

Conversation systems, strategies and styles used by adult communication assistants.

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(PhD Completed, adjunct research fellow)

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Once upon a time in Queensland, Australia...

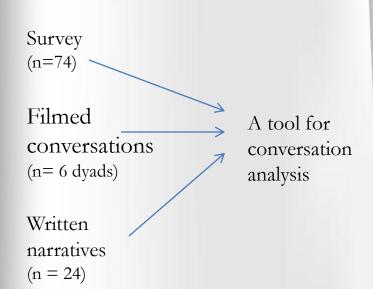
PhD study – strategies used by communication assistants.

Target disability population was Down syndrome, Rett syndrome and cerebral palsy

Literature – negative voice.

Qualitative 3 phase study:

- demographic data
- observation data
- written narratives





What we knew: The Literature Review

- Asymmetry in discourse
- Discourse ? communication or conversation
- Between person with CCN & who?

New information

Strategies could be linked to systems of interaction:

- Language
- Human agency
- Relationship
- Culture
- Environment



The Analysis

Survey data: demographic + written narrative: thematic

Observation data: layered CA approach.

The Findings

- 1. Greater need for: Time, Training, and Technology
- 2. Interaction analysis tool CSSA identified 70 conversation strategies.
- 3. Seven styles of conversation identified



The 3 Ts

Multi dimensional nature of **Time** 'More' / 'additional' **Training Technology** for conversation.

Strategies

70 strategies were identified and assembled in an alphabetical glossary and coded for a Conversation Systems and Strategies Analysis tool (CSSA).





Conversation Systems and Strategies Analysis					System(s)				
Line	Time	Id.	Discourse	Code	R	HA	С	L	E
1	01.52	CA	@ is [that it?	Qpolar OIR1	X				
2	01.53	J	[(holds palms together in midline) yeh						
3	01.54	CA	Yeh? FRIEND	newsmark				X	
4	01.55	J	^^ I wish :						
5	01.56.	CA	you wish for <u>what</u> ?	OIR1				X	
6	01.57	J	yeh						
7	01.59	CA	you wish?	Q4				X	
8	02.02	J	(relaxes hands) OK a fren						
9	02.04	CA	you wish for a friend? ((CA process. time?))	Q polar OIR2			X		
10	02.05	J	Yeh (claps hands to right side of face, tilts head into hands).						
11	02.07	CA	oh. (looks sad)	F			X		
12	02.08	J	(stares at sister in a pleading gaze, tilts head forward and smiles)						
13	02.10	CA	(mirrors J's posture).	F			X		
Total	18 secs	7:6	J = multimodal CA = speech only ((Js' comm. device in another room)).	5q	+	-	+	-	-

7 Styles of Conversation

- 1. My words not yours
- 2. The Ronde
- 3. The kinaesthetic conversation
- 4. The ternary conversation
- 5. You, me and something else
- 6. The code switcher
- 7. The coach

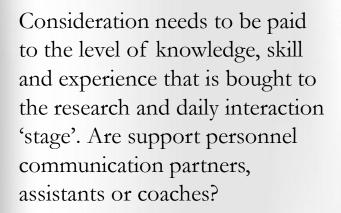
Results

- 1. Conversation strategies can evolve from one or more interaction systems.
- 2. Interaction strategies form particular styles of conversation.
- 3. Styles of conversation may be linked to particular disabilities and interaction systems.
- 4. Asymmetry in AAC discourse may be inevitable, constructive and not necessarily negative.



Implications

Dynamic Systems Theory is a robust approach to better understanding AAC discourse.





It is a human attribute and right to engage with more than a linear act of communication. We should expect CONVERSATION.



Future directions

- Use CCSA to design training
- Replication studies
- Broader sample groups:
 - Styles of conversation
 - Disability specific styles and strategies

Thank you for the opportunity to share this work.

A few references

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