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2022

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Constructing Childhood through Social Interaction:
Rights, Obligations, and Accountability in Adult-Child Interaction

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Sociology

by

Ruey-Ying Liu

2022

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Constructing Childhood through Social Interaction:
Rights, Obligations, and Accountability in Adult-Child Interaction

by

Ruey-Ying Liu

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2022

Professor Tanya Jean Stivers, Chair

Childhood is generally conceptualized as a social construct in contemporary research within the social sciences — while the immaturity of children is a biological fact, how such immaturity in this particular period of human life is perceived and made sense of is a structural and cultural component of a society. However, little research has empirically examined precisely how this social construction is accomplished on a moment-by-moment basis in everyday life. Taking a conversation analytic approach, this dissertation investigates how childhood is constructed in the turn-by-turn sequential unfolding of everyday interaction.

In modern society, childhood is predominately viewed as a time of innocence, during which children are seen as having limited rights to autonomy. Previous interactional studies also suggest that children's membership status is characterized by their limited rights to participate in interaction. In this dissertation, I draw on naturally occurring adult-child conversational data in

English and Mandarin and examine the rights, obligations, and accountability associated with the status of being a child participant in interaction. Chapter 2 shows that adults constantly attend to children's performances in question-answer sequences and work to safeguard their rights to respond, thereby validating their status as interaction participants. Chapter 3 documents how parents assert epistemic primacy over their children, thereby treating them as having reduced rights to make claims about their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Grounded in this asymmetrical relationship between children and their parents, Chapter 4 illustrates that third-party interlocutors (e.g., relatives, friends, and other children) also orient to such asymmetry. That is, the construction of the asymmetrical parent-child relationship is a collaborative effort involving children, parents, and other interlocutors. It is through these special orientations to children that their status *as children* is constructed in social interaction.

By demonstrating how the relative rights of children and adults are manifested in the details of naturally occurring interaction, this dissertation formulates the interactional construction of childhood, which can be related to a wide set of interests in children, including social psychology, child development, linguistic anthropology, and sociolinguistics, and makes important contributions to the insights of childhood in the social sciences more generally.

The dissertation of Ruey-Ying Liu is approved.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I could not have completed this work without the advice and support of my mentors. I am incredibly grateful to my advisor Tanya Stivers, who has the best advice and is always available in times of doubt and trouble. Your mentorship has shaped me into the scholar I am today. You are my role model. Thanks to Steven Clayman, whose warmth and support have encouraged me to continue on this path and through whose walking tours I have explored different sides of LA. John Heritage, whose intellectual guidance was indispensable during this journey; I have become not only a conversation analyst but also a sociologist because of you. Giovanni Rossi, whose insightful comments always point to ways to improve my analysis and inspire new ideas. Hongyin Tao, whose generosity has fostered a welcoming community for scholars in Chinese linguistics; I will miss the picnics and Sun Laoshi's signature dish. It was truly a privilege to have all of you on my committee.

Thanks to my friends and colleagues at UCLA, particularly my fellow scholars affiliated with the Conversation Analysis Working Group and the Center for Language, Interaction, and Culture, for all the encouragement, inspiration, and fun over these years. I am especially grateful for the friendship of Nan Wang, Ying Yang, and Yan Zhou. I will miss the gatherings in our apartment. Thanks to UCLA Department of Sociology for the administrative and financial support. This dissertation was also supported by fellowships funded by J. Yang and Family Endowment for Taiwan Studies and Taipei Economic and Cultural Organization in Los Angeles, awarded through UCLA Asia Pacific Center.

My deepest thanks to my parents, Tzeng-Hsi Liu and Yi-Juan Huang, and my sister, Jia-Ying Liu, who have given me roots and wings. Your unconditional love and support have kept me grounded and have kept me going no matter how far apart we are. This dissertation is

dedicated to you. I hope I have made you proud. I am also indebted to Ching-Ling C. Chen, Ying-Chih Chen, and Tzeng-Feng Liu. Thank you for the support along the way.

Finally, this dissertation would not have been possible without the families who so graciously participated in my research. Thank you for sharing part of your life with me. I can say with confidence that your participation has contributed to our understanding of children and their social worlds.

A modified version of Chapter 2 was previously published as “Guiding children to respond: Prioritizing children’s participation over interaction progression” in *Research on Language and Social Interaction* (2022).

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CHAPTER 1

THE INTERACTIONAL CONSTRUCTION OF CHILDHOOD

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, the ideology of the child-centered society has offered children as well as the interests of children a prominent place in the practices of legal, welfare, medical, and educational institutions. Research across a range of academic disciplines is also devoted to understanding the qualities of children. Within social sciences, there is a general consensus that the concept of the child vis-à-vis the adult is not simply a matter of legal terms, yet the ways that researchers understand and approach children vary across different fields. For instance, treating childhood as a biologically determined trajectory, psychologists focus on when and how children's minds change throughout this developmental course. Linguists have a primary interest in children with respect to how and when a language is acquired. In sociology, childhood is traditionally understood in terms of socialization to account for how individuals in a society come to acquire the norms that inform their actions to maintain social order, yet recent sociologists tend to conceptualize childhood as a social construction and explore "the ways in which the immaturity of children is conceived and articulated in particular societies into culturally specific sets of ideas and philosophies, attitudes and practices which combine to define the nature of childhood" (James & Prout, 1997, p.1).

While each of these disciplines has an interest in childhood that rarely overlaps, they all address interaction as an essential component of the conception of childhood. With a focus on children's developing minds, psychology has identified the cognitive basis for children's interactional competence. Linguistics has examined children's linguistic competence, which

involves the acquisition of various linguistic features, such as phonemes, morphology, syntax, and pragmatics. Sociology and anthropology have an interest in children's sociocultural environment and have provided insights into children's interaction with the social world. Last but not least, Conversation Analysis has been applied to investigate children's interactional competence with respect to particular conversational practices. These studies all contribute to our understanding of children's interactional competence that allows them to participate in meaningful interaction. However, little research has examined the concept of childhood as grounded in the interactional context.

This dissertation is guided by this fundamental question — *what does it mean to interact with a child?* — and explores the construction of childhood in the interactional context, which is within the purview of multiple disciplines and no disciplines. While children's status in society has been widely discussed in terms of *membership* in sociology and anthropology, children's membership in social interaction remains largely underexamined. This dissertation fills this gap by examining how children's status as interaction participants is constructed and oriented to on a moment-by-moment basis in everyday adult-child interaction. In particular, I focus on interactional practices through which adults treat children *as children*.

In what follows, I begin with a review of how children and childhood are conceptualized in psychology, sociology, linguistics, anthropology, and Conversation Analysis, each of which has a particular focus of interest in childhood. I then provide a description of the data and method of this dissertation, followed by an overview of the analytic chapters.

1.1.1 Child development: the psychological perspective

Developmental psychology, which emerged in the late nineteenth century, has been the main arena for child research in the social sciences. Focusing on children's developing minds, psychology has committed to methods of investigation that provide a framework for explanations of children's nature and has indeed justified the concept of the naturalness of childhood itself. From the psychological perspective, childhood is a biologically determined stage on the path towards full human status, i.e., adulthood, of which the naturalness both governs and is governed by its universality. While children's interaction is not a locus of concern in this field, psychological research has largely identified the cognitive foundation for children's interactional competence.

According to Piaget (1926), whose groundbreaking work established the study of development as a major discipline in psychology, child development is a progressive reorganization of mental processes resulting from biological maturation and interaction with the physical world. Specifically, for Piaget, the notion of development entails a certain structure, consisting of a series of predetermined stages of intellectual growth that lead to the eventual achievement of cognitive competence. Taking a constructivist viewpoint, Piaget argued that within each developmental stage, children utilize the process of assimilation and accommodation to create a particular schema of physical and mental actions that govern their orientations to the world. It is through this universal sequence of mastering and transcending the schema at each stage that children acquire cognitive competence. For instance, one foundational domain of children's cognitive development is their knowledge of mental states, which centers around their theory of mind and perspective-taking. As demonstrated by the three mountains task (Piaget & Inhelder, 1956), Piaget stated that children in the preoperational stage, ranging from ages two to

seven, lack sufficient cognitive ability to adopt another person's viewpoint and thus are egocentric. It is until children reach the concrete operational stage, ranging from ages seven to 12, that they become capable of taking another person's perspective. Since Piaget's pioneering work, children's cognitive development, especially their understanding of the mind, has become a focal area of research in developmental psychology for the past several decades and has maintained its dominance in child research to date.

Notwithstanding Piaget's fundamental impact on developmental psychology, his theory has been challenged by critics who consider it to be "empirically wrong, epistemologically weak, and philosophically naïve" (Lourenço & Machado, 1996, p. 143). One of the most common criticisms of Piaget's theory is that it underestimates children's competence. Since the 1970s, empirical studies have demonstrated that Piagetian tasks tend to lead to false negative errors (see Gelman & Baillargeon, 1983), and this is, at least partly, due to the fact that Piaget assessed cognitive competence through the use of language, which in itself is a construct of cognitive competence (Siegel, 1978). Researchers therefore designed and conducted more child-friendly versions of those tasks and found children to be more competent than Piaget assumed. For instance, it has been established that, mainly through the use of false-belief tasks, children typically acquire representational theory of mind at around the age of four, capable of explaining and predicting another person's behaviors by reference to subjective mental states, such as beliefs and desires (Astington et al., 1988; Meltzoff & Gopnik, 1993; Wimmer & Permer, 1983). Even children as young as 18 months old are able to make inferences about another person's desires that are different from their own (Repacholi & Gopnik, 1997). Investigations on perspective-taking also demonstrate that children recognize that the content of what another person sees in a physical space may differ from what they see by the age of three and understand

how objects are presented from that other person's point of view at around four to five years of age (Falvell, 1986; Flavell et al., 1981). More recent studies suggest that such cognitive abilities emerge even earlier, within the first two years of children's life (Moll et al., 2014; Sodian et al., 2007).

Piaget's very idea of the universality of the developmental stages has also been challenged since his theory was founded on the grounds of his observations of his own three children (Lourenço & Machado, 1996). In addition, Piaget seemed to conceive the idea of child development in a social vacuum and neglect the role of social factors while his understanding of cognitive competence was particularly guided by principles of western logic (Broughton, 1981; Winegar & Valsiner, 1992). As Archard (1993) argued, "it is all too easy to cast children as cognitively incompetent when the standard of competence by which they are measured is both culturally specific and unrealised by many adults" (p. 94). Another common criticism of Piaget's theory is that it merely provides descriptions without explaining how or why transitions from stage to stage occur or accounting for individual differences in cognitive development (Brainerd, 1978; Cohen, 1983). To address the weaknesses of Piaget's theory, several psychologists, known as neo-Piagetian theorists, integrated Piaget's framework with other cognitive concepts to produce alternative models, such as Case's (1985) model of executive control structures and Fischer's (1980) skill theory. Among them, the most influential figure was Lev Vygotsky, whose work was first translated into English in 1962 and has had a major impact on psychology and education in western society since the late 1970s.

Vygotsky (1962, 1978) also took a constructivist perspective and deemed child development in terms of qualitative transformations rather than gradual growth increments. Nonetheless, he heavily stressed the importance of children's cultural background and social

interaction for development. As the first modern psychologist to suggest “a mechanism by which culture becomes a part of each person’s nature” (Introduction by Cole and Scribner to Vygotsky, 1978, p. 6), Vygotsky dissented from Piaget’s idea that children’s cognitive development necessarily precedes their acquisition of new competence. Rather, Vygotsky (1978) argued that development moves from the social level to the individual level:

Every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapersonal). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals. The transformation of an interpersonal process into an intrapersonal one is the result of a long series of developmental events. (p. 57)

For Vygotsky (1978), children develop cognitive and linguistic competence through their interactions with more knowledgeable others, whose instructional and scaffolding capabilities foster children’s advancement to reach the upper limit of the *zone of proximal development*, i.e., “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). That is, Vygotsky advocated for a framework for studying the relationship between individuals and their environment, and how that enables cognitive development.

Vygotsky’s sociocultural approach was adopted and made prominent by social interactionists who theorized children’s interaction with adults as a central part of language development. Bruner (1975, 1983), who laid the foundation of the social interactionist model of

language development, proposed that the developmental process relies on children's language acquisition support system, which refers to the social network that supports and scaffolds children's language development. In this tradition of social interactionist theory, studies of western middle-class mother-child dyadic interaction bloomed in the 1970s, which focused on documenting features of maternal interactional style (see Snow & Ferguson, 1977). For example, mothers often treat infants as having something to say even before they are able to produce any meaningful utterances (Trevvarthen, 1979). When talking to young children, mothers tend to use simplified, redundant speech which, as Snow (1972) argued, serves as a less confusing sample of speech for young language learners. Later research suggested that children indeed have a preference for this type of child-directed speech (Fernald, 1985). Since the 1970s, researchers have applied both observation-based and experimental methods to provide empirical evidence on the crucial role that social interaction plays in children's language development (e.g., Gopnik & Meltzoff, 1984, 1996; Kinzler et al., 2007; Kuhl et al., 2003; Saffran et al., 1996).

Another related line of research inspired by Vygotsky's emphasis on culture was developmental cultural psychology, a paradigm emerged in the late 1980s that examines how social practices of a particular set of cultures shape child development (Cole, 1996; Rogoff, 1990; Shweder, 1990; Wertsch, 1985). In this regard, development is conceptualized as "a process in which people transform through their ongoing participation in cultural activities which in turn contribute to changes in their cultural communities across generations" (Rogoff, 2003, p. 37). Developmental cultural psychologists highlight children's own agency in social learning, the process through which information and knowledge are acquired from others in a social context (Boyd & Richardson, 1985), such as learning by observing a model performing a given

behavior and the consequences of that behavior (Bandura, 1986). However, as Tomasello et al. (1993) pointed out, cultural psychologists tend to “focus almost exclusively on the important role of culture, neglecting for the most part what the individual organism brings to the process of enculturation” (p. 495).

In an effort to understand social learning in terms of children’s social cognitive capacity, Tomasello et al. (1993) proposed the notion of cultural learning, focusing on the vital role that perspective-taking plays both in the original learning process and in the resulting cognitive product. Cultural learning is different from social learning in the sense that, as the authors argued, children do not simply direct their attention to another person’s activity but rather attempt to see a situation from that person’s point of view. In this case, “the learner is attempting to learn not *from* another, but *through* another” (p. 496), and therefore, “the form of cultural learning that children are capable of engaging in depends on the form of social cognition they are capable of engaging in” (p. 502). Guided by this approach, Tomasello and his colleagues have conducted empirical studies that focus on children’s cognitive capacity that underpin their acquisition of interactional competence (e.g., Rossano et al., 2015; Tomasello, 2003, 2008; Tomasello et al., 2007). Given the empirical grounds it provides, this line of research has become influential in research on child interaction. However, since the focus of developmental psychology has been and is likely to continue to be children’s developing minds, interaction in itself is not a subject of interest from the psychological perspective. Rather, it is conceptualized simply as a vehicle through which the developmental changes take place.

1.1.2 Child socialization: the sociological perspective

The sociological thinking of children has been conventionally associated with theoretical work on socialization, which seeks to explain how social order is possible. In this tradition, childhood is conceptualized as a resource for understanding how individuals come to acquire norms that they rely on to maintain social order. Therefore, for a long time, children were not studied in their own right but rather were “marginalized in sociology because of their subordinate position in societies and in theoretical conceptualizations of childhood and socialization” (Corsaro, 2018, p. 6).

Child socialization, according to Durkheim (1956), is grounded in the consensus among members of a society about a certain set of social facts, including norms and values that inform their actions. To transmit norms and values to a society’s newcomers, as Durkheim suggested, adults voluntarily orient their educational actions toward the young generation, and such voluntary actions constitute what he called methodical socialization. For Durkheim, children are in a natural state of passivity, whereas adults are warranted by their experience and knowledge to assert their authority over children. Children’s passivity and adults’ authority both contribute to inducing children to accept what they are taught by the adults.

Building on Durkheim’s view, Parsons (1951) also conceptualized socialization as the normative integration into social order in a given society, and in this process, children are required to internalize socially shared expectations associated with certain roles. Nonetheless, unlike Durkheim, Parsons (1951) emphasized that both socializing agents and socializees need to be conceived as acting in roles in interaction for the mechanisms of socialization to operate, arguing that “it is only when this mutuality of interaction has been established that we may speak of the socialization process” (p.143). In addition, inspired by psychological theories, Parsons

highlighted the mechanism of personality and treated socialization as an essential link between personality and social structure. For Parsons, child socialization is crucial since, among the learned elements of personality, the most stable and enduring are the value-orientation patterns acquired in childhood. However, although Parsons (1951) recognized that “many features of the actual process of socialization of the child are obscure” (p.147), he and other sociologists of the time had little concern for the process through which children become socialized. Instead, they focused on what children are supposed to become, treating both the practice and the study of child socialization as inherently forward-looking (Inkeles, 1968).

By virtue of the decline of structural functionalism in the 1960s, functionalist accounts of socialization began to lose favor. Part of the criticism of socialization theories was that they uncritically absorbed psychological models and conceptualized socialization in a vague, muddled manner (Rafky, 1971). More importantly, the conventional view of socialization was deemed overly deterministic, adopting only the adult ideologies of children. As a result, “children as a phenomenon disappear, and sociologists reveal themselves as parents writing slightly abstract versions of their own or other children” (Mackay, 1973, p. 28).

As structural functionalism was partially replaced by more conflict-oriented approaches in the 1970s, reproductive theorists provided models that acknowledged the effect of social conflict and class inequality on child socialization (Bernstein, 1981; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). For example, Bourdieu (1977) proposed the notion of habitus, i.e., “systems of durable, transposable dispositions” (p. 72), to capture how members of a society come to act and see things in a certain way. For Bourdieu, socialization refers to a process of incorporating a set of predispositions, i.e., a habitus, through the continual and routine involvement in the social world. This process of incorporation can be considered as a mechanism of social control leading to

reproduction and maintenance of social order. In contrast to traditional socialization theories, reproductive models portray children in a more active light, yet they still tend to undermine children's involvement in cultural reproduction in their everyday life, in particular in peer cultures (Corsaro, 2018).

Around the same time, with the leverage of Vygotsky's constructive view in developmental psychology, children as active agents became the dominant view in child research. Psychology, as previously discussed, takes a very different approach to children with an exclusive focus on their developing minds. Therefore, while social theories drew on the insights of Vygotsky in their quest for formulating a more child-centered perspective (Connolly, 1998; Corsaro & Fingerson, 2003; Tudge, 2008), they "must break free from the individualistic doctrine that regards children's social development solely as the child's private internalization" (Corsaro, 2018, p. 18).

During the late 1980s, a new paradigm for the sociological study of childhood — "the new sociology of childhood" (Corsaro & Fingerson, 2003, p. 129) — emerged and has engendered increasing academic attention on children (Corsaro, 1986, 1992; James et al., 1998; James & Prout, 1997; Qvortrup, 1994; Thorne, 1993). Within this paradigm, sociologists conceptualize childhood as a social construction that provides an interpretive frame for understanding children as important members and contributing agents of society rather than pro-social objects of socialization (see Kehily, 2009; Mayall, 2013; Qvortrup et al., 2009; Wyness, 2006). Children are thus realized "as constituted socially, as a status of person which is comprised through a series of, often heterogeneous, images, representations, codes, and constructs" (Jenks, 2008, p.78). The idea of socialization was problematized given its forward-looking, individualistic connotations. To replace the term and the concept of socialization,

researchers have proposed interpretive models with a focus on children in their own right rather than the adults they will become (Corsaro & Fingerson, 2003). Although sociologists still draw on the term and the concept of socialization (e.g., James, 2013), the locus of concern is primarily children's social relationships and cultures.

1.1.3 Language acquisition: the linguistic perspective

In the 1960s, linguistics began to rise as part of intellectual movements in the social and human sciences, such as the linguistic turn in philosophy (Rorty, 1967). Linguistics has a specific interest in children for how they come to acquire a language. While this interest in language acquisition largely overlaps with psychological research on language development, linguists are less concerned about children's cognitive capacity and development. Rather, their focus is the acquisition of structures and rules of languages, including phonemes, morphology, and syntax.

A major debate in understanding language acquisition lies in the source of linguistic competence, which can be characterized by the opposing positions of Piagetian constructivism and Chomskyan nativism (see Piattelli-Palmarini, 1980). Piaget's view of child development as a continuous set of qualitative transformations has been illustrated in Section 1.1.1. According to Piaget, in the sensorimotor stage, which extends from birth to approximately two years of age, children progressively construct their understandings of the world by assimilating and accommodating information gained from their interactions with the physical environment; the internalized structures then provide the foundation for language development. Chomsky (1965), however, argued that the brain, like any other human organ, matures rather than learns, and thus rejected the view that children's cognitive competence undergoes transformations based on

environmental input. To acquire a language, children must rely on innate language-specific structures and mechanisms. Following this debate, research on language acquisition has explored whether the source of linguistic competence is located in innate structures, derived as a product of environmental input, or some combination of both (see Clark, 2003; Pinker, 1984; Snow, 1995).

Under Chomsky's enormous influence, the field of developmental linguistics was dominated by the study of syntax in the 1960s with a focus on young children's grammatical competence (Bloom, 1970; Brown et al., 1968; Slobin, 1969). Later in the 1970s, as Chomsky's theories faced challenges from alternative paradigms (e.g., Lakoff, 1971), empirical research within developmental linguistics began to broaden its investigation into areas other than the form of the language, such as semantics and pragmatics. Also inspired by Vygotsky's emphasis on interaction, child discourse (Ervin-Tripp & Mitchell-Kernan, 1977) and developmental pragmatics (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1979) became focal areas of the study of child language. In particular, Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson's (1974) model of turn-taking in adult conversation offered a new analytic framework for research on children's turn-taking (Ervin-Tripp, 1979; Gallagher, 1981; Garvey & Berninger, 1981; Shatz, 1979).

Developmental pragmatics, however, soon lost ground in linguistics. With the radical advancement of cognitive neuroscience and computer power since the 1980s, linguistic research on language form has regained its dominance. Neurological and computational models have been applied to provide evidence of language acquisition, ranging from phonetic perception to the processing of syntactic structures (e.g., Elman, 1993; Elman, et al, 1996; Kuhl, 2010; Meltzoff et al., 2009). Even though there is a rather recent resurgence of psycholinguistic interest in children's turn-taking (Casillas, 2014; Donnelly & Kidd, 2021; Hilbrink et al., 2015;

Holler et al., 2016; Wilson & Wilson, 2005), the academic interest in pragmatic competence has mainly shifted to other disciplines, such as applied linguistics (e.g., Kasper & Rose, 2002) and Conversation Analysis (e.g., Forrester, 2014).

1.1.4 Language socialization: the linguistic anthropological perspective

When linguistics arose in the 1960s, linguistic anthropologists began to examine verbal resources as a critical component of research into the cultural and social world. Gumperz and Hymes (1964) first proposed the approach of the ethnography of communication, of which the central aim is to take into account language use and face-to-face communication of ordinary people within a cultural and social context. While the importance of linguistic phenomena in the ethnographic perspective was long recognized, Hymes (1964) pointed out that “it is not linguistics, but ethnography — not language, but communication — which must provide the frame of reference within which the place of language in culture and society is to be described” (p. 3). Similarly, emphasizing the interactional aspect of language, Gumperz (1968) problematized the notion of linguistic community and suggested that the unit of analysis should rather be speech community, and that is, “any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language usage” (p. 381). Such endeavors inspired field investigations of a given speech community’s repertoire of communicative forms and functions. They also provided an agenda for studying children’s language acquisition with the notion of *communicative competence* (Hymes, 1972; Slobin, 1967), which, in addition to linguistic competence, encompassed sociocultural knowledge necessary for members of a speech community to use language in a socially appropriate manner.

Informed by both psycholinguistic and linguistic anthropological approaches to children's language development, Schieffelin (1985) and Ochs (1985) documented young children's spontaneous language use when conducting their fieldwork in Papua New Guinea and Samoa, respectively, and investigated the sociocultural ecology of children, including social order and practices that govern children's world. One major observation from their longitudinal fieldwork was that the well-established baby talk register in western society, characterized by linguistic simplifications and clarifications (Cross, 1977; Snow, 1972), was not used when Kaluli and Samoan caregivers communicate with young children. As parental practices were shown to be structured and organized by cultural expectations related to children's incompetence, the sociocultural environment of children's communicative practices was of critical importance. Since this aspect was mostly glossed over in psycholinguistic and anthropological studies, Schieffelin and Ochs (1986) bridged the notions of language acquisition and socialization and jointly proposed the theoretical framework of *language socialization*, which involved two aspects of socialization: "socialization through the use of language and socialization to use language" (p. 163).

This framework of language socialization has generated a strand of research on spontaneous, everyday parent-child interaction, which examines language use in interaction and how such language use relates to the larger cultural contexts (see Duff & Hornberger, 2008; Duranti et al., 2012). Although studies in language socialization begin with observations about parental practices, researchers have come to conceive socialization as mutual efforts of all those who participate in everyday practices, describing socialization as a "mutual apprenticeship" (Pontecorvo et al., 2001, p.340). Investigations of children's peer interaction also offer illustrations of how children construct their peer culture and serve as the agents of their own

socialization (e.g., Goodwin, 1990; Goodwin & Kyratzis, 2007), which parallels the new paradigm in sociology that focuses on children's own culture (Corsaro, 1986). These empirical studies not only extend the interest in socialization that lost support in sociology but also shed new light on the process through which child socialization is done in everyday life. However, in this tradition, the sequential organization of social interaction is not treated as a site of inquiry in its own right. To further explore the organization of child interaction, a methodology for a systematic approach to interaction is needed.

