

Bart de Boer

Infant-directed speech and language evolution

Outline:

- Short definition of infant-directed speech
- properties of infant-directed speech (references to sources of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural studies)
- argument for the functional role of these properties (reference to work with infants, and to some modeling studies that show better learnability, my own and Vallabha's for instance)
- potential importance of evolved "teaching" behavior (as proposed in my work with Patricia Kuhl)
- theories that are not directly on infant-directed speech, but rather on mother-child (or caretaker-child) interactions
- theories on the importance of mother-child interaction (Falk, Locke and Bogin)
- theories of the importance of kin-selection in the evolution of cooperative linguistic behavior as proposed by Tecumseh Fitch