the child's prior utterance with a rising intonation to indicate a request for clarification. The exact repetition was further followed by a question from the mother to explicitly ask for clarification concerning the food the child was cooking.

(3) Request for confirmation

Another function of the parents' exact repetition was to request confirmation. This type of repetition indicated that the parents had some grasp of the information inquired about, and that they were offering candidate understandings for the children to confirm (or disconfirm). Such checks of understanding helped ratify the parents and the children's shared knowledge of the state of affairs in question. When exact repetition was used as a request for confirmation, it was usually ended with an utterance final particle, usually *ou* or *a/ya*, as shown below.

Prior to Excerpt 6, LIN was walking around the living room with a backpack on her back. The mother asked LIN why she had a backpack with her and whether she intended to go to school. In response to her mother's questions, LIN looked outside the window and pointed at Fulin Elementary school, which was located opposite LIN's house.

Excerpt 6 (LIN #1, 2;1)

*MOT: 那 你 去 上 福林 國小 幾 年級
 nà nǐ qù shàng Fúlín guóxiǎo jǐ niánjí
 Then you go go to Fúlín elementary school which grade
 呢 ?
 ne ?
 PRT

'Then what grade are you in at Fulin Elementary School?'

*LIN: 兩 年級 .
 liǎng niánjí.
 two grade
 'Grade two'.

*MOT: 兩 年級 喔 ? ←
 liǎng niánjí ou ?
 two grade PRT
 'Grade two ?'

*LIN: 嗯 .
 mm.
 PRT
 'Yeah.'

As seen in the excerpt, when LIN's mother asked LIN which grade level she should be in, her response 'Grade two' was repeated by the mother; in addition, the exact repetition was suffixed with an utterance final particle *ou*. The exact repetition functioned as a request for confirmation, as evidenced by the child's confirmation in Line 4.

In addition to the utterance final particle *ou*, another particle *a/ya* also occurred with the parents' exact repetition to indicate a request for confirmation, as shown in Excerpt 7.

In Excerpt 7, RON and his father were reading a story book. The story involved one boy who was arrogant and another who was modest. The father then asked RON whether he was arrogant.

Excerpt 7 (RON #25, 3;0)

*FAT: 那 RON 驕 不 驕傲?
 nà RON jiāo bù jiāoào?
 Then (name) arrogant NEG arrogant
 'Then, is RON arrogant?'

*RON: 不 驕傲 .
 bù jiāoào.
 NEG arrogant
 'Not arrogant'.

Table 6
Pragmatic functions of exact repetitions.

EXA	RON's father		LIN's mother		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Receipt of information	7	22.58	33	45.83	40	38.83
Request for clarification	4	12.90	4	5.56	8	7.77
Request for confirmation	17	54.84	33	45.83	50	48.54
Others	3	9.68	2	2.78	5	4.85
Total	31	100.00	72	100.00	103	100.00

- *FAT: 喔.
ou.
PRT
'ou'.
- *RON: 像 安安 一樣.
xiàng ān-ān yíyàng.
like (name) same
'Just like An-an'.
- *FAT: 像 安安 一樣 啊? ←
xiàng ān-ān yíyàng a?
like (name) same PRT
'Just like An-an ?'
- *RON: 嗯.
mm.
PRT
'Yeah'.

In Line 4, RON said that he was like *An-an*, the modest boy. In the next line, the father repeated RON's utterance and then added a final particle *a*. The *a*-suffixed exact repetition functioned as a request for confirmation, as attested by RON's confirmation in Line 6.

Table 6 demonstrates the frequency of occurrences for each of the major functions. As seen in the table, RON's father used exact repetitions as requests for confirmation most frequently, and acknowledgement of receipt of information occurred with the second highest frequency. LIN's mother also used exact repetitions frequently for the functions of requests for confirmation and receipts of information, and the two functions occurred with the same frequency in LIN's mother's data.

3.2.2. Reduced repetition

As for reduced repetition, the analysis showed that the major functions of the parents' reduced repetition included (1) targeting a next action to project further elaboration, (2) targeting a next action to project a dispreferred response, and (3) asking for confirmation.