1.1.5 Conversation Analysis: the interactional perspective

A unified theory of social interaction and a unique methodology for a systematic approach to the details of interactional organization, Conversation Analysis (CA) has established itself as a theoretical and empirical endeavor within the social sciences. This field emerged in the 1960s at the intersection of the perspectives of Erving Goffman and Harold Garfinkel, who dissented from the widely accepted view within sociology of the time that the details of the everyday world are an inherently disorderly mess, and thus attempts to conduct a systematic analysis of ordinary interaction would only be a waste of time (see Heritage, 2001). Goffman (1955, 1983) established that social interaction as a form of social organization is analytically viable in its own right. Much of his work dealt with the parameters of interaction order, which comprises a complex set of interactional rights and obligations associated with *face*; that is, individuals' immediate claims about who they are in interaction with others (Goffman, 1955). From Goffman, CA took the idea that talk-in-interaction is an autonomous domain that can be studied as an institutional entity on its own.

Garfinkel (1967), on the other hand, argued that human interaction and institutions are constructed based on the fact that individuals are able to make shared sense of their circumstances and act on such shared sense in everyday life. His project to investigate the shared methods of practical reasoning is *ethnomethodology*, the study of “the body of common-sense knowledge and the range of procedures and considerations by means of which the ordinary members of society make sense of, find their way about in, and act on the circumstances in which they find themselves” (Heritage, 1984b, p. 4). For Garfinkel, ordinary social behavior is a matter of accountable moral choice, and socialization is the process through which actors acquire a body of normatively organized knowledge that allows them to treat their own and one another’s conduct as norm-guided and thus accountable. Such common-sense knowledge is mainly gained through mundane conversational exchanges, which also rests upon the reflexive ethnomethods, since it is the order of interaction through which children are first exposed to the social world.

While Goffman and Garfinkel both formalize the importance of social interaction as a site of order, neither of them offered a clear direction or empirical tools for analyzing interaction. Yet, their work laid the foundation of a new space within sociology in which the analysis of social action could be developed. Harvey Sacks (1967) and Emanuel Schegloff (1968) took up the notion that language as a vehicle for social action can be studied in its concrete particulars and integrated the separate works of Goffman and Garfinkel to form CA (see Heritage, 2001; Maynard, 2013). As an inductive qualitative method, CA seeks to identify and describe structures that underlie social interaction through detailed, case-by-case analyses at the micro-level which lead to generalizations across cases and “works from raw data to noticings of

patterns using a combination of distributional regularities, commonalities in context of use, participant orientations and deviant case analysis” (Stivers & Sidnell, 2013, p.2).

1.1.6 CA research on children

The CA approach to childhood research was initiated by Sacks. In his lectures, Sacks (1992) frequently drew on his observations about children’s activities as a resource for analyzing and evidencing the robustness of interaction and cultural organization. In particular, Sacks repeatedly reflected on the socialization problem, i.e., *how does a child learn to grasp social order?* Given the overwhelmingly detailed nature of social order, child socialization can be complex and difficult to achieve. However, Sacks (1992) observed that

any Member encountering from his infancy a very small portion of it, and a random portion in a way (the parents he happens to have, the experiences he happens to have, the vocabulary that happens to be thrown at him in whatever sentences he happens to get) comes out in many ways pretty much like everybody else, and able to deal with pretty much anyone else. (Vol 1, p. 485)

This observation parallels Chomsky’s (1980) *poverty of the stimulus* argument, which concerned the enormous gap between the highly limited linguistic stimuli to which children are exposed and the full linguistic knowledge they attain. To account for the gap, Chomsky proposed the nativist theory of universal grammar since, he argued, language structures could not possibly be induced from the degenerate language input. Sacks (1992), however, posed an alternative by treating culture, including language, as organized on the basis of “order at all points” (p. 484). That is, social order is manifested at aggregate levels and therefore is subject to an overall differential distribution, and it is also manifested at detailed levels on a case by case, environment by

environment basis. In this regard, interaction as a site of massive organization and order is robust enough to permit children who encounter a very limited environment to undergo socialization into a common set of cultural and interactional practices. What this view projects is the need for an account of culture as an apparatus for generating recognizable actions, and the acquisition of culture in interaction.

In conceptualizing childhood, Sacks focused on the rights, obligations, and accountability associated with membership. On the notion of *member*, Garfinkel and Sacks (1970) argued that it does not refer to individuals but rather “mastery of natural language;” that is, being understood by others as “engaged in the objective production and objective display of commonsense knowledge of everyday activities as observable and reportable phenomena” (p. 342). The boundary of the observable-reportable phenomena related to membership can be made visible through the concept of imitation. As Sacks (1992) pointed out, behaviors are seen as imitations when they are performed by individuals who do not have the right to perform such behaviors. Therefore, without full membership rights, children can *imitate* what adults do, but they cannot *do* these things in the sense that adults can do, and accounts that are normally applied to adults are not always applicable to them.

Children’s restricted membership rights are manifested in their interaction with adults. For instance, Sacks (1992) noted that young children regularly use pre-announcements, namely the question “you know what?” and its variants, as a practice to gain a turn in conversations with adults. By eliciting a go-ahead (Schegloff, 2007b) in the form of “what?” from adults, children are reciprocally given the opportunity to say what they planned to say in the first place “not on [their] own say-so, but under obligation” (p.256). Although children’s use of “you know what?” suggests that they can and do develop sophisticated strategies to overcome interactional

constraints, this practice nonetheless highlights children's status as having restricted rights to talk as well as their awareness of such limited rights. In this regard, the interactional construction of childhood is associated with restricted rights, obligations, and accountability as opposed to adulthood. As Watson (1992) summarized,

Ethnomethodologists and conversation analysts see 'adulthood' and 'childhood' not so much as straightforward substantive phenomena but in terms of arrays of procedural conventions which are oriented to by interactants and which furnish resources in the interaction — conventions which, indeed, assume and reproduce asymmetries between adults and children. (p. 265)

Given that the traditional arena of CA has been ordinary adult conversation, after Sacks, child interaction did not receive much attention until fairly recently. As previously mentioned, the work of Sacks et al. (1974) on adult turn-taking model engendered a lively interest in children's turn-taking as a contrast case to adults from the late 1970s to early 1980s (Ervin-Tripp, 1979; Gallagher, 1981; Garvey & Berninger, 1981; Shatz, 1979), but the interest waned quickly. Following that, although some studies applied the concepts of CA or combined CA with other methods to examine child interaction (e.g., Goodwin, 1982, 1990; Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987), systematic use of CA as a methodology to examine child interaction had yet to be formalized until Anthony Wootton.

By analyzing the forms and sequential positions of young children's requests, Wootton (1997) demonstrated how children take account of and make displays of their intersubjective understanding in the sequential unfolding of turns-at-talk. In his view, it is from learning how to utilize shared understandings that children's social and cultural awareness is constructed. The acquisition of shared understanding requires cognitive underpinnings, such as joint attention

(Bruner, 1983) and perspective taking (Piaget, 1948), and the display of it requires linguistic competence. However, Wootton took the approach to set aside issues within the cognitive domain that might bear on a complete developmental explanation and instead highlighted the details of local conversational contexts. Focusing on the sense-making practices, Wootton's analysis exemplifies what Forrester (2010) calls "ethnomethodologically informed" CA of child interaction (p. 45).

While Wootton's work provides a direction for understanding child socialization by examining local sequences of action in adult-child interaction, subsequent child-focused CA studies are less interested in children's orientation to or approximation of adult interactional norms since it "potentially detracts from, or is otherwise a different project from, one that considers children's interaction as its own object of inquiry" (Kidwell, 2013, p. 516). In this regard, current studies primarily focus on what Forrester (2010) calls "developmentally informed" CA (p. 45); that is, CA is employed as a methodology to map out children's interactional skills with respect to certain conversational practices. For instance, practices surrounding repair sequences in child interaction have received substantial attention, including both children's self-repair (Corrin, 2010; Filipi, 2009; Forrester, 2008; Forrester & Cherington, 2009; Laakso, 2010; Morgenstern et al., 2013) and initiation of other-repair (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2021; Searles & Barriage, 2018; Sidnell, 2010; Wootton, 1994). Other areas in child interaction that stand out as having attracted considerable CA interest include preference organization (Church, 2016; Filipi & Wales, 2010; Hepburn, 2020; Keel, 2016) and turn-taking (Filipi, 2009; Forrester, 2013; Stivers et al., 2018; Wells & Corrin, 2004).

With the emphasis on "developmentally informed" CA (Forrester, 2010), contemporary child-focused CA studies have contributed to our understanding of children's interactional

practices and, in particular, the development of their interactional competence. However, children's status as conversation participants, which is associated with their interactional rights and obligations, remains largely underexplored. The few studies that addressed children's status in interaction mainly focused on their participation rights in institutional settings, such as in classrooms (Church & Bateman, 2019; Houen et al., 2016) and medical encounters (O'Reilly, 2006; Stivers, 2001). In the domain of ordinary interaction, in light of Sacks' observation of children's limited "speak-at-any-time membership rights" (Forrester, 2010, p. 47), existing empirical research is mostly restricted to children's attempts to engage in interactions with adults, examining their practices of summonses and pre-announcements (Butler & Wilkinson, 2013; Eilittä et al., 2021; but see Forrester, 2010).

As the interactional construction of childhood is virtually overlooked in existing ordinary CA research, this dissertation takes the "ethnomethodologically informed" approach and fills this gap by examining interactional practices through which "participant members themselves orient towards the host of constructs, ideas, and social practices associated with the social object *development, childhood, or stage-of-life*" (Forrester, 2010, p. 45). Specifically, this dissertation identifies and analyzes how children's restricted rights and obligations constitute *childhood* and how they are treated as such by adults in everyday interaction.

1.2 DATA AND METHOD

1.2.1 Dataset

The dataset for this dissertation consists of approximately 33 hours of video-recorded adult-child interactions from eight families with at least one child under the age of six. The age range was selected because this is the main stage during which children develop their

interactional competence. The interactions were video-recorded when the families were engaged in everyday activities at home, such as having meals, reading books, and playing games.

The characteristics of the video data are outlined in Table 1 below. Among the eight families, four reside in the United States. Family #1 and Family #3 are almost exclusively English-speaking although the mothers are Taiwanese Americans who speak some Mandarin as their heritage language. Both parents of Family #2 and Family #4 are Taiwanese Americans and speak both English and Mandarin at home. The other four families reside in Taiwan and are all monolingual Mandarin-speaking. All the interactions involved children and their parents, and on many occasions, other adults such as grandparents, relatives, and family friends also participated. All data were collected with participants’ informed consent. Regarding child participants, their legal guardians’ informed consent was obtained.

Table 1 depicts the information on the location (the US or Taiwan), participants, language(s) used in interaction, and the length of recording time. For child participants, names (pseudonyms) and ages are presented, whereas adult participants are listed in terms of their relationships with the child. Families #1, #5, #6, #7, and #8 participated in more than one recording session, and the time interval between each session is reflected in the age of the child.

Table 1: Video data characteristics

Family#	Participants	Language(s)	Time
1 (US)	Zoey: 3y5m Riley: 1y5m Mom, Dad, aunt	English	70 mins
	Zoey: 4y2m Riley: 2y2m Mom, Dad, Grandpa, Grandma, uncle, aunt	English	97 mins
	Zoey: 4y9m Riley: 2y9m Mom, Dad, Grandpa, Grandma, aunt	English	185 mins
2 (US)	Ethan: 6y3m	English/Mandarin	549 mins

	Brandon: 2y10m Mom, Dad, nanny, aunt		
3 (US)	James: 2y4m Mom, Dad	English	115 mins
4 (US)	Hanna: 3y2m Maddie: 3m Mom, Dad, friend	English/Mandarin	84 mins
5 (TW)	Ran: 6y2m Jia: 2y9m Mom, Dad, friend	Mandarin	184 mins
	Ran: 7y11m Jia: 4y5m Hua (cousin): 11y3m Mom, Dad, friend	Mandarin	128 mins
6 (TW)	Yun: 7y11m Ning: 6y Mom, Dad, friend	Mandarin	37 mins
	Yun: 9y8m Ning: 7y9m Kai (cousin): 9y6m Mom, Dad, friend	Mandarin	106 mins
7 (TW)	Lei: 2y2m Shin: 2y2m Mom, Dad	Mandarin	112 mins
	Lei: 2y11m Shin: 2y11m Mom, Dad	Mandarin	150 mins
8 (TW)	Dan: 1y5m Mom, Grandma, Grandpa	Mandarin	82 mins
	Dan: 2y2m Mom, Grandma	Mandarin	109 mins

1.2.2 Method

This dissertation is guided by the principles of CA (see Sidnell & Stivers, 2013). As a qualitative method, CA offers a theoretical framework and a set of systematic procedures for the grounded exploration of what children and adults orient to concerning interactional rights and obligations in their conversations. To identify specific interactional practices through which participants' orientations are manifested, I rely on case-by-case analyses of utterances in their explicit sequential positions and interactional contexts, which lead to generalization across cases.

I initially examined the data to look for possible cultural differences between data collected in the US and that collected in Taiwan. Prior cross-cultural research on parenting styles has indicated that Taiwanese parents, under the influence of Confucianism, are more likely than their US counterparts to adopt an authoritarian parenting style and assert more control over their children's behaviors (Chao, 1994). Some aspects of parental beliefs and practices, such as the emphasis on filial piety (Chao, 2000), shaming (Fung, 1999), and politeness (Gu, 1990), also shape child socialization in Chinese culture as distinctive from western cultures. Given these findings, a hypothesis I initially formed was that Taiwanese parents would be more likely to highlight parental authority in everyday interaction, which would be manifested in practices that restrict children's rights to autonomy to a greater extent, such as allowing children less space to participate, asserting epistemic primacy more aggressively, and correcting children's violations of norms more explicitly and harshly. However, the analysis reveals no systematic difference in these aspects between the US data and Taiwanese data. For this reason, the data are presented together as a single set.

1.2.3 Transcripts

Throughout the dissertation, extracts are transcribed according to standard CA transcription conventions originally developed by Gail Jefferson (Hepburn & Bolden, 2013; Jefferson, 2004) (see Appendix I). For Mandarin data, four-line transcripts consisting of original utterances, transliterations, linguistic glosses, and idiomatic English translations are presented. The age of the child participant is listed in years and months in the extract headers of all transcripts. Focal turns are indicated with arrows in the margins.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE DISSERTATION

At the heart of this dissertation is children's status in social interaction, in which their asymmetric relationship with adults plays a crucial role. Taking the ethnomethodological and conversation analytical approach, this dissertation examines the collections of conventions that are oriented to by participants that establish and reinforce such asymmetry in social interaction. Specifically, I focus on children's restricted rights to autonomy — in modern society, childhood is predominately viewed as a time of innocence (Fass, 2013; Jenks, 1996), during which children are seen as “lacking responsibility, having rights to protection and training but not to autonomy” (Ennew, 1986, p. 21). While members' displays of commonsense knowledge are, as previously discussed, closely linked to the mastery of language, children's membership status is not solely determined by their conversational skills. It is also characterized by their limited rights to claim autonomy as interaction participants. In this dissertation, I illustrate children's status as not-yet-fully-autonomous interaction participants with respect to engaging in conversations with adults (Chapter 2) and asserting epistemic rights (Chapter 3), and parents' status as having the privileged rights and primary responsibilities over their children (Chapter 4).

1.3.1 Chapter 2

In Chapter 2, I begin my investigation with children's participation rights and obligations in everyday adult-child interaction. In contrast to existing ordinary CA research focused on children's initiating practices (e.g., summonses, pre-announcements, and questions), this chapter addresses children's status as selected next speakers in question-answer sequences. This particular sequential environment is well-fitted for exploring children's rights and obligations on two grounds: 1) The interactional norm regarding question-answer sequences, including rights

and obligations, is well-established. As Sacks et al. (1974) argued, when a next speaker is selected to answer a question, “the party so selected has the right and is obliged to take next turn to speak; no others have such rights or obligations” (p. 704). In this regard, when adults select children to answer information-seeking questions, they not only orient to children’s epistemic status as in the knowing position with respect to the requested information (see Heritage, 2013) but also effectively validate children’s rights and obligations to answer. 2) Question-answer sequences are common in adult-child conversations as they are constantly employed by adults to engage children in interaction (Filipi, 2009; Kaye & Charney, 1980).

In this chapter, I focus on question-answer sequences in which the selected child does not respond in a timely or adequate manner. Such delays and troubles in responding evoke a tension between child participation, which is essential for children’s interactional autonomy, and the preference for progressivity (Schegloff, 1979, 2007b), which normally applies to conversations among adults. The analysis examines how co-present, non-selected adults balance between facilitating child participation and advancing progressivity, and the findings suggest that they tend to manage this balance by prioritizing child participation over progressivity. This ordering of preferences in adult-child interaction is in contrast with previous findings in adult conversation, where non-selected speakers typically treat it as preferable to further the progress of sequence and answer on behalf of selected speakers (Stivers & Robinson, 2006). In other words, adults perform actions that would otherwise be deemed violating interactional norms in order to safeguard children’s rights and reinforce their responsibilities to participate in interaction. The fact that extra work is needed and taken to ensure child participation suggests that the status of being a child is indeed associated with restricted rights and responsibilities in

interaction. It is through this special treatment orienting to children's rights and responsibilities that their status *as children* is constructed in social interaction.

1.3.2 Chapter 3

Chapter 3 examines children's status vis-à-vis their parents in asserting epistemic rights. Given that prior theoretical and empirical work in EM/CA tended to conceptualize membership in terms of the mastery of interactional competence (Forrester, 2010) and participation rights (Sacks, 1992), children's membership in relation to their epistemic rights in interaction has yet to be examined empirically and systematically. That is, adults, as full members, are generally considered as having primary rights to know and describe themselves, yet children, as "less-than-full" members (Shakespeare, 1998, p. 24), are not always treated as having primary access to and sole authority over matters within their own epistemic domain.

Focusing on *epistemic primacy* in parent-child interaction, i.e., the relative rights of parents and children to access, assert, or assess a given matter (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Stivers et al., 2011), Chapter 3 shows that parents regularly claim epistemic primacy over children for matters that, based on adult norms of social interaction, should be unequivocally presupposed within children's primary epistemic domain. In particular, the analysis documents two forms of evidence: 1) parents consistently confirm or disconfirm children's asserted claims about their own thoughts, feelings, or experiences; 2) parents consistently use test questions to request information within children's domain and then evaluate their answers as correct or incorrect. These practices illustrate how participant members, in this case, parents, orient towards the constructs, ideas, and interactional practices associated with childhood in the course of everyday interaction at a fine-grained level of detail. That is, childhood is partly constructed

through treating children as having reduced epistemic primacy over matters normally within a speaker's primary epistemic domain.

1.3.3 Chapter 4

Following the exploration of the asymmetrical relationship between children and their parents, Chapter 4 concerns the interactional construction of parenthood. Since the status of being a parent is normally determined by a natural relationship with the child, the construction of parenthood is contingent on and interrelated with the construction of childhood. That is, whereas children are typically treated as having limited rights and responsibilities, parents are oriented to as having privileged rights and primary responsibilities over matters related to their children.

Drawing on multiparty interactions involving parents, children, and third-party interlocutors (e.g., friends, relatives, other children, etc.), this chapter investigates practices through which parental rights and responsibilities are exercised, acknowledged, and sustained. Since previous research on parent-child relations tended to focus on children as the objects of parental authority, this chapter specifically addresses how third-party interlocutors orient to parents' rights and responsibilities. Three types of parental practices are identified in the analysis, each of which concerns a norm regarding interactional rights: 1) acting on behalf of the child when the child is otherwise able to act on their own behalf, 2) acting on behalf of an interlocutor when the interlocutor is otherwise able to act on their own behalf, and 3) correcting the child's violation of a social norm when a third-party interlocutor has the right to sanction the violation by virtue of their interactional role. These practices are marked in ordinary adult conversations, yet parents are treated as having the rights and responsibilities to legitimately perform these actions in this context.

According to Sacks (1992), culture as an apparatus for generating recognizable actions allows us to make sense of the *parent* membership and its category-bound activities. Parental conduct is thus not universally prescribed but rather varied across different cultures. This chapter illustrates how the status of being a parent provides for the rights and responsibilities regarding the focal three practices. The parents are not prescribed to perform these actions, yet they legitimately do so, and this is how they and other interaction participants co-construct parenthood in the Taiwanese and American societies from which the data are drawn.

CHAPTER 2

SOCIALIZING INTERACTIONAL AUTONOMY:

PRIORITIZING CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION OVER INTERACTION PROGRESSION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Children's conversations with adults are individually-tailored vehicles for learning about language and the social world. To become fully competent participants in conversation, children must learn to speak both grammatically and pragmatically (Clark, 2003). For instance, children need to learn to manage turn-taking in collaboration with their interlocutors, which involves their responsive actions and their timing in taking turns. While existing research has dealt with children's emerging interactional competence in turn-taking (Clark, 2003; Ervin-Tripp, 1979; Filipi, 2009; Forrester, 2013; Hilbrink et al., 2015; Holler et al., 2016; Stivers et al., 2018; Wootton, 1997; see Casillas, 2014), the deliberate processes through which adults socialize children into active participation in conversation deserve further attention. In particular, children are socialized not only into when to respond but also how they should respond when they are faced with a question. This chapter investigates adults' socializing practices concerning question-answer sequences in everyday adult-child conversation.

As young as the age of two, children appear to understand response relevance and sequential expectations in interaction (Ervin-Tripp, 1979; Kidwell & Zimmerman, 2007; Wootton, 2007, 2010). Nonetheless, to grasp turn-taking skills, children still need to learn to effectively project the completion of a given action (e.g., question) and plan their responses to deliver them in a timely manner. According to Stivers et al. (2018), children by the age of eight still respond to questions less often and with longer delays than adults. Their responses also

display a lack of reflexive awareness of conversational norms, such as the preference for answer responses (Clayman, 2002; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973; Stivers & Robinson, 2006). Therefore, when adults select children in question-answer sequences, children's delays and troubles in responding may lead to a tension between child participation, which is essential for children's interactional autonomy, and the preference for progressivity, which normally applies to conversations among adults. Drawing on everyday adult-child conversational data, this chapter examines this tension and shows that adults tend to prioritize child participation over sequence progressivity when these two preferences cannot be achieved at the same time. This pattern is in contrast with previous findings in adult conversation.

In the next section, I review existing literature on adult conversational norms that are relevant to turn-taking organization, including the preference for selected next speakers to take the next turn (Sacks et al., 1974), the preference for progressivity (Schegloff, 1979, 2007b), and the preference for self-repair over other-repair (Schegloff et al., 1977), and discuss how these norms relate to conversations with children. I then investigate questions that select children with a focus on instances in which the selected child does not respond in a timely or proper manner and analyze how co-present, non-selected adults balance between advancing progressivity and facilitating child participation. The analysis provides empirical evidence of the ways adults prioritize child participation and socialize children to become autonomous, responsive interactants in conversation.

2.1.1 Preference for selected speakers to take the next turn

In multiparty interaction, most questions select a next speaker by address terms (Sacks et al., 1974), epistemicity (Lerner, 2003; Stivers & Rossano, 2010), or embodied behaviors such as

gaze, body orientation, and pointing gesture (Blythe et al., 2018). When a next speaker is selected, “the party so selected has the right and is obliged to take next turn to speak; no others have such rights or obligations” (Sacks et al., 1974, p. 704). Selected next speakers display an orientation to this turn allocation rule as they overwhelmingly respond to questions even when they are not able to provide an answer (Stivers & Robinson, 2006). Non-selected recipients, namely interactants who participate in the ongoing sequence but are not selected to respond, also orient to this norm by withholding their responses at the transition relevance place (TRP) (Sacks, et al., 1974) even when they are otherwise able to answer the question (Stivers & Robinson, 2006). Once selected next speakers take the turn, they effectively own it. At the occurrence of a trouble source, other participants typically do not initiate repair until the ongoing turn is recognizably completed (Schegloff et al., 1977), thus deferring to the speakers’ primary rights to the turn space.

The rights and obligations associated with next-speaker selection are treated as relevant to adult-child conversation as well. For adult questioners, selecting a child to answer a question is simultaneously validating the selected child’s right as well as obligation to take the next turn. In particular, since young children are not always sophisticated in responding to questions, selecting a child to answer an information-seeking question rather than selecting another adult suggests that obtaining a satisfactory answer is subordinated to encouraging child participation in this context. For instance, in pediatric encounters involving physicians, children, and parents, physicians frequently select children rather than their parents to answer questions (Stivers, 2001). In so doing, physicians effectively validate children’s status as the patients and their orientation to the role that they are “*able, allowed, and, in the future, obliged* to play in their own healthcare” (Stivers, 2012, p. 261).

2.1.2 Preference for progressivity

The preference for progressivity is concerned with the imperative for speakers to progress to the next item, whether it is the next sound in a word, the next word in a turn constructional unit, or the next turn in a sequence (Schegloff, 1979, 2007b). At the level of turn construction, while speakers sometimes pause or self-repair within their own turns, there is still an orientation to progressivity such that silence is tolerated only to a certain extent (Jefferson, 1989), and each repair initiation and solution works to further the production of the turn (Schegloff, 1979; see also Heritage, 2007). Evidence also suggests that conversation participants generally refrain from intervening in a speaker's turn and tend to produce the next turn at or near a possible completion point, although this sometimes results in overlapping talk (Jefferson, 1986). At the sequence level, when a question is posed, an answer which aligns with the action sequence is preferred over the alternative of no response or a non-answer response given that an answer allows for sequence progression and activity accomplishment (Clayman, 2002; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973; Stivers & Robinson, 2006).

