DEVELOPING SECOND LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

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摘　要

自從語言學家 Chomsky 在60年代提出 competence 和 performance 兩種語言能力的區別後，對於語言交談能力（communicative competence）的問題，在語言學界，尤其是社會語言學（sociolinguistics）和心理語言學（psycholinguistics）方面，掀起研究的狂熱。交談分析（discourse analysis）便是這方面的主要研究項目之一。

本論文試就交談分析的理論，來探討第二語言學習過程中交談能力的發展現象。研究對象爲兩個講中國話的兒童，第二語言爲英語。研究的問題有三：(1)在爲期四個月內，兩個幼童第二語言的語言行爲（speech acts）的發展；(2)兩個幼童之間，以及另一英語使用者（English-speaking）之間的會話形式（conversational pattern）；(3)兩個幼童之交談策略（communicative strategies）。

研究結果發現這兩個幼童，利用有限的第二語言，能表達二、三十多種不同的語言行爲，顯示一個人的第二語言交談能力，並不完全受限於第二語言的語言能力（linguistic competence）。我們發現這兩個幼童有辦法（即策略）來補充第二語言能力之不足，因而他們的會話形態，與一般同年齡的兒童的會話，沒有很大的差異。

本論文對外語教學，有所啓示。國內的語文教學，一向重在文法的傳授，而忽略了交談能力的培養，以致於學而不能用。作者以爲語言交談能力的培養，乃是學習語言成功的根本關鍵。

Communicative competence, one's ability to use socially appropriate utterances in a given context, has received much attention in recent sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic studies. A considerable amount of literature concerning the subject matter has been done via discourse analysis or the analysis of natural conversations.

Theoretical frameworks of discourse analysis evolve mainly from the study of adult discourse, but interest in child discourse is also growing every day. Recently, researchers of second language acquisition begin to apply discourse analysis to the study of second language acquisition. Most of these studies focus on the interac-

tions between a native speaker and the second language learner. There is to date no data on the discourse between two second language learners. This paper presents data of the kind--the interaction between two second language learners.

Hence the purpose of the present study is to analyze natural conversations of two Chinese speaking preschoolers learning English as a second language so as to study how they, who have had some communicative competence in one language, develop their second language communication ability. Specifically, the present paper will answer the following questions:

1. What speech acts can the two children perform during a period of four months?

2. Is there a pattern of development in producing the speech acts over time?

3. What patterns of conversations can be found in different situations, i.e., the two subjects talking to each other and the two subjects talking with an English-speaking child?

4. What strategies are involved in developing second language communicative competence?

I. Review of the Literature

Perspectives on Adult Communicative Competence

An adult speaker of a language is said to have communicative competence when he can adapt his own speech accordingly to whom he is speaking to, what he is speaking of, when and where he is speaking, and so on. He is able to use different styles or registers appropriately. He knows that there are rules of speaking for specific speech events, and he can produce various speech acts for various purposes.

A speech event, according to Hymes (1972), is the largest unit of linguistic structure to occur in a given situation, and a speech act is a functional unit which frequently at the grammatical level consists of single sentences, but is not equivalent to them. In other words, speech events and speech acts are hierarchically related. An event may consist of a single speech act, but will often comprise several. To illustrate, a dispute is a speech event, and the utterances the participants exchange are speech acts.

Searle (1969) defines a speech act as "the production or issuance of a sentence taken under certain conditions." On the basis of different conditions, people might use language to make statements, to question, to command, to greet, etc. In Searle's theory, an utterance has three parts (not necessarily separate): the utterance act

(saying morphemes, sentences, etc.), the propositional act (referring and predicting), and the illocutionary act (e.g., promising, stating, questioning, etc.). For example, in the following four sentences, the propositional act, the content, is the same, but the utterance acts are quite different, each being a distinct structure, and the illocutionary acts vary from request for information to conditional request.

1. Will John leave the room?
2. John will leave the room.
3. John, leave the room.
4. If John leaves the room, I will leave also.

Searle further observes that an illocutionary act can be realized in different ways. In making indirect requests, for instance, one might refer to one of the following six ways:

1. Sentences concerning hearer's ability:
   Can you pass the salt?
2. Sentences concerning hearer's future action:
   Will you / Are you going to } pass the salt?
3. Sentences concerning speaker's wish or want:
   I would like (you to pass) the salt.
4. Sentences concerning hearer's desire or willingness:
   Would you mind passing the salt?
5. Sentences concerning reasons for actions:
   I don't think you salted the potatoes.
6. Sentences embedding either one of the above or an explicit performative:
   Can I ask you to pass the salt?

Clearly, linguistic forms and communication functions are not always on a one-to-one mapping relationship. A function is not always realized in a certain form, nor does a form always express a definite function. (See Lindfors 1980 for more examples.)

The study of speech acts focuses mainly on individual utterances, but the study of speech events focuses on a piece of connected discourse or a conversational sequence. Discourse is also found to be structured on the basis of certain principles and conditions. Research to date has come up with the following findings (Lindfors: 286-287).

1. Turn-taking. The participants of a discourse know when and how to take turns and how to pass a turn to someone else. A common form of turn-taking is found in adjacent pairs in which a greeting is responded to with another greeting, a

question with an answer, etc. Successive exchanges in turns often results in chaining (e.g., ABABAB . . . .).

2. Underlying principles. Grice (1967, 1975) found several cooperative principles underlying a conversation. They are the principles of quality, quantity, relevance, and repair. As participants of a conversation, people know what is the right thing to say in a certain situation, how much they should say about it, if what they say is relevant to the topic at hand and to the situation, and when and how they should clarify or repair their speech in the course of a conversation.

3. Situational conditions for the performance of speech acts. Searle (1975) advocated four conditions for requests: (a) the one to whom the request is directed is able to perform the requested action, (b) the one making the request does in fact want the requested act to be carried out, (c) the requester will indicate the future act to be carried out by the requestee, (d) the utterance of the request, whatever its form, counts as an attempt by the requester to get the requestee to perform the requested act. Comparable conditions are also found to underlie the act of promising and other speech acts.

4. Hierarchical structure in conversations. According to Garvey, Baldwin, and Dickstein (1971), a discourse is composed of three stages: beginning, middle, and ending, and each stage is made up of sequences or exchanges, and each exchange is a complete turn. A discourse must be built upon a topic or a set of topics. The most simplistic model of a discourse involves four steps: (q) attention getting, (b) topic nomination, (c) topic development, (d) topic termination (Brown, 1980:196-197). Each of the four steps might be realized by various means. For example, to get attention, one might use a direct address such as "Hey, John" or a raised hand to signal. In order to establish a topic, the speaker and the hearer must have shared knowledge and must work together to make the topic comprehensible. Once the topic is established, the conversation goes on, using the convention of turn-taking, until both parties are satisfied with the on-going talk and feel ready to stop. Then one of them might tactfully say things like "Well, I've got to go now" to terminate the topic and the conversation as well.

