



2014 CCE Summer Internships

CATEGORY ARCHIVES: [INFANT POVERTY AND THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP](#)

Week 7- Wrapping Things Up!

Posted on **July 29, 2014** by **Jane Alexandra Conway**

Who knew summer would go by so quickly? Things in the lab have started to wind down as we decide our final assignments. Research assistant, Haley, and I are finishing coding for Maternal Responsivity during the Free Play task. Once we finish coding that task I will continue coding Word Learning for 12 month olds with RA Montana.

Sadly, we will not be testing anymore infants for the remainder of the summer- my favorite part of the lab! But, I'm looking forward to continuing in the Fall.

Now that my final schedule for the rest of summer has been decided, it's time to start thinking about what I would like to present at the CCE internship banquet! Once we analyze data from the multiple tasks that I have coded for this summer, I'll decide which task to present. Fingers crossed, we've obtained valuable information about the achievement gap in all of the tasks that I've looked at this summer.

Posted in **Infant Poverty and the Achievement Gap**, **Uncategorized**

Week 6- Something Old, Something New

Posted on **July 21, 2014** by **Jane Alexandra Conway**

This week I finished coding Word Learning for 24 month olds, hooray! Now I will begin coding Word Learning for 12 months old. Next week I will be meeting with Professor Evans to analyze the 24 month old data.

I really enjoy coding for the Word Learning task. I feel like this task is a great representation of undergraduate research and its versatility. Last semester I started collecting the data for this task by testing the infants in our lab, then I helped develop a coding scheme that could be used to analyze the task, now I am about to analyze the data

that I coded to see if there is a difference in low and mid income infants. I'm excited to see the results! If they show interesting findings I may use this task as my final project for the CCE internship. Once I finish coding for 12 month olds I will also be analyzing that data which, fingered crossed, will give us more insight into the achievement gap.

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Week Five- Coding, coding, and more coding!

Posted on **July 14, 2014** by [Jane Alexandra Conway](#)

This week was filled with coding! I resumed coding the Word Learning task and also began coding the task, Free Play. In Free Play, parents are given a large basket of toys and are asked to play with their child how they normally would. I enjoy coding this task because it is one of the most 'natural' tasks we have the parent complete with their child. I think this task gives us the best sense of how parent's interact with their child on a day to day basis. I am specifically coding for maternal responsivity during the task, or how well the parent notices, interprets, and responds to child's bids.

Besides coding, Haley, another research assistant, and I were interviewed by the College of Human Ecology about our research! It's exciting to share our experience with undergrad research and our project's goals.

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Week Four- Recruitment

Posted on **July 7, 2014** by [Jane Alexandra Conway](#)

This week I continued coding for the task, Spatial Play. In this task parents are asked to play with their child using a shape sorting toy. I coding for maternal sensitivity, or how appropriately mothers acknowledge and interpret their child's bids based on the child's mood and level of development. I really enjoy coding for this task because it is one of the only tasks that specifically looks at mother to infant interaction, something I find very interesting.

This week I also worked on recruitment for new infants to test. Recently we have been recruiting for infants at the Cortland County Community Action Program (CAPCO). When we see parents with infants we ask them if they would like to learn about our study and if they would be interested in participating. If they agree, we take their name and phone number and call them when we return to the lab. I enjoy going on recruitment trips because I get to explain our study to people who live in the Tompkins community.

Below is a picture of me calling a potential participant!



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Week Three- Data Collection and Analysis

Posted on **July 1, 2014** by **Jane Alexandra Conway**

This week was filled with both visit practice and data analysis. A fellow research assistant and I reviewed all protocols for infant's first visit to the lab. Each participant is tested twice in our lab. The first visit takes place at Cornell and the second visit takes place in the infant's home. My personal favorite visit is the home visit because it allows us to get a sense for the infant's natural environment and daily activities. Before each visit, an RA will call the parent to confirm the appointment time and prepare the infant's visit folder which contains coding sheets for the tasks the infant will complete and questionnaires containing demographic, temperament, and language acquisition questions. Each visit takes approximately two hours and contains tasks that test various developmental processes. After each visit, all coding sheets and questionnaires are put into the participant's folder and locked in the lab. Once the tasks have been administered, they are ready to be coded and analyzed.