The preference for sequence and activity progressivity is evident when the preference for answers competes with the preference for selected next speakers to respond. Stivers and Robinson (2006) explored the ordering of these two preferences when a selected next speaker fails to respond at the TRP. Their findings suggest that among adults, the preference for answers is normally prioritized over the preference for a response by the selected speaker. When an answer is due but absent, non-selected recipients regularly provide an answer when they can and thereby advance the progress of the sequence rather than delay progressivity in favor of further prioritizing the selected speaker's right to respond.

The tension between progressivity and the selected speaker's right to respond is also observed in pediatric encounters when children are selected to answer physicians' questions but do not respond immediately. Stivers (2001) documented that parents typically treat it as preferable to further the progress of sequence and answer on behalf of their children. Although some parents pursue responses from the selected children, overall, parents do not compromise progressivity in favor of children's rights to respond as selected speakers in pediatric interaction, which is similar to the pattern identified in ordinary adult conversation. This prioritization can be accounted for by the institutional context, in which all participants work toward a specific goal, namely getting the child patient's illness treated. Since problem presentation is essential for achieving this cooperative goal, the activity of obtaining medically relevant information takes priority over child participation.

While the pressure of an institutional encounter might tip the scales of adults toward progressivity over child participation, everyday adult-child conversation tends to be child-focused, and thus the ordering of preferences is likely to differ from the pattern observed in pediatric encounters. How adults balance between the preference for progressivity and child participation in everyday conversation will be examined in the analysis.

2.1.3 Preference for self-repair

In ordinary adult conversation, there is an overwhelming preference for self-repair over other-repair, i.e., speakers of a trouble source generally correct it themselves (Schegloff et al., 1977). This preference can be accounted for by the organization of repair: 1) opportunities for self-initiation come before opportunities for others to intervene, 2) both same-turn and transition-space opportunities for repair initiation are taken by speakers of the trouble source, and 3) both

self- and other-initiations yield self-repair (Schegloff et al., 1977). From the social perspective, other-repair is often used and understood as a disagreement-implicative action (Pomerantz, 1984a) and thus can be face-threatening (Brown & Levinson, 1987; but see Robinson, 2006). Given the preference for self-repair, other repair initiations in adult conversation are normally withheld a bit beyond the completion of a trouble source turn to provide an extra opportunity for self-repair (Schegloff et al., 1977).

Adult-child interaction is by no means an exception to the preference for self-repair. From early on, self-repair occurs more often than other-repair in children's talk (Forrester, 2008) and the ratio continues to increase over time (Morgenstern et al., 2013). Even when adults initiate repairs on children's talk, they usually target linguistic features rather than the substance of children's talk, refraining from correcting children's meaningful contributions in interaction (Laakso, 2010). Nonetheless, even though correcting the substance of children's talk might undermine children's interactional autonomy, other-correction is still inevitable in interaction with young children who are not always capable of performing the correction themselves (Laakso, 2010; Norrick, 1991). In this regard, other-correction also serves as a vehicle of socialization for children "who are still learning and being taught to operate with a system which requires, for its routine operation, that they be adequate self-monitors and self-correctors as a condition of competence" (Schegloff et al., 1977, p. 381).

The basic position in which other-repairs are initiated in adult conversation is the turn following the trouble source turn (Schegloff et al., 1977). Only in rare cases are other-initiations of repair found past the next-turn position, such as multiple tries at already initiated repair sequences or extended turns in progress (Schegloff, 2000). Yet, Wong (2000) identified that non-native speakers recurrently initiate repair on the talk of their native interlocutors later than

the basic position, which stalls the progressivity as it revisits a prior turn of which a trouble source is identified. The delayed other-initiation of repair is used to avert or correct miscommunication in the talk and implies an asymmetry between native and non-native speakers in terms of language competence and potential for miscommunication that they both orient to in native/non-native conversation.

In adult-child conversation, when a child is selected to answer a question but produces a trouble source, there is a tension between correcting the child immediately in the next turn to facilitate the progress of the sequence and delaying the repair initiation to allow even more opportunities for the child's self-repair. This chapter will address whether the initiating position of other-correction is delayed in everyday adult-child interaction at the cost of progressivity in the analysis.

2.1.4. Child socialization

Child socialization is traditionally conceptualized in sociology as the process through which children internalize socially shared norms, values, and expectations that inform their actions in a given society (Durkheim, 1956; Parsons, 1951). To account for how children grasp such norms, Sacks (1992) argued that social order is manifested at a detailed micro-level in social interaction. Although children encounter only a portion of all possible cultural practices in their everyday life, interaction as a site of order is robust enough to permit children who interact with members of a given society to undergo socialization and thereby become competent members of that society. In other words, child socialization takes place in every bit of ordinary interaction, and thus interaction affords us a revealing window into the deliberate process through which children become socialized.

Relying on spontaneous, face-to-face interaction with and among children, previous research has explored the processes through which children are socialized into pragmatic aspects of language (e.g., Burdelski, 2013, 2015; Cekaite, 2007; Clancy, 1986; Goodwin & Cekaite, 2013). In particular, treating the organization of interaction as a site of inquiry in its own right, the Conversation Analysis (CA) approach has been extensively utilized to understand how children are socialized into certain interactional norms, such as preference organization (Church, 2016; Hepburn, 2020; Keel, 2016) and repair organization (Corrin, 2010; Filipi, 2009; Forrester, 2008; Laakso, 2010; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2021; Searles & Barriage, 2018; Sidnell, 2010; Wootton, 1994). These studies highlight children's interactional competence and agency in conversations with adults.

Prior CA research has also examined question-answer sequences in adult-child interaction in institutional settings. For instance, Davidson and Edwards-Groves (2020) examined how teachers facilitate multiple-response sequences among children to increase opportunities for them to contribute to classroom talk. Bateman (2013) also illustrated how teachers provide both emotional care and educational support for children through their responses to children's questions. In the pediatric setting, as previously discussed, by selecting children to answer questions, physicians socialize children into what constitutes medically relevant information and what kind of responses they are expected to provide in this context (Stivers, 2001). The present study contributes to this line of research, building a body of empirical evidence for how adults guide children to respond properly as selected speakers to socialize them into responsive roles in question-answer sequences in everyday interaction.

2.2 METHOD

Relying on the analytic techniques of CA, the chapter identifies and analyzes sequences in which 1) an adult who is not in the knowing position initiates a genuine information-seeking question, 2) the questioner selects a child as the next speaker in the presence of at least one other knowing adult who is otherwise able to provide an answer, and 3) some kinds of interactional issues can be identified with the selected child's response (or non-response). Test questions, which request information obviously already known to the questioners (Searle, 1969), are excluded in the current dataset since they serve different functions and take a distinctive shape of sequence organization.

2.3 ANALYSIS

In interaction with child interlocutors who are still developing their turn-taking skills, adults typically prioritize children's rights and obligations to talk and manage normative preferences in ways that are different from adult conversations. Three forms of evidence for such priority are presented. First, adults prioritize children's rights to respond not only initially but also in the face of delays to progressivity. When a child is selected but does not provide an immediate answer, non-selected recipients typically withhold an answer, usually well beyond the TRP, thus violating the normative preference for progressivity. Second, on the infrequent occasions in which non-selected recipients answer questions on behalf of selected children, they still orient to children's rights over the answers and the importance of child participation. Third, when facing children's problematic responses, non-selected recipients tend to withhold correction in the basic responsive position, i.e., the turn following the trouble source turn (Schegloff et al., 1977). By allowing more opportunities for children's self-repair, adults again

compromise activity progressivity in favor of children's rights to autonomously respond. In what follows, we examine each of these forms of evidence in detail.

2.3.1 *Prioritizing child participation in the face of no response*

In conversations among adults, speakers typically prioritize the preference for an answer over the preference for the selected speaker to answer when the two preferences come into conflict (Stivers & Robinson, 2006). The preference ranking is, however, particularly challenging for interactants in adult-child interactions. There comes to be a tension not only between rights to answer and progressivity but also a tension between child participation and progressivity. In the current dataset, children's non-response does not consistently lead to non-selected recipients providing answers on their behalf. Rather, non-selected recipients tend to withhold an answer and pursue a response from the selected child. This ordering of preferences can be attributed to children's special status where their rights as selected speakers and their socialization into active respondents in conversation are prioritized.

Extract 1 exemplifies a non-selected recipient pursuing a response from the selected child when he does not immediately respond. Here, James' nanny (NAN) brought him to a play date and told a friend (FRI) that they had just come back from a trip. James dropped a piece of Play-Doh on the floor prior to this segment, and the sequence begins as the friend picks it up and hands it to James while asking James about the trip (line 1). James does not initially respond as he seems not to be paying attention because he is looking at his Play-Doh (line 2).

Extract (1) James:2y4m

01 FRI: 那邊 探親 好玩 嗎?
 nabian tanqin haowan ma?
 there visit relatives fun Q

Did (you) have fun visiting the relatives there?
 02 (0.5)/((JAM looks at Play-Doh))
 03 你 去- 去 那邊 做 什麼?
 ni qu- qu nabian zuo shenme?
 2S go go there do what
 You went- went there (and) what did (you) do?
 04 (0.7)/((JAM looks down, holding Play-Doh in his hands))
 05 有 沒 有 去::
 you mei you qu::
 PRF-NEG-PRF go
 Did (you) go::
 06 (1.0)/((JAM looks up and turns his face to FRI))
 07 NAN: -> 今天 去 幹嘛?
 jintian qu ganma?
 today go do-Q
 Today what did (you) do?
 08 (.) / ((JAM is facing FRI but does not gaze at FRI))
 09 你 知道.
 ni zhidao.
 2S know
 You know (that).
 10 去 上 什麼 課?
 qu shang sheme ke?
 go take what class
 What class did (you) take?
 11 (0.5)/((JAM shifts his gaze to FRI))
 12 JAM: 體育 課.
 tiyu ke.
 PE class
 PE class.
 13 FRI: 體育 課 是 不 是
 tiyu ke shi bu shi?
 PE class COP-NEG-COP
 PE class, wasn't it?

As a non-selected recipient, the nanny withholds her participation not just initially (line 2) but also when the friend's further pursuit is again met with silence (line 4) even though she has the epistemic knowledge of where they have been and what they have done during the trip. This practice suggests that in contrast to the norm of prioritizing progressivity in adult conversation, the nanny prioritizes the preference for the selected speaker to respond in this context.

I argue that the nanny's prioritization of enabling James to respond himself is related to his social status as a child, and the evidence lies in what she does in pursuit of his response (Pomerantz, 1984b). In line 6, James shifts his gaze from his Play-Doh to the friend, suggesting that he is now attentive to questions posed to him. The nanny then specifies the question agenda by introducing "today" (line 7) but otherwise restating one of the friend's questions. After a micropause, she adds "you know that" (line 9), which encourages James by highlighting his ability to answer and further pushes for a response since it invokes what would be a reasonable account for not answering (i.e., he does not know the answer) and rejects it as a possible account. The nanny then issues a much more specific question ("what class did you take" in line 10). By narrowing down the range of acceptable answers from any activity that James has done that day to a specific class, the nanny in effect offers James a memory cue and also a lexicogrammatical structure for formulating his answer. Given that the "what class" question permits a specific phrasal response that fits this design of question (Fox & Thompson, 2010), James no longer needs to produce a complete sentence on his own and simply has to fill in the class he took. Lowering the demand on James also simultaneously increases his accountability to participate in the sequence. With the nanny's guidance, James successfully produces an adequate response in line 12.

This example shows how the non-selected recipient prioritizes the child's right and obligation to respond as the selected speaker and the need to encourage his participation over providing an answer for the questioner. Nonetheless, the non-selected recipient still maintains the right of the questioner to an answer and advances the progressivity by narrowing down the scope of the question in her pursuit. This practice of redesigning the question is common in these data where the selected child's non-response does not seem to be accounted for by a

hearing problem or lack of attention, and thus simply repeating the question is unlikely to elicit a satisfactory response. In these cases, the non-selected recipients pay close attention to children's abilities to understand the questions and guide them to produce appropriate answers, thereby socializing them to achieve interactional autonomy as active respondents in conversation.

It is worth noting that such an orientation to young children's rights to respond is displayed by not only adults but also older children with more developed interactional competence. Extract 2 illustrates how six-year-old Ran adjusts the original question when pursuing a response from her two-year-old sister Jia. This instance takes place at the beginning of a recording session when the researcher (RES) visits the family for the first time. Upon seeing the camera, Jia gets excited and waves multiple times. The researcher then asks Jia to introduce herself in front of the camera.

Extract (2) Jia: 2y9m; Ran: 6y2m

01 RES: 這 個 是 誰?
zhe ge shi shei?
this CL COP who
Who is this?

02 (.)/(JIA looks at the camera)

03 你 是 誰?
ni shi shei?
2S COP who
Who are you?

04 (0.7)/(JIA looks at the camera)

05 你 要 自 我 介 紹 跟 大 家 說 ^hello 你 是 誰.
ni yao ziwo jieshao gen dajia shuo ni shi shei.
2S will self introduce PREP everyone say 2S COP who
Introduce yourself, say ^hello and who you are to everyone.

06 JIA: He:llo: ((wave hand))

07 (1.0)/(JIA walks away)

08 RAN: -> ((point at JIA))你 叫 什 麼 [名字?
ni jiao sheme [mingzi?
2S call what name
What is your name?

09 RES: [他 是 滿 兩 歲=

[ta shi man (.) liang sui=
3S COP full two age
She is already (.)two years of age

10 JIA: =駱 [佳.
luo[jia.
NAME
Luojia.

11 MOM: [呃 兩- 快 要 三 歲 了.
[uh liang- kuai yao san sui le.
two almost will three age PT
uh two- *almost three years of age.*

12 RAN: 他 是 駱佳.
ta shi luojia.
3S COP NAME
She is Luojia.

Similar to the previous example, Ran as a non-selected recipient withholds an answer at the TRPs (lines 2 and 4). When the researcher again pushes for a response with a more specific request (line 5), Jia partially conforms to the agenda by greeting the presumptive audience over the camera, which suggests that she understands the response relevance and sequential expectation of the action. However, she then walks away from the camera without introducing herself.

While the researcher takes Jia's action as abandoning the ongoing sequence and selects Mom in another question sequence (line 9), Ran holds Jia accountable and pursues a response by reformulating the researcher's request. The original request is designed with a rather formal expression, *ziwo jieshao* ("introduce oneself" in line 5), which might be difficult to understand for a two-year-old. The scope of "say who you are" may also be too broad to grasp for Jia. Ran redesigns the request in a more colloquial and specific manner, "what is your name?" (line 8), which also sets up a frame where only a name is necessary as a phrasal answer (Fox & Thompson, 2010) whereas a full clause would be required to introduce oneself. Ran's practice indicates that she recognizes that a response from Jia is relevantly missing and, even though she could have answered on behalf of Jia, she prioritizes Jia's primary right to respond and provides

guidance instead. It is when Jia's answer goes unnoticed by the researcher that Ran repeats the requested information on behalf of Jia (line 12), acknowledging the right of the questioner to an answer. This example shows that the practice of prioritizing the rights of selected children is not restricted to the binary categories of *adults* and *children* defined by age. Rather, this is a resource for more sophisticated interactants to socialize less sophisticated interactants into active participation without particular respect to age.

Although adults generally prioritize the rights of children to respond over progressivity, we still sometimes see the tension between progressivity and child participation bubble to the surface. This is exemplified in Extract 3 where the non-selected recipient begins to answer a question at the TRP but quickly aborts her turn and then invokes the selected child's right and obligation to answer. The following conversation happens when the researcher (RES) visits Lei's family for the first time and asks Lei who he is. Similar to Extract 2, Lei does not reply immediately, and Mom pursues a response from him by asking his name (line 1). However, instead of answering, Lei initiates a new sequence and asks about *Xiaobu* (line 2), which later turns out to be a robot toy.

Extract (3) Lei: 2y2m

- 01 MOM: 你 叫 什麼 名字 呀?
 ni jiao sheme mingzi ya?
 2S call what name Q
 What is your name?
- 02 LEI: 小布 哩:?
 xiaobu le:?
 NAME Q
 What about Xiaobu?
- 03 (0.5) / ((MOM laughs))
- 04 MOM: 小布 喔, [小布 在-
 xiaobu ou, [xiaobu zai-
 NAME PT NAME PREP
 Xiaobu, Xiaobu is in-
- 05 RES: [小布 是 你的 名字 嗎?

[xiaobu shi ni de mingzi ma?
 NAME COP 2S GEN name Q
Is Xiaobu your name?

06 MOM: -> °不°- 小布 是 你 的 名字 嗎?
 °bu°- xiaobu shi ni de mingzi ma?
 NEG NAME COP 2S GEN name Q
 °Nn°- *Is Xiaobu your name?*

07 (0.5)

08 LEI: °不 是.°
 °bu shi.°
 NEG-COP
 °No.°

Although Mom’s laughter (line 3) implies that she hears Lei’s action as problematic, she complies with Lei’s question and begins to address the issue of *Xiaobu* (line 4). The researcher, while remaining silent when Lei first mentions *Xiaobu* (line 2), initiates her question at the completion of Mom’s utterance “*Xiaobu ou*” (line 4) and selects Lei to answer whether *Xiaobu* is his name (line 5). The researcher’s question can thus be hearable as teasingly sanctioning not only Lei for not answering his name but also Mom for going along with Lei. Mom then initiates a *no*-answer at the TRP (line 6). Since Mom is held accountable for conforming to the original agenda regarding Lei’s name, her initial response indicates her inclination to help the sequence progress as she could close this side sequence with a *no*-answer and revisit her question in line 1 or, more straightforwardly, provide Lei’s name on his behalf. However, Mom cuts off her *no*-answer in its production shortly (line 6; the *bu* sound can be identified as a negation, but it cannot be standalone grammatically and thus is not equivalent to a complete *no*) and then selects Lei in her repeat of the researcher’s question. Mom’s cutoff and selection of Lei suggest that she prioritizes Lei’s participation over progressivity. Her full repeat also highlights Lei’s right and obligation to answer this particular question as the selected speaker.

In this section, I have shown what constitutes the majority of cases involving the tension between progressivity and child participation. In these cases, when the selected children are not

offering uptake, non-selected adults consistently withhold answers and pursue children's responses after the TRP, often by redesigning the questions in a more specific manner and thus lowering the demand on the selected children to provide satisfactory answers. In so doing, adults socialize children into when and how to respond to questions properly as autonomous participants in interaction. Yet, it is not invariable that this tension leads non-selected recipients to withhold answers. I will now analyze cases in which they do answer on behalf of selected children and present evidence that further supports the overall priority of child participation over the preference for progressivity in everyday adult-child interaction.

2.3.2 When non-selected recipients respond

The relatively infrequent cases in which non-selected recipients self-select to answer questions that selected children initially appear to provide counter-evidence to the claim that child participation is prioritized because in these cases, the selected child's right to respond is essentially subordinated to the progressivity norm. However, I will show that through participant orientation, child participation remains a strong priority, albeit differently balanced than in most cases.

There are two types of cases in this subset of data. First, in some cases, non-selected recipients do not answer initially, as in Extracts 1–3, but then provide answers past the TRP. In contrast with cases found in adult conversation (Stivers & Robinson, 2006), when this happens in conversations with children, we see a continued orientation to a prioritization of child participation and thus socialization. While non-selected recipients appear to orient to progressivity in these cases, the specific manner in which they respond reflects a struggle with the tensions that exist between prioritizing progressivity and facilitating children's responses —

after providing an answer, non-selected recipients consistently work to engage the selected child in the ongoing sequence, such as seeking confirmation from the child, thereby maintaining the child's ownership of the requested information and thus the primary right to participate. An example is found in Extract 4 where Dad's friend (FRI) asks Hanna about her plans for the weekend when they are sitting on the stairs, to which Hanna does not respond promptly.

Extract (4) Hanna: 3y2m

- 01 FRI: Hanna 這 個- 周 末 有 沒 有 要 去 哪 裡 玩?
zhe ge- (.)zhoumo you mei you yao qu nali wan?
this CL weekend have-NEG-have will go where play
Hanna this- (.)weekend are (you) going somewhere for fun?
- 02 (0.7)/((HAN looks down, taking a step down the stairs))
- 03 DAD: -> 沒 有, 要 慶 祝 媽 媽 生 日 對 不 對?
mei you, yao qingzhu mama shengri dui bu dui?
NEG-have will celebrate Mom birthday correct-NEG-correct
No, (we) are celebrating Mom's birthday, right?
- 04 FRI: u::h 沒 有 要 出 去 玩.
mei you yao chuqu wan.
NEG-have will go out play
(you) are not going out for fun.

After the TRP, Dad self-selects and gives a *no*-answer on behalf of Hanna (line 3), displaying his priority of sequence progressivity and his subordination of Hanna's primary right to respond. Nonetheless, Dad orients to Hanna's status as the selected speaker by responding in her voice, which is evidenced by his use of the person reference form *mama* ("Mom" in line 3). Dad also formulates his response as an interrogative with a question tag *dui-bu-dui* (literally "correct not correct"; roughly equivalent to "right?" in English), which explicitly works to elicit a confirmation from Hanna (Chen & He, 2001; Li & Thompson, 1981). By inviting Hanna's confirmation, Dad treats her as having the primary right and obligation to co-participate in answering and also validates her epistemic priority regarding the requested information.

Although Hanna does not provide a verbal confirmation in this case, inviting the selected child's confirmation is an alternative practice commonly used by non-selected recipients when guiding the child to produce an answer on their own seems unlikely. In this example, Hanna may not have a clear idea of what she would be doing in a few days, whereas Dad is apparently knowledgeable of her future plans. She also seems not to pay full attention to the ongoing conversation since she is moving down the stairs. Dad's practice works to facilitate sequence progressivity without undermining Hanna's right as the selected speaker. This case shows that even when speakers adhere to adult conversation norms, they still orient to the importance of facilitating children's contributions as the selected speakers.

The second set of cases found in this subset of data is where non-selected recipients volunteer an answer on behalf of the selected child immediately at the TRP. However, rather than treating the child as not having the right to answer or subverting the importance of child participation, this typically only happens when the question posed is problematic. Non-selected recipients thus absolve children of responsibility for answering in these cases. For instance, in Extract 5, Mom's friend (FRI) selects Hanna to answer a question about swimming strokes ("what do you swim" in line 3), to which Hanna does not provide a timely response. The questioner then pursues Hanna's response with a candidate answer ("breaststroke" in line 5).

Extract (5) Hanna: 3y2m

- 01 FRI: 你 每 個 禮 拜 都 游 泳 喔?
 ni mei ge libai dou youyong ou?
 2S every CL week all swim Q
 Do you go swimming every week?
- 02 HAN: ((nod))
- 03 FRI: 你 游 什麼?
 ni you sheme?
 2S swim what
 What do you swim?
- 04 (0.7)/((HAN looks at FRI))

05 游 蛙式?
 you washi?
 swim breaststroke
 Swim breaststroke?

06 MOM: -> 沒有 啦, [他 也 只 是 坐 在 游 泳 圈 上=
 meiyou la, [ta ye zhi shi zui zai youyongquan shang=
 NEG PT 3S also just COP sit PREP swim ring top
 No, *she just sits on top of a swim ring*

07 HAN: [((shake head))

08 MOM: =[而已.
 =[eryi.
 only
 only.

09 FRI: [坐 在 游 泳 圈 上.
 [zuozai youyongquan shang.
 sit PREP swim ring top
 Sit on top of a swim ring.

In response to the “what do you swim” question, Mom prioritizes Hanna’s right to answer like other non-selected recipients shown in previous examples. Even though Hanna does not know any specific swimming stroke, she could talk about her water activities or even admit that she does not actually swim and still conforms to the question agenda. The friend’s following pursuit, however, is problematic in a twofold manner. First, while supplying a candidate answer is normally a useful strategy for obtaining information when the recipient has difficulty giving a satisfactory answer (Pomerantz, 1988), in this case, it narrows down the question agenda to a particular stroke ostensibly outside Hanna’s domain of knowledge since, as Mom later reveals, Hanna does not swim at all. Hanna’s immediate and relevant response to the friend’s first question (lines 1–2) and her gaze also suggest that she is attentive to the questions, and therefore her lack of uptake is likely due to an understanding problem. Second, the question design implies the friend’s false presupposition about Hanna’s swimming ability, which requires correction. To deal with this problematic question, Mom intervenes at the TRP and states that Hanna does not actually swim yet, and thus that the problem Hanna is having responding to the

friend is rooted not in any issue of regular interactional competence for her age but in an inadequately recipient-designed question.

This analysis has demonstrated that while speakers in adult conversation typically prioritize the questioner's right to progressivity through an answer over the selected speaker's right to provide the answer when an answer is due and missing, the preferences are differently ranked in conversations involving young children. When a child is selected to answer a question, non-selected recipients tend to prioritize the selected child's right to respond and withhold an answer even well beyond the TRP. They also work to identify the problem that leads to the child's lack of uptake and guide the child to respond, thereby socializing the child to become an active respondent in conversation. It is when the questions appear to be inadequately designed that non-selected adults immediately intervene in the sequences at the TRP.

