1. Language acquisition by children

The transcript shown is of Kamal and his parents engaging in a turn-taking conversation concerning various topics. The parents are seen to be engaging with the child by asking questions and exercising his cognition through an explanation of his reasoning. Kamal is aged two years and one month old and it could be argued that he is in the early telepathic stage of language development as he is able to string three to four words together to form a sentence. The child is seen to be going through a naming spurt as he is asking questions like 'why?' in order to better understand the world around him. The child could be seen to have very basic grammar which is common in his age. According to Katherine Nelson's theory, Kamal is seen to be a referential child with 50% of his vocabulary being naming words such as 'mum' or 'dad'. There are a variety of ways language is used in the transcript both by the parents and Kamal.

Firstly, a feature of Kamal's speech is his use of consonant cluster reduction. This can be seen where he says 'dink' rather than 'drink', this shows that the child is simplifying the word so that he is able to pronounce it. This phonological feature is passively corrected by the father who states 'theres my drink' which demonstrates the real pronunciation of the word. Although this method of passive correction is preferred by most parents, many neglect that children often don't understand that they are pronouncing the wrong word. His ability to name objects shows that he could be in the labelling stage of Jean Achinson's theory of children's linguistic development. This is because the child is able to distinguish what a drink is and who it may belong to.

Next, the use of prosody and upward intonation is a sign of the parents using infant directed speech (IDS). IDS is often used among parents and in some cases IDS helps children with syllabification and recognizing whether a sentence is a question or statement. However, in some cases IDS leads to mispronunciation due to the use of baby talk and this could have caused the child to say 'dink'. The parents also continue to engage Kamal's cognition by asking questions like 'why' in order to enable Kamal to explain his reasoning. An example of this is seen where Kamal states ' this up please', the father responds with 'why' in order to engage Kamal's cognition and test his cognitive ability or according to Noam Chomskey Kamal is engaging his Language Acquisition Device which will help him develop his language skills.

The parents engaging in conversation with Kamal in the transcript could suggest that his parents are using extended code which is what Basin Bernstein explained in his theory of codes. By asking questions in response to Kamals statements he is able to widen his scope on the world and exercise his

cognition. Contrasting to an elaborate code a restricted code would be where parents do not engage in so much conversation or answer questions with a general statement. Kamal's parents do not use restricted code and this can be seen where Kamal's mother states 'bring it here please', Kamal asks 'why?' and this is answered by 'you'll break it'. A parent using restricted code might just respond by saying 'just bring me the mug'.

Along with this, Kamal could be seen to have basic level grammar due to his inability to form full sentences, this can be seen where he states 'dont go bed (.) i dont', this shows that he is still developing his syntax and has yet to master the forming of complete sentences. However, this could be developed through Lev Vygoski and Jerome Bruner's social interactionist theory where a child's language is developed through conversation with care takers and a more knowledgeable other (MKO). It could be argued that Kamals parents are believing in the social interactionist theory as they are wanting to expand Kamals cognitive and language ability through conversation. They may believe that through conversation children can conduct trial and error otherwise known as packaging which is Jean Aitchison's theory of a child's language development.

The child's use of both micro and macro pauses shows when he is familiar and unfamiliar with a word or phrase. For example, when the father uses the word 'late'. The child is obviously unfamiliar with the word as he states 'i don't (.) late' the short pause shows that he is trying to use the word grammatically but doesn't understand the semantic of late and therefore there are virtuous errors like 'i dont late'. Other examples of viticus errors are evident when the 'turn it round' instead of turn it around. This is an example of unstressed syllable reduction where the beginning or the word is removed to simplify the word.

To conclude, Kamal and his parents use language in a variety of ways which are done to engage Kamal's cognition. The strategies used such as turn-taking conversation, extended code and passive correcting will likely lead to the child's full gasp of the English language.

