

Play Database



Database	Context (Subgroup)	Age Range	Grade in School	# Samples	Location	Special Coding
Play	Con (Play)	2;8 – 5;8	P, K	69	WI	SI

Participants

Typically developing children, ranging in age from 2;8 - 5;8, were drawn from preschools in Madison and kindergarten classrooms in the Madison Metropolitan School District. These children, whose primary language is English, came from a variety of economic backgrounds and ability levels. "Typically developing" was determined by normal progress in school and absence of special education services. Economic background was determined by eligibility for the free lunch program. Ability level was determined by teacher rating. Age, gender, and grade data is available for all children.

Elicitation method

The database samples were elicited in-person with an examiner engaged in play with the child. If you choose to elicit a play sample where the child plays with his/her parent/guardian, either in-person or virtually, make sure the parent/guardian is familiar with the elicitation protocol in order to minimize the differences in the outcome.

- In-person session: Seat the child near you, either at a table or on the floor. Record the sample using your phone, tablet, or digital recorder.
- Virtual session: Have the parent/guardian and child seated together, either at a table or on the floor. Record the sample using your phone, tablet, digital recorder, or the recorder built into the software you are using to host the virtual meeting, e.g., Zoom.

Elicitation Protocol

Engage the child using play dough, small toys, blocks, toy farm, house, gas station, or similar toys. Using a cloth to cover the table or a rug on the floor helps reduce ambient noise.

Examiner's role

- Participate in the play.
- Encourage the child to talk.
- Follow the child's lead.
- Request directions, clarification.
- Comment on the child's activity.
- Avoid asking frequent yes/no or closed "wh" questions as these often lead to obvious and limited responses/answers.

Examples of prompts/questions used to promote conversation:

"I've bought some play dough for us to play with today. What should we make together?"

"Let's make ---. What do we need to do to make it?"

"Here are two cows. What should we do with them?"

"I wonder where this car should go."
"Where do think this car should go?"

Transcription Notes

Utterances were segmented into Communication Units (C-units) as defined in the SALT documentation. All transcripts were timed and pauses, within and between utterances, of two or more seconds in length, were marked.

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.*

Subordination Index (SI) Coding

SI coding was applied to all samples. 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.

Using SALT to Compare Samples to the Play Database

Use SALT's Database menu to compare your sample with age or grade-matched samples selected from the Play database. SALT looks at the "+ Context" and "+ Subgroup" plus lines in your transcript to determine which database to pre-select. To pre-select the Play database, include the following plus lines in your transcript:

+ Context: Con
+ Subgroup: Play

Although you can type these plus lines into your transcript, the easiest way is to select the correct sampling context (Con) and subgroup (Play) when first creating a new transcript (by completing the New Transcript Header information dialogue box).

Acknowledgements

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