2.3.3 Prioritizing child participation in the face of problematic claims

The last part of the analysis offers another form of evidence for the claim that child participation is prioritized over the preference for progressivity in adult-child interaction. Here, we examine how non-selected recipients deal with problematic responses from selected children, an environment in which a tension between facilitating children's rights to contribute as selected speakers and correcting inadequate claims emerges. When a child is selected to answer a question but gives a problematic response, non-selected recipients appear to orient to their accountability for correcting the false claim since not revealing the correct information to the questioner would violate Grice's maxim of quality, "try to make your contribution one that is true" (Grice, 1975, p.46). In this regard, children's problematic responses would lead to other-correction initiated by non-selected recipients immediately in the next turn, the basic position in

which other-repair initiations normally take place (Schegloff et al., 1977). However, this is not what we tend to see.

In the current dataset, non-selected recipients appear to achieve a balance between encouraging child participation and correcting problematic claims by delaying corrections. While other-initiations in adult conversation are regularly withheld a bit beyond the completion of trouble source turn to provide an extra opportunity for self-repair (Schegloff et al., 1977), non-selected recipients in the current dataset often withhold repair initiations further until later turns, allowing even more space for children's self-repair and maintaining their rights to talk. In so doing, they also compromise activity progressivity as they need to revisit a prior turn in the sequence or even reopen an already closed sequence when correcting the trouble source. I argue that this practice is also related to socializing children into providing adequate responses as autonomous participants in conversation.

For instance, in Extract 6, the non-selected recipients withhold repairs until the ongoing sequence is recognizably closed. Here, Brandon is watching TV with his nanny (NAN) and aunt (AUN), both of whom have been with him all day. Mom has just returned home from work and asks Brandon whether he played outside during the day — while she knows that it is Brandon's daily routine to play outside, she does not know for certain about that particular day since it was raining.

Extract (6) Brandon: 2y10m

01 MOM: 今天 有 没 有 出去 玩=
 jintian you mei you (.) chuqu wan=
 today PRF-NEG-PRF go out play
 Today did (you) (.) play outside

02 BRA: =°有[°°
 =°yo[u°°
 AFF
 °°Yes.°°

03 MOM: [還是 下 太多 雨?
 [haishi xia taiduo yu?
 or fall too much rain
 or did it rain too much?

04 (0.2)/((BRA looks at TV))

05 BRA: 下 太多 雨.
 xia taiduo yu.
 fall too much rain
 It rained too much.

06 MOM: 真的 嗎?
 zhende ma?
 really Q
 Really?

07 BRA: 對. =你 看.((point at the TV))
 dui. =ni kan.
 correct 2S look
 Right.=You look.((point at the TV))

08 (1.0)

09 NAN: -> 頭髮 [都 淋溼 啦.
 toufa [dou linshi la.
 hair all get wet PT
 Hair all got wet.

10 AUN: -> [有- 有 出去 啦, 但是 下雨 就 回來 了.
 [you- you chuqu la, danshi xiayu jiu huilai le.
 PRF PRF go out PT but rain as soon come back PT
 (He) did- did go out, but came back as soon as it rained.

11 MOM: 你有 穿 [雨鞋 嗎?
 ni you chuan [yuxie ma?
 2S PRF wear rain boots Q
 Did you wear rain boots?

12 NAN: [我們 的 頭 有 沒 有 淋濕 啊?
 [women de tou you mei you linshi a?
 1P GEN head PRF-NEG-PRF get wet Q
 Did we get our hair wet?

In response to Mom's question, Brandon produces an affirmative response token at a very low volume (line 2), to which Mom seems not to notice as she immediately continues her question, transforming it into an alternative question ("or did it rain too much" in line 3). After a short gap, Brandon repeats that it rained too much (line 5). From Brandon's perspective, he likely treats the second alternative as an independent question since he has already answered the first one, and his response is valid as it did rain a lot that day. However, for the questioner (Mom)

and the knowing non-selected recipients (the nanny and the aunt), Brandon's response is problematic since it is hearable as an account of why he stayed inside while he actually went out.

When Brandon makes the misleading claim in line 5, the nanny and the aunt both withhold corrections. Even though Mom shows doubt about Brandon's claim with her initiation of a disagreement-implicated repair (Pomerantz, 1984a), they continue to remain silent when Brandon again makes a misleading confirmation, implicating that he did not go out (line 7). In so doing, the nanny and the aunt both prioritize Brandon's autonomous participation even when his answer is problematic.

It is, however, not the case that Brandon's misleading answer is treated as a choice he has the right to make. After Brandon recognizably closes the current sequence and launches a new one by directing Mom to look at something on TV (line 7), the nanny and the aunt both initiate repairs on Brandon's claim even though reopening the prior sequence stalls the progress of the activity that Brandon orients to. Nonetheless, even in correcting him, the nanny continues to orient to Brandon's primary right over the answer. She first reminds Brandon that they got wet in the rain (line 9) and then uses an interrogative to invite his confirmation (line 12), thereby maintaining his right to participate as the selected speaker as well as his epistemic priority. This practice of inviting the selected child's co-participation has been discussed in the previous section (Extract 4).

The aunt also works to validate Brandon's participation but uses a different strategy. While she explicitly points out that Brandon went out, she also recontextualizes his response (line 10). In Mom's original question, she offered two alternatives, *play outside* or *it rained too much*, and the latter is pragmatically understood as in opposition to the former, i.e., *stay inside*. Here, the aunt does work to adjust the question context as the two options do not account for

what actually happened: Brandon played outside, *and* it rained too much so he had to come back in. In other words, the aunt validates Brandon’s contribution since *it rained too much* is true, yet it is not an account for not going out at all but rather for returning inside.

In the following example, the non-selected recipient withholds correction until a follow-up question is posed by the same questioner. Here, Dad knows that a family friend, Shirley, visited that morning when Mom and Brandon were home, but he does not know for sure whether Brandon got to meet with Shirley during her visit. When Dad asks Brandon whether he met with Shirley (line 1), Brandon promptly provides a factually incorrect answer (line 2), which, similar to Extract 6, is not corrected by Mom in the next turn.

Extract (7) Brandon: 2y10m

- 01 DAD: Brandon 你 今天 有 看 到 Shirley 阿姨 嗎?
 ni jintian you kan dao Shirley ayi ma?
 2S today PRF see PRF aunt Q
Brandon did you see Aunt Shirley today?
- 02 BRA: 沒 有.
 mei you.
 NEG PRF
 (I) didn't.
- 03 DAD: 沒 有.
 mei you.
 NEG PRF
 (You) didn't.
- 04 (0.6)/((BRA looks at DAD))
- 05 DAD: 你 太 晚 起來 是 不 是?=
 ni tai wan qilai shi bu shi?=
 2S too late get up COP-NEG-COP
 You got up too late, didn't you?
- 06 MOM: -> =有 啦.
 =you la.
 AFF PT
 (He) did (see Aunt Shirley).

Like the nanny and the aunt in Extract 6, Mom also initially prioritizes Brandon’s autonomous participation by withholding a correction on his false claim. Although Dad initiates repair by repeating Brandon’s answer (line 3), both Brandon and Mom pass up the opportunity to perform

a repair solution. Dad then nominates a candidate account for why Brandon did not see Aunt Shirley in the follow-up question (line 5). As Dad pursues this topic and falsely presupposes that Brandon did not meet with Aunt Shirley, it becomes sanctionable for Mom to further withhold a correction. In line 6, Mom latches onto Dad's question and initiates repair on Brandon's claim. Mom's practice is similar to Extract 5 where the non-selected recipient withholds participation until a problematic question is posed to the child. In this case, Dad's follow-up question is deemed inadequately designed with the false presupposition, and Mom deals with this problematic question immediately. Her correction also works to socialize Brandon into Grice's (1975) maxim of quality — we need to provide truthful answers as selected speakers.

In some cases, non-selected recipients correct children's problematic responses in the next turn, the basic position for other-repair initiation, but they regularly work to engage children in the ongoing sequence. For instance, in Extract 8, the non-selected recipient invites the child's confirmation after correcting the child's partially incorrect answer. Here, Mom mentions that James saw fish when visiting his grandparents with Mom and prompts James to tell Dad about buying new fish during their visit (line 1). After James repeats Mom's request without further elaboration (line 2), Dad asks James about the fish (line 3).

Extract (8) James: 2y4m

01 MOM: Tell Daddy (0.2) you went to buy new fish.
02 JAM: Buy uh: (0.2) ne:w fish.
03 DAD: What happened to those fish.
04 JAM: Uh: (1.0) uh 都 死 掉 了.
 dou si diao le.
 all die PRF PT
 All died.
05 DAD: [((laugh))
06 MOM: -> [((laugh)) Not all of them.
07 只有 一點點, 沒有 全部 死 掉.
 zhiyou yidiandian, meiyou quanbu si diao.
 only very few NEG all die PRF
 Only very few, not all died.

08 只有 一點點 死 掉 對 不 對?
zhiyou yidiandian si diao dui bu dui?
only very few die PRF correct-NEG-correct
Only very few died, right?

Even though the fillers and the one-second pause imply that James has difficulty formulating a proper response (line 4), Mom prioritizes his participation by withholding her contribution until James answers that the fish “all died”. Mom then initiates repair in the next turn, taking issue with James’ claim that the fish *all* died — in fact, only very few fish died. While Mom adheres to the adult conversation norm and initiates repair as early as in the next turn, she still orients to the importance of child participation as well as James’ epistemic priority by explicitly seeking James’ confirmation with the question tag *dui-bu-dui* (“correct not correct” in line 8) (Chen & He, 2001; Li & Thompson, 1981). In so doing, Mom also socializes James into what counts as an adequate answer to Dad’s question — we need to provide sufficient and appropriate details of an event.

In summary, the analysis has presented evidence that socializing children to participate actively and autonomously in conversation normally takes priority in adult-child interaction. Adult speakers tend to orient to children’s rights and obligations to respond as selected speakers in the face of delays to progressivity. Even when non-selected adults provide answers or corrections, they work to involve children in the ongoing sequence and display a continued orientation to children’s rights and obligations to participate as well as their epistemic priority over the matters being requested.

2.4 DISCUSSION

This chapter has shown that adults tend to prioritize child participation over the normative preference for progressivity in everyday interaction when progressivity conflicts with

the need to socialize children into active responsive participation in conversation in the Taiwanese and American societies from which the data are drawn. This ordering of preferences suggests that child socialization is normally the overarching goal of everyday adult-child interaction. For adult questioners, the primary goal of selecting a child instead of another adult to answer an information-seeking question is to engage the child in the ongoing conversation. Non-selected recipients, as the analysis has revealed, also orient to the same goal of promoting children's rights and obligations to participate and their actual participation through which socialization is realized. This pattern contrasts with previous findings in adult conversation (Schegloff et al., 1977; Stivers & Robinson, 2006), in which the selected speaker's right to respond is recurrently compromised in favor of action and sequence progressivity.

Existing CA research on conversational norms has primarily developed based on adult conversation and has yet to deal with variations that might occur when children who are still learning to manage conversational skills are involved, and how the asymmetry between adults and children shapes participants' adherence to (or violations of) norms. This chapter has demonstrated how the norm of progressivity can be trumped by the overarching goal of child participation and socialization in everyday adult-child interaction. Specifically, the preference for progressivity may give way to child participation when a child is selected to answer a question but does not provide an immediate response, as non-selected recipients tend to withhold answers and pursue responses from children. Similarly, progressivity might be stalled when a selected child provides a problematic answer, as non-selected recipients tend to withhold corrections past the basic responsive position, allowing more opportunities for children to initiate self-repair. In other words, children are treated as a special case where their rights as selected speakers and their socialization into active, autonomous participation are prioritized. This

pattern of balancing socialization and progressivity might also be operating in other asymmetrical relationships, such as native/non-native interaction and interaction involving individuals with speech or cognitive impairment, since an overarching interactional goal (e.g., education, therapy, etc.) is often relevant in these settings.

This chapter contributes directly to research on interaction with children as it provides empirical analyses of how adults deal with children's non-response and problematic responses in question-answer sequences. Specifically, responding promptly and appropriately when being selected as the next speaker is a hallmark of interactional competence, and this study illustrates adults' scaffolding practices of guiding children to meet this goal. The analysis also adds to prior studies on socializing children's pragmatic skills with an illustration of how child socialization into conversational norms is done in the turn-by-turn sequential unfolding of naturally occurring ordinary interaction.

The broader implications of this chapter center around the nature of childhood. Previous research on membership categories indicates that the category of *child* is associated with restricted rights and responsibilities in interaction as opposed to the category of *adult*. This can be exemplified by young children's use of summonses and pre-announcements to gain a turn in conversations with adults, which indicates their restricted rights to participation (Butler & Wilkinson, 2013; Eilittä et al., 2021; Sacks, 1992). In this chapter, we also see a special treatment with respect to children — adults perform actions that would otherwise be deemed violating adult interactional norms in order to safeguard children's rights and reinforce their responsibilities to participate in interaction. The fact that extra work is needed and taken to ensure child participation suggests that the status of being a child is indeed associated with restricted rights and responsibilities in interaction. It is through this particular orientation to

children's rights and responsibilities that their status *as children* is constructed in social interaction.

While consistent patterns regarding the prioritization of socializing children's interactional autonomy were identified in the current dataset which includes eight families in the US and Taiwan, this is a rather small sample of interactants. It is thus worth noting that such norms may not be generalized to adult-child interaction in families from different cultural backgrounds. For instance, Schieffelin (1985) observed that in Kaluli society, adults do not treat young children as conversational partners until they are able to produce understandable talk, whereas in this study, we see how adults in the current dataset make accommodations for children to the extent that they bring conversations to a halt to prioritize children's participation. Therefore, we need to be cautious when interpreting the findings and making general claims about the prioritization of child participation and socialization in adult-child interaction.

CHAPTER 3

CONSTRUCTING CHILDHOOD:

HOW PARENTS ASSERT EPISTEMIC PRIMACY OVER THEIR CHILDREN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Childhood is conceptualized as a social construct in contemporary research on the sociology of childhood (Corsaro, 2018; James & Prout, 1997; Jenks, 1996; Qvortrup et al., 2009). Although the immaturity of children is a biological fact, how such immaturity in this particular period of human life is perceived and made sense of is a structural and cultural component of a society. The child is thus “a status of person which is comprised through a series of, often heterogeneous, images, representations, codes and constructs” (Jenks, 1996, p. 32). For instance, in modern western societies, childhood is predominately viewed as a time of innocence, during which children are seen as “lacking responsibility, having rights to protection and training but not to autonomy” (Ennew, 1986, p. 21). While prior research has extensively investigated the rights, constraints, and expectations associated with childhood, there has been little systematic empirical examination of the construction of childhood in social interaction; that is, how children are treated *as children* on a moment-by-moment basis in the course of their everyday interaction with adults. Drawing on naturally-occurring parent-child interactional data, this chapter provides empirical evidence of how adult interlocutors orient to children’s restricted rights and thereby construct childhood in social interaction.

People are generally considered as having the primary rights to know and describe their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences (Heritage, 2011; Labov & Fanshel, 1977; Lerner, 1996; Pomerantz, 1980; Sacks, 1992). In parent-child interaction, however, children are not always

treated as having primary access to and sole authority over these matters. Focusing on *epistemic primacy* in parent-child interaction, i.e., the relative rights of parents and children to access, assert, or assess what they know (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Stivers et al., 2011), this chapter shows that parents regularly claim epistemic primacy over children regarding matters that, based on adult norms of social interaction, should be unequivocally presupposed within children's primary epistemic domain. I argue that this is one central component of how childhood is constructed in social interaction — through treating children as having reduced epistemic primacy over matters normally within a speaker's primary epistemic domain.

In what follows, after a review of prior work on epistemics in the organization of social interaction, I provide two forms of evidence in support of the argument that parents tend to claim epistemic primacy over matters related to their children. First, parents consistently confirm or disconfirm children's asserted claims about their own thoughts, feelings, or experiences. Second, parents consistently use test questions to request information within children's domain and then evaluate their answers as correct or incorrect. These practices are highly marked in ordinary adult conversation. The asymmetrical reliance on such practices in parent-child interaction indicates an orientation to children as having reduced rights to claim epistemic primacy. I argue that this is one component of how childhood is constructed in social interaction.

3.1.1 Knowledge in social interaction

In sociology, the construction of knowledge is concerned with the social processes through which the representations of the world are created since “society's influence extends into the structures of human experience in the form of ideas, concepts, and systems of thought”

(McCarthy, 1996, p.1). The root proposition of the sociology of knowledge was initially derived from Marx (2007) that human consciousness is determined by their social being. In this tradition, knowledge was conceptualized as determined by social conditions (Mannheim, 1936). Yet, based on his analysis of the structure of the common-sense world of everyday life, Schutz (1962) argued that knowledge is socially constructed and distributed. Since each type of social actor receives a certain stock of actual knowledge, our common-sense knowledge must be communicated in order to become reality. This social constructionist approach was further developed by Berger and Luckmann (1966), who argued that knowledge is acquired through socialization and institutionalization as a tacit foundation for the way the world is organized. In these processes, interaction plays a vital role.

Garfinkel (1967) formalized the importance of interaction in the formulation of common-sense knowledge. Using breaching experiments and ethnomethodological methods, he identified the procedures on which people rely to “make sense of, find their way about in, and act on the circumstances in which they find themselves” in their everyday life (Heritage, 1984, p.4) and showed that ordinary social behavior is a matter of accountable moral choice. To sustain social order, social actors mobilize assumptions and contextual considerations to account for the actions of others and treat transgressions as morally sanctionable and thus norm-guided.

While Garfinkel focused on the accountability of individual conduct, Goffman (1971) identified knowledge as a territorial preserve, over which people claim primary rights to possess, control, or use, whose “boundaries of the field are ordinarily patrolled and defended by the claimant” (p. 29). In particular, personal knowledge within *information preserves* contains “the sets of facts about himself to which an individual expects to control access while in the presence

of others” (p. 38–39) and is subject to “territorial offenses” by individuals who have no right of access (p. 49).

Building a link between the work of Schutz, Garfinkel, and Goffman, Sacks (1992) formulated a conception of social distributions of knowledge and information as accountable matters. In interaction, people orient to themselves as accountable for what they know, how they know, and their rights, obligations, and responsibilities to know. For instance, Sacks (1975) noted that interactants orient to the difference between knowing something on one’s own behalf and knowing something from what others have said, and “one is responsible for knowing some things on one’s own behalf” (Sacks, 1975, p. 72). In storytelling episodes, storytellers also routinely situate themselves as witnesses or as participants within the stories to make visible the epistemic and moral basis of their telling (Sacks, 1984). Sacks’ observations tapped into the issue of epistemics in ordinary interaction and guided subsequent CA research on the interactional approach to the sociology of knowledge (Sidnell, 2005).

3.1.2 Epistemics in conversation

There is a longstanding cross-disciplinary interest in epistemics, namely people’s orientations to the distribution of knowledge and information. Psychologists’ interests in knowledge distribution center around theory of mind, i.e., the cognitive ability to attribute mental states, including knowledge, intention, beliefs, and so forth, to ourselves and others (e.g., Astington, 2006; Baron-Cohen, 1991; Premack & Woodruff, 1978; Wellman, 2002). Linguists concentrate on our understanding of linguistic encoding of mental states and pragmatic competence in indexing the source of knowledge and information, such as epistemic modality and evidentiality (e.g., Chafe & Nichols, 1986; Fox, 2001; Kamio, 1997; Lyons, 1977).

Conversation analysts, however, are concerned with social processes through which participants index and negotiate their epistemic access, i.e., what is knowable to whom, and hence their relative rights to describe, assert, or assess a given matter. Rather than focusing on a single sentence or occasion, CA has developed an analytic framework to deal with procedures through which participants constantly and reflexively establish intersubjectivity with respect to their relative epistemic states over the course of interaction.

Epistemic access involves the source of knowledge, directness of access, and degree of certainty or recency (Stivers et al., 2011). For instance, building on Sacks' observations, Pomerantz (1980) formalized the distinction between Type 1 knowledge, "those that subject-actors as *subjects actors* have rights and obligations to know" by virtue of firsthand experience, and Type 2 knowledge, "those that subject-actors are assumed to have access to" by virtue of indirect means (p. 187). This concerns not just *knowledge* in the philosophical sense but also thoughts, feelings, and experiences owned by individuals. People who have direct or primary epistemic access to a given matter are thus oriented to as having epistemic primacy, i.e., the greater epistemic rights to know and describe that matter (Heritage & Raymond, 2005).

These dimensions of knowledge and its social distribution are central to how speakers design and understand social actions in social interaction. For instance, in determining whether an utterance is understood as a request for information or an assertion, epistemic status consistently trumps linguistic form (Heritage, 2012). Turn allocation and repair organization in conversation are also oriented to by reference to speakers' epistemic primacy (Bolden, 2013, 2018; Drew et al., 2012; Lerner, 1993, 2003; Robinson, 2013). The management of epistemic primacy is particularly manifested in assessment sequences given that being the first to offer an assessment of some state of affairs implicitly claims epistemic primacy over that matter

(Heritage, 2002a; Heritage & Raymond, 2005). When the first assessor, in relation to the second assessor, does not have primary epistemic access to the claim, both parties modify their claims to “cancel the epistemic implications of the first and second positioned status of their contributions” (Heritage & Raymond, 2005, p. 34). For instance, second speakers may upgrade their claims by offering confirmation in second position (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Schegloff, 1996; Stivers, 2005).

While CA work on epistemics has primarily concentrated on epistemic primacy derived locally from interactional roles (e.g., producer of a first position assessment), there is a general understanding that epistemic primacy is also derivable from social categories (Raymond & Heritage 2006; Stivers et al., 2011). As Drew (1991) suggested, speakers’ asymmetrical positions vis-à-vis certain knowledge are not simply governed by their cognitive states of knowing or not knowing what the other knows. Rather, they orient to “the normatively organized social distributions of authoritative access to bodies or types of knowledge” (p. 45), of which *social distribution* indexes the structural identities by which participants are categorized (e.g., adult/child), and *authoritative access* refers to the conventionally warrantable rights or entitlements ascribed to members who are categorized by one of a set of paired relational categories (adult) but not to the other paired identity (child).

Drew’s theoretical example of adult/child categories is consistent with the contemporary social construction of childhood — children are deemed innocent with restricted rights and responsibilities (Ennew, 1986; Jenks, 1996). However, this notion of children’s restricted epistemic rights is based on common-sense knowledge without empirical grounds, and thus it remains unclear *how* epistemic primacy is managed in and through adult-child interaction and hence what role this might play in the way adults work to construct childhood.

3.1.3 Epistemic primacy in parent-child interaction

The interactional construction of childhood is associated with children's restricted rights and responsibilities as participants in interaction. As previously discussed, an indication of their limited rights is their use of summonses and pre-announcements to elicit adults' attention and thereby engage in conversations with adults (Sacks, 1992). Even though these practices highlight children's ability to develop their own strategies to overcome interactional constraints, their attempts are, nonetheless, consistently disattended, blocked, and suspended by adult interlocutors (Butler & Wilkinson, 2013; Eilittä et al., 2021; O'Reilly, 2006).

There is a general assumption about children's restricted rights in terms of the epistemic domain as well. While epistemic rights in ordinary adult conversations are determined by what is knowable to whom (Heritage & Raymond, 2005), people tend to assume an asymmetry between adults and children that does not necessarily correspond with what they actually know or do not know. This assumption can be justified by adults' *expertise* (Heritage, 2013) in interaction, namely their fully developed cognitive and interactional competence, on the grounds that adults are generally able to correctly know something and properly communicate what they know, whereas children are not always capable of doing so.

This asymmetry is even more distinct in parent-child interaction. Whereas adults typically possess full rights and responsibilities as opposed to children in general, parents are oriented to as possessing a special status associated with privileged rights and responsibilities with respect to *their* children, including the rights and responsibilities to know and describe their children. For instance, Raymond and Heritage (2006) examined an assessment sequence regarding two children and illustrated how a grandparent works to police the boundaries of knowledge to which she claims special rights by virtue of her status as a *grandparent*. While her

interlocutor also has direct access to the children, the interlocutor defers to the grandparent's primary rights in making assessments about her grandchildren.

The puzzle, then, is whether such special rights pertaining to *parents* trump the primary epistemic rights of *children* when children make claims about their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences, matters that they, according to adult norms of social interaction, should be unquestionably presupposed to have primary rights to know and describe. Focusing on everyday parent-child interaction, this chapter provides empirical evidence of the ways in which parents assert epistemic primacy over matters within their children's primary domain and sheds light on how childhood is constructed in social interaction.

3.2 METHOD

This chapter focuses on children's claims about their private personal knowledge, including thoughts, feelings, or experiences, to which they have direct, primary, or even sole access. There are two sequential positions in which such claims are made: 1) turn-initial positions, where the claims are produced as assertions that do not make confirmation or disconfirmation a conditionally relevant next action, and 2) responsive positions, where the claims are produced as answers to parents' test questions (Antaki, 2013; Searle, 1969). In the present dataset, seventy instances of such claims were identified and analyzed.

3.3 ANALYSIS

Focusing on children's claims about private personal knowledge within their own epistemic domain, this analysis identifies and examines two types of practices through which parents assert epistemic primacy over their children: 1) parents respond to children's first-

position claims about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences by confirming or disconfirming them; 2) parents ask test questions to request information within their children's domain and then evaluate their answers as correct or incorrect. These practices indicate that restricting children's autonomy over their claims constitutes one important way that adults construct children *as children* in social interaction. The last part of the analysis addresses how this pattern shifts over time as children become older and are thus treated as more autonomous and responsible for what they know.