(1) Targeting a next action to project further elaboration

Targeting a next action, noted by Schegloff (1997) as one of the common uses of repetition, is defined as 'the use of repeating to articulate at a turn's start the element of preceding talk by another which is the target or point of reference for a further action to be taken in a subsequent turn constructional unit in the turn' (p. 531). In other words, the speaker repeats an element of the preceding utterance by another speaker at the beginning of a turn, and aims at projecting further action in subsequent talk. The analysis of our data revealed that 'targeting a next action' is also an important function of the parents' use of reduced repetition. The parents used reduced repetitions to indicate that the repeated part of the preceding child utterance was going to be taken by the parents as the topic of their subsequent utterances. In other words, the parents indicated that they had something to say about the repeated information. By using a reduced repetition, the parents made the repeated information a preliminary before adding new information about it in subsequent utterances.

Excerpt 8 and Excerpt 9 illustrate this function of reduced repetition in the parents' speech. In Excerpt 8, LIN and the mother were reading a story book about three little pigs.

Excerpt 8 (LIN #6, 2;6)

- *LIN: 那 講 # 嗯 -: 三 隻 小 豬.
nà jiǎng # mm -: sān zhī xiǎo zhū.
then tell PRT three CL little pig
'Then, tell the story of the three little pigs'.

- *MOT: 三 隻 小 豬. ←
 sān zhī xiǎo zhū.
 three CL little pig
 ‘The three little pigs’.
- *MOT: <這 個> [/] 這 這 個 呢 # 這 個 叫 做 豬 頭 三
 <zhè ge> [/] zhè zhè ge ne # zhè ge jiàozuò zhū tóu sān
 this CL this this CL PRT this CL call pig head three
 兄弟.
 xiōngdì.
 brothers
 ‘This is called “The Three Pig-Headed Brothers’.
- *MOT: 知 道 嗎 [%問研究者並展示故事書] ?
 zhīdào ma [% asking the observer and presenting the book]?
 know PRT
 ‘Do you know (about the story)?’
- *MOT: 不 知 道 # 很 好 # 我 告 訴 你!
 bù zhīdào # hén hǎo # wǒ gàosù nǐ !
 NEG know very good I tell you
 ‘(You) don’t know. Good. Let me tell you’.

As seen in Line 2, the mother repeated a part of LIN’s preceding utterance. The repeated information *san zhi xiao zhu* ‘three little pigs’ became the topic of the mother’s following utterances. We observed that after giving the reduced repetition, the mother began a sequence of utterances which were related to the topic. Thus, the reduced repetition had the function of targeting a next action to project further elaboration.

Excerpt 9 shows another example. In Excerpt 9, LIN and her mother were reading a story book.

Excerpt 9 (LIN #6, 2;6)

- *LIN: 喵 咪 跑 來 了 .
 miāomī pǎo-lái le.
 cat run-come PRT
 ‘The cat ran over here’.
- *MOT: 跑 來 了 . ←
 pǎo-lái le.
 run-come PRT
 ‘(The cat) ran over here’.
- *MOT: 跑 來 偷 看 .
 pǎo-lái tōu kàn.
 run-come secretly see
 ‘(The cat) ran over here to take a peek’.
- *LIN: 喵 咪 沒 有 進 來 嗎 ?
 miāomī méiyǒu jìn-lái ma ?
 cat NEG come-in PRT
 ‘Didn’t the cat come in?’
- *MOT: 喵 咪 沒 有 進 來 .
 miāomī méiyǒu jìn-lái.
 cat NEG come-in
 ‘The cat didn’t come in’.

As seen in Line 2, the mother responded to LIN’s preceding utterance with a reduced repetition *pao-lai le* ‘(The cat) ran over here’. Similarly, after the reduced repetition, the mother, as well as the child, added further information about the

repeated information in the following discourse. Thus, the mother indicated that she had something to say about the repeated information. By using a reduced repetition, the mother made the repeated information a preliminary before adding new information about it.

(2) Targeting a next action to project a dispreferred response

As seen above, when the parents used reduced repetition for the function of targeting a next action, reduced repetition was used as a strategy to project further elaboration. Besides projecting elaboration, it was found that the parents also used reduced repetition to project negatively-valenced actions, such as refusals or disagreement. As suggested by Schegloff (1997), repetition of the 'targeting a next action' type is often related to dispreferred responses. In these cases, the parents usually produced the reduced repetition with a rising intonation.

Excerpt 10 demonstrates an example of such a function. In this example, RON and his father were playing some musical instruments in the living room. When the child was playing drums, the father was afraid that RON was making too much noise.

