



Bilingual Spanish/English Unique Story Databases

Database	Context (Subgroup)	Age Range	Grade in School	# Samples	Location	Special Coding
Bilingual English/Spanish Unique Story	Nar (OFTM)	5;0 – 9;7	K, 1, 2, 3	475	TX & CA	SI, NSS

Participants

The Bilingual English Unique Story and Bilingual Spanish Unique Story databases consist of English and Spanish story **tell** (not retell) narratives from native Spanish-speaking bilingual (Spanish/English) children. These English learners (ELs) were drawn from public school EL classrooms in urban Texas (Houston and Austin), border Texas (Brownsville), and urban California (Los Angeles). The children reflect the diverse socio-economic status of these areas. Age, grade, and gender data is available for all children.

Additional Inclusion Criteria

1. The children were described as “typically developing” as determined by normal progress in school and the absence of special education services.
2. All children were within the following age ranges.

Grade	Age Range
K	5;0 – 6;9
1	6;2 – 7;7
2	7;3 – 8;9
3	8;4 – 9;7

3. All children were able to produce both English and Spanish narratives containing at least one complete and intelligible verbal utterance in the target language. Although the language samples may contain code-switched words (*English words in the Spanish samples or Spanish words in the English samples*), at least 80% of the words from each sample were in the target language.

Elicitation Protocol

There are different ways to provide the story model and record the student’s story. You may have the student seated next to you or you may be eliciting the sample virtually. You may be using SALT’s *Online Story Elicitation* program (available as an annual subscription on the SALT web site) or providing the directions and story model yourself. Both methods should result in similar outcomes (Manning, et al., 2020, Brennan, et al., 2004). All samples should be recorded for later transcription.

This task is a unique/tell story using the picture book:

OFTM: *One Frog Too Many* by Mercer and Marianna Mayer (1975)

Bilingual Spanish/English or Monolingual Spanish?

Minimally, an English Learner (EL) should be able to produce at least one complete and intelligible utterance in both languages for this assessment. Otherwise, consider the student to be a monolingual speaker.

Target language

For bilingual (Spanish/English) students, if able, you should assess in the language deemed strongest. Alternatively, you may assess in the language in which you are most comfortable. All instructions and prompts should be in the language targeted in elicitation. If the student's performance is below average compared to age and grade-matched peers, or if you want to assess the student's performance in both languages, elicit a second sample in the other language. You may choose to elicit the second sample using the same story or a different story.

Unique (tell) story task

The protocol assumes that the student has had experience **retelling** at least one story. This is important because the story is not modeled. The student is shown the story and then asked to tell the story in their own words.

Elicitation method

1. Option 1 (In-person or virtual session):

Use SALT's *Online Story Elicitation – Bilingual Spanish/English & Monolingual Spanish* program. Select the category (Bilingual Spanish/English), the target language (Spanish or English), and the story. Follow the prompts. If this in an in-person session, use the recorder built into the program. If eliciting the sample virtually, use an alternate recorder, e.g., your phone, the recorder built into Zoom or other software for hosting virtual meetings.

2. Option 2 (In-person session):

Have the student seated next to you with the book in front of you.

Directions to the student (English sample):

Examiner: *Here is a book that doesn't have any words. We are going to look at the pictures in this book together. When we finish, I want you to tell the story to me in English. Ok? Let's look at the book.*

Directions to the student (Spanish sample):

Examiner: *Aquí tengo un libro que no tiene palabras. Vamos a mirar las fotos en este libro. Cuando terminemos, quiero que me cuenta el cuento en español. ¿Ok? Vamos a mirar el primer libro.*

You control the book while you silently look at each page together.

After looking through the book, instruct the student to tell the story in the target language.

Leave the book with the student and move away – either at an angle facing the student or across the table. Moving away from the student helps promote language and minimize pointing. Turn on the recorder.