Thus far we have reviewed the major findings about adult communicative competence: the nature of speech acts and speech events, the mapping of forms and functions, and the structure of discourse. In the following section, we review recent findings about child discourse: what speech acts young children can perform, how children handle the problem of function and form, and what patterns of conversation they produce.

Discourse Analysis in First Language Acqusition

Using Searle's model (1969) on speech acts, Dore (1975) suggests that children's utterances can be characterized as primitive speech acts which have no predication but consist simply of a "rudimentary referring expression." He has identified nine primitive speech acts in one-word utterances produced by two two-year-olds. They are labelling, repeating, answering, requesting action, requesting an answer, calling, greeting, protesting, and practicing. He finds that the two-year-olds perform these acts by means of intonation and paralinguistic devices such as pointing more often than by means of verbal expressions.

Keenan (1974) has made an insightful study of children's repetition. She suggests that it serves many discourse functions. Children use repetition to affirm, acknowledge, counterclaim, reverse the direction of an order, establish topics, etc. (pp. 132-136).

Halliday (1975) also reports the speech of a nine-month-old boy as having many different functions: instrumental (the "I want" function), regulatory (the "do as I tell you" function), interactional (the "me and you" function), personal (the "here I come" function), heruistic (the "tell me why" function), and imaginative (the "let's pretend" function).

Although Dore and Halliday use quite different terminology, most of the speech acts or functions they describe are communication functions (with the exception of Dore's labelling and practicing and Halliday's imaginative). Clearly, very young children are capable of expressing their communication intentions with very limited linguistic ability.

Although one-word utterances can be used to experss different communication intentions, the child must in time develop other functions and other means to express the same function as his verbal ability progresses. In studying children's directives (requestives), Ervin-Tripp (1974), finds that children progress from imperatives (*Gimme a match*) to imbedded imperatives (*Could you gimme a match*?), to need statements (*I need a match*), and finally to interrogative requests (*Do you have a match*?) and general-statement requests (*There aren't any matches*). Ervin-Tripp concludes that explicit directives (imperatives and imbedded requests) are acquired earlier than implicit directives.

But Shatz's (1974) and Reeder's (1975) studies show that children are equally happy with both types of directives (in comprehension tasks). Garvey (1975) in studying how three-to-five-year-olds direct others, observes that the majority of children (over 80%) prefer explicit directives.

The most comprehensive work on children's speech acts is Dore et al's study

(1978). They classify three-year-olds' speech acts into six modes: requestives, assertives, performatives, responsives, regulatives, and expressives. Dore et al's schema will be the model for data analysis in the present study, so it will be taken up in greater detail later.

Although Piaget (1955) suggests that very young children can not have conversations because of egocentric speech, Dore and Halliday have already made it clear that many of the young children's primitive speech acts do have communication intentions. Keenan and Klein (1975) observe that very young children (two-year-olds) can follow the convention of turn taking and attach relevance and coherence even to their sound plays. They also note that the children can acknowledge each other's utterances in different ways.

Garvey's study, cited earlier, finds that five-year-olds can produce rather complicated patterns of discourse in the form of [(presequence) (adjunct) request (clarification) acknowledgement (acknowledgement)] where parentheses mean that these acts are optional. In other words, five-year-olds' conversations are already quite adult-like.

Keenan & Schieffelin (1976), analyzing three-year-olds' conversations, have come up with the following observations:

1. In building a conversation, children rely heavily on the here and now context of the immediate situation, which enables them to use non-verbal expressions to engage attention and to initiate topics successfully.

2. Because of children's poor articulation, limited syntax, underspecification of relevant information, or frequent egocentric speech, misunderstanding occurs frequently and a topic is usually not developed.

3. When a topic is being shifted, children usually fail to do so as explicitly as the adults do.

4. In an adult-child discourse, the child seldom initiates topics; he only collaborates on a topic initiated by the adult.

5. Although children might self-correct or self-repeat in order to make themselves understood, they frequently fail to initiate repair when they are talking with adults.

From quite a different perspective, Scollon (1974) tries to determine to what extent a one-year-old develops syntax out of interactions. In Scollon's view, the child's one- or two-word utterances make a semantically related series and the adult who interacts with the child supplies slots for the child to fill in by asking questions of the child. An example is as follows:

C: Kimby.
A: What about Kimby?
C: Close.
A: Closed? What did she close, hmmm?
C: (Look in picture book at an old woman at a stove)
Cook
Say
A: What'd the cook say?
C: Something.

The child has created a vertical structure, in contrast to the adults' horizontal structure. Scollon believes that the child is able to learn to construct syntactic relationships through conversations.

We have reviewed only a small portion of the literature on child discourse. A young child is able to communicate various intentions even when his verbal ability is limited. Gradually he adds new functions and new expressions for each function. It is suggested that explicit means for expressing a function (e.g. directive) are probably acquired earlier than implicit means. Very young children can create rather relevant, coherent conversations by following the turn-taking convention. Children at the age of five are able to produce complicated discourse, very much like adult norms.

Discourse Analysis in Second Language Acquisition

Ever since Wagner-Gough (1978) called attention to the mapping problem between form and function in second language acquisition, researchers of second language acquisition have begun to turn to discourse analysis for insight.

Hatch (1978) first proposed that "language learning evolves out of learning how to carry on conversation rather than the common premise that the second language learner must learn some structures before he can converse." For instance, when Paul (Huang's (1971) subject) says "This + + + pencil," he is nominating a topic for conversation rather than giving a piece of information. In Hatch's own words, "this particular structure evolves out of discourse. It evolves . . . because of the conscious desire of the child to say something, to talk about something"(1978 : 405). Hatch finds a structure of discourse (vertical structure) similar to Scollon's (1974). Through discourse, the second language learner, like the first language learner, learns to say not only single words (names of objects) but also structures (This + + + my boat). Out of interactions, the second language learner repeats, recombines. and expands the utterances made by his conversation partner and thereby acquires the second language.

Hatch notices that although the second language learner has very limited vocabu-

lary and structure he can still call attention, initiate topics, identify topic reference, and make relevant responses. Many of these speech acts are accomplished through repetition, sometimes accompained by a different intonation contour (usually the rising intonation). In Hatch's opinion, even the second language learner's language play serves conversation functions--to keep the conversation going.