3.3.1 Confirming (or disconfirming) children's claims

This section focuses on children's first position claims concerning private personal knowledge to which they have primary and sometimes exclusive epistemic access. As the first speaker to make a claim, children's asserting actions would normally carry epistemic primacy, and other speakers would orient to the firstness of their claims (Heritage, 2002a; Heritage & Raymond, 2005). However, as the analysis reveals, even under circumstances in which 1) children have direct, primary, or even sole access to their claims, 2) children assert the claims in first position, and 3) such claims do not make confirmation or disconfirmation a conditionally relevant next action, parents often confirm or disconfirm the claims in second position, thereby asserting epistemic primacy over children's propositions. This is a significant departure from adult conversation where such first position assertions are only rarely confirmed by others (Stivers, 2005). When this happens in adult conversation, it is normally done under circumstances where, for instance, the second speaker had previously alluded to the proposition and is thus claiming ownership over it (Schegloff, 1996)¹.

¹ Below is a simplified example of confirming allusions from Schegloff's (1996) data:

Instances in parent-child interaction do not share such context. For example, in Extract 1, Ran asserts her food preference in first position. Ran’s mother had not previously talked about Ran’s preference, and the preference is certainly Ran’s to own. Nonetheless, even though Ran does not invite confirmation, Mom offers confirmation with *dui* (“correct”), which assesses the validity of Ran’s prior claim and displays Mom’s primary right to evaluate it (Kendrick, 2010), followed by a full repeat², which also indexes Mom’s epistemic primacy (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Schegloff, 1996; Stivers, 2005).

Extract (1) Ran: 6y2m

- 01 RAN: 我現在 沒有 那麼 喜歡 吃 薯條 了。
 wo xianzai meiyou name xihuan chi shutiao le.
 1S now NEG that much like eat fries PT
I don't like to eat fries that much now.
- 02 MOM: 對。 你 現在 沒有 很 喜歡 吃 薯條。
 dui. ni xianzai meiyou hen xihuan chi shutiao.
 correct 2S now NEG very like eat fries
Right. You don't like to eat fries very much now.

Although Mom as Ran’s primary caregiver apparently has some knowledge of Ran’s likes and dislikes, this is through observing her past behaviors, an indirect form of access to her preferences. Rather than claiming this knowledge or treating Ran’s assertion as news, Mom asserts epistemic primacy over Ran’s claim by confirming it in second position. Through this

Interviewer: Why do you write juvenile books?

Interviewee: I started writing juvenile books for entirely practical reasons.

Interviewer: Making money.

Interviewee: Making money. That practical reason.

In repeating the interviewer’s formulation of “making money” as alluded to “practical reasons,” the interviewee confirms the status of “practical reasons” as an allusion to making money. This tie back to “practical reasons” as the allusive reference source is also evidenced in the interviewee’s subsequent remark “*that* practical reason.”

² Besides the person references, there are two differences between Ran’s claim and Mom’s repeat: 1) *name* “that much” vs. *hen* “very;” 2) the turn-final particle *le*, which Li and Thompson (1981) term “currently relevant state” particle as it serves the function of signaling that “a state of affairs has special current relevance with respect to some particular situation” (p. 240). With her use of *name* “that much” and *le*, Ran emphasizes comparison and distinction between the past and the present (i.e., “I used to like it a lot but not that much anymore”), whereas Mom’s formulation is primarily concerned with the current state (i.e., “you don’t like it very much now”).

practice, Mom implicitly asserts that she knows Ran's food preference at least as well as Ran does.

Extract 1 exemplifies a typical case of parents confirming children's claims to which children have primary access. The practice of confirming in second position in parent-child interaction does the work of asserting primary rights just as it does in adult conversation (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Stivers, 2005). However, in adult conversation, this is normally deployed only when the first speaker has in some way failed to attend to the recipient's primary rights over the domain. The parents in these data, in contrast, do not have primary or even equal access to their children's claims. Therefore, the relatively common usage of this practice in parent-child interaction provides evidence for parents' construction of children as having reduced rights to claim epistemic primacy and thus autonomy over their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

It is, however, not the case that parents work to undermine children's autonomy as an interactional goal. Rather, reducing children's epistemic rights should be understood as a contingency of the construction of childhood. As Enfield (2011) argued, there is a distinction between a claim derived from parents' official authority (that they gave birth to their children) and a demonstration enabled by their actual authority (that they know their children). To maintain their status as *parents*, parents need to prove with action that they are capable of carrying out their entitlements and responsibilities. In Extract 1, Mom's confirmation works to affiliate with Ran and demonstrates that she knows her child, which is essential for sustaining her status as a parent. A consequence of her practice, though, is reducing Ran's epistemic rights. This analysis examines the mechanisms through which childhood and parenthood are socially constructed and does not evaluate these parental practices as "good" or "bad" parenting.

The asymmetry between parents and children is even more evident when some interactional issues concerning children's claims emerge. For instance, Extract 2 illustrates how a parent corrects the linguistic structure of the child's claim while also confirming it. Here, Lei is riding on a Mercedes-Benz toy car and is making a noise with the steering wheel. Mom tells Lei to be less vigorous (line 1), to which Lei conforms (line 2). After a five-second lapse, Lei asserts, *zheme xihuan Benz* ("like Benz so much" in line 5). This claim is linguistically problematic because the subject is missing. While Mandarin is a pro-drop language, the subject of a sentence is to be omitted only when it is inferable from the preceding talk, such as in answers to questions (see Li & Thompson, 1981). Since Lei's claim is produced in first position, a subject is required.

Extract (2) Lei: 2y2m

- 01 MOM: Lei-Lei 小 力 一點.
 xiao li yidian.
 little force a little
 Lei-Lei a little less vigorous.
- 02 LEI: ((stop making noise))
- 03 MOM: 小 力 輕輕 的.
 xiao li qingqing de.
 little force gentle PT
 Less vigorous be gentle.
- 04 (5.0)
- 05 LEI: -> 這麼 喜歡 Benz.
 zheme xihuan Benz.
 this much like
 Like Benz so much.
- 06 (0.2)
- 07 MOM: => 你 這麼 喜歡 Benz. 對 啊.
 ni zheme xihuan Benz. dui a.
 2S this much like correct PT
 You like Benz so much. (That's) right.

In line 7, Mom repeats Lei's claim and adds the subject *ni* ("you") with an emphasis, which is hearable as an embedded correction (Jefferson, 1987) of the grammar and simultaneously the

claim per se. Rather than the more common norm-guided practice of other-initiated repair where the speaker offers a candidate understanding or an uncertainty-marked modulation (Schegloff et al., 1977), here, Mom's correction orients to her primary right to simply assert that it is Lei who likes Benz so much.

Since Lei is currently riding on the car, his claim is not merely a general preference but also a sentiment of how he feels at the moment. Even though Mom has knowledge of Lei's preferences through observing his past behaviors, she does not have direct access to Lei's feeling at this particular moment. Still, following the grammatical correction, Mom goes on to confirm Lei's claim with an assessment (*dui* "correct") followed by a turn-final particle *a* with a slightly high pitch. This particle is frequently used to inform or confirm something in responsive position, normally in answers to questions, as it indexes the speaker's pre-existing knowledge of the matter and thereby suggests their epistemic primacy (Wu, 2004). In this regard, Mom's response *dui a* is designed as if the confirmation were requested by Lei in the first place, which would imply that she knows how Lei feels better than he does. While Mom's confirmation shows her affiliation with Lei's feeling, it also suggests how she treats Lei as a child with limited rights to claim epistemic primacy.

In Extract 3 below, we see a more elaborate illustration of the phenomenon, in which the parent confirms the child's claim in second position even though the referent of the claim is unclear. Here, Zoey and Mom are talking about the storybook *Tangled*, and Mom positively evaluates Zoey's ability to read the story (line 3). Immediately following the assessment, Zoey asserts that she is good at "go:den things" (line 5). Although the sequential order of Zoey's assessment would allow Mom to assume that the assessment is, at least to some extent, related to reading the story, Mom apparently does not realize what "go:den things" refer to until line 14.

Extract (3) Zoey: 3y5m

01 MOM: Do you read the whole story to Mama all the ti[:me?
02 ZOE: [Yes.
03 MOM: You do. I know you're very good at read[ing it.
04 ZOE: [I- I'm- I'm gon-
05 -> I'm good at go:den things.
06 MOM: -> You meant- you're good at (.) [good at things. Yes.]
07 [(nod three times)]
08 ZOE: I'm good at go:lden things.
09 MOM: You're good at golden things?
10 ZOE: Yeah.
11 (0.5)/(MOM smiles)
12 ZOE: Cuz I- cuz I know all the golden things and, (.) and- (.)
13 can [si:ng.
14 MOM: [.hhh0::h you mean all the golden wo:rds?
15 ZOE: Yea:h.=
16 MOM: => =Yeah. The ka- the words that are in gold. You do know
17 all those words.
18 ZOE: Yeah I know (those).=
19 MOM: =You memorize all the wo:rds.=right? In all your stories?
20 ZOE: Yeah.

Throughout the sequence, Mom orients to herself as the one to assert and assess these matters related to Zoey — whether she reads the story, how good she is at reading it, that she is good at things, and ultimately her knowledge of the golden words. In line 6, Mom initiates repair on Zoey's claim but produces an incorrect solution. Even though “good at (.) good at things” is too broad to be a likely interpretation, Mom confirms Zoey's claim with a turn-final agreement token *yes* accompanied by her nodding gesture. Similar to *dui a* in Extract 2, the agreement token *yes* is designed as if the confirmation were requested by Zoey. Moreover, in contrast with the normal ordering of responses to questions (i.e., “yes it is”), this marked formulation of placing the agreement token after the repeat prioritizes the action of adjusting the turn rather than agreeing with Zoey's terms (Heritage & Raymond, 2005). In so doing, Mom subordinates the action of agreeing with Zoey to the assertion of her epistemic rights, which works to upgrade her claim in second position.

Zoey seems to recognize the miscommunication as she reasserts her claim with a clearer articulation of the “l” sound in “go:lden” (line 8). This time, Mom correctly identifies Zoey's

utterance and that “golden things” refer to the golden-colored words in the storybook. After Zoey confirms that she is indeed referring to the golden words, Mom again validates Zoey’s claim. Her full repeat with the expanded auxiliary verb (“you *do* know all those words” in lines 16–17) weakens Zoey’s claimed primacy and reinforces her authority in second position (Raymond, 2017; Stivers, 2005). While Mom’s practice works to affiliate with Zoey’s self-praise, her subordination of Zoey’s epistemic right to assess her own ability is part of how she treats Zoey as a child, even as she affiliates with her.

Thus far, I have presented cases of parents confirming children’s claims in second position as evidence for the argument that parents reduce children’s epistemic autonomy, and this is part of their construction of childhood. In what follows, I provide further evidence for this argument by showing how parents tread even more into their children’s domains by explicitly challenging their assertions even when parents have restricted epistemic access to these claims. Extract 4 takes place at lunchtime when Riley’s parents and grandparents are passing around a salad bowl with uncooked mushrooms in it. The segment begins as Riley turns to Mom and asserts, “I want mushroom:m” (line 1). Riley’s action can be understood as a request for the mushrooms and simultaneously an implicit claim of liking mushrooms. Mom deals with these two aspects separately. While she grants Riley’s request by giving her a piece of mushroom, she challenges Riley’s claimed enjoyment of uncooked mushrooms (lines 2–4).

Extract (4) Riley: 2y9m

01 RIL: -> I want mushroom::m Mama,
02 MOM: You want the mushroom? ^Okay, ((take salad bowl)) °mushroom.°
03 >You want mushroom<but this is not a cooked one baby,
04 ((Put one piece of mushroom on RIL’s plate)) Okay?
05 You like it cooked. So:,
((one minute of transcript omitted))
06 RIL: -> I like ^coo:ked mushro[om].
07 MOM: [You like cooked mushroom yes.
08 So don’t eat that one baby.

Wanting something is completely personal and thus is normally oriented to as a matter over which a speaker possesses sole authority by the speaker and interlocutors. In this case, however, Mom undercuts Riley's claim by asserting her knowledge of Riley's general preference for cooked mushrooms. Instead of directly disconfirming Riley's desire at this moment (i.e., "you don't want the mushroom"), Mom invalidates the basis of Riley's desire by invoking her general preference (i.e., "*I know* you wouldn't like the mushroom"). As Riley's primary caregiver, Mom has indirect access to Riley's general food preferences through observing what she eats. Along with her expert knowledge of the difference between cooked and uncooked mushrooms, Mom's authority over Riley's asserted desire for the mushroom may be justified, yet it highlights how she treats Riley as a child with limited rights to claim her own wants.

It turns out that Mom is correct about Riley's preference. One minute later, when Grandma passes around pizza with cooked mushrooms on it, Riley asserts, "I like ^coo:ked mushroom" (line 6). Mom confirms Riley's claim in responsive position with a full repeat and a turn-final agreement token *yes* (line 7) and then tells her not to eat the cold mushroom she requested earlier. Although Mom works to affiliate with Riley by underscoring her effort to contrast raw and cooked mushrooms and consolidating that distinction, her practice of second-position repeat still undermines Riley's epistemic primacy, as we have analyzed in Extract 3.

Extract 5 also illustrates a child asserting her wants, which then become a site of contestation between the child and her parents. Here, Zoey is about to have dessert with her family and needs to choose between a pecan pie and a pumpkin pie. The sequence begins as Zoey points at the pumpkin pie and asserts, "I don't want that one" (line 2). Similar to the previous example, Zoey's action can be understood as a claim of disliking the pumpkin pie and also a request for the other pie, which makes the adults' action of getting her the pecan pie

relevant. She does not invite confirmation or disconfirmation of her preference for the pecan pie. Yet, both Dad and Mom challenge her claim (lines 3–4).

Extract (5) Zoey: 4y2m

01 ZOE: I don't- I want- ((point at pumpkin pie))
02 -> I don't want that- I don't want that one.
03 DAD: You [don't want] pumpkin?
04 MOM: [You don't?]
05 (0.2)
06 MOM: That's the one you brou:ght.
07 DAD: This is pumpkin. You like pumpkin.
08 ZOE: -> I like pumpkin.
09 DAD: You do: like pumpkin.
10 ZOE: I want- I want cream on mine.

While simply providing Zoey with what she requests would be to treat her as an autonomous individual whose wants are hers to own (and mistakes hers to make), Dad and Mom both initiate repair on Zoey's claim. Their other-repetitions serve the function of projecting a challenge to Zoey's claim (Rossi, 2020). Specifically, Dad uses a full repeat and replaces “that one” with “pumpkin” (line 3), which works to account for Zoey's rejection of the pie — she does not realize it is pumpkin.

With no immediate uptake from Zoey, Mom and Dad pose the challenge more explicitly and work to invalidate Zoey's claim. Even though Mom and Dad do not have direct access to Zoey's wants at this moment, they assert their knowledge of Zoey's past activity (“that's the one you brou:ght” in line 6) and past preference (“you like pumpkin” in line 7), to which they have access. Dad seems to have correctly identified that Zoey did not realize the pie she rejected is pumpkin since Zoey subsequently confirms she indeed likes pumpkin (line 8).

Although second position claims typically imply epistemic subordination (Heritage & Raymond, 2005; Stivers, 2005), Zoey's assertion is nonetheless hearable as a competitive move since she has direct, primary access to what she likes and, if she were an adult, should have

authority over the claim. However, Dad further upgrades his epistemic primacy over Zoey's claim by using a full repeat with the auxiliary expanded and stressed (line 9), which works to undermine Zoey's default ownership over the claim (Raymond, 2017; Stivers, 2005). In response, Zoey backs down in this competition and requests cream on her pumpkin pie (line 10), orienting to her own epistemic domain as malleable. Here too, the treatment of Zoey as a child can be separated from affiliation with the child. Both parents work to get Zoey's wants right, but their practices undermine her epistemic rights.

While many cases of children's claims concern their own preferences and wants, there are other types of claims about children's private thoughts and experiences where we see the same pattern as well. Extract 6 concerns a child's assertion about her plan for action, which is explicitly challenged by her mother. Prior to this segment, Mom prompted Zoey to talk about what she had done in preschool on Thursday. Zoey reported that she did not get a chance to make a rainbow because "Ms. Maya didn't make time for me" (data not shown). This extract begins as Dad walks into the room in the middle of Zoey and Mom's conversation. After Mom provides the context for Dad (lines 2 and 5), Zoey asserts, "I'm never gonna come back to Ms Maya anymore" (line 7).

Extract (6) Zoey: 3y5m

01 DAD: What happened.
02 MOM: Ms Maya didn't make time for her.
03 DAD: Whe:n.
04 ZOE: Cu[z I-
05 MOM: [On Thursday.
06 ZOE: Cuz- cuz I mean we made a rainbow an I (made/mean) so sa:d,
07 -> and I and then I'm never gonna come back to Ms Maya anymore.
08 MOM: That's not true. You're gonna go back to see Ms Maya.=cuz
09 you love Ms Maya.
10 ZOE: W'l I don't. I [love ()
11 DAD: [What about Ms Risa.
12 ZOE: No, I'm not gonna come back for them.
13 DAD: No:?=
14 MOM: =No:, huh.

15 DAD: But they would be sa:d then.
16 MOM: She's so final in her decisions.

Given her status as a child, Zoey's decision of not going to preschool is apparently not hers to make. Nonetheless, from her perspective, the thought process of this decision is valid and lies entirely in her own domain. In line 8, Mom immediately disputes Zoey's decision and produces a counter-claim with absolute certainty. Although Mom's disagreement might be hearable as asserting her deontic authority, i.e., the right to determine others' courses of future actions (Stevanovic & Peräkylä, 2012), she immediately rushes through to an account, "=cuz you love Ms Maya" (lines 8–9; note the latch marked with = in the transcript). This account highlights Mom's epistemic authority, not her deontic authority — she rejects Zoey's decision not on the basis that she *wants* Zoey to go to preschool but that she *knows* Zoey loves her teacher. Similar to Extracts 4 and 5, while it is practically impossible to disprove children's claims to which they have sole direct access, Mom uses Zoey's past behavior as the ground for contesting Zoey's claim. In so doing, Mom treats Zoey as a child by subordinating her epistemic primacy over the current claim.

This case also illustrates a dimension of epistemic primacy as a site of contestation that we have not seen in prior cases: Zoey explicitly resists Mom's counter-claim and account (line 10). She then reasserts her decision when Dad nominates another teacher whom Zoey presumably adores as well (line 12). This time, Mom appears to acquiesce to Zoey's position without actually ceding much authority. When Dad seeks to persuade Zoey to change her mind (line 15), Mom blocks Dad's pursuit on behalf of Zoey (line 16), which again conveys her rights and authority to evaluate Zoey's decision. Mom's practice suggests that, while parents sometimes do acquiesce to children's claims, there is still a continued orientation to parents' rights and authority as they remain in the driving seat in interaction.

In this section, I have shown that parents consistently confirm or disconfirm their children's first position propositions about matters within their primary epistemic domains. In so doing, parents compete with children's primacy over the propositions even though both the epistemic access to and the sequential position of the claims would favor children. I argue that this asymmetry is partially responsible for the social construction of *parent* and *child* in interaction. Parents are oriented to *as* parents with rights and responsibilities to know their children, whereas children are treated *as* children with restricted epistemic primacy over matters in their own domains.

This asymmetry can also be understood in Goffman's (1981) notion of the three components of speakerhood grounded in their differential rights and responsibilities to the utterance: *animator*, who articulates the claim, *author*, who composes the forms of the claim, and *principal*, whose positions are established by the claim and commits to the claim. While interactants tend to presuppose an alignment of these three roles in ordinary adult interaction — an animator is normally treated as author and principal unless there is evidence otherwise (Enfield, 2011), children are not consistently oriented to *as* such. Even though they animate and author their claims, their primary rights and responsibilities as principals of their claims are often reduced.

As previously noted, while this analysis examines parental practices that reduce the autonomy of child interlocutors, this should be understood as a contingency of the construction of childhood, not an interactional goal of parents. As the analysis reveals, parents tend to use these practices to accomplish affiliating goals that do not involve asserting parental control, such as affiliating with the child's self-praise (Extract 3) and assisting the child in making optimal decisions (Extracts 4 and 5). Therefore, subordinating children's epistemic primacy to these

goals should be considered a general norm in parent-child interaction in the American and Taiwanese societies rather than a demonstration of authoritarian parenting.

3.3.2 Recipient-side test questions

The second form of evidence for children's reduced epistemic rights is parents' use of recipient-side test questions (Antaki, 2013). Test questions, which are used to request information already known to the questioner in order to find out whether the recipient knows it (Searle, 1969), are prevalent in environments involving asymmetrical relationships, such as educational settings (Mehan, 1979)³. In adult-child interaction, test questions constitute a majority of all questions children experience, even more common than genuine requests for information (Shatz, 1979; Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2008). The main purpose of test questions in ordinary adult-child interaction is to assess children's knowledge, although they can be used to establish or maintain joint attention for younger children as well (Olsen-Fulero & Conforti, 1983; Shatz, 1979).

One particular variant of test questions is what Antaki (2013) termed *recipient-side test questions*. Drawing on interactions between adults with intellectual disabilities and care staff

³ A classic example of a test question in classroom discourse is "what time is it?" As Mehan (1979) discussed, when this question is designed as a genuine request for information in everyday conversation, the sequence would take the following shape:

A: What time is it?
B: 2:30.
A: Thank you.

The same question, when issued in the classroom setting, would be hearable as a test question, and the sequence would unfold like this:

A: What time is it?
B: 2:30
A: Very good.

In the second sequence, the evaluation rather than acknowledgment in third position indicates that A has known the answer all along, and the question is used to test whether B is capable of telling the time.

members at a residential service, Antaki identified how staff members issue recipient-side test questions that appear to be designed to genuinely solicit information “that is truly within the recipient’s domain, but whose answers are nevertheless assessed by the questioner as being right or wrong” (p.7)⁴. This practice is deployed for educational or therapeutic purposes and reflects the cognitive asymmetry between staff members and residents.

The prevalence of recipient-side test questions in everyday parent-child interaction provides another revealing window into how childhood is constructed in social interaction. Parents often ask children about thoughts, feelings, or experiences that are primarily and sometimes exclusively owned by children but then orient to their own rights to evaluate children’s answers. Extract 7 exemplifies a recipient-side test question about the child’s preference, to which Dad only has indirect access.

Extract (7) Ran: 6y2m

- 01 DAD: -> 你 最 不 喜 歡 吃 的 食 物 是 什 麼?
ni zui bu xihuan chi de shiwu shi sheme?
2S most NEG like eat ASSO food COP what
What is your least favorite food?
- 02 RAN: 馬 鈴 薯 .
malingshu.
potato
Potatoes.
- 03 DAD: => 對 啊 .
dui a.
correct PT
(That’s) right.

⁴ Below is a simplified example of a recipient-side test question from Antaki’s (2013) data:

Staff: What did you do after dinner?
Resident: ((gesture of knocking nails in))
Staff: That’s right.

The staff member’s question is designed as if it is a genuine request for information since the resident, if he were an adult with normal cognitive skills, would have primary epistemic rights over his own experiences. However, the staff’s evaluation in third position recasts the original question as a recipient-side test question. In so doing, the staff member claims final authority over the matter being requested.

Dad's question appears to genuinely seek information to which Ran has sole direct access and therefore would have epistemic primacy. However, after Ran provides an answer, Dad offers an evaluation *dui a* ("that's right"), a practice that, as already discussed in Extract 2, indexes his epistemic primacy over the proposition of what Ran dislikes. Just as parents consistently assert epistemic primacy over children's first position claims, so too do parents claim authority to assert children's correctness or incorrectness when they answer questions in second position. This practice thus constitutes a second practice through which parents reduce children's epistemic primacy and socially construct childhood in interaction. As previously noted, it is not the case that parents work to subordinate children's rights as an interactional goal. Since this segment takes place during a dinner with a family friend, it is likely that Dad uses this practice to demonstrate to the friend (as well as Ran and other family members) that he knows his child, which essentially works to affiliate with Ran. Yet, in so doing, he reduces Ran's epistemic rights.

The privileged rights and entitlements associated with parenthood are even more salient when compared with Antaki's (2013) findings in residential service, where most recipient-side test questions involved staff members asking residents about their recent activities, to which the questioners also had direct access. The staff members' epistemic primacy is justified by their actual knowledge about the residents and their expertise as individuals with normal cognitive competence. Even with the twofold warrant, only in rare cases did the staff members ask about private experiences, such as residents' meal preferences. Furthermore, in both cases Antaki presented regarding private experiences, staff members did not explicitly assess the answers as right or wrong but only indirectly imply that the answers were not what they had anticipated. That is, staff members did not orient to possessing rights to judge what residents preferred. This

contrasts with how Dad assesses Ran's answer as correct, which demonstrates the special status of *parents* as well as the subordination of *children*.

Extract 8 moves from the domain of preferences to an even more private domain: feelings. Here, Zoey and Mom are talking about Zoey's scooting experience. Before this segment, Zoey mentioned that she is able to scooter fast on a ramp. Mom then brought up that Zoey had scooted up a hill all by herself the other day even though she was not confident at first (line 1). In line 7, Mom asks a recipient-side test question regarding how Zoey felt about the activity.

