AAC in the Wild: Exploring and Charting Authentic Social Interactions
Higginbotham, Blackstone, Hunt-Berg

Part II
Communication Behavior

What is an Utterance?
- An utterance consists of one or more observable communicative acts that participants within the interaction perceive as being intentional and meaningful.

C & B: Collaborating on an Utterance
- Focus on mutual understanding
- Coordination through time and sequence
- Use of multiple communication modalities
- One species of interaction

There is order in mundane interaction
(Psathas, 1995)
- Human
- Ubiquitous
- Sequentially organized in time
- Local, situated

What they were doing was carrying out actions that were meaningful and consequential for them in that immediate context (p. 17)

Similarities in Interaction

Conversation using communication board
(Higginbotham and Caves, 2002)

C: But anyway give me your name.
L: Alright, it's Louise.
C: Louise.
L: And my last name is pretty long.
C: Okay.
L: B-i-l-e-
C: B-
L: e-
C: e-
L: i-k
C: i-k
L: j-i-a-n
C: j:-i:-a:-n.
L: That's right.
C: Okay.

Utterances are Jointly Inter-Acted in Real-Time
- Each individual's actions are coordinated with their partner's
- Participants choose the right communication tool (modalities, strategies) for particular purposes.
- Accommodating temporal demands
- Getting it “right”
- Meeting partner needs & expectations
- Meeting own needs (e.g., comprehension)
Utterances are Multimodal

- Verbal
- Vocal
- Gesture
- External Tools
  - AAC device
  - Manipulatables
- Context
- Other people

Communication is Distributed

- Across People, Artifacts, Contexts
- Interdependent layers of media, no single layer is coherent by itself (Goodwin, 2000)
- We coordinate multi-media displays with our partners

"Monitoring" Gaze

Utterances ARE NOT Sentences
There are communication costs associated with the media chosen.

Advice for Practitioners:
- Recognize the constraints and affordances for each modality.
- Teach flexible multimodal strategies.
- Appreciate: Sequential order, Time and timing.

Advice for Developers:
- Communication is interaction.
- Quickfires.
- Voice controls.
- Participant displays.
- Provide task specific tools.
- Design for use with other communication modalities.