Comments and targets

Overall grade: B+

A good answer overall - well done. Mention of turn-taking immediately - good. Early telepathic stage identified and explained / justified. Good reference to "naming spurt" with helpful example and explanations. Good, clear references to IDS and Chomsky. You might want to refer to the link between elaborated code and social background / class / parental level of education here (when you refer to Bernstein). Good reference to virtuous errors - but please explain what these are and why / how they occur so put the examiner's mind at rest. Overall an excellent answer - you make some accurate and very well-observed comments with good use of examples and, at times, excellent explanation.

Targets:

1. Spend some time *defining the linguistic features you identify* and briefly putting them into the general context of child language acquisition - this will allow an examiner to see your secure grasp of key concepts and award you full credit for your level of understanding - so that he can know that you are not just "feature-spotting".

2. Consider other theorists such as Bruner and Piaget if possible.

3. Pay closer attention to any *"more advanced" utterances made by the child*. It might help you to think of yourself as someone assessing his level of linguistic development professionally.

4. Consider saying more about the turn-taking. *Children are notoriously bad at this (when very young or even later) - how is Kamal doing?*

5. What about Halliday's functions of language?

6. *Who is running the conversation* and how can you tell?

(I will now share the specific Mark Scheme with you for this particular question.)

2. Collins page 180

Discuss ways in which the children and adults are using language here. You should refer to specific details from the transcription, relating your observations to ideas from your studies of language acquisition.

Section C: Exploring A Level language topics

Text 3

Freya:	ok (.) so thats if youre playing with all the cards (1) we're just going to be playing with (.)
Adam:	what are the wed¹ ones ↗
Freya:	[to Beth] what do you think ↗ (.) it says for young players who cant read (.) he <u>can</u> read but zoe might come over and play and it is a bit quick ↗
	//
Beth:	yeah its a bit quick and you dont want to leave her out if she wants to join in again ↘
Freya:	right (.) so we'll just do the blue ones again ↘ (1) ok
Adam:	ok (.) i like the blue ones (.) i could find them (.) i was good at that wasnt i ↗
Freya:	yes you were (.) but we are a good winner as well as a good loser arent we ↗ (.) like mummy says (1) so we get them out here
Rachel:	ooh look it says write your name here (.) dyou want to write your name there ↗ (2) right (.) thats enough colours
Zoe:	do need have (.) do need have all dem
Rachel:	are we gonna write your name here ↗ (.) [follows text with finger] write your name (.) here ↘ (2) dyou want to write your name ↗ (1) so what letter comes first
Zoe:	a zuh
Rachel:	right (.) a zuh (.) you do it
Zoe:	im too littuh
Rachel:	you can do a zuh ↘
Zoe:	i <u>cant</u> (.) no ↘
Rachel:	alright ↘ [writes] zuh (.) and what comes next ↗
Zoe:	uh oh
Rachel:	oh (.) then what
Zoe:	<u>eh</u>
Rachel:	good girl (.) are you going to colour in anna or elsa ↗
Zoe:	anna
Rachel:	so you need the pink colours and i need the blue colours ↘ (3) those are elsa colours
Zoe:	dis ones not elsa
Rachel:	no
Zoe:	no
Rachel:	actually this ones more of an anna colour

Notes:
¹ Adam's way of saying 'red'

The transcript shown is a conversation between Freya (14), Zoe (3), Adam (6) and two adults: Beth and Rachel. The transcript is an example of turn taking where Freya leads both Adam and Zoe in conversation by asking questions in order to exercise their cognition. Turn-taking conversation is notoriously difficult for children as they often monologue instead. Adam and Zoe are an exception as they wait for Freya or another caretaker to finish asking a question before responding. This could be the result of turn taking games such as peek-a-boo which teaches children when to speak and when to listen or act.