Holding the idea that structure evolves out of conversations, Hatch argues that the order of acquisition is really a "reflection of conversation growth" (1978: 412). For instance, Aux and *-ing* morphemes are acquired early because they occur most frequently in the second language learner's conversations.

Peck (1978) sets forth to study child-child discourse and discovers that his seven-year-old Spanish-speaking subject interacts with a child native speaker of English in much the same way as Keenan's (1974) two-year-old twins. Many functions identified by Keenan are also found in the seven-year-old's speech.

Peck also compares child-child discourse with child-adult discourse and finds that the two types of discourse differ in many ways. First, the adult native speaker asks more information questions while the child native speaker more rhetorical questions. The second language learner asks a small number of rhetorical questions and very few information questions. Secondly, in the child-child discourse, both parties can be self-satisfied with sound plays, but in the adult-child discourse, the adult frequently asks for clarification. Finally, Peck feels that child-child discourse is more social than adult-child discourse because the children can attend to each other even in shifting topics or in sound plays.

Peck suggests that in child-child discourse, the language learner is given many chances to learn syntax and phonology, and in adult-child discourse, the learner has opportunities to practice syntax and semantics. In Peck's own words,

> With the other child, Angel (the second language learner) has freedom to respond on many levels, especially, to play with the sounds and forms of words, or to sing, or chant. . . . It looks as though the freedom in the types of responses that the child can give may be what allows the child (forces the child) to perfect his pronunciation and helps him to speak in a more standard form. The adult's concern with the child's meaning, and willingness to overlook the child's mistakes, is perhaps instrumental in allowing him to learn how to use language to express his ideas. (p. 399)

According to Peck, the child native speaker cares more for the correct form, and the adult native speaker for the correct use of the words.

But Peck's idea of language instruction found in natural conversations is one of implicit teaching. Are second language learners explicitly taught in the course

of a conversation with a native speaker? Wong (1976) has found evidence of explicit teaching on the part of native speakers. She finds that one of the native speakers, paired with the subjects of her study, tends to play teacher, providing correct words, answering questions, and modeling for repetition.

Chesterfield (1982), defining teaching as including not only explicit teaching but also communication repair and other conversation strategies, asks the question if instruction occurs in child (native speaker)-adult (learner) discourse. She collects data from an adult non-native speaker babysitting two young native speakers of English (ages 7 and 4). Four types of instruction are identified: (1) negotiation of instruction, in which the children clarify a misunderstood message by rewording after the adult requests, (2) other correction, in which the children most frequently correct errors of fact or content and sometimes correct morphological and syntactical errors. (3) modeling/incorporation, in which the adult learner incorporates the children's vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation into her repertoire, and (4) provision for information, in which the children convey new input that has not been solicited or prompted by a perceived error of the adult. Of the four types, negotiation of intended meaning and provision for information are the most frequent (over one third).

As to the content of instruction, Chesterfield discovers that one-third of linguistic input provided by the older child is in the area of vocabulary, and more than half of the younger child's input is discourse related in content. It seems that the older child is concerned more with the right thing to say and the younger child with communication intentions. The adult's response to such instruction is done through repetition and reshaping (rewording). Sometimes she says "yeah" even when she does not understand.

Chesterfield also finds that age difference affects the teaching role taken by the children. The older child willingly takies on the teaching job, but the younger child does not.

The idea that language grows out of interaction or syntax grows out discourse has been one of the main issues in second language acquisition research. From a vertical vs. horizontal structure point of view (Hatch), to implicit teaching (Peck), to explicit teaching (Wong), to communication negotiation and repair (Chesterfield), researchers try to determine the dynamics of second language acquisition through discourse analysis. Clearly, discourse analysis has greatly widened the perspectives on the nature of language acquisition. We are no longer satisfied with the frequency count of certain morphemes or the order of acquisition of the morphemes. We feel safe to say that children learn a second language because they want to communicate

in that language: language is learned through interaction.

But there is still much to be done in order to understand the dynamics of second language acquisition. For example, the speech events and acts of second language learners have not been systematically studied, nor have the conversational patterns of learners acquiring the same language been analyzed. This study is an attempt to fill this gap.

II. Methods and Procedures

Subjects and Procedures

The subjects of the present study were two Chinese preschoolers (H, girl, age 5, and C, boy, age 3) learning English as a second language from January 1980 to June 1981 (For a complete description of the two subjects, refer to Yang 1981). In the first few months, their productions were limited to single words or some short formulaic utterances, e.g., *Thank you*, *Next stop.* Since they spent most of their time, from 8 AM to 5 PM, during weekdays at a day-care center, and since their family did not usually speak English at home, no recordings of their natural conversations were made in the first six months. During the summer vacation (June-August 1980), however, it was found that they began to use the second language more often with each other as they played together at home. Hence, recordings of their conversations started in July (Again, refer to Yang 1981 for a full description of data collection). For the present study, four speech samples are taken from recordings made in July, August, September, and October (one sample each month). Each sample is a complete play situation. In the July sample, an English-speaking child participated in the two subjects' play; in the other three samples, the two subjects were the only participants in their play situations. The July sample is sixty minutes long, and the rest each about thirty minutes. Because of the paucity of speech produced by C in the samples, an elicited conversation was made in September by the present researcher to induce more utterances from him. The results of the elicitation will not be included in four samples, but will be used as supplementary information on C's speech performance.

Data Analysis

The model for data analysis is adapted from Dore, Gearhart, and Newman (1978). Based on the theoretical frame works of Searle (1969), Grice (1967) and many others, Dore et al develop a schema for analyzing nursery school children's

conversations. In the schema, thirty five types of speech acts (conversational acts, in their own terminology), grouped into six general classes, are identified. The acts are reproduced in Figure 1, and their definitions and examples are given in Table 1. The modifications and insertions made by the present researcher are preceded by asterisks. Dore et al's seven criteria for coding are also followed. We want to know if the speech acts uttered by native three-year-olds also occur in the speech of the two second language learners. The seven criteria for coding each utterance are (1) grammatical form of the surface structure, (2) the literal semantic reading of its primary proposition in terms of logical subject, predicate, and other constituents, (3) conventional illocutionary force of its form, including idiomatic and indirect forms, (4) relation to speaker's own and others' utterances in the same conversational sequence, (5) marked illocutionary devices, such as marked word orders, intonation patterns and other prosodic features, which convey values beyond the canonical force, (6) task-relatedness, and (7) other contextual factors such as gestures, ongoing activity, timing of utterance, objects and people present, etc. (p. 375)

It follows the that the first task of analysis is to code each utterance according to the seven criteria, and then make a frequency count. The purpose is to find what speech acts emerge first, and what types of speech acts occur in each sample and how frequently they appear.