Excerpt 10 (RON #25, 3;0)

*FAT: 你 [/] 你 為什麼 要 吵 小咪妞?
 nǐ [/] nǐ wèishénme yào chǎo xiǎomīniū?
 you you why want disturb (name)
 'Why do you want to disturb Xiaominiu (by noise)?'

*FAT: 她 睡覺 了。
 tā shuìjiào le.
 she sleep PRT
 'She is asleep'.

*RON: 她 還 沒 睡覺
 tā hái méi shuìjiào.
 she still NEG sleep
 'She is not asleep yet.'

*RON: 她 吃 午飯。
 tā chī wǔfàn.
 she eat lunch
 'She's having lunch'.

*FAT: 吃 午飯? ←
 chī wǔfàn?
 eat lunch
 'Having lunch?'

*FAT: 現在 晚上 吃 晚飯 哪。
 xiànzài wǎnshàng chī wǎnfàn na.
 now evening eat dinner PRT
 '(It's) evening now, and (it's time for) having dinner'.

As seen above, in Line 5 the father produced a reduced repetition *chi wufan* 'Having lunch?' with a rising intonation; the repeat was used to serve as a preliminary to project the disagreement in the next line.

In Excerpt 11, LIN and the mother were about to go out to buy lunch. After the mother helped LIN put on her jacket, LIN asked her mother to hold her in her arms.

Excerpt 11 (LIN #1, 2;1)

*LIN: 媽媽 抱抱 - : .
 māma bàobào - : .
 Mommy hold in the arms
 '(I want) Mommy to hold (me)'.

*MOT: 抱抱? ←
 bàobào?
 hold in the arms
 'hold (you)?'

*MOT: 不 行 抱。
 bù xíng bào.
 NEG can hold in the arms
 '(I) can't hold (you)'.

In Line 1, LIN made a request to ask her mother to hold her, and the mother responded with a reduced repetition *baobao* 'Hold (you)?' with a rising intonation. The reduced repetition appeared to signal that LIN's request was not appropriate and that the next action following the repeat would be a dispreferred response. As seen in Lines 3, the mother's reduced repetition was followed by an explicit refusal.

As seen above, reduced repetition usually did not close the speaking turn. Instead, reduced repetition often indicated that the speaker had something more to say. Reduced repetition with a non-rising intonation often preceded further elaboration while reduced repetition with a rising intonation often preceded an explicit dispreferred response.

(3) Request for confirmation

Another function of the parents' reduced repetition was to ask for confirmation. Reduced repetition which served as a request for confirmation was often suffixed with an utterance final particle, usually *ou* or *a/ya*. Excerpt 12 is an example of reduced repetition with the utterance final particle *ou*, and Excerpt 13 is an example of reduced repetition with the utterance final particle *a/ya*.

Prior to Excerpt 12, the mother had just stopped LIN from putting an object into her mouth and had said that she would need to have an operation on her stomach if she did so. The child then referred to someone who was taken to hospital for an operation.

Excerpt 12 (LIN#6, 2;6)

*LIN: 然後 要 送 醫院 去。
 ránhòu yào sòng yīyuàn qù.
 then must send hospital go
 'Then (he) had to be taken to hospital'.
 *MOT: 送 醫院 喔?. ←
 sòng yīyuàn ou?
 send hospital PRT
 'Taken to hospital?'
 *LIN: 嗯。
 mm.
 PRT
 'Yeah'.

As seen in Line 2, the mother produced a reduced repetition *song yiyuan* 'Taken to hospital?' with a final particle *ou*. The reduced repetition appeared to function as a request for confirmation, as evidenced by the child's confirmation *mm* 'Yeah' in Line 3.

In Excerpt 13, RON was driving a toy car in the living room. His father asked RON where he was going, and RON replied that he was going to pick up his mother.

Excerpt 13 (RON #2, 2;1)

*RON: 我 [I] 我 [I] 我 去 接 媽媽 [%一面開玩具車一面說].
 wǒ [I] wǒ [I] wǒ qù jiē Māma [% said while driving a toy car].
 I I I go pick up Mommy
 'I'm going to pick up Mommy'.
 *FAT: 去 接 媽媽 呀 -:? ←
 qù jiē Māma ya -:?
 go pick up Mommy PRT
 '(You're) going to pick up Mommy?'
 *RON: +^ 嗯。
 +^ mm.
 PRT
 'Yeah'.

In Line 2, the father's reduced repetition was produced with the utterance final particle *ya*. Similarly, the father's reduced repetition also functioned as a request for confirmation, which elicited a confirmed response from RON in Line 3.