Directions to the student (English sample):

Examiner: *Okay, now I would like you to tell me the story.*

Directions to the student (Spanish sample):

Examiner: *Ahora, cuéntame lo que pasó en este cuento.*

Refer to the following section for a list of prompts that may be used while the student tells the story. Remember, all prompts should be in the target language.

After the student finishes telling the story, turn off the recorder and thank the student for telling his/her story.

Repeat these steps to elicit the sample in the other language. You may elicit the second language sample immediately after the first, or you may prefer to wait several weeks in between.

Examiner's role during the retell

Use minimal open-ended prompts (in the target language) as necessary when eliciting the samples. Open-ended prompts *do not* provide the student with answers or vocabulary. They *do* encourage the student to try or they let the student know it is ok to move on if needed.

- Use open-ended prompts when the student:
 - is not speaking
 - says "I don't know.", "¿Cómo se dice?"
 - starts listing (e.g., "boy", "dog", "jar")
- Acceptable verbal prompts include:

<i>Tell me more.</i>	<i>Dime más.</i>
<i>Just do your best.</i>	<i>Haz lo mejor que puedas.</i>
<i>Tell me about that.</i>	<i>Dime sobre eso/esa.</i>
<i>You're doing great.</i>	<i>Estás haciendolo muy bien.</i>
<i>I'd like to hear more about that.</i>	<i>Me gustaría oír más sobre eso/esa.</i>
<i>Tell me what you can.</i>	<i>Dime lo que puedas.</i>
<i>That sounds interesting.</i>	<i>Eso/Esa suena interesante.</i>
<i>What else?</i>	<i>¿Qué más?</i>
<i>Keep going.</i>	<i>Siguele. Dale.</i>
<i>Mhm . Uhhuh.</i>	
- Acceptable nonverbal prompts include:
 - Smiles and eye contact
 - Nods of affirmation and agreement
- Unacceptable prompts include:

<i>What is he doing?</i>	<i>¿Qué está haciendo (él)?</i>
<i>Where is he?</i>	<i>¿Dónde está (él)?</i>
Pointing at scenes in the book while prompting	
<i>What's this?</i>	<i>¿Qué es esto?</i>
<i>What's happening here?</i>	<i>¿Qué está pasando/ocurriendo aquí?</i>

Avoid asking the "wh" questions, who?, what?, when?, where?

What if the student code switches? Direct the student to use the target language with minimal interruption of his or her story. If the student occasionally uses a word in the non-target language, you should ignore it. However, if the student uses a lot of words or phrases in the non-target language, prompt the student (in the target language) with:

<i>in English, please</i>	<i>en Español, por favor</i>
<i>tell it to me in English</i>	<i>dimelo en Espanol</i>
<i>tell me the story in English</i>	<i>dime el cuento en Español</i>

Transcription Notes

- The Spanish samples in the reference database were transcribed by native Spanish speakers. The English samples were transcribed by native English speakers.
- Utterances were segmented into Modified Communication Units (MC-units) which were developed specifically for these samples to account for the pronoun-drop nature of the Spanish language.
- The underscore was used for repetitious words or phrases within utterances. This prevented inflation of the MLU due to repetition used to provide emphasis, e.g., C dijeron|decir rana_rana_rana dónde estás|estar.
- All transcripts have timing markers at the beginning and end of the sample. The initial marker indicates the child's first utterance. The final timing marker indicates the end of the child's narrative.

