

The Dynamic Give and Take of Early Communicative Development:  
Language, Gesture, and Action in Parent-Child Interaction

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In this talk, I will present findings from two lines of research designed to address the broader issue of the cascading effects of early developmental advances and delays on caregiver input. The first documents enhanced variability in early communicative development in infants with an older sibling with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The second explores the consequences of this variability for the language-learning environment. Improving our understanding of communicative delays of the sort observed in ASD and other developmental disorders and developing effective intervention methods requires going beyond the individual to consider the constant, complex interplay between developing communicators and their environments.