

Children learn Language in Conversation

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In learning a language, children need to learn both the conventional forms for their community, and how to use those forms. I will argue that children learn language – both forms and uses in the course of conversation.

I will draw on findings from adult offers of new words and evidence for children's uptake; from adult reformulations of child errors and children's attention to these reformulations, and from adult scaffolding of children's early 'narratives', where children rely on adult knowledge of an event in order to make their contribution.