Freya, Beth and Rachel all use Infant directed speech and this can be seen with the continuous use of upward intonation which is imitated later by Adam in the sentence **"what are the wed ones /".** Infant directed speech is a controversial topic among theorists and caregivers as some believe that it patronises the child and teaches them improper pronunciation and grammar, examples of this can be seen **when a parent says "wittle" rather than little. The other side of the argument suggests that infant** directed speech helps the child break down language through the changes in tone and frequency. The avoidance of pronouns also helps the child - this is where parents refer to themselves of mum or dad instead of me which helps the child achieve Object permanence which is where children are able to comprehend that an **object exists without it being seen. Through Freya, Beth and Rachel's use of infant directed speech it could** be argued that the children have developed better turn-taking abilities and are able to understand features of language better seen as they are more exaggerated in speech. For example, in the transcript Freya askes **"what comes next" with the use of upward intonation** - this shows Zoe that freya is asking a question and therefore she needs to respond.

Zoe and Adam are in different stages of development, Zoe is in the early telegraphic stage where she is able to string more than three words together to form a somewhat grammatically correct sentence. Adam is in the late telegraphic stage where his vocabulary expands to an estimated 10,000 words. However, there are some anomalies as Adam struggles with substitution **as seen with the word "wed"** **rather than "red" this could be a result of an over**-use of baby talk by caregivers. This is an anomaly because six year olds generally do not require to simplify words. It is apparent that there are various features of language used by the caretakers and children:

Firstly, Lev Vygotsky's interactionist theory can be applied to the transcript, Zoe is in the zone of proximal development where she struggles to work independently and therefore needs the assistance of a caregiver or a MKO (More Knowledge Other). In contrast, Adam has scaffolded and is more independent, this can be seen with the finding of the blue cards, Adam found the cards himself without the need of an **MKO. Vgotsky's** theory suggests that interaction is vital in the development of language and his theory could be supported by this transcript as it shows how the children have learnt and imitated their caregivers through listening to dialogue. An example of this can be seen with Adams use of upward intonation which is what children often learn from their caregivers' use of Child Directed Speech as many argue that changes in tone help children separate statements from questions. Therefore, Zoe and Adam have developed their speech through their parents use of Vygotsky's theory of social interaction - most caregivers believe that dialogue is important in the development of language as it gives children the **chance to network (Final stage of Jean Aichison's** stages of child language development) which is the use of trial and error to understand the semantic (meaning) of the word and helps them categorize them.

Personally I would suggest that Vgoski's theory is valid in the context of the transcript as well outside the transcript. This can be seen with the study of Feral children such as Jim who was born into a family with two deaf parents and struggled to master language as he only learnt from watching TV. It wasn't until he could interact with a speech therapist that his language improved and therefore, when caregivers such as Freya, Beth and Rachel exercise the use of dialogue Zoe and Adam are able to learn language quicker than families like J**im's who did not interact with each other as much.**

Another theory which can be applied to the transcript and which shows the features of language **used by the caregivers and the children in B.F. Skinner's reinforcement theory. His theory argues that** children learn through negative and positive reinforcement this can be seen with the Skinner box experiment where a mouse received food when pressing a button thus proving his reinforcement theory.

Many disagree with the ethical side of his theory as it did include electrocuting mice and many disagreed with the fact that humans were related to mice but his theory can be proven in this transcript. **This is seen where Rachel asks Zoe "then what?" and Zoe replies "eh" Rachel's response is "good girl" after thi**s Zoes **confidence could be seen to have grown as she begins to use longer sentences like "dis is not Elsa".** The caretakers use positive reinforcement with Adam as well by praising him for finding the blue cards. However, it is apparent that they don't use negative reinforcement, possible because it often destroys a child's self confidence. Instead of negative reinforcement they use passive correction otherwise known as reformulation. This is where the caregivers will correct the child without drawing too much attention to the virtuous error. **This can be seen where Rachel states "actually this one's more of Anna's colour", this teaches the child that what they said is wrong but it doesn't traumatise the child or destroy their self** confidence.

Lastly, Zoe is generally in the right stage of language development for her age. She is able to make two-word and multi-word utterances with basic syntax, she is also struggling with the alphabet as she is only able to make sound-letter **associations such as 'Zuh' for the letter 'z'. This is normal at her age as** children generally learn the alphabet at age 5. She definitely masters the sound-letter associations in the transcript and it could be argued that she is better than most children her age as sound-letter association is usually mastered at ages 4.

