

## Background

Honorifics (e.g., *Ms. Rachel*) plays a crucial role in social deixis by indexing hierarchical social relations and social distance.<sup>3</sup> Far beyond alternate vocative forms, the Korean honorifics system manifests itself both lexically (e.g., 생일 vs. 생신 for *birthday*) and morpho-syntactically (e.g., verbal inflections; -요), forming a register (e.g., informal register to a friend; honorific register to a teacher).<sup>6</sup>

Past research brings to light the surprising usage of honorifics in child-directed speech (CDS).<sup>1,2</sup> **The function of honorifics in CDS, however, remains unclear from case studies alone.**

## Potential role of honorifics in CDS

We explore four potential roles of honorifics usage in CDS:

### 1. Honorifics solely indexes social distance.

The proportion of honorifics usage in CDS should mirror the proportion of honorifics usage to other family members of comparable social distance.

### 2. Honorifics is a general marker of linguistic input.

Honorifics usage should be directly proportional to the overall frequency of speech act categories.

### 3. Honorifics scaffolds behavioral socialization.

Utterances commending/discouraging behavior should be the most honorifics-marked.

### 4. Honorifics scaffolds linguistic socialization.

Utterances modeling honorifics usage should be the most honorifics-marked, i.e., in speech elicitations and roleplaying (e.g., as cashier and customer in a grocery store).

## CHILDES Ko Corpus<sup>4</sup>



Naturalistic “home” recordings (audio only)

**Age groups:** 0;8, 1;1, 2;3 **Avg rec. duration** = 46.87 mins  
**N** = 30 (10 per age group) (*SD* = 3.44; *range* = 16.22)

## Speech act coding

Utterance-level speech act coding using Inventory of Communicative Acts - Abridged (**INCA-A**)<sup>5</sup>:

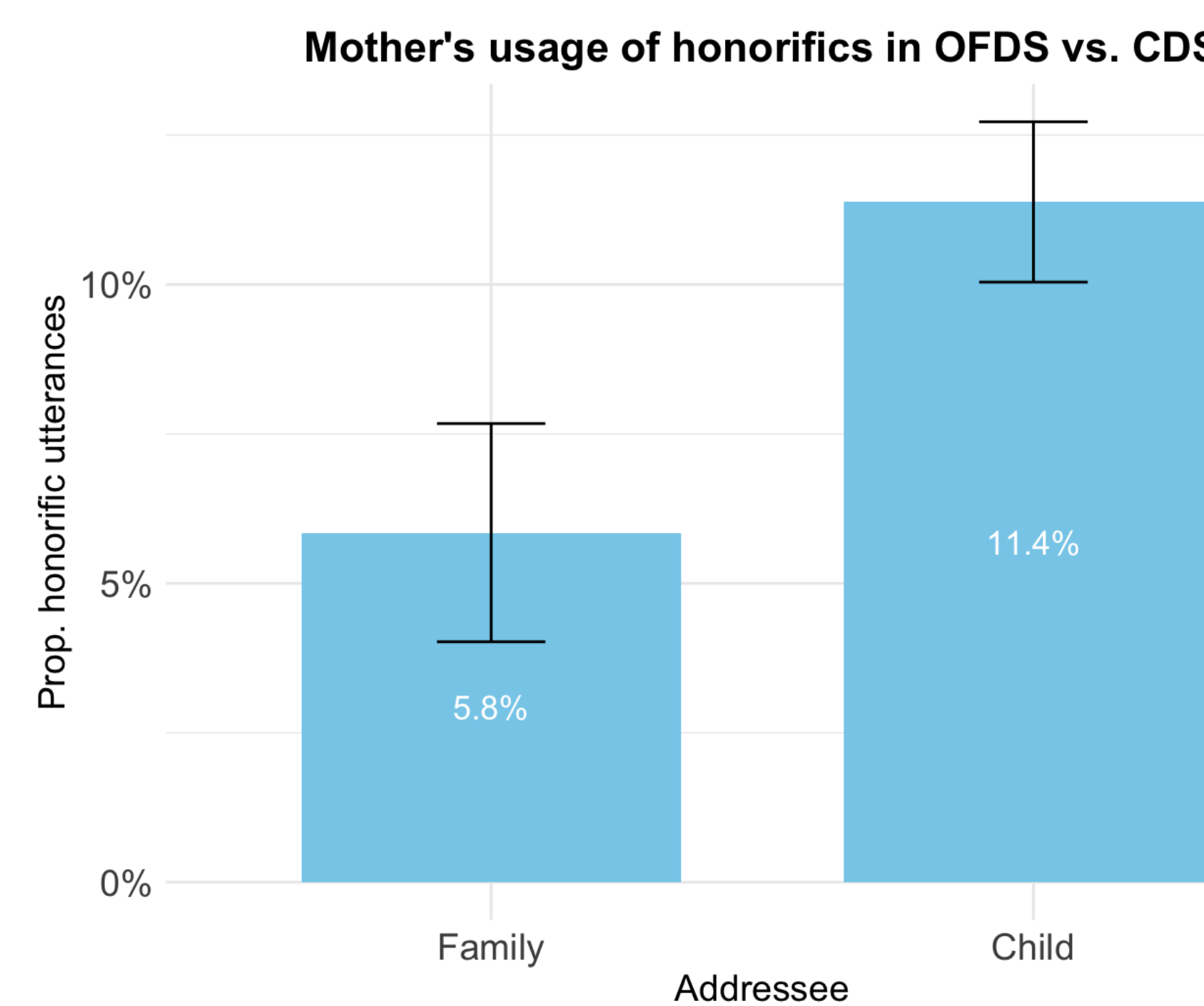
line_num	spkr	INCA-A	transcription
375	MOT	RQ	제일 큰 것부터 꺼 볼까요 그럼? most big-ATTR thing-from put.on try-SUPP.SUGQ-HON then Then shall we try on the biggest one first?
380	CHI	ST	엄마 안 돼. mom not allowed We can't Mom.
384	MOT	YQ	안 돼요? not allowed-HON We can't?
389	MOT	ST	할 수 있어요. do-FUT.ATTR ability exist-HON We can.

