



EXAM FACTOR APPLICATION FORM

Name: Tami Cooler

Age: 18

School: East London Comprehensive

Dream Job: Dancer

Why do you think you have the EXAM FACTOR?

I dunno really, I just really like to analyse spoken language, I think it's really really interesting and just think I have a lot to offer the show! I think I am quite good at sticking to the point in my essays, others can waffle but I think I stay quite focused on the question.

Exam Submission:

In transcript B Jan, Leila's caregiver, uses certain techniques in order to encourage Leila's language development. For example on several occasions Jan expands on what Leila says "it's the water, it's going down the pipes" by doing this, Jan has effectively explained in more depth Leila's initial comment "it's (.) is it (.) NOISY" arguably this could be effectively teaching Leila how to expand on the more limited responses she has given. Jan has also shown encouragement through the praise, "good girl", in response to Leila following instructions correctly and will help to create a positive relationship between the less familiar participants. Further, Jan helps to improve Leila's language development through correction "Leila: they all wight...Jan: they're all right" this will help Leila to learn from her mistakes and errors and develop her language correctly in the future. The use of correction and repetition supports Skinner's theory, he believed that language was another learned behaviour and that children learn through positive and negative reinforcement. In contrast, Leila is quite confident in the telegraphic stage despite her unfamiliar caregiver: "my daddy and mummy take me to park" this is quite developed telegraphic utterance which uses the conjunction 'and'. It is missing the auxiliary verb 'are' but this virtuous error shows Leila's innate ability to experiment with language which supports Chomsky's innateness theory that children are born with inherent language capabilities which explains why children have errors in speech that would not have been picked up from caregivers.

In transcript A Leila is on her own constructing a conversation with her toys. She is able to demonstrate that she understands concepts such as turn-taking through her use of pauses, on line 4 Leila includes a 3 second pause between switching between her own voice and that of Iggle Piggle's to demonstrate that she is attempting to recreate a conversation between her and her toys. She uses phatic talk which suggest she understand conversational conventions "how are you today panda". We see her imitating the speech of her father "LEILA GO TO SLEEP" as well as repeating information we can assume she may have picked up imitating her caregivers on a shopping trip; "we going shopping today Leila...buy some peas". This supports Piaget's theory that language acquisition is part of a child's wider development and language comes alongside understanding. He argues that a child cannot articulate in language what they do not understand. Leila is copying the speech in the context of role play with her toy, suggesting she is trying to make sense of language she has witnessed.



EXAM FACTOR APPLICATION FORM

Name: Sophie Scott

Age: 17

School: Larkley Academy

Dream Job: Teacher

Why do you think you have the EXAM FACTOR?

I've made a lot of progress in English over the last few years and I'm really proud of this, I've gone from a D to a B and want to come on the show to prove that anyone can do it. I have a real passion and have worked and will work so hard to make my writing the best it can be.

Exam Submission:

Transcript A begins with a line of speech from Leila's father in which he uses an imperative in order to command Leila to go to sleep. He tells her twice and in the second time of doing so puts more emphasis on the word "now". Given the discourse of both texts, regardless of the fact only Leila is speaking in text A, we can assume that Leila is aware of how to construct and participate in a conversation. Throughout transcript A Halliday's imaginative function of language is evident. Words in the square brackets in Text A instruct us that Leila is changing her voice when she switches character, this suggests that she understands the difference between people within a conversation. On line 9 we come across an example of Leila copying what she has heard her father say "Leila go to sleep". This is an example of the imitation theory which was devised by Skinner. The idea that adults use Child Directed speech meaning they reduce the complexity of sentences and vocabulary is supported in Text B on several occasions as Jan misses out auxiliary verbs and other words when talking to Leila, e.g. "you going to sit on the chair". She also adapts the prosodic features that she uses to appeal more to her younger audience. This is seen in her emphasis on certain phrases.