Extract (8) Zoey: 3y5m

01 MOM: You said you couldn't do it but then I said (.) you gotta try.=
02 =Right?
03 KAT: And then I ^DID IT.
04 MOM: And then you did it.
05 (0.7)
06 MOM: And then you didn't even want help right? Cuz then you could
07 -> do it=cuz you felt rea:lly: (.) what.
08 (0.2)
09 KAT: Strong I feel (no/now)[()
10 MOM: => [Strong and, p- p- p- prou::d.

While Zoey and Mom were both involved in the scooting event, Mom did not have direct access to how Zoey felt inside. Nonetheless, Mom treats Zoey's answer as hers to judge as right or wrong. She first confirms Zoey's answer with a repeat ("strong" in line 10) and then supplies an additional answer ("prou::d"), treating Zoey's answer as insufficient. Specifically, before actually producing *proud*, Mom makes the "p" sound three times as a phonemic cue, which works to facilitate word retrieval with Zoey. Through this practice, Mom helps Zoey expand her emotional literacy and express the kind of feeling that one would have in the given circumstance, yet she simultaneously asserts epistemic primacy over Zoey's feelings, treating them as something able to be taught.

The next case further illustrates how parents deal with children's responses to recipient-side test questions. While recipient-side test questions concern topics that recipients are accountable for knowing, children sometimes fail to answer these questions. When this happens, although parents could directly reveal the answer or move on without further addressing the issue, they tend to provide guidance as if they are dealing with standard test questions deployed for educational purposes. For instance, in Extract 9, Mom asks Zoey about something Zoey said the day before (line 3), but Zoey has difficulty recollecting the answer.

Extract (9) Zoey: 3y5m

01 MOM: Do you like mango?
02 ZOE: Yeah.=
03 MOM: -> =What did you say mango rhymes with yesterday.
04 ZOE: Ma, (.) mango.
05 MOM: Yeah. Ma ma:ngo. But you said it [rhymed with] something.
06 ZOE: [°Man°]
07 Ma,
08 MOM: You said it rhy- said it rhy:med with a bird. [Remember?
09 ZOE: [Man-
10 Mango. Flamingo.
11 MOM: => Yeah you said flaming(hh)o. That's right. You said it rhymed
12 with flamingo.

This case is similar to a standard test question sequence in educational settings as Mom shepherds Zoey towards the correct answer. The hint provided by Mom (line 8) increases her epistemic primacy and successfully leads to Zoey's correct answer (line 10). On occasion, typical adults also forget about things they have said or done, but other knowing adults are more likely to provide answers rather than guidance. In contrast, here Mom prioritizes obtaining an answer from Zoey over the progress of the sequence, thus relaxing the normative preference for progressivity (Schegloff, 2007b). This departure from adult norms in social interaction again conveys an asymmetry between adults and children — Mom orients to her right to test what Zoey remembers and guide her when needed, whereas in ordinary adult conversation, interlocutors are unlikely to be treated as having similar rights.

When children's answers to recipient-side test questions depart from parents' expectations, parents sometimes challenge these answers. This provides further support for the argument that these practices reduce children's autonomy and construct their status as children. Extract 10 occurs when Dad is chatting with his friend, who compliments Hanna on her new haircut. Dad mentions that Grandpa did the haircut and then selects Hanna to answer whether she wants Grandpa to cut her hair next time (line 1). Dad's question appears to be a genuine information-seeking question since Hanna's wants are exclusively hers. However, after Hanna provides an affirming answer (line 2), both Dad and Mom take issue with her answer.

Extract (10) Hanna: 3y2m

- 01 DAD: -> 你 (.) 下次 要 不 要 給 爺爺 剪 頭髮?
 ni (.) xiaci yao bu yao gei yeye jian toufa?
 2S next time want-NEG-want let grandpa cut hair
 You(.) next time do (you) want to let Grandpa cut (your) hair?
- 02 HAN: 要.
 yao.
 want
 (I) want.
- 03 (0.2)
- 04 DAD: 要 不 要?
 yao bu yao?
 want-NEG-want
 Do (you) want?
- 05 HAN: 要.
 yao.
 want
 (I) want.
- 06 DAD: => [要 給 爺爺 剪 喔?
 [yao gei yeye jian ou?
 want let grandpa cut Q
 (You) want to let Grandpa cut it?
- 07 MOM: => [(要 給 爺爺 剪 喔?)
 [(yao gei yeye jian ou?)
 want let grandpa cut Q
 ((You) want to let Grandpa cut it?)
- 08 你上次 不 是 說 你 要 去 頭髮店 剪?
 ni shangci bu shi shuo ni yao qu toufadian jian?
 2S last time NEG COP say 2S want go hair salon cut
 Didn't you say before that you want to go to a hair salon?

09 HAN: O::h.

After a short delay, Dad initiates repair on Hanna's answer with a partial repeat (line 4), which implies his disagreement (Schegloff, 2007b) and projects a challenge to Hanna's claim (Rossi, 2020). Hanna again confirms that she wants Grandpa to do her haircut. This time, Dad produces a full repeat with a stress on "want" (line 6), making his disagreement clearer. Mom also challenges Hanna's answer by invoking her previous, inconsistent proposition (line 8). Specifically, her turn is designed as a highly assertive negative interrogative (Heritage, 2002b), which invites Hanna's confirmation. Mom's practice is similar to the practices shown in Extracts 4, 5, and 6 — it is difficult to directly disprove children's claims when they exclusively own them, but parents often undermine these claims by asserting knowledge of things they have access to, such as children's past preferences and activities.

Given that Dad was already telling the friend that Grandpa cut Hanna's hair, he could have directly told the friend that Hanna had said she wanted to go to a hair salon. Dad's selection of Hanna as the next speaker to answer this recipient-side test question not only engages Hanna in the ongoing conversation but also allows her to talk about her own thoughts, which highlights her autonomy and agency. However, when Hanna's response does not fit with their expectations, Dad and Mom prioritize asserting epistemic primacy over Hanna's claim and demonstrate to the friend and Hanna that they know their child.

This section analyzed how parents issue recipient-side test questions in conversation with children. These questions are designed as if they are genuine information-seeking questions, but once children provide answers, parents assert their epistemic primacy over the answers by treating them as something they have rights to confirm or disconfirm. While parents tend to utilize these questions to accomplish affiliative interactional goals, such as expanding the child's emotional literacy (Extract 8), scaffolding the child's phonics recognition (Extract 9), and

inviting the child to talk about herself (Extract 10), these practices display a strong epistemic authority pertaining to parents.

3.3.3 Becoming more autonomous

In the current dataset, young children typically conform to parents' asserted epistemic primacy and rarely push back possibly because they have just begun to grasp theory of mind (Astington, 2006) and may not yet have a comprehensive understanding of epistemic considerations in interaction. However, as children's cognitive and interactional competence develops over time, they come to be treated as more autonomous and accountable for what they know, and thus epistemic primacy derived from parenthood is likely to shift. In this section, I present cases with older children (age six and above) that depict this shift, but since the current dataset involves primarily younger children, the findings in this section should be interpreted as a preliminary rather than a conclusive one.

In previous analyses, we have seen that when young children's claims are not consistent with what their parents know about them, parents usually challenge these claims (Extracts 4–6 and 10). In contrast, in the following case involving a six-year-old child (who is significantly older than the children in Extracts 4–6 and 10) asserting a claim different from what her parent anticipated, the parent acknowledges rather than challenges the claim. One minute before this extract, Mom asked Ran about her favorite animal, but Ran had a hard time figuring out her answer. Mom and Dad then asked Ran's sibling Jia the same question, and after Jia provided an answer, they talked about Jia's favorite animal for a while. After their discussion, Ran produces "rabbit" (line 1).

Extract (11) Ran: 6y2m

01 RAN: -> Rabbit.
02 (0.5)
03 MOM: => 你 最 喜 歡 rabbit 嗎?
ni zui xihuan rabbit ma?
2S most like Q
Is your favorite rabbit?
04 什 麼 時 候 改 的?
sheme shihou gai de?
what time change NOM
When did (you) change it?
05 RAN: 啊 不 然 我 以 前 什 麼- 喜 歡 什 麼=
a buran wo yiqian sheme- xihuan sheme=
PT otherwise 1S before what like what
Otherwise I used to what- like what=
06 MOM: =貓頭鷹.
=maotouying.
owl
=*Owl.*
07 (0.5)
08 RAN: 我 喜 歡 rabbi:t.
wo xihuan rabbi:t.
1S like
I like rabbi:t.
09 MOM: Okay.

Ran's answer is significantly delayed sequentially and is produced without sufficient context to connect to Mom's original question (e.g., "my favorite is rabbit" would suffice). Therefore, Mom's question "is your favorite rabbit?" (line 3) is hearable as a genuine request for confirmation rather than a challenge. Mom's follow-up question ("when did you change it?" in line 4) also treats Ran's claim as true and valid. Although Mom does implicitly assert her prior access to what Ran *used to* like, she defers to Ran's initial claim (line 1) and reassertion (line 8), thereby validating Ran's status as an autonomous individual whose preference is hers to own. Mom's practice here may be accounted for by Ran's older age and hence her higher autonomy over her own claims.

The practice of recipient-side test questions is likely to change over time as well. Prior research has demonstrated that children as young as the age of two are able to distinguish test

questions from genuine information-seeking questions (Grosse & Tomasello, 2012)⁵. Although recipient-side test questions are designed to be “more genuine” than standard test questions, it is likely that children in the preschool stage begin to understand the interactional intentions behind such questions (i.e., that they are being assessed). As children become more autonomous regarding their own knowledge, they may refuse to be tested on matters within their primary epistemic domain. For instance, in Extract 12, a six-year-old child resists her mother’s recipient-side test questions by claiming that she does not know the answer while she apparently does. Prior to the sequence, Mom was chatting with her friend and mentioned that Ning is now in kindergarten. Mom then selects Ning and asks her about a Christmas party that they both attended the day before (line 1), possibly because it was an event held by or related to the kindergarten.

Extract (12) Ning: 6y; Yun: 7y11m

- 01 MOM: -> Ning-Ning 我們 昨天 去 參加 誰 的 聖誕 晚會?
 women zuotian qu canjia shei de shengdan wanhui?
 1P yesterday go attend who GEN Xmas party
Ning-Ning whose Xmas party did we attend yesterday?
- 02 NIN: 不 知道.
 bu zhidao.
 NEG know
(I) don't know.
- 03 MOM: 誰 的?
 shei de?
 who GEN
Whose?
- 04 NIN: 不 知道::
 bu zhidao::
 NEG know
(I) don't know::.
- 05 (0.2)
- 06 MOM: 不 知道 嗎?
 bu zhidao ma?
 NEG know Q

⁵ In their experiment, test questions were operated as intentionally hiding something while the child was watching and then asking the child “where is the [object]?”

- Do (you) not know?*
- 07 YUN: 假 不 知.
jia bu zhi.
fake NEG know
(She) is pretending (she) doesn't know.
- 08 NIN: 不 知道:
bu zhidao:
NEG know
(I) don't know:.
- 09 MOM: [是 誰?
[shi shei?
COP who
[Who was (it)?
- 10 YUN: [((reach for dessert))
- 11 NIN: 不 知[道
bu zhi[dao.
NEG know
(I) don't know.
- 12 MOM: [這 甜點 可以 吃. 很 好吃 耶.
[zhe tiandian keyi chi. hen haochi ye.
this dessert allow eat very delicious PT
(You) can have this dessert. (It) is very delicious.
- 13 Ning-Ning 你 要 不 要 吃 一 個?
ni yao bu yao chi yi ge?
2S want-NEG-want eat one CL
Ning-Ning do you want to have one?

Considering the regular cognitive competence for her age as well as the recency and salience of the event, it is safe to assume that Ning knows the answer. However, she responds to Mom's question with a non-answer response "I don't know" and insists on not knowing the answer in the face of Mom's multiple pursuits (lines 3, 6, 9) and her older sibling Yun's accusation that she is merely pretending not to know the answer (line 7). Ning's non-compliance with Mom's question agenda implies that she refuses to be tested for her knowledge of a recent event.

Throughout the sequence, it is evident that Mom recognizes that Ning is capable of answering but unwilling to do so because, when Ning indicates that she does not know the answer, Mom simply repeats the question instead of offering guidance (in contrast to Extracts 8 and 9 involving younger children). After her pursuits fail to elicit an answer from Ning, Mom

shifts to the next topic (lines 12–13), and the answer is never addressed. This case displays how Mom balances subordinating Ning’s epistemic primacy and fostering her autonomy. While there is no answer and evaluation produced in this sequence, Mom’s action of asking the recipient-side test question in the first place suggests her asserted epistemic primacy over Ning’s experience. When Ning continues to resist the question, however, Mom orients to Ning’s autonomy, refraining from further claiming her authority (e.g., revealing the correct answer or disputing Ning’s claim of not knowing the answer).

In this section, we have examined cases that suggest a shift in the patterns of how parents and children negotiate and contest the rights and responsibilities related to their epistemic primacy as children become more autonomous and accountable for their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Since the findings are grounded on limited cases of older children, future research with more data on interactions with older children will be needed to draw a more conclusive argument about this developmental process of children’s epistemic rights.

3.4 DISCUSSION

This chapter shows that in interaction with children, parents consistently orient to themselves (as do others) as having epistemic primacy over their children’s claims about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in both initial and responsive positions. Through the use of second position confirmations and recipient-side test questions, parents treat children *as children* and construct childhood as a status associated with restricted rights to claim epistemic primacy in social interaction.

Contemporary studies of the sociology of childhood have been concerned to conceptualize the social construction of childhood and theorize the ways in which children’s

reality is negotiated in everyday life through their interactions with adults. This chapter contributes to this line of research by offering empirical evidence for how adult interlocutors orient to children's restricted rights to claim epistemic primacy as a particular contingency of childhood on a moment-by-moment basis in social interaction. In addition, since most studies in this field rely on the ethnographic methodology to document children's everyday interactions (Corsaro, 2018), this conversation analytic study carries methodological implications by demonstrating that we are able to systematically identify and analyze how the relative rights of children and parents are made visible and consequential in the details of naturally occurring conversational data.

This chapter also contributes to research on the interactional approach to the sociology of knowledge. Existing research on epistemics in social interaction has mainly focused on epistemic primacy derived locally from interactional roles. While there is a general assumption that epistemic primacy is derivable from social categories, the asymmetry between adult/child or parent/child is often invoked as an example based on common-sense knowledge or passing observation, and little systematic empirical investigation has been conducted regarding how such asymmetry is produced and sustained to in social interaction. This chapter identifies interactional practices in everyday parent-child conversation that exemplify the norm-guided social distributions of knowledge and thereby illustrates how epistemic primacy derived from parenthood is practiced and oriented to in everyday interaction. In particular, this analysis not only describes the fact that parents *possess* entitlements and responsibilities but also shows how parents *exercise* them as a way of demonstrating their status as parents.

Another implication of this chapter is that it provides insight into what it means to be a speaker. In his work on footing, Goffman (1981) conceptualized *speaker* as a laminated entity

constituted by animator, author, and principal and discussed marked instances in which the three roles are not carried out by the same person. Most exceptions involve institutional tasks (e.g., providing an interpretation of a speech) or local interactional goals (e.g., reported speech). Yet, Goffman also mentioned that parents sometimes animate and author “baby talk” on behalf of their child but make it apparent that the baby is the principal being talked for. This chapter also shows that children’s speakerhood is malleable — adults, in particular parents, do not always orient to children as the principals who have primary rights and responsibilities of their claims. Nonetheless, this pattern is likely to shift over the life course as children become more autonomous and accountable for their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

CHAPTER 4

CONSTRUCTING PARENTHOOD:

ORIENTING TO PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Parenthood is generally conceptualized as a social construct in contemporary research in social science. While parenthood as a status is normally determined by a natural relationship with the child, how parenthood is perceived and made sense of is a structural and cultural component of a society. In modern western societies, childhood is predominantly viewed as a time of innocence, during which adult protection is needed (Jenks, 1996). Parenthood has thus developed into an obligation directed to safeguarding the child's best interests and promoting the child's well-being (Schneider, 2010). This child-centered construction of parenthood has informed the legal position of parents vis-à-vis their children in these societies. Although the formulation of parental rights and obligations is ever-changing and at times contested in legislation, its scope is generally concerned with the care and upbringing of the child, ensuring the child's right to education, healthcare and medical treatment, food, and shelter, and representing the child in legal proceedings (Churchill, 2011; Probert et al., 2009). It is through fulfilling these responsibilities for children that parents are constructed *as* parents in these societies.

The social construction of parenthood is not limited to legal rights and obligations. Previous discourse studies have demonstrated that parenthood as a moral domain is also constructed in everyday life through the use of language, both in text and talk. For instance, Marshall (1991) examined childcare manuals and discussed how motherhood is constructed by

medical and psychological professionals with prescriptions attached to the ways that “good mothers” should behave. In the domain of talk, Schiffrin (1996) analyzed how two women create self-portraits of themselves as mothers through narratives about their daughters in sociolinguistic interviews. Parenthood is also constructed in spontaneous interaction. Focusing on a parent-teacher-pupil conference, Adelswärd and Nilholm (2000) illustrated how a speaker constructs her maternal identity by helping her daughter with Down syndrome present herself as a competent interlocutor. Similarly, Gordon (2007) showed how a speaker takes the mother role through performing actions linked to motherhood, such as assessing her child’s behaviors, in everyday family talk. These discourse studies provide empirical evidence that the construction of parenthood is tied to childhood and is manifested in everyday talk. However, as this strand of research has mainly focused on how speakers construct their own identities, it remains largely underexplored how parents are *treated as* parents by interlocutors on a moment-by-moment basis in the course of everyday interaction.

Drawing on naturally-occurring interactional data in English and Mandarin, this chapter investigates how interlocutors orient to the *parent* category. Previous research on social interaction has observed that people’s conduct is regularly organized by reference to the social categories of which they are members (Housley & Fitzgerald, 2015; Sacks, 1992). Through common-sense knowledge and assumptions of membership categories, including the different sets of rights and responsibilities associated with them, people account for and make sense of the social actions of one another (Pomerantz & Mandelbaum, 2005; Raymond, 2019; Stokoe, 2009; Whitehead & Lerner, 2009). This chapter examines how the *parent* membership category affords parents the rights and responsibilities to perform certain sequential actions in multiparty interactions involving parents, children, and third-party interlocutors (e.g., relatives, friends,

other children, etc.) and analyzes how interaction participants orient to such parental rights and responsibilities.

In what follows, I review prior work on parenthood in the interactional context and then examine interactional practices through which parental rights and responsibilities are exercised and acknowledged as a collaborative effort of parents, children, and third-party interlocutors in multiparty interaction. Specifically, the analysis focuses on three parental practices: 1) acting on behalf of the child, 2) acting on behalf of a third-party interlocutor, and 3) correcting the child's violation of a social norm when a third-party interlocutor has the right to sanction the violation by virtue of their interactional role. These practices, when performed in ordinary adult conversations, would be deemed highly marked, yet the parent is oriented to as having the rights and responsibilities to legitimately perform these actions in this context. I argue that this orientation constitutes one important way through which parenthood is constructed in social interaction.

4.1.1 The asymmetry between adults and children

The construction of parenthood is closely interrelated with the construction of *childhood*, which is associated with children's restricted rights and responsibilities as participants in interaction. Even though the child-centered ideology in modern western societies gives children a prominent place in various aspects of social life, idioms like "children should be seen and not heard" still hint at a general understanding of children's limited rights to participation by virtue of their membership. This can be exemplified by Sacks' (1992) observation concerning young children's use of "you know what?" as a practice to gain a turn in conversations with adults. By eliciting a "what?" from adults, children are reciprocally given the opportunity to say what they

planned to say in the first place “not on [their] own say-so, but under obligation” (p. 256).

Although children’s use of “you know what?” suggests that they can and do develop their own strategies to overcome interactional constraints, this practice nonetheless reflects their restricted participation rights.

While Sacks’ argument of children’s limited rights to speak was built on passing observation, Butler and Wilkinson (2013) empirically investigated a child’s participation in family interaction and showed that the child’s initiating actions are regularly disattended, blocked, and suspended by his parents despite his use of various means to mobilize their reciprocity, such as summonses and pre-announcements (e.g., “guess what?”) (Schegloff, 2007b). Similarly, Eilittä et al. (2021) examined children’s practices of summoning in multiparty in cars and illustrated that children’s attempts to join an ongoing conversation or start a new topic are often ignored or suspended by adults. This pattern is also observed in institutional settings. Drawing on family therapy sessions, O’Reilly (2006) documented how children’s interruptions are consistently ignored by their parents and the therapist. In the rare occurrences in which children persist in pursuing a response from adult co-participants, their actions are explicitly sanctioned. As these studies illustrate, children are competent in many aspects in interaction, such as monitoring the attention of other interlocutors, initiating an action in the course of an ongoing conversation, and pursuing engagement from others, yet they are still oriented to *as children* with restricted rights in interaction (see also Forrester, 2010). Therefore, the benchmark of *adult* membership is not determined by a specific age or mastery of interactional competence. Rather, the interactional construction of *adulthood* concerns collections of conventions that are oriented to by participants so as to establish and reinforce asymmetries between adults and children regarding interactional rights and obligations (Shakespeare, 1998; Watson, 1992).

4.1.2 The 'parent' membership category

The *parent* membership category is distinctive from *adult*. While adults typically own full membership rights and responsibilities as opposed to children, parents possess privileged rights and responsibilities with respect to *their* children. In his seminal work on membership categorization analysis, Sacks (1972) introduced the brief story “The baby cried. The mommy picked it up” and argued that *baby* and *mommy* comprise a standardized relational pair within a *membership categorization device*, i.e., a collection of categories with rules for their application. Through the *family* device, the common-sense understandings of *baby* and *mommy* are invoked, including their expectable actions and their legitimate attributions in relation to one another. These recognizable category-bound activities (i.e., babies cry, and their mothers pick them up to comfort them) allow us to understand this story — the mommy was the mommy of this baby, and her action of picking up this baby was responsive to the baby’s crying. Although Sacks’ analysis was primarily concerned with the role of membership categories in the organization of ordinary interaction rather than parenthood, this example points to an understanding of the membership rights and responsibilities related to the parent category — the mommy has the right and responsibility to comfort *her* baby when the baby is crying, and no other adults share the same right and responsibility. It is through picking up the baby that the mother’s membership as *parent* is manifested and sustained. When she does so, it is recognizable as a mundane action, and we do not need to look any further to make sense of this action.

Subsequent research on membership categories has empirically investigated how parenthood can be invoked in ordinary conversation. For instance, Schegloff (2007a) documented that parent as a membership category can be invoked through person reference, such

as using “a mother” rather than “Mrs. Martin” to refer to a person. Stokoe (2009) showed how a speaker, by self-referencing as “a single mother,” alludes to her lack of resources to cope with problems. Focusing on a phone call with a doctor, Pomerantz and Mandelbaum (2005) analyzed how the caller invokes shared understandings of parental rights and responsibilities by explicitly identifying herself as “only his grandma” to account for why she did not request a medical examination on the sick child’s behalf during a prior medical consultation — parents, rather than grandparents, are the legitimate people to do so (see also Kitinger, 2005).

As these studies suggest, the predominant focus of membership categorization research has been on how social categories are made demonstrably relevant (Schegloff, 1987) through explicit references to people as members of categories and how such categories can be used as resources for particular actions. However, membership categories can be made visible and consequential without being explicitly articulated. In their analysis of a meal shared by a young child and his family members, Butler and Fitzgerald (2010) showed how conversation participants tacitly invoke *parent* through the design of offers and directives (e.g., “Do you [parent] want a separate plate for him [child]?” invokes the parent’s right and responsibility to make decisions for the child).

Along with this research on the intersection of sequential action and membership categorization, Rossi and Stivers (2021) argued that social categories inhabited by participants afford or constrain their rights to legitimately perform actions in the moment-by-moment flow of social interaction. For example, in Sacks’ (1972) story, the mommy’s membership as a parent provides a warrant for her to pick up the baby. Prior work on parental directives, namely the practices used for getting children to do something (Labov & Fanshel, 1977), also demonstrated how the *parent* membership is invoked and sustained through a shared understanding of and

orientation to parents' legitimate rights to control their children's behaviors in parent-child interaction (Aronsson & Cekaite, 2011; Ervin-Tripp, 1976; Goodwin & Cekaite, 2018; Kent, 2012). Although children do not always comply with parental directives, it is by virtue of parental rights that parents have a license to issue directives and sanction children's non-compliance. Similarly, research on rule formulation and negotiation in parent-child interaction identified how parents use announcements to explicitly invoke their rights and responsibilities to discipline their children's behaviors (Pontecorvo et al., 2001; Wootton, 1986). Interlocutors without membership in the *parent* category do not share the same rights to perform these actions to children and would be accountable if they did so. For instance, Hester and Hester (2010) presented a case in which a child issues a directive to his sibling, and this action is heard as reiterating their parent's earlier directive rather than producing an independent action since directives are not conventionally bound to the *sibling* membership category.

This chapter contributes to this line of research by building a body of empirical evidence of how the *parent* membership category establishes affordances of parents' performances of particular actions in everyday parent-child interaction. Prior research on actions related to parental rights and responsibilities has concentrated on child participants as the subjects of parental authority, highlighting how children acknowledge, conform to, or resist parental authority. To fully understand the interactional construction of parenthood, how other participants orient to parenthood deserves further investigation. Since the few studies that have addressed this aspect of parenthood mainly rely on single episodes of interaction (e.g., Butler and Fitzgerald, 2010), the present study extends the scope of this research by systematically investigating the practical acknowledgment and accomplishment of actions associated with

parental rights and responsibilities as a collaborative effort of parents, children, and third-party interlocutors in multiparty interaction.