Table 7

Pragmatic functions of reduced repetitions.

RED	RON's father		LIN's mother		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Projecting further elaboration	12	24.49	8	23.53	20	24.10
Projecting dispreferred responses	7	14.29	7	20.59	14	16.87
Request for confirmation	24	48.98	14	41.18	38	45.78
Others	6	12.24	5	14.71	11	13.25
Total	49	100.00	34	100.00	83	100.00

As seen above, both exact repetition and reduced repetition can be used with the utterance final particles *ou* or *a/ya* to function as a request for confirmation. The difference between the particle-suffixed exact repetition and the particle-suffixed reduced repetition lies in the scope of information needing to be confirmed.

Table 7 presents the frequencies of the major functions of reduced repetitions in the data. As seen in the table, both parents used reduced repetitions most frequently as requests for confirmation, and targeting a next action to project further elaboration was also a function which occurred frequently.

3.2.3. Modified repetition

The data revealed that the major functions of the parents' use of modified repetition included (1) acknowledging the receipt of information, (2) giving correction, and (3) asking questions or providing answers.

(1) Receipt of information

Modified repetition can also be used to acknowledge the receipt of information. This function is similar to the function observed in the analysis of exact repetition. In such cases, the form of the modified repetition often involved a deictic shifting, such as the shift from *wo* 'I' to *ni* 'you', or from *zhe* 'this' to *na* 'that', as seen below.

In Excerpt 14, the mother was teaching LIN how to put on a glove. As seen in Line 1, LIN said that *wo buhui* 'I can't', and the mother responded to the child's utterance with *ni buhui* 'You can't'. With the deictic shifting, the mother acknowledged what LIN said; she then gave LIN some help with the glove.

Excerpt 14 (LIN #22, 3;1)

*LIN: 我 不 會。
wǒ bú huì.
I NEG can
'I can't'.

*MOT: 你 不 會。 ←
nǐ bú huì.
you NEG can
'You can't'.

*MOT: 然後 沒 關係 啊 # 你 只 要
ránhòu méi guānxi a # nǐ zhǐ yào
then NEG matter PRT you only need
把 手 張開。
bǎ shǒu zhāngkāi.
BA hand spread
'That's fine. You only need to spread your fingers'.

Excerpt 15 is an example from RON's data. In this example, RON was trying to perform a magic trick. In Line 1, RON said to his father *ni yanjing bi qilai* 'Close your eyes.' The father's modified repetition *wo yanjing bi qilai* 'Close my eyes' also involved a deictic shifting. The father acknowledged RON's utterance with a modified repetition, and complied with RON's request to close his eyes.

Excerpt 15 (RON #13, 2;6)

*RON: 你 眼睛 閉 <起來> [>].
nǐ yǎnjīng bì <qílái> [>].
you eye close up
'Close your eyes'.

*FAT: <我 眼睛> [<] 閉 起來. ←
 <wō yǎnjīng> [<] bì qǐlái.
 I eye close up
 'Close my eyes'.

*FAT: RON 變 給 爸爸 看.
 RON biàn gěi bàba kàn
 (name) do magic tricks for father see
 'RON show Daddy the magic trick'.

(2) Correction

In addition to the function of acknowledging the receipt of information, modified repetition can also be used to give correction. In such cases, the changes often involved replacing a content word with another content word instead of deictic shifting.

In Excerpt 16, LIN, the mother, and LIN's younger sister were in the living room. LIN and the younger sister were at a desk drawing pictures with some color pencils. When LIN mentioned that her sister was using a black pencil, her mother responded with a modified repetition to correct LIN's utterance, and indicated that her younger sister was drawing with a blue pencil. As seen in the example, the mother's modified repetition involved a replacement of the word *heise* 'black' with the word *lansè* 'blue'.

Excerpt 16 (LIN #6, 2;6)

*LIN: 妹妹 塗 黑色.
 mèimei tú hēisè.
 little sister draw black
 'Little sister was drawing with (a) black (pencil)'.

*MOT: 妹妹 塗 藍色. ←
 mèimei tú lánsè.
 little sister draw blue
 'Little sister was drawing with (a) blue (pencil)'.

Excerpt 17 is from RON's data. In this excerpt, RON and his father were talking about a misplaced book. When RON suggested that the book was at his grandfather's place, the father explicitly disagreed by saying *bushi la* 'no'. In addition, he provided a modified repetition to correct the child's utterance, indicating that the book was in his, the father's, room.