The second task is to examine how each act is realized, and how the two subjects converse in their second language. It is hoped that by both quantitative and qualitative types of analysis the two subjects' development of communicative competence can be described better.

III. Results

The results of frequency count are presented in Table 2. The pattern of development is not immediately clear. C appears to have more of certain acts (e.g., performatives, responsives, and expressives) and to have fewer of certain other acts (e.g., requestives, assertives) over time; H, however, shows much variability in all six modes of acts. Roughly speaking, the most frequent acts for both subjects are requestives, and then assertives and responsives for H and assertives and regulatives for C, and least frequently, expressives and performatives.

Table 3 presents the numbers of types of speech acts produced by both subjects over the four samples.

Quite surprisingly, the July sample has more types of speech acts than the August and the September samples, probably due to the participation of an English-

Figure 1. A network representation of the primary conversational functions, general classes, and particular conversational acts in the coding scheme. From Dore et al, 1978

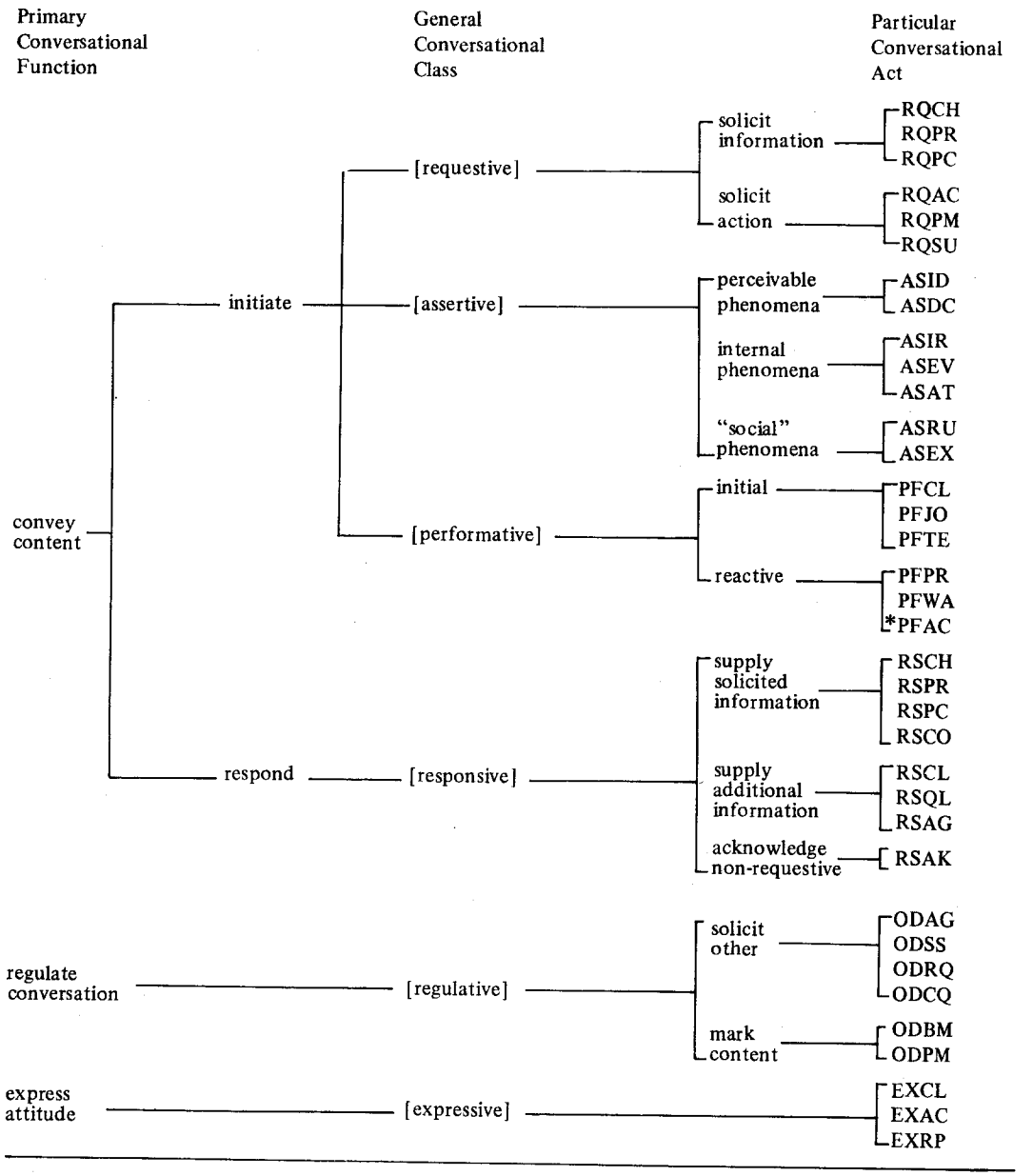

Table 1. Codes, Definitions and Examples of Speech Acts
(Adapted from Dore et al 1978)

Code	Definition and Example
	Requestives solicit information or actions.
RQCH	*Choice Questions* seek either-or judgements relative to propositions: "Is this an apple?"; "Okay?"; "Right?"
RQPR	*Product Questions* seek information relative to most "WH" interrogative pronouns: "Where's John?"; "What happened?"; "Who?"; "When?"
RQPC	*Process Questions* seek extended descriptions or explanations: "Why did he go?"; "How did it happen?"; "What about him?"
RQAC	*Action Requests* seek performance of an action by hearer: "Give me it!"; "Put the toy down!"; *all want-statements expressing the desire for someone to provide/give the things wanted/needed are treated as such acts.
RQPM	*Permission Requests* seek permission to perform an action: "May I go?"
RQSU	*Suggestions* recommend the performance of an action by hearer or speaker both: "Let's do it!"; "Why don't you do it?"; "You should do it."; *the advice and the prohibition utterances all belong to this category.
	Assertives report facts, state rules, convey attitudes, etc.
ASID	*Identifications* label objects, events, people, etc.: "That's a car "; "I'm Robin "; "We have a boat."
ASDC	*Descriptions* predicate events, properties, locations, etc. of objects or people: "The car is red "; "It fell on the floor "; "We did it."
ASIR	*Internal Reports* express emotions, sensations, intents and other mental events: "I like it "; "It hurts "; "I'll do it "; "I know."
ASEV	*Evaluations* express personal judgments or attitudes: "That's good."
ASAT	*Attributions* report beliefs about another's internal state: "He does not know the answer."; "He wants to."; "He can't do it."
ASRU	*Rules* state procedures, definitions, "social rules," etc.: "It goes in here."; "We don't fight in school."; "That happens later."
ASEX	*Explanations* state reasons, causes, justifications, and predications: "I did it because it's fun."; "It won't stay up there."
	Performatives accomplish acts (and establish facts) by being said.
PFCL	*Claims* establish rights for speaker: "That's mine "; "I'm first."
PFJO	*Jokes* cause humorous effect by stating incongruous information, usually patently false: "We throwed the soup in the ceiling."