Last week I began the preliminary steps to developing a coding scheme for the task, Word Learning. This week after revisions from Professor Evans, I began coding for this task. The coding scheme was developed from a previous experiment ran by Lakshmi Gogate and seeks to examine the correlation between parent's style of naming objects and child's subsequent word-mapping abilities. In order to begin coding, I had to be checked for reliability with another research assistant, Montana. Montana and I used the coding scheme that I developed last week to assess parent's use of movement with object naming. There are four different ways parents can label the novel object: Synchronously, asynchronously, statically, and naming while the infant holds the novel object. In synchronous naming, the parent moves the novel object while naming it. In asynchronous naming, the parent

moves the novel object before or after naming it. In static naming, the parent does not move the object at all but simply names it. Lastly, the parent may name the object while the infant is holding the novel object. Along with these four criteria, I also code for maternal responsivity- or how encouraging and responsive the mother is to the child's attempts to name the novel object. Creating the coding scheme for this task and actually using it to code was a very rewarding experience. I can't wait to see what the results from this task reveal about the correlation between poverty and infant development!

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Week Two- Learning 'Word Learning'

Posted on **June 21, 2014** by **Jane Alexandra Conway**

This week was filled with new tasks! A fellow research assistant and I worked together to create a tentative coding scheme for the task, "Word Learning". This task involves mothers teaching their infants the names of two to three novel objects in a two minute time frame. I read two articles by researchers who have performed similar experiments on infant's ability to both say and understand novel words. After reviewing these articles and videos of previous participants from this study, my fellow research assistant and I developed a tentative coding scheme for our professor to review. Next week we'll be editing the coding scheme after incorporating our professor's revisions.

Along with working on "Word Learning", this week I learned how to administer another task on infants. This task tests infant's ability to recognize several different emotions such as happy, mad, angry, and sad. Overall, this week was a busy but exiting one! I learned a new task and was able to work with my colleagues to develop a new coding



scheme.

(Picture of me and another research assistant working on "Word

Learning")

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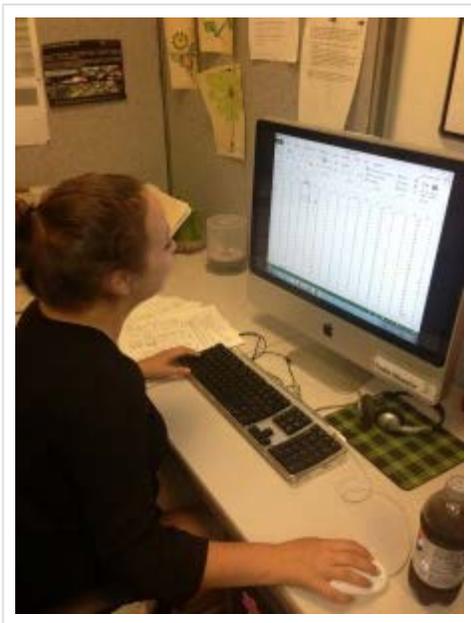
Week One- Let's Begin!

Posted on **June 14, 2014** by **Jane Alexandra Conway**

This week was my first week back at Cornell for my summer internship with the Cornell Infant Studies Laboratory.

This summer I'll be working on the Baby Games project under the supervision of Professor Gary Evans. We started off the week with our first official Baby Games meeting in the lab. I'll be working with four other research assistants this summer. Together we will be conducting several tests on infants from low and mid income families in the Ithaca area that will examine several developmental abilities such as language skills, emotional regulation skills, and attentional focus. After conducting the tests on the infants and collecting the data we will analyze the results by coding it with statistical software, mainly SPSS. This summer I'll be focusing on the Spatial Play task that test infant's perceptual and cognitive abilities.

This week mainly consisted of administrative tasks and getting acquainted with what we will be doing this summer. I updated coding for the MacArthur language questionnaire (that's me coding the questionnaire in the picture!) and began organizing the folders containing each participant's information from the study. Next week I will receive my coding assignment for the rest of the summer and will be preparing for our first summer participant's visit to the lab.



This week was a busy but exciting start to the summer and I'm looking forward to continuing the project!