4.2 METHOD

To identify the deliberate processes through which the *parent* membership affords particular actions in multiparty interaction among parents, children, and third-party interlocutors, I collected instances of practices that would be deemed breaching interactional norms in ordinary adult interaction but are oriented to as non-transgressions by interaction participants in this context. I then reviewed all cases and looked for similarities and differences in order to subdivide cases and analyzed how parental rights and responsibilities are made recognizably relevant through these practices.

4.3 ANALYSIS

This analysis focuses on how the *parent* membership provides for the rights and responsibilities to perform actions that would be otherwise considered violations of social norms in ordinary adult interaction. Three types of parental practices are identified, each of which concerns a norm regarding interactional rights: 1) acting on behalf of the child when the child is otherwise able to act on their own behalf, 2) acting on behalf of an interlocutor when the interlocutor is otherwise able to act on their own behalf, and 3) correcting the child's violation of a social norm when a third-party interlocutor has the right to sanction the violation by virtue of their interactional role. As the analysis reveals, interlocutors consistently treat parents as having primary rights and responsibilities to perform these actions in interactions involving their children. These practices provide empirical evidence of how interlocutors orient to parental

rights and responsibilities and thereby construct parenthood in social interaction as distinctive from adulthood.

4.3.1 Rights to act on behalf of the child

In ordinary adult interaction, interlocutors typically treat each other as having primary rights to know, describe, and make decisions about themselves (Heritage, 2011; Labov & Fanshel, 1977; Pomerantz, 1980; Sacks, 1992). As Goffman (1971) argued, personal knowledge is operated within territorial preserves, over which people claim primary rights to possess, control, and use. The boundaries of territorial preserves are patrolled and policed by their owners, and offenses by individuals who have no right of access are accountable and even sanctionable (Sidnell, 2005). Therefore, interlocutors would not have the right to act on behalf of another individual unless there is some special warrant for doing so. For instance, in question-answer sequences in ordinary adult conversations, non-selected speakers are treated as having the right to take the next turn only when the selected speaker fails to produce an immediate response or displays an inability to answer (Stivers & Robinson, 2006).

This norm appears to be relaxed in interactions involving children. As previously noted, research on parent-child interaction has demonstrated that parents are normally oriented to as having deontic authority over their children, namely the rights and obligations to make decisions about their children and control courses of their future actions (Kent, 2012; Stevanovic & Peräkylä, 2012). This is manifested in parents' use of directives, which carry the pragmatic function of controlling the behaviors of the recipient and thereby constitute local social order in interaction (Drew & Couper-Kuhlen, 2014). Given that previous work tended to focus on children as the subject of parental authority, this analysis investigates how third-party

interlocutors orient to the relative rights of parents and children by examining instances in which parents act on behalf of their children when children are arguably able to act on their own behalf.

The first instance illustrates a mother declining an offer made to her child, in which the mother's deontic right is made relevant. Extract 1 takes place when Dad is opening a pizza box at lunch. As Zoey looks at the pizza left in the box (line 1), Dad offers her a slice (line 2). While Dad's selection of speaker grants Zoey the primary right to accept or decline his offer, Mom immediately declines the offer on Zoey's behalf (line 3).

Extract (1) Zoey: 4y9m

01 ZOE: Three more: (0.2) three more left.
02 DAD: There's three left. That's right. You want one?
03 MOM: -> No.=She still- she's-
04 (0.6)
05 ZOE: I have=
06 MOM: =she has (.) food in her plate.
07 DAD: ((puts one slice on his plate and closes the box))

Through her immediate rejection, Mom asserts her deontic right to respond on behalf of Zoey and determine the course of her future action. Both Zoey and Dad orient to Mom's deontic right and treat her rejection as valid. Although Zoey as the selected recipient of the offer and Dad as Zoey's other parent could push back on Mom's rejection, Mom's status as Zoey's parent provides a warrant for producing this immediate rejection even to another parent.

In the following case, we see a more explicit orientation to deontic rights associated with the parent membership category as the third-party interlocutor selects the mother to grant or deny permission on behalf of her child. The focal child here is two-year-old Brandon. Brandon's big brother, Ethan, is the third-party interlocutor who just finished sprinkling ground cinnamon on his oatmeal for breakfast. The sequence begins as Brandon asks Ethan to pass the cinnamon to him (line 1).

Extract (2) Ethan: 6y3m; Brandon: 2y10m

01 BRA: Ethan 給- 給 我.= ((reaches for cinnamon))
 gei- gei wo.=
 give give 1S
 Ethan give- give (that) to me. = ((reaches for cinnamon))
02 ETH: -> =Can I do it? ((holds cinnamon, gazing at MOM))
03 MOM: No, he can do it himself.
04 ETH: Why::. ((passes cinnamon to BRA))
05 MOM: Just like you could do it when you're his age.

As the owner of his breakfast, Brandon would have the right to decide who gets to sprinkle cinnamon on his oatmeal if he were treated as an adult. However, Ethan does not directly address Brandon's request but rather turns to Mom and asks whether he can sprinkle the cinnamon for Brandon (line 2). Ethan's selection of next speaker displays his orientation to Mom as having the primary right to decide whether Ethan can sprinkle cinnamon on Brandon's oatmeal. Mom's immediate rejection indicates that she aligns with this orientation. While Ethan conforms to Mom's rejection by passing the cinnamon to Brandon, he again selects Mom to provide an account for her rejection, conveying a continued orientation to Mom's right to act on behalf of Brandon. Mom then further defends Brandon's rights to autonomy on his behalf. Brandon also orients to Mom's primary to make decisions for him. As the request initiator, Brandon has the right to pursue a response from Ethan and even sanction his non-response, yet he withholds his participation in the new sequence that Ethan initiates. This case shows that all three parties in this interaction orient to Mom's primary right to determine the courses of her children's actions.

In addition to deontic authority, a parent's action of acting on behalf of a child is also justifiable by epistemic authority. While epistemic rights in ordinary adult conversations are determined by what is knowable to whom (Heritage & Raymond, 2005), the asymmetrical positions vis-à-vis epistemic rights between parents and children are not simply governed by

their actual possessions of information. Rather, epistemic authority can be derived from the *parent* category on the grounds of parental rights and obligations to know, describe, and assess their children (Raymond & Heritage, 2006). As we have seen in Chapter 3, even though individuals normally treat one another as possessing privileged access to their own thoughts, feelings, and experiences and as having primary rights to describe them (Heritage, 2011; Labov & Fanshel, 1977; Pomerantz 1980; Sacks 1984), parents consistently assert epistemic authority over their children about these matters.

Extract 3 below illustrates how the third-party interlocutor orients to the parents' epistemic rights regarding the child's preference, to which the access is primarily owned by the child. Before this segment, Dad asks Ran about her least favorite food, to which Ran replies "potatoes" (data not shown here; see Extract 7 in Chapter 3). After the sequence is closed, Mom turns to Ran's younger sibling Jia and asks the same question (line 1). When Jia appears to hesitate, Dad provides an answer in an extremely low volume as if he is talking to himself (line 3). Jia does not seem to hear Dad as she overlaps with him and asserts that she does not like potatoes (line 4), which is identical to Ran's earlier answer. Later, Mom's friend (FRI) selects the parents and requests confirmation of Jia's claim (line 12).

Extract (3) Jia: 2y9m; Ran: 6y2m

- 01 MOM: 啊 你 最 不 喜 歡 吃 的 是 什 麼?
 a ni zui bu xihuan chi de shi shenme?
 PT 2S most NEG like eat NOM COP what
 What is your least favorite food?
- 02 JIA: Um::[:
- 03 DAD: [°°沒有 [不 喜 歡 的.°°
 [°°meiyou [bu xihuan de.°°
 NEG NEG like NOM
 °°*Nothing (she) doesn't like.*°°
- 04 JIA: -> [我 不 喜 歡 吃 馬 鈴 薯.
 [wo bu xihuan chi malingshu.
 1S NEG like eat potato

I don't like to eat potatoes.

05 (0.2)

06 RAN: 還有 紅豆 跟 綠豆。
haiyou hongdou gen lüdou.
also red bean and mung bean
Also red beans and mung beans.

07 MOM: 紅豆 跟 綠豆 是 你 不 喜 歡 吃。
hongdou gen lüdou shi ni bu xihuan chi.
red bean and mung bean COP 2S NEG like eat
It's you who don't like to eat red beans and mung beans.

08 妹妹 喜 歡 吃。
meimei xihuan chi.
little sister like eat
Little Sister likes to eat (them).

09 (2.0)

10 JIA: 我 喜 歡 紅豆 綠豆。
wo xihuan hongdou lüdou.
1S like red bean mung bean
I like red beans and mung beans.

11 MOM: 你 喜 歡 紅豆 綠豆。
ni xihuan hongdou lüdou.
2S like red bean mung bean
You like red beans and mung beans.

12 FRI: -> 他 真的 也 不 喜 歡 吃 馬 鈴 薯 嗎?
ta zhende ye bu xihuan chi malingshu ma?
3S really also NEG like eat potato Q
Does she really also dislike potatoes?

13 MOM: 沒有=
meiyou=
NEG
No=

14 DAD: =沒 [有 啊,
=mei[you a,
NEG PT
=No,

15 FRI: [只 是 學 [姊姊。
[zhi shi xue [jiejie.
only COP learn big sister
Just copying (her) big sister.

16 DAD: [他 什 [麼-
[ta shen[me-
3S what
she what-

17 MOM: [他 什 麼 都 吃。
[ta shenme dou chi.
3S what all eat
She eats everything.

While Mom and Dad have knowledge of their children's likes and dislikes through observing their past behaviors, this is an indirect form of access to their preferences. Still, in this sequence, we see both parents assert epistemic authority over their children's preferences: Dad takes the initiative to articulate Jia's view (line 3) although the low volume suggests that he defers to Jia's primary right to answer. Mom also explicitly asserts Ran and Jia's preferences (lines 7–8).

The friend displays the same orientation to the parents' primary epistemic rights over their children. The friend has no access to Jia's food preferences and appears not to notice Dad's utterance in line 3 since she sits further away from Dad. However, she initiates a request for confirmation that challenges Jia's asserted claim (line 12) as she seems to suspect that Jia has simply repeated Ran's answer ("potatoes") without actually standing by the claim. This is evidenced by her use of *zhende* ("really"), which implies disbelief, and *ye* ("also"), which provides a built-in account for her disbelief (that this is following Jia's big sister, as the friend later explicitly states in line 15). Although the friend's gaze cannot be clearly identified in the video, her use of the third person reference *ta* ("she") excludes Jia as the selected speaker even though Jia is the one who made the claim and clearly has direct, primary access to her own preferences. In so doing, the friend treats the parents as having greater rights and responsibilities to know Jia's preferences and communicate them. The parents confirm the friend's suspicion (lines 13–14, 16–17), indicating that they also orient to their own epistemic authority over Jia's claim.

The deontic and epistemic dimensions of parental authority are often interrelated — parents make decisions for their children based on what they know about them. In the following case, the third-party interlocutor orients to both dimensions of parental authority. During lunch,

Grandma (GMA) initiates an offer for Riley, yet she selects Mom to respond on Riley's behalf through her gaze and the third person reference to Riley.

Extract (4) Riley: 2y9m

01 GMA: -> Does- does Riley want the mushroom?
02 (0.7)
03 MOM: Ask ^Riley.
04 GMA: Riley,

Grandma's selection of Mom as the next speaker suggests her orientation to Mom's deontic right to determine whether or not Riley might have the mushroom. Yet, the design of this question highlights Mom's epistemic rights since, even though wanting something is completely personal, it treats Mom as having direct access to Riley's wants and thus having primary rights to make the decision on behalf of Riley. In other words, Grandma's question assumes that Riley may not be in a primary position to know her own wants, make a sensible decision, or communicate it reliably and effectively, whereas Mom has greater rights and responsibilities in any or all of these aspects. However, rather than deciding on Riley's behalf, Mom prioritizes Riley's autonomy by asking Grandma to redirect the question to Riley (line 3). While Mom's action is in effect an assertion of her deontic authority as she implicitly grants Riley the permission to have mushroom if she wants to, this case shows that parental rights and responsibilities are not simply invoked in interaction. Rather, they may be negotiated, transformed, or even challenged.

In addition to next speaker selection in question-answer sequences, another environment where the construction of parenthood can be manifested is assessment sequences. Pillet-Shore (2012) examined parent-teacher conferences and showed that both teachers and parents treat utterances that praise nonpresent children as implicating praise of parents since parents are responsible for their children. This "ownership" of children (see Raymond & Heritage, 2006) can be made relevant even in the presence of children. Extract 5 below presents an assessment

sequence, in which the third-party interlocutor first addresses her compliment of the child to his mother, treating her as owning the praiseworthy attributes of her child, and then addresses the compliment to the child. Here, Mom and Lei are playing a car logo game — Mom would draw a car logo on a whiteboard, and Lei would answer what brand it is. The game has been going on for a few rounds, and Lei has correctly identified all the logos Mom has drawn so far. The extract begins as Lei again correctly identifies the logo of Volkswagen. In line 3, Mom’s friend (FRI) selects Mom and compliments Lei’s ability in playing this game.

Extract (5) Lei: 2y2m

- 01 LEI: 福斯 耶.
fusi ye.
NAME PT
Volkswagen.
- 02 MOM: 對.=
dui.=
correct
Right.=
- 03 FRI: -> =他 真的 很 厲害 耶.
=ta zhende hen lihai ye.
3S really very good PT
=He is really very good.
- 04 MOM: ((gaze shifts to FRI)) °對.°
°dui.°
correct
°Right.°
- 05 FRI: 都 認得.
dou rende.
all recognize
(He) recognizes all of them.
- 06 MOM: 你 跟 它 bye-bye. ((refers to the Volkswagen logo on whiteboard))
ni gen ta bye-bye.
2S PREP 3S
You say bye-bye to it.
- 07 LEI: Bye-bye.
- 08 MOM: 好. ((erases the whiteboard))
hao.
okay
Okay.
- 09 FRI: -> 你 真的 好 厲害 喔. 你 都 認得 耶.
ni zhende hao lihai ou. ni dou rende ye.

2S really very good PT 2S all recognize PT
You are really very good. You recognize all of them.

While the friend subsequently addresses her compliment directly to Lei after Mom closes this sequence about the Volkswagen logo (line 9), the friend's prioritization of addressing Mom conveys her orientation to Mom's primary right over Lei's right to accept compliments about Lei's behaviors. That is, instead of treating Lei as an autonomous individual whose accomplishments are exclusively his to own, the friend attributes Lei's praiseworthy primarily to Mom. As the recipient, Mom aligns with this orientation by producing a minimal agreement (line 4), which works to display a sensitivity to both the preference to agree with and accept the praising assessment and the preference to avoid self-praise (Pomerantz, 1978).

In this section, I have shown how the *parent* membership affords rights and responsibilities for parents to act on behalf of their children. Parents not only take the initiative to act on behalf of their children (e.g., rejecting an offer made to the child in Extract 1) but are also consistently *selected* to perform these actions (Extracts 2–5). That is, parents are oriented to as having primary rights to know about their children and to determine their courses of action while also having primary responsibilities for their behaviors. This practice thus provides a revealing window into interaction participants' assumptions about childhood, parenthood, and the asymmetrical relationship between parents and their children.

4.3.2 Rights to act on behalf of others

This section addresses the same interactional norm, i.e., individuals typically do not have the right to speak or act on behalf of others unless they have a license for doing so. The parental practice of acting on behalf of their children, as the previous section shows, can be justified by parental authority. Yet, parental rights to perform such actions seem to extend to third-party

interlocutors as well. As the analysis reveals, parents recurrently act on behalf of third-party interlocutors in interactions with their children even when they have no right of access to their domains and have no apparent license for doing so. These actions, however, are not treated as transgressions by third-party interlocutors who are otherwise able to act for themselves. This orientation to parental rights to perform such actions shows that the construction of parenthood involves not just how parents treat their children but also how they treat other adults.

Extract 6 illustrates a parent making an offer on behalf of the other parent. This segment occurs at breakfast when Mom is feeding Lei and Dad is feeding Lei's twin sister. As Lei is looking at something on the shelf, Mom makes an offer to bring Lei what he wants on behalf of Dad (line 1).

Extract (6) Lei: 2y2m

- 01 MOM: -> 你 要 什 麼 你 跟 爸 爸 講 . 爸 爸 幫 你 拿 .
ni yao shenme ni gen baba jiang. baba bang ni na.
2S want what 2S PREP Dad say Dad help 2S take
Tell Dad what you want. Dad will bring it over for you.
- 02 (0.2)
- 03 好 不 好 ?
hao bu hao?
okay-NEG-okay
(Is that) okay?
- 04 (0.5)
- 05 LEI: 要 那 個 賽 車 啦 .
yao na ge saiche la.
want that CL race car PT
(I) want that race car.
- 06 MOM: 你 要 那 個 三 姨 婆 幫 你 買 的 賽 車 是 不 是 ?
ni yao na ge sanyipo bang ni mai de saiche shi bu shi?
2S want that CL Great Aunt help 2S buy ASSO race car COP-NEG-COP
You want the race car that Great Aunt bought you, is that right?
- 07 LEI: Un.
- 08 MOM: -> 好 , 爸 爸 幫 你 拿 .
hao, baba bang ni na.
okay Dad help 2S take
Okay, Dad will bring it over for you.
- 09 DAD: ((leaves the table to get the toy))

As an autonomous individual, Dad has the primary right to offer Lei to bring his toy, whereas Mom, according to adult conversational norms, would not have the right to make such an offer on behalf of someone else unless there is a warrant for doing so. Nonetheless, Dad orients to Mom's right to make the offer on his behalf. After Lei confirms which toy he wants (line 7), Mom immediately grants the request on behalf of Dad (line 8). Dad then complies with the request and gets the toy for Lei (line 9).

This case suggests that in the face of issues concerning children (in this case, Lei is looking at the toy on the shelf rather than focusing on eating), parents are treated as having the primary right to utilize third-party interlocutors as resources to deal with such issues. Although Dad as the other parent shares joint responsibility to look after Lei, it is still Mom's status as Lei's parent that grants her the warrant for treading into Dad's domain and acting on his behalf. Considering that if it was Lei's aunt rather than his mother, it is likely that the aunt would need to perform extra work to avoid being heard as a violation (e.g., "I'll ask Dad to bring it over for you.").

While Mom's action in Extract 6 may also be accounted for by her partnership with Dad (Rossi & Stivers, 2021), the following case shows that parents' rights to act on behalf of others when dealing with issues related to their children are not limited to their partners or family members. In Extract 7, a mother rejects her child's invitation on behalf of her friend. The sequence begins as Zoey selects Mom's friend (FRI) and asks whether she will stay for dinner. Although Zoey's question is hearable as an invitation, the friend does not treat Zoey as having the primary right to invite her for dinner and withholds her response until Mom also issues the same invitation (line 3).

Extract (7) Zoey: 3y5m

01 ZOE: Are you gonna have dinner with us?
02 (0.5)
03 MOM: Would [you like] to have dinner with us?
04 FRI: [U:h-]
05 Probably not.=
06 MOM: =No? [You're not-
07 FRI: [No.
08 MOM: O:kay.
09 (0.5)
10 ZOE: But I: I want you to like- I want you to (.) have dinner with us.
11 MOM: -> W'l she can come play again sometime.
12 FRI: Un huh,

The friend initially provides an uncertainty-marked rejection (line 5) but then produces a firm *no* following Mom's request for confirmation (line 7). After Mom acknowledges the rejection, Zoey seeks to pressure the friend to change her decision (line 10). As the selected recipient, the friend has the primary right and obligation to respond to Zoey's renewed invitation. Yet, Mom immediately dismisses the invitation by offering an alternative on behalf of the friend even though she has neither the access to whether the friend plans to visit again nor the right to control her future courses of action. In so doing, Mom prevents the friend from making the dispreferred rejection to Zoey. The friend also orients to Mom's right to withdraw the invitation by agreeing with Mom's proposal (line 12). In this case, Mom's action is licensed by her interactional goal of dealing with Zoey's presumably unwanted invitation and moving the sequence toward closure.

In the following case, the child initiates a proposal to the researcher (RES) who visits the family for a recording session for the first time. As there is no immediate uptake from the researcher, the parents respond on behalf of the researcher even though they had just met each other. Extract 8 also takes place during Lei's breakfast time, and the sequence begins as he selects the researcher, to whom he refers as "teacher," and produces a proposal *gen wo da da* ("hit hit with me" in line 1). Lei's proposal poses two problems for the researcher. First, while it

can be inferred as some kind of play, *da da* (“hit hit”) is not a fixed expression in Mandarin. The researcher may thus have trouble assessing whether she would do this unknown activity with Lei. Second, accepting the proposal would entail engaging Lei in a different activity before he finishes his breakfast. As previously discussed, the researcher apparently does not have the deontic right to determine Lei’s activity, whereas his parents do.

Extract (8) Lei: 2y2m

- 01 LEI: 老師 跟 我 打 打。
laoshi gen wo da da.
teacher PREP 1S hit hit
Teacher hit hit with me.
- 02 (0.7)
- 03 DAD: -> 好 那 你 趕快 [吃。
hao na ni gankuai [chi.
okay then 2S hurry eat
Okay then you hurry up eating.
- 04 MOM: -> [你 要 再 講 一 次。
[ni yao zai jiang yi ci.
2S need again say one time
You need to say one more time.
- 05 老師 沒 聽 到。 再 講 一 次。
laoshi mei ting dao. zai jiang yi ci.
teacher NEG hear PRF again say one time
Teacher didn't hear (you). Say one more time.
- 06 LEI: 老師 跟 我 打 打。
laoshi gen wo da da.
teacher PREP 1S hit hit
Teacher hit hit with me.
- 07 RES: 好 啊, 那 你 先 吃 完 早餐。
hao a, na ni xian chi wan zaocan.
okay PT then 2S first eat PRF breakfast
Okay, you finish breakfast first.

In ordinary adult conversation, when a response is relevantly missing, it is the norm that the action initiator would deal with the problem (Pomerantz, 1984b). Yet, in this case, the parents are accountable for moving the sequence forward for a number of reasons. As Lei’s parents, they apparently have knowledge of what “hit hit” refers to as well as that this is not a fixed expression outside the family. In addition, Lei is unlikely aware of the understanding issue here

since he, presumably, has been using this expression in interaction with family members without raising any problem. Finally, and maybe most importantly, the parents have the deontic rights to grant or deny permission to allow Lei to engage in another activity at breakfast time.

After the gap, Dad accepts the proposal on behalf of the researcher (line 3). Even though he has no access to whether the researcher is interested in this activity, he works to move the sequence forward by granting conditional permission. Mom then overlaps with Dad and takes a different approach (line 4). While she also speaks on behalf of the researcher, she attributes the researcher's lack of response to a hearing problem and requests Lei to repeat this proposal. That is, Mom does not work to fix the problems for the researcher but rather orients to Lei, using the hearing problem as an account for why his proposal has not been responded to by the selected speaker. As a result, Lei reproduces the proposal in the same manner (line 6). The researcher then utilizes Dad's earlier response as a model and provides a conditional acceptance (line 7). This case shows that although the parents do not seem to have the rights to act on behalf of the researcher in terms of whether she heard Lei and whether she would like to play with him, they nonetheless use this as a resource to deal with the interactional issue. The researcher also aligns with the parents, yielding to their rights and responsibilities to fix the problems that come with Lei's proposal.

In this section, I have offered evidence of how the *parent* membership category provides for parents' rights to act on behalf of third-party interlocutors when dealing with issues related to their children. While acting on behalf of others is normally accountable and even sanctionable in ordinary adult interaction, adults who are involved in interactions with children, including both parents and third-party interlocutors, appear to prioritize the need to deal with interactional issues at the moment and advance sequence progressivity. This provides a justification for parents,

who are responsible for their children, to tread into third-party interlocutors' domains and act on their behalf. This parental practice of utilizing third-party interlocutors as an interactional resource, as the analysis has documented, applies to conversations with family members, friends, and even acquaintances. The current dataset does not include strangers of the participating families, but it is likely that the orientation to this particular parental right extends to strangers as well. For instance, parents may use strangers as a resource and tell their children to lower their volume in a public space because "people around us are not happy about the noise."

4.4.3 Rights to correct the child's violation of a social norm

Thus far, we have examined practices concerning parental rights with respect to children and parental rights with respect to third-party interlocutors. The last section of the analysis investigates environments in which both parents and third-party interlocutors possess rights with respect to children — when children violate social norms, their parents have the rights and obligations to correct such violations since parents usually takes the main education role to scaffold the development of children's moral and social competence. Yet, third-party interlocutors may also possess legitimate rights to deal with children's transgressions by virtue of their interactional roles. As the analysis reveals, third-party interlocutors consistently defer to parents' primary rights and responsibilities to guide their children's behaviors.