Table 1 (continued)

PFTE	*Teases* annoy, taunt or playfully provoke a hearer: "You can't get me."
PFPR	*Protests* express objections to hearer's behavior: "Stop "; "No."
PFWA	*Warnings* alert hearer of impending harm: "Watch out!"; "Be careful!"
*PFAC	*Accompaniments* maintain contact while an act is performed: "I show you "; "Like this."
	Responsives supply solicited information or acknowledge remarks.
RSCH	*Choice Answers* provide solicited judgements of propositions: "Yes."
RSPR	*Product Answers* provide Wh-information: "John's here "; "It fell."
RSPC	*Process Answers* provide solicited explanations, etc.: "I wanted to."
RSCO	*Compliances* express acceptance, denial, or acknowledgement of requests: "Okay."; "Yes."; "I'll do it."
RSCL	*Clarification Responses* provide solicited confirmations: "I said no."
RSQL	*Qualifications* provide unsolicited information to requestive: "But I didn't do it "; "This is not an apple."
RSAG	*Agreements* agree or disagree with prior non-requestive act: "No, it is not "; "I don't think you're right."
RSAK	*Acknowledgements* recognize prior non-requestives: "Oh "; "Yeah."
	Regulatives control personal contact and conversational flow.
ODAG	*Attention-Getters* solicit attention: "Hey!"; "John!"; "Look!"
ODSS	*Speaker Selections* label speaker of next turn: "John "; "You."
ODRQ	*Rhetorical Questions* seek acknowledgment to continue: "Know what?"
ODCQ	*Clarification Questions* seek clarification of prior remark: "What?"
ODBM	*Boundary Markers* indicate openings, closing and shifts in the conversation: "Hi!"; "Bye!"; "Okay "; "Alright"; "By the way."
ODPM	*Politeness Markers* indicate ostensible politeness: "Please"; "Thank you."
	Expressive non-propositionally convey attitudes or repeat others.
EXCL	*Exclamations* express surprise, delight, or other attitudes: "Oh!"; "Wow."
EXAC	*Accompaniments* maintain contact by supplying information redundant with respect to some contextual feature: "Here you are"; "There you go."
EXRP	*Repetitions* repeat prior utterances.

speaking child. If the July sample were ignored, there is a steady increase in the number of types of acts over time, indicating that the two subjects gain more competence in expressing their communication intents in the seoncd language.

Table 2. Frequencies and Percentages of the Six General Classes of Speech Acts Produced by H and C in the Four Samples

Speech Acts Classes	H				C			
	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
Requestives	44	49	38	49	34	27	12	14
	19%	31%	36%	21%	39%	46%	40%	21%
Assertives	111	26	29	89	19	7	2	9
	48%	17%	27%	38%	22%	12%	7%	13%
Performatives	18	2	10	11	5	3	2	5
	8%	1%	9%	5%	5%	5%	7%	7%
Responsives	41	30	16	44	8	3	6	11
	18%	19%	15%	19%	9%	5%	20%	16%
Regulatives	10	41	14	34	15	17	4	20
	4%	26%	13%	14%	17%	29%	13%	30%
Expressives	6	8	0	8	7	2	4	8
	3%	5%	0%	3%	8%	3%	13%	12%
Total	230	156	107	235	88	59	30	67
	100%	*99%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	99%

*Due to rounding, the total of percentages may not reach 100.

Table 3. Types of Speech Acts Produced by H and C

Speech Acts Classes	H				C			
	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
Requestives	6	4	4	6	3	3	3	2
Assertives	7	5	7	7	5	3	2	3
Performatives	2	1	4	4	3	1	2	1
Responsives	6	4	4	7	4	3	3	4
Regulatives	3	5	3	4	2	2	2	3
Expressives	2	2	1	3	3	1	2	3
Total	26	21	23	31	20	13	14	16

Table 4 gives the frequencies of requestives. The most frequent requestives for both subjects are RQAC and RQCH. C has not made any RQPC and RQSU in the four samples, and his RQPR and RQPM are rather scarce. In H's case, with the exception of RQSU, there is much fluctuation from sample to sample in the occurrence of requestives, probably attributable to the content of their play situations.

Table 4. Frequencies of Requestives

	H				C			
	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.
RQCH	13	15	5	13	10	22	7	11
PQPR	4	1	2	10	0	2	0	0
RQPC	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
RQAC	22	27	20	20	20	3	4	3
RQPM	1	0	0	5	4	0	1	0
RQSU	3	6	11	11	0	0	0	0

Table 5 presents frequencies of assertives. Both subjects appear to have made more ASIR and ASDC than other assertives. If the July sample is ignored, H makes more of all types of assertives over time, but C does not show such a pattern. C has not made any ASEV and ASRU, and his ASID, ASAT, and ASEX are very scarce.

Table 5. Frequencies of Assertives

	H				C			
	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
ASID	32	3	2	12	1	1	0	0
ASDC	18	5	5	39	5	2	1	4
ASIR	30	15	14	21	9	5	0	3
ASEV	2	0	1	3	0	0	0	0
ASET	5	0	3	4	1	0	1	2
ASRU	4	1	4	3	0	0	0	0
ASEX	20	2	4	9	3	0	0	0

Table 6 presents frequencies of responsives. The most frequent type of responsive is RSAG for H and RSAK for C. Both subjects make very few RSPC.

Table 6. Frequencies of Responsives

	H				C			
	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
RSCH	3	4	8	3	1	1	3	1
RSPR	5	0	3	2	0	0	2	1
RSPC	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RSCO	11	5	3	5	3	0	0	0
RSCL	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1
RSQL	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0
RSAG	17	11	2	19	3	0	0	0
RSAK	4	10	0	10	1	1	0	8

From Table 7, we find that both subjects make quite many ODBM's, but very few regulatives of other types.

Table 7. Frequencies of Regulatives

	H				C			
	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
ODAG	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
ODSS	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
ODRQ	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0
ODCQ	1	1	0	1	0	2	0	3
ODBM	8	26	8	17	1	0	2	4
ODPM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 8 gives the frequencies of the performatives and the expressives. As already mentioned, both types of acts are rare in the four samples. To warn (PFWA) in the second language is still not available, either due to the play situations or to the subjects' incompetence.