In terms of lexis, Leila's vocabulary appears to be quite complex, it is possible to assume that she is just using language that she hears on an every day basis. For example in transcript A Leila talks about going shopping clearly something she has heard her parents say. Just after this suggestion, Leila follows it by saying "buy some peas", perhaps further support for the imitation theory. This also suggests that Leila understands the semantics of this particular activity implying she has deeper knowledge. The lexis used by Jan in transcript B remains quite simple and unchallenging and she uses the technique of repetition, e.g "grass on them, he's got grass on them". Throughout the transcript Leila's grammar appears to be quite advanced given her age. There is only a few times where she gets the syntax wrong or where she uses the wrong form of a verb, for example Leila says on line 13 "I be not cheeky" rather than "I am not cheeky". Furthermore, on line 25 Leila uses the wrong tense. "he lose it", perhaps she is wanting to say "he lost it", however it is common knowledge that the ability to form tenses is quite a complex task and therefore this error is not hugely shocking. This could be linked to the cognitive theory of learning language.



EXAM FACTOR APPLICATION FORM

Name: Edmund Scott-William

Age: 18

School: St Michael's Private School

Dream Job: Politician

Why do you think you have the EXAM FACTOR?

I am an avid student of language and hope to go on and study English Language at Cambridge University. I love to speak and hope to use my expert knowledge on adapting my language to be able to be an effective politician who can be accepted by all classes of people through my varied language. I think I am really good at identifying different language devices.

Exam Submission:

In this transcript we see Leila is at the Telegraphic stage of language acquisition. This is identifiable through her somewhat underdeveloped language features for a child of 2.

What is obvious straight away is that Leila is somewhat limitedly aware of the social conventions of talk. The use of pauses on line 4 of 3 seconds before starting off Iggie Piggie's speech, shows that she self-assuredly understands turn taking. This also represents her efficacious use of nouns throughout this transcript. She is also able assuredly adapt her language to convey emotion and commands. As we can see on line 9 when she is imitating her father: "*LEILA GO TO SLEEP*" she puts extra stress and volume onto these words to represent her father's annoyance, demonstrating a respectable use of prosodic features. At times she uses incorrect grammatical choices, "*I be not cheeky*" showing the underdevelopment of her language. There are also a range of non-fluency features evident from the transcript for example, false starts and repairs: "*cheeka you're cheeka cheeky you you you cheeky*". Leila is also able to see the difference between imperatives and declaratives "*we going shopping today Leila...I want to go shopping*". Leila also uses more colloquial language "*yeah*" as well as more simplified baby talk "*wakey*". She shows a good understanding of pragmatics in the ways that she uses phatic talk "*...hello Momo...hello panda (.) how are you today panda*" showing an understanding on discourse conventions. She also shows an understanding of discourse conventions in the use of prosodic features here. She uses a heightened pitch here to indicate a question has been posed.

In transcript 2 Leila's language seems to regress slightly and she doesn't demonstrate the confidence that she showed in transcript 1.. This is demonstrated in the much smaller amount actually said in this transcript, her speech is also a lot shorter. She continues to show errors in her speech construction, for example: "*what that*" and "*they all wight*" and we see examples of child directed speech from Jan "*what IS that*" and "*they're all right*". Leila uses more frequent false starts like "*it's (.) is it*" which could again show that she is feeling less confident with this caregiver. Leila goes on to demonstrate a lack of discourse convention by making a radical change in topic made conversation "*I've got sticky hands*". Leila also uses a lot of repetition, copying Jan's language "*oh dear*". Jan shows further CDS when she gives praise and encouragement to Leila "*good girl*". Jan also offers polite encouragement through her use of interrogatives. She uses both a mix of open questions: "*what about mine*" and closed: "*do you want some help*". Next we can see that Jan has adapted the prosodic features to help engage Leila "*they ARE big chairs...[sing-song intonation]*". Leila again demonstrates her ability to turn take showing her understanding of discourse factors, however, her often abrupt topic change could suggest she still does not understand these conventions properly.

The work of many theorists is relevant here. Primarily Jan's simplistic language supports Bruner's theory that interactions between child and carer are crucial to language development. Similarly Piaget's theory of children learn the language of what they understand would link to this transcript too. The positive reinforcement can also link to Skinner's theory that children learn through positive reinforcement.