To conclude the strategies used such as turn-taking conversation, reformulation as well as the **application of Skinner's positive reinforcement theory and Vgoski's interactionist** theory will likely lead to the both childrens full gasp of the English language.

Comments

An excellent answer overall**. W**ell done :)

Please complete any edits in a new document or something similar so that I know the version I marked!

You have a generally very secure understanding and command of the key terms, relevant stages of development and theorists and you apply them well, usually providing helpful and clear examples which you explain clearly.

To improve you need to comment a little more on the possible limitations of certain theories - which we can discuss today if you wish.You could also comment in greater detail about how the different theories are shown in the transcript and give more examples and explain these in greater depth (and with a slightly more "scientific" approach.

I can see that - at times - you are (secretly!) imagining yourself as a professional who is assessing the children's language development - and you frequently do this very well! However, you should try to do it a bit more if possible.

There are also some theories which you didn't mention - of course you can't mention them all - and there is some value in being selective, as it can show that you know which are the most relevant for a particular transcript. However I would like to see maybe two more mentioned (and even one more casually dismissed in writing as not applicable!).

Please also see my other comments above e.g. about Piaget and Vygotsky (e.g. the correct use of the term "scaffolding").

Overall grade: A= (A double minus - a lower A grade.)

3. Child Language Acquisition

3. Discuss ways in which Teddy and his mother are using language here. You should refer to specific details from the transcription, relating your observations to ideas from your studies of language acquisition.

The transcript between Teddy, who is aged 1 and 9 months, and his mother is a classic example of turn-taking conversation as well as an example of a caretaker exercising a child's cognition. Teddy could be seen to be in the babbling stage of development which, according to linguists, is the first stage. This is **due to Teddy's babbling, simplification, final consonant deletion and much more. It is therefore apparen**t that Teddy and his mother use language in a variety of ways.

Firstly, Teddy's babbling and vocal play shows that he is in the early stage of language development. He could be seen to be behind in some aspects as studies show that babbling generally stops when a child reaches 8 - 12 months of age. This is not the case for Teddy who is 21 months old and therefore, should have more command and control over his vocal cords. Examples of Teddy's babbling can be seen in the beginning of the transcript where he says "ah da bai ia o". As he continues to converse with his mother he begins to regain confidence in speaking and can use words like "daddy", "where" and "work" which shows that as he interacts with his mother he exercises his cognition. This could be seen as confirming Leo Vygotsky's interactionist theory where a child learns to speak with the help of a MKO (More Knowledgeable Other) and begins to leave the ZAD (Zone of Achieved Development) into the ZPD (Zone of Proximal development) which means that a child stops being increasingly reliant on an MKO and can work independently. However, there are some limitations to this theory as it does not explain the process of development or how exactly development occurs. It also ignores the role of an individual and places emphasis on the social or collective ideas which are due to Vygotski's communist background and ideology. I would argue that Teddy's level of development needs some attention as he is still babbling and struggling to control his vocal cords. However, with an increased use of Basin Bernstein's extended code, it could be argued that Teddy will be able to label more objects.

Teddy's mother uses elaborate code which is where a caretaker is more engaged in a child's cognitive development and exercises this through asking questions such as "why", "where" and "how". His mother uses this when discussing where Teddy's Dad is by asking "daddy where" as well as asking questions like "what does teddy want to do". Bernstein argued that extended code helps a child expand their social skills as they converse with a caretaker who uses varied vocabulary such "work" or "clever" and who uses a range of utterances with upwards and downwards intonation which helps a child break down language and separate sentences. This theory is used widely among parents as there are great results in a childs development however, there are some limitation with Bernstiens theory as it suggests that all lower class families use limited code which shows his failure to see diversity of speech among parents, as well as this, Bernstein presented little to no evidence to support his claims however, with the increased use of his theory it could be argued that it is incredibly beneficial.

Next, it is apparent that Teddy does not believe in object permanence which is the belief that people and objects continue to exist outside the child's vision. I draw this conclusion because of the childs