Table 8. Frequencies of Performatives and Expressives

	H				C			
	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
PFCL	2	0	3	1	2	0	1	0
PFJO	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0
PFTE	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	5
PFPR	0	0	3	2	2	0	1	0
PFAC	16	2	2	7	0	3	0	0
PFWA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EXCL	4	5	0	5	5	0	3	5
EXAC	2	3	0	2	2	2	0	2
EXRP	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	1

To sum up, among the thirty-six speech acts, two (ODPM and PFWA) are not found in H's speech, and eight (PFWA, ASRU, ASEV, ODSS, ODRQ, ODPM, RSPC, RQPC) not found in C's speech. Although the pattern of development is not readily clear, we find, however, that over time, both subjects have more types of most types of speech acts (except PFAC and EXRP) in later samples than in early ones. In general, the subjects are most capable of making assertives and requestives, and least able in making performatives and expressives. In other words, the two subjects, like Dore's (1978) 3-and-4-year-olds in his study 2, where two children are taken to a supermarket by an adult, always try to seize "conversational rights" by means of assertives and requestives.

IV. Discussion

Two crucial questions must be answered if the pattern of development is to be understood: Do the two subjects learn to express a similar act through different devices over time? and how do they manage to express a variety of functions with limited linguistic ability?

Due to the limited space here, only the requestives and the responsives are analyzed and discussed in answering the first question. Table 9 and 10 present H's and C's various devices used to express the requestives and the responsives in the four samples. The tables clearly show that the two subjects (H especially) do use more devices to express the same function in later samples than in earlier ones, and frequently the various devices are used with more freedom (i.e., in diverse situations and structures) than they are originally used. H's RQCH is the best example. In July, she makes a RQCH by the rising intonation, *OK*? or the formula "*Are you ready*?"; in August, *See*? and the formulaic frame *Do You want X* are added to the repertoire; in September, another frame *Are you* X is used; and in October, questions are properly asked with inversion, *do*-support and the rising intonation.

The development of communicative competence involves the development of indirect speech acts. Both H's and C's RQACs follow a rather similar course of

Table 9. H's Devices for Expressing Requestives and Responsives

	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
RQCH	*rising intonation* Are you ready? OK?	OK? See? Do you want X?	OK? See? *rising intonation* Are you X	OK? See? Do you X? Are you X? Is X? Isn't X? How about?
RQAC:	You V X. V X. Don't V X. No V. I want X. I don't want you X.	You V X. V X. Don't V X.	You V X. V X. Don't V X. You don't V X. Can/Could you X? I don't want you X. Maybe we can X You not X.	You V X. V X. Don't V X.
RQSU:	Let's X. Let me X.	Let me X. You have to X.	Better not X. You can X. You can't X. You get to X.	You can X. You can not X. You not X. You got to X. You need (to) X.
RQPM:	*rising intonation*	---	---	---
RQPR:	What do you X? Where is X? What are you doing? doing? Where did you X?	What?	Where's X? What's X?	What/What's X? Where's X? Who X? Why X?
RQPC:	Why?	---	---	Why X?
RSCH:	Yeah. Right	No. OK. No OK.	No. Yeah. OK.	Yes. OK. Yeah.
RSCO:	OK. No. I don't want to (X).	OK.	I don't want to. OK. No, I don't want to.	Yes, I know. OK. No, I don't want to. Yes. No, don't X.

Table 9. (continued)

RSAK:	Yeah. OK.	Yeah. OK. Oh. That's OK. I don't know.	--------	OK. Oh. I don't know.
RSAG:	OK. Yeah. Oh. No. Uh-huh. *neg. sent.*	OK. Uh-huh. No. All right.	OK. No.	OK. Yes. No. No, *sentence.*
RSPR:	*answers to* Where Q Who Q	--------	*answers to* What Q	*answers to* What Q What else?
RSPC:	I want to.	--------	--------	--------
RSCL:	--------	--------	--------	*self-repetition.*

* X stands for variable elements.
V stands for verbs.
---- Stands for absence of such acts.

Table 10. C's Devices for Expressing Requestives and Responsives

	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
RQCH:	*rising intonation* OK ?	*rising intonation* OK ?	*rising intonation* OK ?	*rising intonation* OK ? Right ?
RSAC:	Don't X. You don't X. I want X. V X.	V X. I want X.	V X. Can you X ?	V X.
RQPM:	Can I X ? *rising intonation*	--------	May I X ?	--------
RQPR:	--------	What ? What you doing ?	--------	--------
RSCH:	No.	Yes.	Yeah. OK. *repetition*	No.
RSCO:	OK. Ah.	--------	--------	--------
RSAG:	No. He not X.	--------	--------	--------
RSAK:	OK. Ah.	Oh.	--------	OK. Oh. I know.
RSQL:	--------	--------	Yes.	--------
RSCL:	--------	I say.	--------	Yes, I did X.
RSPR:	--------	--------	*answers to* What Q	*Answers to* What Q

development. Both begin to use (1) imperatives without *you*, (2) imperatives with *you*, and (3) *I want* and *I don't want you* (H only) sentences, which originally describe an internal state but are used as a subtle way of asking others to provide the things wanted or needed. But in the September sample, both begin to use more polite forms of request: *Can/Could you* X for the affirmative request.

The question of how the two subjects manage to express quite diverse functions with their limited linguistic ability can also be answered by looking at Tables 9 and 10 again. Take the simple utterance *OK* for instance: already in the July

sample, it is used to express four functions by H (RQCH, RSAK, RSCO, and RSAG) and three functions by C (RQCH, RSAG, and RSAK). The subjects seem to be using some strategies to build up their communicative competence.

1. The different meanings ascribed to the rising intonation and the falling or level intonations seem to be acquired rather soon. As a result, adjacency pairs using deictic particles are quickly learned. Thus, the two subjects learn to respond to *OK*? with *OK*, to *Right*? with *Right*, to other choice questions with *Yeah* and others. Not only this, they also learn early to use tags like *OK*? and *Right*?

H is found to be using special intonation contors for discourse purposes. By maintaining the non-falling intonation (the level intonation), she is suggesting to her conversational partner that she needs help in expressing herself, and her conversational partner shows willingness to help as found in the July sample.

(1) H: Ah, and this -- is -- is -- my --
M: Small.
H: This -- is -- too small, so I want that.

The use of the level intonation gives the speaker (H) time to find the best expressions for use.

