



Partner Use of Social Turns in Conversation Facilitates More Language Than Cueing Turns: A Case Study of A Man with Severe Broca's Aphasia and His wife

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Background

Conversation partners often use **semantic and phonemic cues** and **test questions** (i.e., questions with already known responses) when talking with people with aphasia.

This partner-behavior is often used to prompt the person to speak.

These partner behaviors are not typical of social interactions between adults.

Such behaviors are consistent with adult/child or teacher/ student interactions. Such behaviors may inadvertently:

- **emphasize a power differential**
- **send a message of incompetency**

Test questions and cues can only be used if the partner already knows the target word. Thus,

- the person with aphasia has already communicated the idea effectively *OR*
- the information is obvious or known

Such cueing in conversation potentially sends the message that the person's method of communication was inadequate, both implicitly and via explicit partner corrections when the target word is not retrieved.

This is so **potentially detrimental** to the person with aphasia, that reducing these partner behaviors is a standard part of communication partner training (i.e., Better Conversations with Aphasia).

Yet, no research exists examining the impact on language production following these cued conditions and language production in more social conditions.

Research Questions

In spontaneous, unstructured conversation:
RQ 1: what is the impact of a "cued" condition consisting of test questions and semantic/phonemic cues and a "social condition" consisting of comments and non-test questions in a person with severe Broca's aphasia?

RQ 2: What is the extent of partner negative judgement (i.e., corrections) of the participant's language production in both conditions?

Method

Participants: Ben and Margo
64-year old man & his wife
severe Broca's aphasia
Aphasia Quotient = 48.0

Conversation Samples:

Three unstructured social conversations
The couple knew conversations should be:

- Casual
- Had no specific expectations
- All communication modalities could be used

➤ Margo spontaneously used very frequent test questions, semantic and phonemic cues



Reliability (33% of data)

Transcription: 94.5%
Identification of:

- Margo's cued/social turns: 84.1%
- Margo's negative judgements: 98.3%

Coding for:

- form: 98.6%
- content: 95.2%
- use: 93.8%

Conversation Characteristics	Conv 1	Conv 2	Conv 3
Duration	11'56"	11'58"	11'40"
# Margo's turns with cues	77	74	42
# Margo's social turns	147	95	54

These data were collected with funding support from an ASH Foundation New Investigators Research Grant

Cues are associated with less language in conversation and negative partner judgements

Partner cueing turns resulted in

- Mostly single word nouns
- Very few verbs and adjectives, no adverbs
- Few 2+ word utterances
- Very few S+V constructions
- No Opening moves
- Few expressions of opinion
- Negative judgments by partner

Partner social turns resulted in

- Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs
- Mostly 2+ word utterances
- Multiple S + V constructions in each sample
- 3 Opening moves
- Multiple expressions of opinion
- No negative judgments by partner

RQ 1: Measures & Results: Use

	Conversation 1		Conversation 2		Conversation 3	
Ben's Turns Consisted of:	Cued	Social	Cued	Social	Cued	Social
Clarification Requests	1	4	1	1	1	1
Opening Moves ¹ (introduction of new information)						
• <i>Statement of Fact</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0
• <i>Question of Fact</i>	0	0	0	1	0	2
Sustaining Moves ¹						
• <i>Responding</i> (response to partner's question)	15	6	14	10	1	3
• <i>Reacting</i> (reaction to partner's comment)	4	12	1	1	10	16
• <i>Continuing</i> (adds turn to own talk)	0	2	0	5	0	4
Evaluative Remark ²	1	7	1	3	0	5

¹Eggs & Slade, 1997; ²Longacre, 1996; Olness et al., 2010

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RQ 1: Measures & Results: Form and Content

	Conversation 1		Conversation 2		Conversation 3	
Ben's Turns Consisted of:	Cued	Social	Cued	Social	Cued	Social
2+ word utterances	9	19	7	16	12	22
Single word utterances (not: 'yes', 'no')	22	16	21	5	11	9
Subject + Verb utterance (independent utterance)	0	8	1	14	1	13
Total Nouns (not: impersonal pronouns)	17	21	14	14	9	19
• <i>I, We, You pronouns</i>	0	9	0	12	2	11
• <i>Proper nouns</i>	9	7	9	0	5	4
• <i>Specific nouns</i> (e.g., son, salmon, TV)	8	5	8	0	3	4
• <i>Vague nouns</i> (e.g., stuff, thing)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Verbs	0	10	0	15	2	16
• <i>Heavy verbs</i> ³ (e.g., brush, drive, eat)	0	7	0	9	1	10
• <i>Light verbs</i> ³ (e.g., do, make, be, have)	0	3	0	6	1	6
• <i>Material verbs</i> ⁴ (doing verbs: walk, fly, build)	0	0	0	2	1	3
• <i>Relational verbs</i> ⁴ (being verbs: to be)	0	3	0	4	0	4
• <i>Mental verbs</i> ⁴ (sensing verbs: think, know, feel, remember, hear)	0	7	0	9	1	10
• <i>Behavioral verbs</i> ⁴ (physiological verbs: dream, smile, breathe, cry)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adjectives	3	8	1	4	1	6
Adverbs	0	3	0	1	0	2

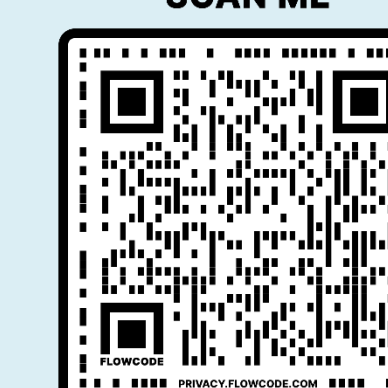
³Berndt et al., 1997; ⁴Halliday, 2004; Armstrong, 2005

RQ 2: Rate at which Margo negatively judged Ben's turns

Condition	Conv 1	Conv 2	Conv 3
Cued	33.3%	39.3%	30.4%
Social	8.6%	0.0%	0.0%

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