In ordinary adult conversation, when speakers violate interactional norms, their interlocutors are normally oriented to as having the rights to deal with such transgressions. For instance, when a questioner selects a next speaker to provide an answer, the selected speaker has the right and obligation to take the next turn (Sacks et al., 1974). If the selected speaker fails to do so, their non-response would be deemed accountable, and the questioner would have the right

to either pursue a response from the selected speaker or abandon their attempt to obtain a response from the selected speaker (Heritage, 1984). In addition, as we have seen in Chapter 3, when a child is selected to answer a question but fails to respond promptly, non-selected recipients who are otherwise able to provide an answer typically work to pursue a response from the selected child rather than providing an answer on behalf of the selected child. Their rights to intervene and pursue the selected child's response as non-selected recipients are warranted by their epistemic status (that they know the requested information) and their local interactional roles (that they are co-participants of the ongoing conversation). Nonetheless, rights associated with the *parent* membership consistently trump rights associated with local interactional roles.

Extract 9 exemplifies a third-party interlocutor seeking the parent's intervention when the child appears to breach the norm of sharing. Here, Brandon, the focal child, is holding a bag of cheese puffs, and Brandon's big brother Ethan asks him to share some (line 1). Brandon grants Ethan's request by putting three puffs in Ethan's bowl (line 3), yet Ethan treats them as insufficient and immediately rejects Brandon's provision.

Extract (9) Ethan: 6y3m; Brandon: 2y10m

- 01 ETH: 我 要 一 點 點。
 wo yao yidiandian.
 1S want a few
I want a few.
- 02 BRA: 很 多 不 可- 太 少 不 可 以。
 hen duo bu ke- tai shao bu keyi.
 very many NEG allow too few NEG allow
(I) can't give too many- (I) can't give too few.
- 03 ((put three puffs in ETH's bowl)) 好 啦, 給 你。
 hao la, gei ni.
 good PT give 2S
Alright, here you go.
- 04 ETH: -> No::.. Bran- that's-
 05 ((turns to MOM)) Mommy- (0.2) Mommy this is all
 06 Brandon gave me. ((show his bowl to MOM))
- 07 MOM: ((walk toward ETH and BRA)) 啊 你 是- 小 氣-
 a ni shi- (0.2) xiaoqi-

Extract (10) Zoey: 4y2m⁶

01 GMA: How was that. (.) How was Olivia.
02 (1.0)
03 DAD: -> Did you enjoy it?=^oZoey.^o=
04 ZOE: =yea:[::, ((looks at a picture))
05 DAD: [Zoey. Ahm- Ama bought that for you. Can you tell her
06 about it?
07 (1.0)
08 Zoey. (.) Zo[ey, ^oplease.^o Ama bought [that for you.=Olivia,
09 ZOE: [((gaze shifts to DAD)) [((gaze shifts to GMA))
10 (0.2)
11 DAD: Can you tell her about it? Tell her what you-
12 whether you [like it?]
13 ZOE: [Shish-] I like the- (.) this movie parts.
14 And the jersey parts,
15 GMA: Oh::?

Among the family members around the dinner table, Zoey is the only response-relevant recipient who has played *Olivia* (Lerner, 2003). Other family members have no epistemic rights to answer the question on behalf of Zoey and are under no obligation to inform Grandma of the requested information when Zoey does not do so. By pursuing a response from Zoey, Dad asserts his right and responsibility as Zoey's parent to guide her when she violates the interactional norm. Specifically, when Zoey provides minimal uptake without looking at Grandma or Dad (line 4), even though the right to assess the response is normally reserved for the questioner (Pomerantz, 1984b), Dad treats Zoey's answer as insufficient and probes more details by offering an account ("Ama bought that for you" in line 5 and again in line 8). Grandma also orients to Dad's primary right to shepherd Zoey towards a satisfactory response by withholding her participation until Zoey finally produces one (lines 13–15).

In Extract 11, we see a more elaborate illustration of how a third-party interlocutor defers to a mother's primary right to guide her child. Brandon is sitting with Dad and Aunt at the dinner table whereas Mom and Brandon's brother are sitting at another table, a short distance

⁶ "Ama" in lines 5 and 8 refers to Grandma in Taiwanese.

away, which allows them to hear but not see each other. Dad knows that a family friend, Shirley, visited that morning when Mom, Aunt, and Brandon were home, but he does not know for sure whether Brandon got to meet Shirley during her visit. This extract begins as Dad asks Brandon whether he met Shirley that day (line 1). Brandon immediately provides a factually incorrect answer (line 2), which requires correction. Although Aunt as a knowing coparticipant has the epistemic right and ability to correct Brandon's false claim, she defers to Mom's primary right to correct Brandon by withholding her correction until Mom intervenes (lines 6–7).

Extract (11) Brandon: 2y10m

- 01 DAD: Brandon 你 今天 有 看 到 Shirley 阿姨 嗎?
 ni jintian you kan dao Shirley ayi ma?
 2S today PRF see PRF aunt Q
 Brandon did you see Aunt Shirley today?
- 02 BRA: 沒 有.
 mei you.
 NEG PRF
 (I) didn't.
- 03 DAD: 沒 有.
 mei you.
 NEG PRF
 (You) didn't.
- 04 (0.6)/((AUN laughs))
- 05 你 太 晚 起來 是 不 是=
 ni tai wan qilai shi bu shi=
 2S too late get up COP-NEG-COP
 *You got up too late, didn't you?=
 =有 啦.
 =you la.
 PRF PT
 =(He) did (see Aunt Shirley).*
- 07 AUN: -> 有 啦.
 you la.
 PRF PT
 (He) did (see Aunt Shirley).
- 08 DAD: oh. 有.
 you.
 PRF
 Oh. (You) did.

While Aunt and Mom are both in the knowing position of the requested information, their interactional roles are notably different: Aunt is a co-present participant since she is sitting with Brandon and Dad, whereas Mom, who is engaging in another activity with Brandon's brother at a short distance, would not be considered as part of the ongoing conversation unless she self-selects to speak. In this regard, Aunt would seem to have greater accountability to correct Brandon's false claim. However, even though Aunt's laughter in line 4 implies that she hears Brandon's false claim and Dad's acknowledgment as problematic, she withholds verbal correction until Mom initiates a repair. Aunt's action points to an orientation to Mom's membership as a parent, treating her as having the primary right and responsibility to correct her child even when she is not immediately present. After Mom corrects Brandon's false claim, Aunt quickly aligns with Mom, orienting to her own accountability as a knowing co-participant (line 7).

In this section, I have demonstrated how third-party interlocutors consistently defer to parents' primary rights and responsibilities to guide their children in interaction. Even when the local interactional roles of third-party interlocutors would otherwise grant them the primary rights to correct children, parents are nonetheless treated as having the primary rights to do so. The analysis suggests that members who are responsible and accountable for scaffolding children's development within the family organization are differentiated by hierarchy, of which parents are positioned at the highest status. This orientation to parental rights and responsibilities is part of how parenthood is constructed in interaction.

4.4 DISCUSSION

This chapter shows that in multiparty interactions among parents, children, and third-party interlocutors, parents are consistently oriented to as having the primary rights to act on behalf of their children, to act on behalf of other interlocutors, and to correct their children's violations of social norms even though such actions would be considered as highly marked in ordinary adult interaction. These interactional practices indicate that parents routinely serve as the mediators who deal with interactional issues involving their children and other interlocutors. Through these practices, parental rights and responsibilities are assumed, acknowledged, and reproduced, and thereby parents are constructed *as parents*.

The construction of parenthood is a cultural component of any society. As Sacks (1992) argued, culture as an apparatus for generating recognizable actions allows us to make sense of the *parent* membership and its category-bound activities. Parental conduct is thus not universally prescribed but rather varied across different cultures. For instance, Schieffelin (1985) observed that in Kaluli society, babies are described as having no understanding, and thus Kaluli parents do not treat babies as conversation partners in dyadic interactions. This is in contrast with the well-established baby talk register in western societies (Snow, 1972). In the current study, we have examined how the parent membership provides for parental rights and responsibilities regarding the three practices identified in the analysis. The parents are not prescribed to perform these actions, yet they legitimately do so, and this is how they and other interaction participants co-construct parenthood in the Taiwanese and American societies from which the data are drawn.

This chapter also provides insight into the distinction between *parent* and *adult*. The asymmetrical nature of adult-child interaction is, to a larger extent, a common-sense one, and

children's position within such an asymmetrical relationship has received abundant academic attention, especially as subjects of authority. However, there has been little systematic empirical investigation of parenthood as distinctive from adulthood. While both categories are associated with entitled rights and responsibilities in interaction with children, parents possess a specific set of legitimate rights and responsibilities with respect to *their* children. As this chapter shows, interaction participants do display differential orientations to *parent* and to *adult*. In particular, for adult participants, the distinction lies not only in how they treat children (e.g., whether an adult has the right to act on behalf of a child) but also in how they treat one another (e.g., whether an adult has the right to act on behalf of another adult). Although the parent membership is determined by a relationship with children, parental rights and responsibilities are produced, managed, and sustained not only by parents and their children but also by other participants as a collaborative accomplishment in interaction.

Current discourse studies of the family organization are concerned with the ways in which the reality of parents is constructed and negotiated through the use of language. This chapter contributes to this line of research by illustrating how parents are constructed *as parents* through interactional practices on a moment-by-moment basis in social interaction. Since discourse studies in this field tend to focus on the formation of the speaker's own identity and stance, this conversation analytic study provides methodological implications by demonstrating that we are able to systematically identify and analyze conversational practices in the turn-by-turn sequential unfolding of naturally occurring interaction through which parents' position vis-à-vis children and other adults is made visible and consequential.

A broader implication of this chapter centers around the intersection of sequential action and membership categorization, two fundamental domains of social interaction. As previously

noted, conversation analytic research on the interrelationship between membership categories and the organization of social interaction has primarily focused on explicit invocations of categories in the design of particular actions since they support claims of demonstrable relevance (Schegloff, 1987). However, as Schegloff (2007c) argued, it is necessary that analysts deal not only with already formulated descriptions of persons and activities but with how the conduct itself comes to be formulated as such. This chapter adds to the existing investigation of implicit invocations of membership categories (e.g., Butler & Fitzgerald, 2010; Flinkfeldt et al, 2021; Rossi & Stivers, 2021) and provides evidence for the operational relevance of membership categories in the performance of sequential actions. Specifically, the analysis shows how participants enact the *parent* membership not just as a resource for action design but also as warrants for performing certain actions at all.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

5.1.1 Implications for childhood research

Children's status, rights, and competence have been the major foci of contemporary childhood studies. Opposing the traditional view of children as pro-social objects of socialization, recent childhood research tends to characterize children as agents and active constructors of their own social worlds, focusing on their views, voices, and experiences in their everyday life (Corsaro, 2018; James & Prout, 1997; Kehily, 2009; Qvortrup et al., 2009; Wyness, 2006). This approach entails that children, rather than merely *future* beings, are competent, entitled members as they are *now*. As enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989), children are entitled to "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family" (preamble) and, as Article 12 delineates, have rights to freely express opinions on matters that concern them. Their status as entitled members is supported by solid empirical evidence of their competencies in both cognitive and social domains (e.g., Hutchby & Moran-Ellis, 1998), which has societal, political, and education implications (Mayall, 2013). In particular, to explicate children's competencies, childhood researchers predominantly rely on ethnographic methods, such as participant observation and interviews, to gain access to children's perspectives and thereby document how they understand and take part in the processes of social preservation and reproduction (see Corsaro, 2018).

This dissertation contributes to this strand of research by addressing how children's status is constructed in natural settings of social interaction. However, this dissertation extends the remit of childhood research on two grounds. First, departing from the common methodological approach in this field, i.e., eliciting children's own accounts of their social worlds, this dissertation draws on participant orientation using the methodology of CA. As discussed in Chapter 1, by examining the sequential unfolding of turns-at-talk, CA gains access to the ways in which participants themselves make sense of one another's actions and thereby establish collaborative courses of social activities. The methodological contrast between CA and conventional ethnographies is aptly addressed by Goodwin (1990):

By making use of the techniques of conversation analysis and the documentation of the sequential organization of indigenous events, we can avoid the pitfalls of "interpretive anthropology," which tends to focus its attention on ethnographer/informant dialogue rather than interaction *between participants*. This will enable us to move away from reports to ethnographers of how people play out their lives towards an "anthropology of experience" concentrating on how people themselves actually perform activities. (p. 287)

Second, as noted in Chapter 1, contemporary research on children's interaction tends to focus on how children display specific competencies in deploying linguistic resources and managing interaction within a developmental framework. Although such emphasis on children's competence gives the due recognition of children as important members in society, this has left out the perspective of how others orient to childhood.

Following the tradition of Ethnomethodology and CA, this dissertation concerns *not* children's competence (or incompetence) but rather how the status of being a child, including children's membership rights and obligations, are oriented to by others on a moment-by-moment

basis in the course of everyday interaction. Chapter 2 shows that adults constantly attend to children's performances in question-answer sequences and work to safeguard their rights to respond, thereby validating their status as interaction participants. Chapter 3 documents how parents treat children as having reduced epistemic rights by asserting epistemic primacy over children's thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Young children seem to align with this orientation since there is none, or at most, little resistance from them, though this pattern is likely to shift over time. Grounded in this investigation of the asymmetrical relationship between children and their parents, Chapter 4 illustrates that third-party interlocutors (e.g., relatives, friends, and other children) also orient to such asymmetry. That is, the construction of the asymmetrical parent-child relationship is a collaborative effort involving children, parents, and other interlocutors. It is through these special orientations to children that their status *as children* is constructed and reconstructed in social interaction.

While this focus on children's restricted rights to interactional autonomy seems to contradict the current academic endeavor in portraying children as members who are entitled to equal rights, it is important to emphasize that this dissertation argues not that children *have* restricted rights but rather that children are *treated as* having restricted rights, and such participant orientation is evidenced in the ongoing interaction in children's everyday encounters. This implies that, while children's status, rights, and competence are widely recognized with the contemporary ideology of the child-centered society, this approach does not necessarily shape interactional practices at such a fine-grained, micro-level of details. However, it would be a misconception to say that children's rights are denied solely on the basis of the social category to which they belong regardless of the interactional context. As the analysis reveals, the orientation towards children's restricted rights is normally contingent on other interactional goals, such as

showing affiliation with children (Chapter 3), scaffolding children's developing competencies (Chapters 2 and 3), and dealing with interactional issues between children and other interlocutors (Chapters 2 and 4). Therefore, rather than mistreatments that require remedy (see Hester & Moore, 2018), such orientations should be viewed as contingencies of the construction of childhood in the Taiwanese and American societies.

These contingencies create a tension between the goal of facilitating children's development and the construction of children's restricted rights to autonomy, for instance, the "tradeoff" between parents scaffolding their children's expressions of preferences, emotions, and memories by using epistemic confirmations on the one hand, and the assertion of epistemic primacy that is necessary to accomplish such goals on the other (Chapter 3). This can be conceptualized as a cost-benefit treatment — in interaction with young children, the benefits of scaffolding their developing competencies outweigh the costs of undermining their interactional rights. However, this pattern is likely to shift as children grow older and become more autonomous (and accountable) for their own views, voices, and experiences. Older children may begin to show resistance to "playing along" (e.g., Extract 12 in Chapter 3), and as a result, parents are likely to perceive the costs of these practices as rising relative to the gains.

By demonstrating how the relative rights of children and adults are made visible and consequential in the details of naturally occurring interaction, this dissertation formulates the interactional construction of childhood, which can be related to a wide set of interests in childhood, including social psychology, child development, linguistic anthropology, and sociolinguistics, and makes important contributions to the insights of childhood in the social sciences more generally.

5.1.2 Implications for the sociology of childhood

According to Corsaro (2018), there are two basic tenets of the sociology of childhood: “children are active agents who construct their own cultures and contribute to the production of adult world, and childhood is a structural form or part of society” (p. 4). This first tenet, as previously noted, is typically dealt with by ethnographic methods which capture children’s everyday life as participants in their cultures. The implications offered by this dissertation regarding the concept of “children as active agents” has been discussed in Section 5.1.1 on childhood research.

The second tenet concerns that, for society, childhood is an everlasting structural category even though its members constantly change, and its qualities vary across time and contexts. In this sense, childhood is a socially constructed period in which children live their lives, and children are incumbents of their childhoods. To address the concept of “childhood as a structural category,” prior sociological research tends to focus on how childhood is interrelated with other structural categories, such as gender, race, and social class (see Qvortrup, 1994), exploring how children affect and are affected by society at the macrolevel. This, however, has left out how childhood as a category is constructed at the microlevel.

This dissertation furthers the scope of the sociology of childhood by illustrating how childhood as a structural component of society is constructed at a microlevel in the ongoing interaction in children’s everyday encounters. Through a sociological lens, the findings shed light on the nature and conception of childhood as a social construct and also provide important methodological implications for research on the sociology of childhood — microlevel methods for qualitative studies can be utilized to examine childhood not only with respect to “children as active agents” but also “childhood as a structural category.”

5.1.3 Implications for Conversation Analysis

The findings of this dissertation contribute to the field of CA by expanding our understanding of interactional norms that participants are obliged to uphold. While CA has established itself as a systematic approach to the normative organization that underlies social interaction, existing work on interactional norms has primarily developed based on adult conversations. This has overlooked variations that might take place in interactions involving participants who have yet to claim the same rights, obligations, and accountability as fuller members do.

This dissertation illustrates how the asymmetry between children and adults shapes participants' adherence to and violations of interactional norms. Chapter 2 deals with the normative preferences that are relevant to question-answer sequences, including sequence progressivity (Schegloff, 1979, 2007b), turn allocation (Sacks et al., 1974), and repair organization (Schegloff, et al., 1977). As the analysis shows, the normative preference for progressivity is often relaxed in interactions involving children as their participation is typically prioritized by adult co-participants.

In Chapter 3, the normative organization of epistemic domains is re-examined in the context of parent-child interaction. In adult conversations, the boundaries of epistemic domains are regularly patrolled and even policed by owners since, as Goffman (1971) suggests, epistemic territories are simultaneously territories of the self, and “to fail to maintain such territory is to risk deracination” (Heritage, 2013, p. 383). However, the analysis reveals that children are not always treated as having primary rights to assert their own personal knowledge, whereas their parents are oriented to as entitled to tread into their epistemic domains. Through identifying and analyzing children's claims about their personal knowledge, this chapter illustrates the

asymmetry between children and parents as a manifestation of the norm-guided social distributions of knowledge.

Focusing on parenthood, Chapter 4 investigates two aspects of interactional norms, namely acting on behalf of others and sanctioning others. In ordinary interaction among adults, the rights to perform these actions are typically granted by virtue of local interactional roles and local sequential environments (e.g., Heritage, 1984; Stivers & Robinson, 2006), yet parents, as this chapter shows, are consistently oriented to as having the rights and responsibilities to legitimately perform these actions in interactions involving their children. In particular, the *parent* status affords parents a set of legitimate rights with respect not only to their children but also to other adult participants in interaction.

These patterns of variations of the normative interactional structure are likely an indication of overarching goals in this particular domain of adult-child interaction, i.e., scaffolding children's developing competence and facilitating their interaction. For instance, parents' assertions of epistemic primacy are usually designed to scaffold children's feelings, memories, and language use (Chapter 3). Similarly, parents' transgressions into other adults' domains are justified when they work to deal with interactional issues between their children and other interlocutors (Chapter 4). The findings provide implications for understanding other asymmetrical relationships, such as native/non-native interaction and interaction involving individuals with speech or cognitive impairment, since an overarching interactional goal (e.g., education, therapy, etc.) is often relevant in these settings as well. More broadly, this dissertation sheds light on the interrelationship between entitlements implied by actions, rights and obligations associated with membership, and the normative organization of social interaction.

5.1.4 Implications for membership categorization

Focusing on membership rights of children vis-à-vis parents, this dissertation addresses the intersection of sequential action and membership categorization, two fundamental domains of social interaction. In order to establish demonstrable relevance (Schegloff, 1987), previous studies on the interrelationship between membership categories and interactional structures have mainly focused on explicit references to people as members of categories and how such categories can be used as resources for particular actions (e.g., Pomerantz & Mandelbaum, 2005; Stokoe, 2009). However, as Schegloff (2007c) argued, it is necessary that analysts deal not only with already formulated descriptions of persons and activities but with how the conduct itself comes to be formulated as such.

This dissertation adds to the few existing investigations of implicit invocations of membership categories (e.g., Butler & Fitzgerald, 2010; Flinkfeldt et al., 2021; Rossi & Stivers, 2021) and provides empirical evidence for the operational relevance of membership categories in the performance of sequential actions. Specifically, participant orientations toward childhood and adulthood can be understood as “category-sensitive” phenomena (Rossi & Stivers, 2021) — for instance, parents asserting rights over their children is recognizable as a typical action associated with their *parent* membership, and children giving way to such assertions is also recognizable as a typical action associated with their *child* membership. Through these actions, the common-sense understandings of *children* and *parents* are invoked, including their expectable actions and their legitimate attributions in relation to one another. Social categories also place constraints on the performance of certain actions, such that autonomously engaging in conversations (Chapter 2) and claiming epistemic primacy (Chapter 3) are conventionally associated with *adults* but not *children*. In this regard, the category memberships are enacted not

just as a resource for action design but also as warrants for performing or not performing certain actions at all.

By identifying how membership in social categories establishes affordances and constraints on the performance of certain actions, this dissertation shows the operational relevance of sociodemographic structure in the organization of social interaction and points to “a way that conversation analytic research can move forward in deepening the understanding of the mechanisms through which social identity permeates social interaction” (Rossi & Stivers, 2021, p. 72).

5.2 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Drawing on interactions with young children, this dissertation explicates the contingency of the interactional construction of childhood that creates a tension between the goal of fostering children’s development and the construction of children’s restricted rights to autonomy and provides a model for longitudinal research into how this tension may shift over the life course. Given that this dissertation draws on a dataset of interactions with young children and affords a fairly limited illustration of older children, future research with data involving children of a wider age range will be needed to draw a more conclusive argument regarding this pattern. As noted in Chapter 1, several of the participating families in this dissertation are open to revisits for data collection. My plan is to collect longitudinal data with these families (although this has been disrupted by the global pandemic), and the updated dataset will afford observations of the long-term shift.

It is worth noting that in preparation for this dissertation research, I did collect a few hours of interactional data of families with older children (one English-speaking family with a 9-

year-old girl in the US, and one Mandarin-speaking family with a 9-year-old boy and a 12-year-old girl in Taiwan). These data were eventually excluded from the dissertation because there is virtually no occurrence of any of the focal practices identified in interactions with younger children (e.g., guiding children to respond, speaking on behalf of children, asking children recipient-side test questions, etc.). This is consistent with the cost-benefit argument (see Section 5.1.1) — children in this age range have obtained a relatively high degree of autonomy which allows them to push back on parental authority, and scaffolding their developing competencies is no longer a priority for parents. Yet, as previously discussed, the construction of childhood is not entirely determined by children's competence, and thus older children are unlikely to acquire equal rights and obligations as their parents do by virtue of their higher autonomy. To further investigate how the interactional construction of childhood shifts over time, future research will need to identify other interactional practices through which participation orientations to the status of being an older child are made visible and consequential. This may even extend to grown children since a child is always a child in relation to their parents.

Another direction for future research is to incorporate data from a more diverse sample. As outlined in Chapter 1, the current dataset consists of Taiwanese American and Taiwanese families because the initial goal was to conduct cross-cultural comparisons. Moreover, these families are exclusively middle or upper class. Lareau's (2011) seminal work on childrearing practices in middle-class, working-class, and poor families demonstrates the power of social class in shaping the lives of American children. On language use, for instance, working-class parents rely heavily on directives to discipline their children, whereas middle-class parents tend to promote reasoning and negotiation with their children. The consequence, Lareau argues, is that working-class children display a sense of constraint, whereas their middle-class counterparts

are fostered with a sense of entitlement. However, it remains unclear whether such differences in the childrearing approach are manifested at the micro level of the sequential unfolding of turns-at-talk. For future research, the CA methodology can be utilized to describe the details of participant orientations to the constructions and reconstructions of childhood and identify disparities, if any, with respect to categories such as race and social class.

APPENDIX I

CONVERSATION ANALYTIC TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

.	(period) falling intonation.
?	(question mark) rising intonation.
,	(comma) continuing or slightly rising intonation.
wor-	(hyphen) abrupt cut-off.
wor:d	(colon) prolonging of sound.
<u>word</u>	(underlining) stress.
WORD	(caps) loud speech.
°word°	(degree symbol) quiet speech.
^word	(circumflex accent symbol) marked pitch rise.
>word<	(more than and less than) quicker speech.
<word>	(less than and more than) slowed speech.
hh	(“h”) hearable aspiration or laughter.
.hh	(“h” preceded by a period) hearable in-breath.
(hh)	(“h” in parentheses) inside word boundaries.
[(left-side bracket) beginning of overlapping talk or behavior.
=	(equal sign) latch or contiguous utterances of the same speaker.
(1.5)	(number in parentheses) length of silence in tenths of a second.
(.)	(period in parentheses) micro-pause, 0.2 second or less.
()	(empty parentheses) talk too obscure to transcribe. Words or letters inside such parentheses indicate the transcriber’s best estimate of what is being said.
((action))	(double parentheses) non-speech activity.

APPENDIX II

ABBREVIATIONS OF INTERLINEAR GLOSSES

1S/ 2S/ 3S	first/ second/ third person singular pronoun
1P/ 2P/ 3P	first/ second/ third person plural pronoun
AFF	affirmative
ASSO	associative (<i>-de</i>)
CL	classifier
COP	copular verb
GEN	genitive (<i>-de</i>)
NEG	negation
NOM	nominalizer (<i>de</i>)
PREP	preposition
PRF	perfective aspect
PT	particle
Q	question

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