## CDS metadata

age group	mean utts/min	SD	mean num unique speech acts	SD
0;8	38.3	9.4	29.9	4.60
1;1	39.6	5.7	33.4	3.87
2;3	39.1	3.2	38.5	3.14

## Honorifics in CDS is *dynamic*, not static

### More than a marker of social distance



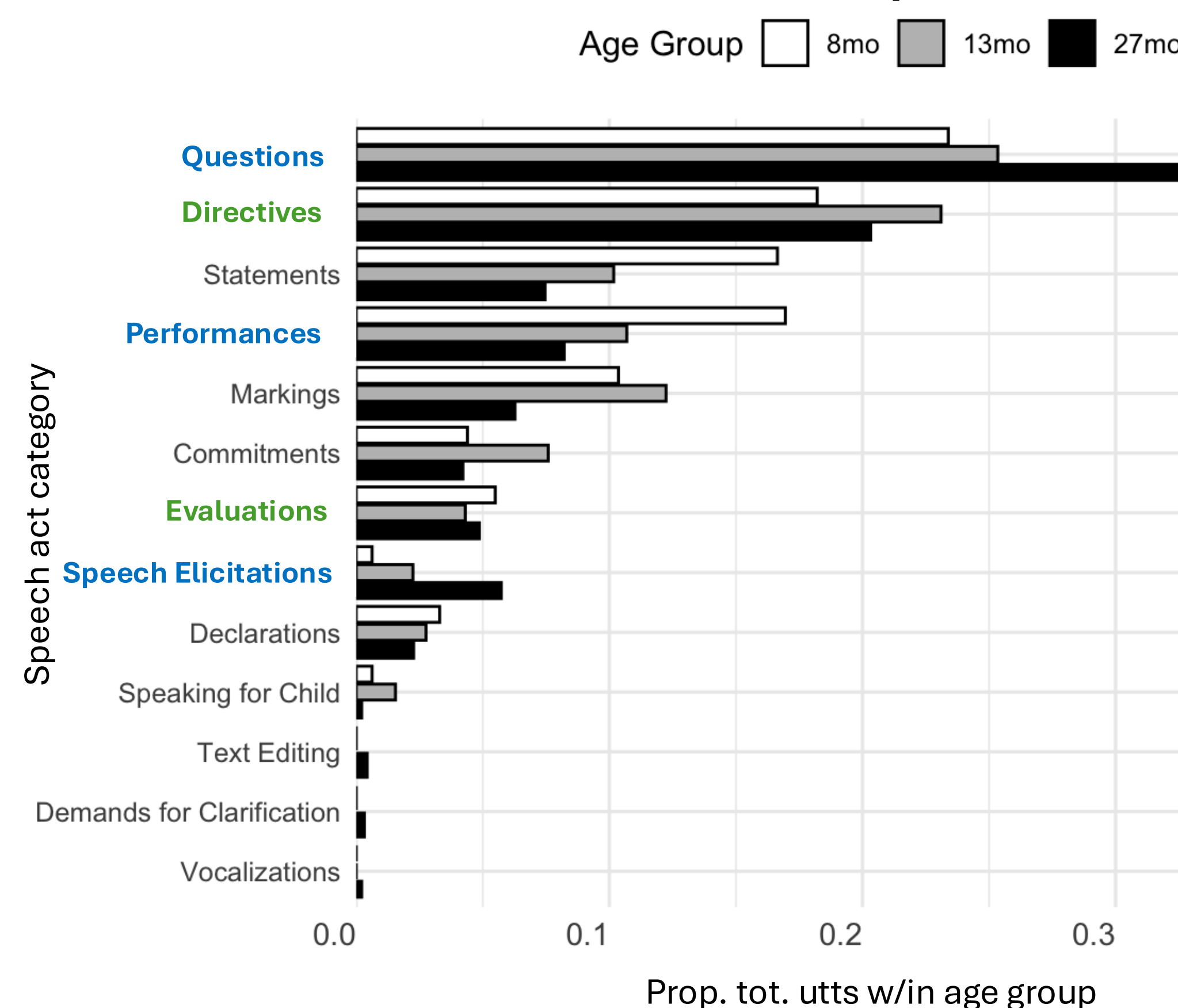
Honorifics were used significantly more in CDS than in Other-Family-Directed-Speech (OFDS). ( $t(28) = 3.16, p < 0.005$  adult baseline prop. = 78.6%)