Excerpt 17 (RON#13, 2;6)

*FAT: 那 本 書 放 哪裡?
 nà běn shū fàng nǎlǐ?
 that CL book put where
 'Where was that book placed?'

*CHI: 放 在 電梯 阿公 家裡 了.
 fàng zài diàntī agōng jiālǐ le.
 put at elevator grandpa home PRT
 'It's in grandpa's house where there is an elevator.'

*FAT: 不 是 啦.
 bú shì la.
 NEG be PRT
 'No'.

*FAT: 放 在 爸爸 房間 裡面 啦. ←
 fàng zài bàba fángjiān lǐmiàn la.
 put at father room inside PRT
 'It's in Daddy's room'.

(3) Questions or answers

Another function of modified repetition was to ask questions or to provide answers. In such cases, the modified repetition involved replacing a non-question word with a question word, or vice versa.

In Excerpt 18, a box of cookies, which was a gift from the observer, was placed on the table. LIN asked about the cookies in Line 1. As seen in the mother's response in the next line, with the replacement of the question word *shenme* 'what' with the content word *binggan* 'cookie', the mother's modified repetition provided an answer to the child's question.

Excerpt 18 (LIN #6, 2;6)

- *LIN: 這 是 什 麼 ?
zhè shì shénme ?
this be what
'What is this?'
- *MOT: 這 是 餅 乾 . ←
zhè shì bǐnggān .
this be cookie
'This is a cookie'.

While the above example shows the parent's use of modified repetition to give an answer, the following example demonstrates the parent's use of modified repetition to ask a question. In Excerpt 19, RON wanted to take a certain cleaning rag to wipe the floor. As seen in the father's modified repetition in Line 2, the father replaced *na yi ge* 'that one' in RON's preceding utterance with the question word *shenme* 'what'. The father employed a modified repetition to ask a question in order to elicit more information from RON.

Excerpt 19 (RON#2, 2;1)

- *RON: 我 要 拿 那 一 個
wǒ yào ná nà yí ge .
I want take that one CL
'I want to take that one'.
- *FAT: 你 要 拿 什 麼 ? ←
nǐ yào ná shénme ?
you want take what
'What do you want to take?'

Table 8 shows the distributions of the major functions of modified repetitions. As seen in the table, modified repetitions were most frequently used for the function of acknowledging the receipt of information in both parents' data. The function of asking questions or providing answers ranked second.

3.2.4. Expanded repetition

The analysis showed that the parents resorted to expanded repetition to serve the following major functions: (1) reformulating the child's utterances, and (2) elaborating on the child's utterances.

(1) Reformulation

One of the major functions of expanded repetition was to reformulate the child's utterances. By using a more expanded form of repetition, the parent added some elements to the child's preceding utterance to make it more comprehensible or more grammatical while preserving the meaning of the child's utterance.

In Excerpt 20, RON and the father had found that there was a mosquito in the living room, and were trying to kill it. RON took a toy, saying that he wanted to kill the mosquito with the toy.

Table 8
Pragmatic functions of modified repetitions.

MOD	RON's father		LIN's mother		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Receipt of information	9	42.86	21	44.68	30	44.12
Correction	5	23.81	7	14.89	12	17.65
Question or answer	7	33.33	17	36.17	24	35.29
Others	0	0.00	2	4.26	2	2.94
Total	21	100.00	47	100.00	68	100.00

Excerpt 20 (RON #25, 3;0)

- *RON: 用 這 個 [= 玩具] 打 +/.
 yòng zhè ge [= toy] dǎ +/.
 use this CL hit
 '(I'll) use this to kill (the mosquito)'.
 *FAT: 好 你 用 這 個 打 蚊 子 好. ←
 hǎo nǐ yòng zhè ge dǎ wénzi hǎo.
 good you use this CL hit mosquito good
 'OK. You'll use this to kill the mosquito'.

In this excerpt, the father's expanded repetition in Line 2 reformulated RON's preceding utterance. By using a more expanded form of repetition, the father restated the child's intention with a more complete utterance.

Excerpt 21 is another example. In this excerpt, RON and his father were involved in a pretend play. RON said that he was making a cake, and the father thus asked him about how to make a cake.