Coding Notes

- [EO:word] marks overgeneralization error
- [EP:word] marks pronoun error
- [EW] marks an extraneous or unnecessary word in the utterance that, if omitted, would make the utterance syntactically correct, e.g., C And he shout/ed and[EW] to the frog.
- [EW:word] marks other word-level error
- [EU] marks utterance-level error (*also marks utterances with 3 or more errors*)
- [FP] marks filled pause words such as *like*, e.g., *You (like[FP]) get six card/s*
- [CS] a word code attached to all code-switched words (Spanish words in English transcripts or English words in Spanish transcripts)
- [I] a word code attached to all imitations of vocabulary provided by the examiner

The following codes were created to mark Spanish-influenced English:

- [WO] an utterance-level code signifying words or phrases within an utterance which are out of order in Standard English. The content (semantics) of the utterance is correct; however the word order is awkward, e.g., C And then fall down the dog and the boy [WO]
- [EW] marks an extraneous or unnecessary word in the utterance that, if omitted, would make the utterance syntactically correct, e.g., C And he shout/ed and[EW] to the frog. As a general rule, do not mark more than one extraneous word in an utterance; instead, mark the utterance using the [EU] code
- [F] placed at the end of each utterance lacking a stated subject as a result segmenting utterances using MC-units

Subordination Index (SI) and Narrative Scoring Scheme (NSS) Coding

SI and NSS coding were applied to all the samples in the Bilingual Spanish/English Unique Story databases.

SI is a measure of syntactic complexity which produces a ratio of the total number of clauses (main and subordinate clauses) to the number of C-units. A clause, whether it is main or subordinate, is a statement containing both a subject and a predicate. Grammatically, a subject is a noun phrase and a predicate is a verb phrase. Main clauses can stand by themselves. Subordinate clauses depend on the main clause to make sense. They are embedded within an utterance as noun, adjective or adverbial clauses.

NSS is an assessment tool developed to create a more objective narrative structure scoring system. It is based upon early work on story grammar analysis by Stein and Glenn, 1979. This scoring procedure combines many of the abstract categories of Story Grammar, adding features of cohesion, connecting events, rationale for characters' behavior and referencing. Each of the scoring categories has specific explicit examples to establish scoring criteria, reducing the abstractness of the story grammar categories.

Using SALT to Compare Samples to the Bilingual Spanish/English Unique Story Database

Use SALT's Database menu to compare your sample with age or grade-matched samples selected from the Bilingual Spanish/English Unique Story database. SALT looks at the following header lines in your transcript to determine which database to pre-select. To pre-select the Bilingual Spanish/English Unique Story database, include the following plus lines in your transcript:

- + Language: Spanish (or English)
- + Bilingual: SE
- + Context: Nar
- + Subgroup: OFTM

Although you can type these plus lines into your transcript, a simpler alternative is to select the target language (Spanish or English), bilingual (SE), sampling context (Nar), and subgroup (OFTM) when completing the New Transcript Header information dialogue box.

Acknowledgements

Language samples for the Bilingual Spanish/English Story Retell reference databases were collected and transcribed as part of the grants HD39521 "Oracy/Literacy Development of Spanish-speaking Children" and R305U010001 "Biological and Behavioral Variation in the Language Development of Spanish-speaking Children", funded by the NICHD and IES, David Francis, P.I., Aquiles Iglesias, Co-P.I., and Jon Miller, Co-P.I.

References

- Brennan, D. M., Georgeadis, A. C., Baron, C. R., & Barker, L. M. (2004). The effect of videoconference-based telerehabilitation on story retelling performance by brain-injured subjects and its implications for remote speech-language therapy. *Telemedicine Journal & e-Health, 10*(2), 147-154.
- Kim, Y. S. G. (2016). Do Live Versus Audio-Recorded Narrative Stimuli Influence Young Children's Narrative Comprehension and Retell Quality?. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 47*(1), 77-86.
- Manning, B., Harpole, A., Harriott, E., Postolowicz, K., & Norton, E. (2020). Taking Language Samples Home: Feasibility, Reliability, and Validity of Child Language Samples Conducted Remotely with Video Chat Versus In-Person.
- Mayer, M. & Mayer, M. (1975). *One Frog Too Many*, New York, NY: Dial Press.
- Stein, N. & Glenn, C. (1979). An analysis for story comprehension in elementary school. In R. Freedle (Ed.) *New directions in discourse processing*, Vol. 2. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.