(2) H: Put it right here down.
Pretend this --
Ching is --
M: Ching is the youngest.
H: Uh-huh, Ching is daddy 'cause Ching -- is -- boy.

Another use of pitch for H is to keep the ground. She achieves such purpose by raising her voice while self-repeating.

(3) H: He, he, pretend --
Pretend he is daddy.
M: (trying to interrupt)
H: (raising voice) Pretend daddy he's go home.
OK, pretend daddy he's go home.

2. Repetition, both self-repetition and repetition of others' utterances, serves many other functions than the ones given above. In fact, this may be the first way the two subjects learn to talk. The following passage shows that C makes a protest by repeating M's utterance.

(4) M: Pretend, in that school.
Ching--

C: Don't my--doctor !
M: (To H) In that school now.
(To C) Stop it.
(To H again) Ching is bothering this, Ching is bothering the doctor.
C: You stop !

In the following, H confirms a new topic by repeating M.

(5) M: This is chair.
This is playground chair.
H: This is--playground chair.
So--

In the following, repetition (self-repetition) helps H to make her point.

(6) M: I got some--
H: No, don't play with shoes because shoes is yuck.
Shoes is yuck.

Repetition helps C to say longer sentences than possible.

(7) M: I want go home.
When I told, when I came home then I told you to go put your dress on today 'cuz we are going to school.
C: Pretend go to put dress on.

3. Like young children, the two subjects refer to gestures very often to help communicate their intentions.

(8) M: Please put baby hat on now, honey.
Let me put baby hat on.
H: Not this, like this.
M: Oh !
H: This, this right here.
I know how to do it.
This--and this.
I show you, this first, like this.

(9) C: Sister ?
M: Yes ?
C: This ?
M: Yes.

Utterances like *This*, *Here*, *Like this*, *Right here* are enough for them to express a variety of meanings: to negate, to explain and illustrate, to establish a topic, etc. But this could not be if gestures were not used simultaneously.

4. Judging from the limited linguistic ability the two subjects possess at that

time, it is surprising to find that they can maintain conversation with the English-speaking child all the way throughout their plays while doing nothing apparent to contribute to the development of topics established either by their playmate or by themselves. They must have had a knack, but what is it? Let us examine the following passage:

(10) H: This is--cold water.
This is--milk.
And this is--cold water--juice.
That juice, and milk is this.
For me--it's hot water.
M: Pretend--
H: This is--
M: Pretend we, we, we don't have any hot water, OK ?
And this is--
H: Milk.
This is--cold water.
This is--
M: Juice ?
H: Yeah.
M: This is milk.
H: Yeah.

Despite the fact that both H and M often watn to get the floor, they are actually building a rather coherent conversation, abiding by the convention of turn-taking, contributing to the established topic by supplying necessary information. The key fact is that both of them are willing to cooperate. And even if they are each actually talking about different things, they seem to have mutual understanding that they are still following the cooperative principle. But the fact is that they are tolerating each other's egocentric talk: each cares for what concerns him/her most. Such speech is to them quite normal.

(11) M: Hai, put that hat on cuz pretty soon you are gonna go to school.
H: Wait.
M: Goodbye, honey.
H: I want make it cake for baby eat.
OK, ho--peanut--and--
M: What are you going to give for doggie ?
H: And this one is my house.
Pretend this is good--

M: Hai, put your hat on it.
C: Mommy, I've got it car.
H: Pretend I want make it cake for take my school, OK ?
C: Mommy--
H: (In Chinese) *wo bu-shih* Mommy. (= I am not Mommy)
C: Pretend I want--can I--this car ?
M: Can you please put your hat on, please honey ?

Another characteristic of the discourse in the July sample is topic-shifting. Again, the three conversationalists are not bothered by topic-shifting. H and C usually introduce new topics by *This*-sentences and *Pretend*-sentences (Refer to the preceding passage for such utterances).

I think the fact that M is very understanding accounts partly for the continuance of their discourse. Rarely does M need clarification as in the following:

(12) M: Hwa, Hwa, before I came home, I bought something for you.
H: This can not--
M: I, I bought something for you.
H: This--can not--play, play--this, OK ?
M: What?
H: This, this--ho--this--is--not--not hat, so--
M: I, I bought this for you.
H: No, no, 'cause this is open, so can play with this.

Here M fails to understand H because H suddenly switches from a play situation to real life: she does not want M to play with one of her toys. Even in this very case, communication does not break down.

In short, the knack that accounts for the continuation of discourse lies in the fact that the three children can following the principles of turn-taking and cooperation, that they can tolerate each other's rather egocentric talk and frequent shifting of topics, and that the English-speaking child understands H and C quite well through both verbal and non-verbal clues.

5. While the two subjects are quick to pick up expressions like *OK*? *OK*! *Right*? *Right*, they are unable to use others. Thus, they turn to their native language for help. Hesitation markers such as *hm*, *ho*, *le-hong* and acknowledgment utterances such as *oh* and *ah* occur in their July speech. (To each other, the two children frequently turn to their first language.) And these markers and utterances seem to work for them well enough to keep the conversation going.

The July sample has been discussed in great detail because of the richness of data. The August sample marks a transitional stage for both subjects. At this time,

English is used by H 41% of the time, and 24% by C. H appears to be fluent in saying some utterances and to hestitate as before in saying others. A great change in H's speech is found when she is addressing (ODAG): she uses almost the same loving tone as M does in saying *honey, please* in the July sample--the pitch is extraordinarily high and lenghtened.

In the September sample, however, H becomes very fluent and uses English 71% of the time, but C still produces very little English, probably because H dominates almost all play situations and is actually the one to decide what to say, who to speak, etc. In order to overcome the limit of such natural conversations, an elicited task is added. The results (given in Table 11) show that C is very good at making responsives and assertives. He can answer all *wh*-questions except *how* and *how much* questions. He is observed to be using the strategy of repetition to the fullest extent. He uses repetition to answer questions, to clarify, and to make his point.

(13) Y: What's that ?
C: That--car, station wagon.
(14) Y: How do you make it ?
C: Make it airplane go.
(15) Y: Where is Hsin ?
C: Hsin ? I don't know.
(16) Y: OK. What are you making ?
C: Making--big airplane, Florida airplane.

Although not all repetitions work well for C, they are helping C in two ways: (1) to keep the conversation going, (2) to give him chances to clarify and develop a topic that interests him.

(17) C: Policecar.
Y: Policecar.
What is the policecar going to do ?
C: Doing, doing man.
Y: Doing man ?
C: Yeah. Doing car, not man.
Y: Why ?
C: 'Cause he wants down.
Y: 'Cause he wants down ?
C: Down.
Y: Down what ?
C: Down house.
Y: Down house. Good.