Excerpt 21 (RON #25, 3;0)

- *RON: <-> [//] 滷一滷
 yī [//] lǔyīlǔ.
 one stew
 'Stew it'.
 *RON: 然後 他 就 會 熟 了。
 ránhòu tā jiù huì shóu le.
 then it then will cooked PRT
 'Then it will be cooked'.
 *FAT: 喔 蛋糕 要 用 滷 的 就
 ou dāngāo yào yòng lǔ de jiù
 PRT cake need use stew NOM then
 會 熟 啦. ←
 huì shóu la.
 will cooked PRT
 'Oh, you have to stew the cake for it to be cooked'.
 *RON: 對。
 duì.
 right
 'Right'.

As seen in Excerpt 21, the father used an expanded repetition to restate RON's intention. The father's expanded repetition reformulated RON's utterances, and expressed RON's intention in a more complete and comprehensible utterance.

Excerpt 22 is from LIN's data. In this excerpt, LIN was playing with some toy kitchen utensils. She told her mother that she was making a hamburger. The mother asked LIN what flavor the hamburger was, and LIN answered that it was an apple flavor.

Excerpt 22 (LIN #1, 2;1)

- *MOT: 什麼 味道?
 shénme wèidào?
 what flavor
 'What flavor?'
 *LIN: 是 -: 蘋果 口味 的。
 shì píngguǒ kǒuwèi de.
 be apple flavor ASSOC
 '(It) is apple-flavored'.

*MOT: +^ 蘋果 口味 的 漢堡. ←
 +^ píngguō kǒuwèi de hànǎo
 apple flavor ASSOC hamburger
 'An apple-flavored hamburger'.

*MOT: 噁 -: .
 e -: .
 yuck
 'Yuck!'

Similarly, we observed in this example that the mother responded to LIN's utterance with an expanded repetition, which repeated what LIN had said with a more complete utterance.

(2) Elaboration

As seen above, when serving the function of reformulation, the parents' expanded repetition reiterated the children's intents without adding new information. In addition to this reformulation function, another important function of expanded repetition was elaboration. When expanded repetition served the function of elaboration, new information was added in the expanded repetition to move the conversational topic forward.

In Excerpt 23, the mother and the child were reading a story book about a snail. When they turned to a page with a picture of a snail trail, the mother then asked LIN what it was; LIN answered that it was a line.

Excerpt 23 (LIN #6, 2;6)

*LIN: 線線 .
 xiànxiàn .
 line
 'A line'.
 *MOT: 線線 # 是 蝸牛 爬 過 的 痕跡 ←
 xiànxiàn # shì guāniú pá guò de hénjī .
 line be snail crawl EXP NOM trail
 'The line is the trail left by a snail'.

As seen in the mother's expanded repetition in Line 2, the mother not only repeated LIN's utterance *xianxian* 'line', but elaborated on it to offer an explanation about the snail trail. Thus, the expanded repetition used in this excerpt not only repeated what LIN had said but also added new information to the conversation.

Recall that one of the major functions of reduced repetition is to target a next action to project further elaboration; the function appears to be similar to the elaboration function observed here for expanded repetition. However, when reduced repetition is used for this function, the reduced repetition acts as a springboard for the next action, and it is the next action that provides further elaboration; thus the repeated part and the new information are usually stated in separate utterances. In contrast, when expanded repetition is used for the function of elaboration, new information is added into the repeat itself. In other words, the repeated part and the new information are integrated and presented in a single utterance.

In addition to offering elaboration, the parents may also use expanded repetition to elicit elaboration from the children, as seen below. Excerpt 24 is from the same conversation data as Excerpt 23. In Excerpt 24, LIN and the mother were reading a story about a snail. The story was about the different places the snail had been. When they turned to a page which showed that the snail was in a cave, the mother then asked LIN where the snail was.

Excerpt 24 (LIN #6, 2;6)

*MOT: 然後 他 跑到 # 這個 是 什麼 ?
 ránhòu tā pǎo dào # zhè ge shì shénme ?
 then it run to this CL be what
 'Then it went into... what is this?'
 *LIN: 山洞 裡面 .
 shāndòng lǐmiàn .
 cave inside
 'The inside of a cave'.
 *MOT: 山洞 裡面 # 去 做 什麼 ? ←
 shāndòng lǐmiàn # qù zuò shénme ?
 cave inside go do what
 '(It went into) the inside of a cave...to do what?'