### More than a general marker of linguistic input

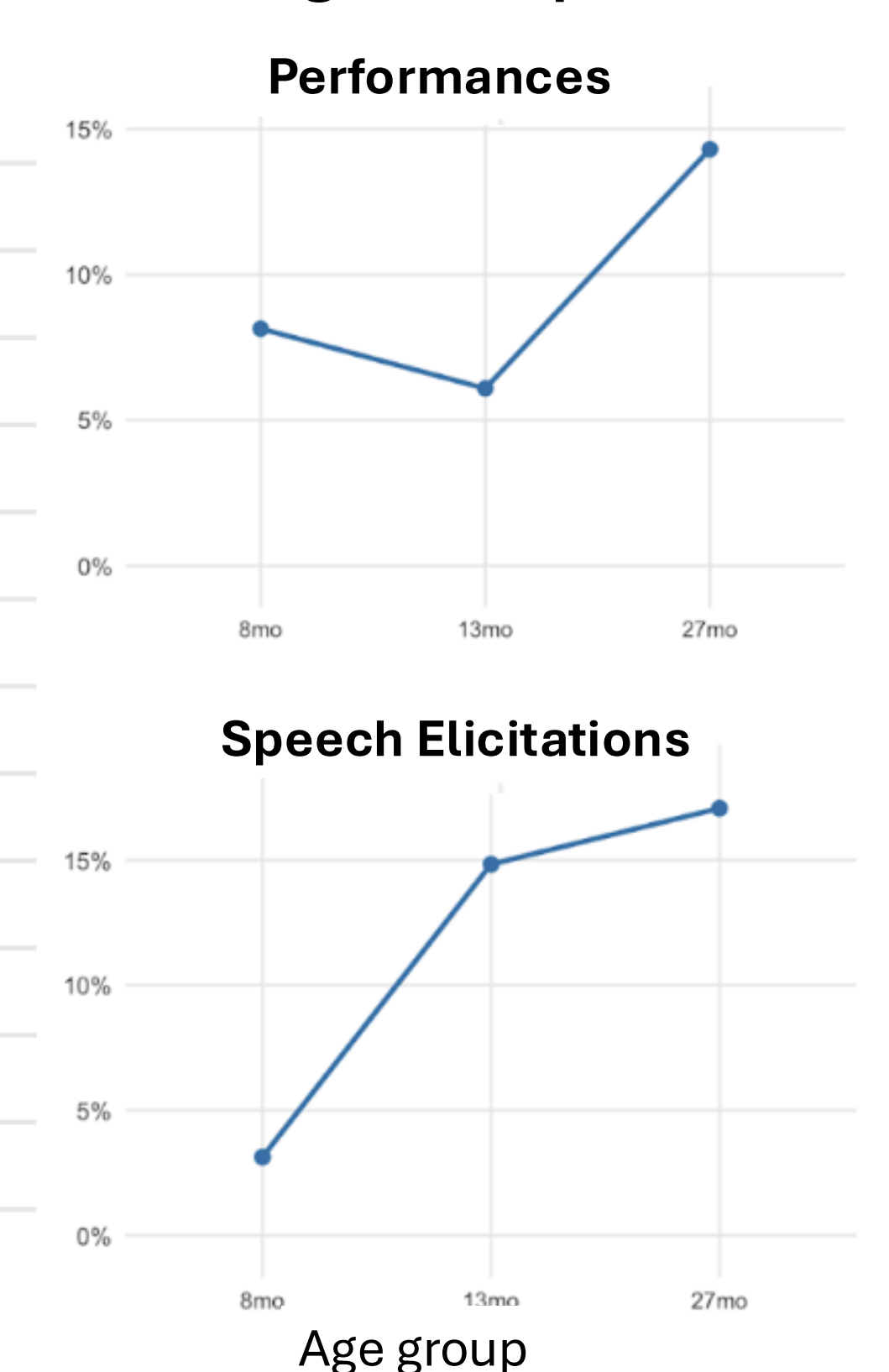
Honorifics usage was not directly proportional to the overall frequency of speech act categories within age groups. ( $\chi^2 = 60.6; 158.7; 177.6$  (0;8; 1;1; 2;3),  $p < 0.001$  for all)

## Behavioral socialization? Linguistic socialization!

### Dist. of honorific utts across speech act categories



### Prop. utts w. honorifics markings w/in speech act



### Behavior management with Directives and Evaluations...

에이 아파요 이렇게 하-면 일-어나-세요 이제 조끼 벗-고  
INTERJ hurt-HON thus-ADV do-if rise-up-HON now vest take.off-CONN  
'Ouch, it hurts if (you) do it like this.' 'Please get up now and take off your vest.'

### ...but also modeling through Performances and Speech Elicitations...

똑똑 문 열-어 주-세요 안녕히 계세요 하-해  
ONOM door open-CONN give-HON-REQ well stay-HON do-IMP  
'Knock knock, please open the door.' 'Say, "Goodbye!"'

### ...and building familiarity with politeness constructs with Questions.

이거 뭐-예요 뭐 하-고 놀-고 싶-어요  
this-thing what-COP-HON what do-CONN play-CONN want-HON  
'What is this?' 'What do you want to do (play)?'

Honorifics in CDS thus serves to dynamically scaffold both behavioral and linguistic socialization.

## Discussion

**Honorifics in CDS is dynamic and didactic, not static.** Building on behavioral socialization accounts of CDS honorifics, we've established its additional role in facilitating linguistic socialization through systematic analyses of speech acts associated with honorifics-marked utterances.

How this selective socialization influences children's own early productions of honorific forms and when this CDS-specific function of honorifics gives way to socialized, addressee-dependent honorifics usage remains to be uncovered.

## References

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Poster, data and scripts