Table 11. C's Speech Acts in the Elicited Conversation

Acts	Frequency	Percentage
Requestives		
RQAC	1	1
Responsives		
RSCH	32	33
RSPR	22	22
RSCL	13	13
Assertives		
ASID	3	3
ASDC	7	7
ASAT	4	4
ASEV	1	1
ASIR	3	3
ASRU	1	1
Performatives		
PFCL	2	2
PFAC	1	1
Regulatives		
ODCQ	3	3
Expressives		
EXRP	5	5
Total	98	99*

* Total percentage less than 100 due to rounding.

Of course, Y's echo questions also contribute to the continuation of the conversation.

The elicited conversation does not really elicit more speech acts than C is able to produce in natural conversations, but it does help to see that C can respond appropriately mostly, and it also reveals that C has more ways of expressing certain acts than found in natural conversations in the September sample. For instances, RSCH is realized by *Yeah*, *Right*, *OK*, *Yes*, *Sure*, *Un-uh*, *Uh-huh*, and sentences in the elicited conversation, but it is realized by *Yeah*, *OK*, and repetition in natural conversations.

Throughout all four samples and the elicited conversation, there are only a few instances of explicit teaching. In the August sample, C asks H in Chinese for the English "Water". In the elicited conversation, C asks for English equivalents for "long" and "United States." But these do not constitute real teaching; rather, they

are elicitations for teaching. Real teaching occurs in the October sample when H tries to explain to C the pronunciation of "spoon."

(18) H: What's this ?
C: Bush.
H: Spoon. *Mei-you* /š/; /š/ *jiu-shih hen-dou.* (without /š/; /š/ means many)
C: Spoon, spoon.

No instance of vertical vs horizontal structures is found in the two subjects' natural conversations. Probably because they can always use their native language to express themselves when necessary. But in the elicited conversation, such pattern occurs.

(19) Y: Ching, do you have a car ?
C: Yes.
Y: Where is your car ?
C: There.
Y: That's Hwa's car.
C: My car.
Y: Which one ?
C: This. This my car.

C is finally able to combine two phrases (vertical structure) into a sentence (horizontal structure).

The topic-comment structure is also found in C's speech.

(20) Y: What's that ?
C: That--car, station wagon.

C's utterance literally means "That's a car, and the car is a station wagon." Presumably this is the primitive form of a complex sentence.

If we accept Chesterfield's definition of teaching, then teaching (implicit) occurs everywhere. However, I would like to return to the strategy of repetition because in that the children are doing meaningful learning--learning through communication. Both H and C do not just do exact imitation; rather, they often repeat part of the other speaker's utterance and incorporate it into their own utterances. Refer to Excerpts 4, 7, 13, 14, 16, and 17 for C's repetition, and Excerpt 1 for H's repetition. Another example to show such type of repetition made by H is in the following:

(21) M: This one is for baby.
This one is for Mommy.
H: This one is for daddy.

After M's two structurally similar utterances, H copies the structure and the intona-

tion pattern with a little substitution, and the result is a perfect sentence which is so different from the ones that she alone can make. Such incorporation appears to be basic to the acquisition of syntax.

Let us, as a final touch to this section, look at a piece of conversation in the October sample.

(22) C: Mommy, Mommy, Mommy.
H: I don't know you go home.
You are home.
Where is your lunch box ?
C: Mommy, *wo you* (I have) lunch box.
H: Who give you the lunch box ?
C: *Lao-shih* (the teacher).
H: Oh! That's pretty.
Take your food and going to cook.
C: Uh ?
H: Yeah, for baby eat.
Hurry, take your food and going to cook for baby because baby get eat.
C: *Lao-shih shuo* (the teacher said), put on the, she know.
Teacher, here, teacher.
H: Good boy.
C: Icecream, baby, icecream.

In this episode, H plays two roles, and two settings are involved, but the two subjects can switch back and forth freely without any misunderstanding. At this time, H is predominantly English-speaking, and C is making great progress too. The discourse structure of this single episode is near the adult norm, with beginning, middle and ending, with side sequences and clarifications, based on the principles of turn-taking and cooperation.

V. Summary and Conclusion

This paper studies the development of communicative competence of two Chinese-speaking children learning English as a second language, specifically the types of speech acts produced by the two subjects in natural conversations, the pattern of discourse, and the strategies involved in acquiring communicative competence. Four speech samples collected monthly from July 1980 to October 1980 are the data for analysis.

Based on the schema of Dore et al (1978), the two subjects' speech acts are classified and computed. Because of the participation of an English-speaking child in their play, the July sample has as many as (and often more speech acts than) the other three samples. The pattern of development is thus made unclear. But when the July sample is excluded, the two subjects do make more different speech acts in later samples than in earlier ones. The most frequent type of act for both subjects is requestives, and then assertives and responsives for H and assertives and regulatives for C.

The two subjects are also found to be gradually adding new devices for expressing the same function from time to time. And they use certain strategies to cope with the communication demand so that with little linguistic ability they are able to express a variety of functions even in the July sample. These strategies include the skillful use of different intonation contours, repetitions, gestures, some underlying principles of conversation, and native language facilitation.

The conversational pattern is in general quite well-formed. In the July sample, more topic-shifting occurs, but in the other three samples, because the two subjects are free to use another language, their discourse is like that of children of the same age, with occasional shifting of the topic, but mostly sticking to the principles of turn-taking, relevance, and so on.

The idea that structure evolves out of conversation is supported by the present study. Both H and C often try to elicit the second language from his/her conversationalist, in quite different ways though. H uses intonation and pause, and C uses his first language. What they elicit is often words or phrases, but they frequently repeat them and incorporate them in their sentences. The vertical vs. horizontal structure has also been found in the elicited task when C combines his previous utterances into a longer sentence.

It has been suggested (Hatch, 1978) that adult second language learners need to be taught explicitly to get into a discourse--from topic nomination to hesitation pauses. Judging from the relative ease the two subjects of the present study perform in communication tasks, the present writer agrees with Hatch. Moreover, the present writer feels that even in the very beginning of learning a foreign language, one must develop his communicative competence. One must not wait until he has learned all important aspects of the second grammar. The fact that language is basically a means of communication and that grammar evolves out of language rather than the other way around should by all means be the basic assumption in any language syllabus. Only after one has developed his second language communicative competence can it be confirmed that he has learned the language.

The present study is limited by the fact that only four speech samples collected over a period of four months are used for analysis, hence the pattern of development is not clear. In the future, speech samples collected over a longer period of time should be included for analysis so that the question of developing second language communicative competence can be answered more fully.

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