As seen in the mother's expanded repetition, the mother tried to elicit new information from the child, instead of providing new information. By doing so, the mother elicited the child's participation in the conversation, and maintained the interaction with the child. While this use of expanded repetition may be a strategy motivated by the mother's attempt to communicate with the child, the expanded repetition also provided a scaffolding function of helping the child incorporate what she had already said into the new information elicited by the mother.

Excerpt 25 is another example. In this excerpt, RON was playing with some toy drums in the living room.

Excerpt 25 (RON #25, 3;0)

- *FAT: 你 在 幹嘛?
 nǐ zài gànma?
 you DUR what
 'What are you doing?'
- *RON: 打 鼓.
 dǎ gǔ.
 beat drum
 'Playing drums.'
- *FAT: 打 鼓 會不會 太 吵 啊? ←
 dǎ gǔ huì-bú-huì tài chǎo a?
 beat drum will-NEG-will too noisy PRT
 'Might it get too noisy if you played the drum?'

Similarly, in this excerpt the father's expanded repetition in Line 3 intended to elicit new information from the child. The father asked RON to comment on the consequence of his own behavior by using an expanded repetition.

Table 9 demonstrates the frequencies of occurrences for the pragmatic functions. As seen in the table, both parents used expanded repetitions more frequently for the function of elaboration than for the function of reformulation.

3.2.5. Summary

Table 10 summarizes the major functions of the four types of other-repetition in the parents' data. The structural features which are associated with the type-function relations are also presented.

As seen in the table, the four types of other-repetition serve nine major functions in the data:

- (1) Acknowledging the receipt of information: The parents used exact or modified repetition to acknowledge that the information expressed in the children's preceding utterances had been received by the parents. (EXA, MOD)

Table 9

Pragmatic functions of expanded repetitions.

EXP	RON's father		LIN's mother		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Reformulation	9	33.33	32	33.33	41	33.33
Elaboration	15	55.56	55	57.29	70	56.91
Others	3	11.11	9	9.38	12	9.76
Total	27	100.00	96	100.00	123	100.00

Table 10

Summary table of repetition types, pragmatic functions and structural features.

	EXA	RED	MOD	EXP
Receipt of information	✓		✓ (deictic shifting)	
Request for clarification	✓ (+ rising intonation)			
Request for confirmation	✓ (+ ou or a/ya)	✓ (+ ou or a/ya)		
Projecting further elaboration		✓		
Projecting dispreferred responses		✓ (+ rising intonation)		
Correction			✓ (incorrect words ⇔ correct ones)	
Question or answer			✓ (non-question word ⇔ question word)	
Reformulation				✓
Elaboration				✓ (+ new information)

- (2) Asking for clarification: The parents used exact repetition to ask the children to provide related information in order to clarify the sources of trouble, usually produced with a rising intonation. (EXA)
- (3) Asking for confirmation: The parents used exact or reduced repetition to offer candidate understandings for the children to confirm (or disconfirm), usually ending with an utterance final particle, usually *ou* or *a/ya*. (EXA, RED)
- (4) Targeting a next action to project further elaboration: The parents made the repeated information in reduced repetition a preliminary before adding new information about it in subsequent utterances. (RED)
- (5) Targeting a next action to project a dispreferred response: The parents used reduced repetition to project refusals or disagreement, usually produced with a rising intonation. (RED)
- (6) Giving correction: The parents used modified repetition to correct the children's preceding utterances by replacing the children's incorrect words with correct ones. (MOD)
- (7) Asking questions or providing answers: The parents used modified repetition to ask questions or to provide answers by replacing a non-question word with a question word, or vice versa. (MOD)
- (8) Reformulating the child's utterances: By using expanded repetition, the parent added some elements to the child's preceding utterance to make it more comprehensible or more grammatical while preserving the original meaning of the utterance. (EXP)
- (9) Elaborating on the child's utterances: New information was added in expanded repetition to move the conversational topic forward. (EXP).

4. Discussion

The results of the present study demonstrated that other-repetition was a prominent aspect of the parents' speech, and that the parents used the different types of other-repetition to perform a variety of communicative functions. It appears that adults resort to other-repetition for communicative purposes not only when addressing other adults but also when addressing children. Thus, the use of parental other-repetition is perhaps more important as a communication strategy than as a modeling or instructive technique. As suggested by Uǰgiris et al. (1989), other-repetition is part of the broader system of communicative exchanges between caregivers and children and needs to be examined within that broader context.

