

"Grand Rounds" in protracted phonological development: Contributions of case-based analysis

PANEL ORGANISER & AFFILIATION

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Background

A crosslinguistic study of typical (TD) and protracted (PPD) phonological development is underway to explore universal and language-specific patterns in phonological acquisition, and develop clinical applications. Group studies have addressed particular developmental topics (e.g. fricatives, word structure, clusters). But individuals often show idiosyncratic patterns and complex interactions between phenomena. Developmental theories must account for both the general and the idiosyncratic.

Purpose

This purpose of the panel is to explore the scope of protracted phonological development through presentation of individual cases for five languages, deriving implications for theoretical frameworks and clinical application. (Complementary posters are being submitted for additional languages to continue the discussion.)

Method

The panel begins with an overview of theoretical assumptions and study methodology (ages 3-5, TD/PPD, single word elicitation, nonlinear phonological analyses). Case analyses follow for three boys (Arabic, Portuguese, Swedish) and two girls (Slovenian, Icelandic), 4-year-olds except for the Portuguese (5;3). For each child, biographical data and a nonlinear phonological analysis will be presented: whole word, word length, stress, segment timing, word shape, segments/features, interaction.

Results

Whole Word Match ranged from 0% to 27%. Common developmental patterns followed markedness: e.g. deletion of weak syllables, codas, cluster consonants; stops for fricatives. Idiosyncratic phenomena included: segment timing issues (Icelandic, Swedish); sequence constraints, i.e. frequent assimilations/metatheses (Slovenian, Portuguese, Arabic); and unexpected substitutions: fricatives for stops (Slovenian), [θ] for /f/ (Icelandic), voicing issues (Portuguese). The Arabic child was also dysfluent.

Conclusions

The panel for the five languages provides a unique opportunity to reflect on the scope of protracted phonological development across languages, observing common and uncommon patterns in acquisition of word structure, segments/features and their interactions. Theoretical and clinical implications for the roles of markedness and complexity in development will be discussed. The panel will set up discussion for related complementary posters for five additional languages.

SPEAKERS ON THE PANEL AND THEIR AFFILIATION

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