The results further demonstrated that the parents' use of other-repetition also reflected the particular nature of parent-child interaction. In the parent-child communication, the parents were interacting with a partner who had limited cognitive and verbal skills. Other-repetition appeared to reflect the parents' attempts to foster interaction through appropriate responsiveness. As suggested by McDonald and Pien (1982), maternal (or caregiver's) speech can be divided into two types of utterances: one oriented toward controlling the child's actions, the other toward eliciting the child's participation in conversation. Other-repetition seems to be particularly relevant to the second type. There appear to be some differences between other-repetition in adult conversation and in parental speech to children. For example, other-repetition is the major device for acknowledging the receipt of information in parental speech; in adult conversation, however, indicating the receipt of information is often realized by other devices such as through the use of backchannels (Clancy et al., 1996). In addition, particle-suffixed other-repetition is prevalent in parental speech. Frequent use of particle-suffixed other-repetition appears to demonstrate a nurturing speech style, and is one of the distinguishing features of Mandarin child-directed speech. Furthermore, the results also showed that the parents used other-repetition for the functions of reformulation and elicitation; these functions also appear to be more appropriate for addressing children than adults. On the other hand, it has been found that Mandarin-speaking adults in adult-directed conversation use other-repetition for the function of stalling, or the function of humor, or for savoring what was said (Tsai, 2002); these functions, however, were not observed in the parents' other-repetition in our data. In other words, it appears that when addressing children, parents make some adjustments in their use of other-repetition.

While parental other-repetition was found to serve as an important strategy for communication, the characteristic of responsivity demonstrated by parental other-repetition has also been singled out as the principal component of development-fostering relationships. As suggested by Uǰgiris et al. (1989), responsivity entails several important aspects evident in interactions with young children. One of the aspects is sharing. Sharing is manifest in the reciprocity of interactions, and is exemplified by matching exchanges; it requires sensitivity to a child's developing competencies. Another aspect is tutoring the child to acquire world knowledge and social skills; exchanges during tutoring interactions can take the child to the next level of functioning. A third aspect of responsivity is enabling the child to participate in conversation so that they may become competent at 'doing things with words' (Bruner, 1978).

The findings of this study also indicated that the distributions of the types of other-repetition differed in the two parents' data. While similar percentages of exact repetitions and modified repetitions were found in the two parents' speech, reduced repetitions occurred more frequently in RON's father's speech, and expanded repetitions occurred more frequently in LIN's mother's speech. These results may reveal individual differences in the use of other-repetition by the parents. However, as shown in the analysis, an important function of expanded repetition is to elaborate on the children's contribution while an important function of reduced repetition is to target a next action to project further elaboration. Thus, the different distribution patterns may demonstrate that the two parents sometimes used different repetition strategies for the similar communicative purpose of advancing the conversational topic. However, it should also be noted that while both strategies can be used for advancing the conversational topic, the uses of the different strategies appeared to result in different ways of

advancing the topic. When using reduced repetitions, the parents indicated that they had taken the repeated part of the preceding child utterance to be the topic of their subsequent utterances. By singling out the topic, the parents appeared to use reduced repetition as a more global strategy, which usually projected further elaborated talk. In contrast, when using expanded repetitions, the parents added new information into the child's original utterance; the repeated part and the elaboration were integrated and presented in a single utterance. Thus, the parents appeared to resort to expanded repetition as a more local strategy by adding new information to the child's preceding utterance to advance the topic a step further.

This study has revealed some interesting findings concerning Mandarin-speaking parents' use of other-repetition in interaction with children. Some limitations to this study, however, should be noted. First, the data used in the study consisted of the speech of only two parent-child dyads; further studies using more participants would be beneficial to understanding the generalizability of the findings. Another limitation is that this study did not take into consideration the genders of the parent-child dyads; further studies are needed to examine the gender factor. Despite the limitations, it is hoped that this study has shed some light on our understanding of the pragmatic functions of Mandarin parental other-repetition within the framework of communicative exchanges.

Appendix A

Transcription conventions	
-:	Previous word lengthened
#	Pause between words
+^	Quick uptake
+	Self-completion
[/]	Retracing without correction
[//]	Retracing with correction
[>]	Overlap follows
[<]	Overlap precedes
[=text]	Explanation
[% text]	Comment on main line
Gloss abbreviations	
ASSOC	Associative
BA	<i>ba</i>
CL	Classifier
DUR	Durative aspect
EXP	Experiential aspect
GEN	Genitive
NEG	Negative
NOM	Nominalizer
PRT	Particle

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