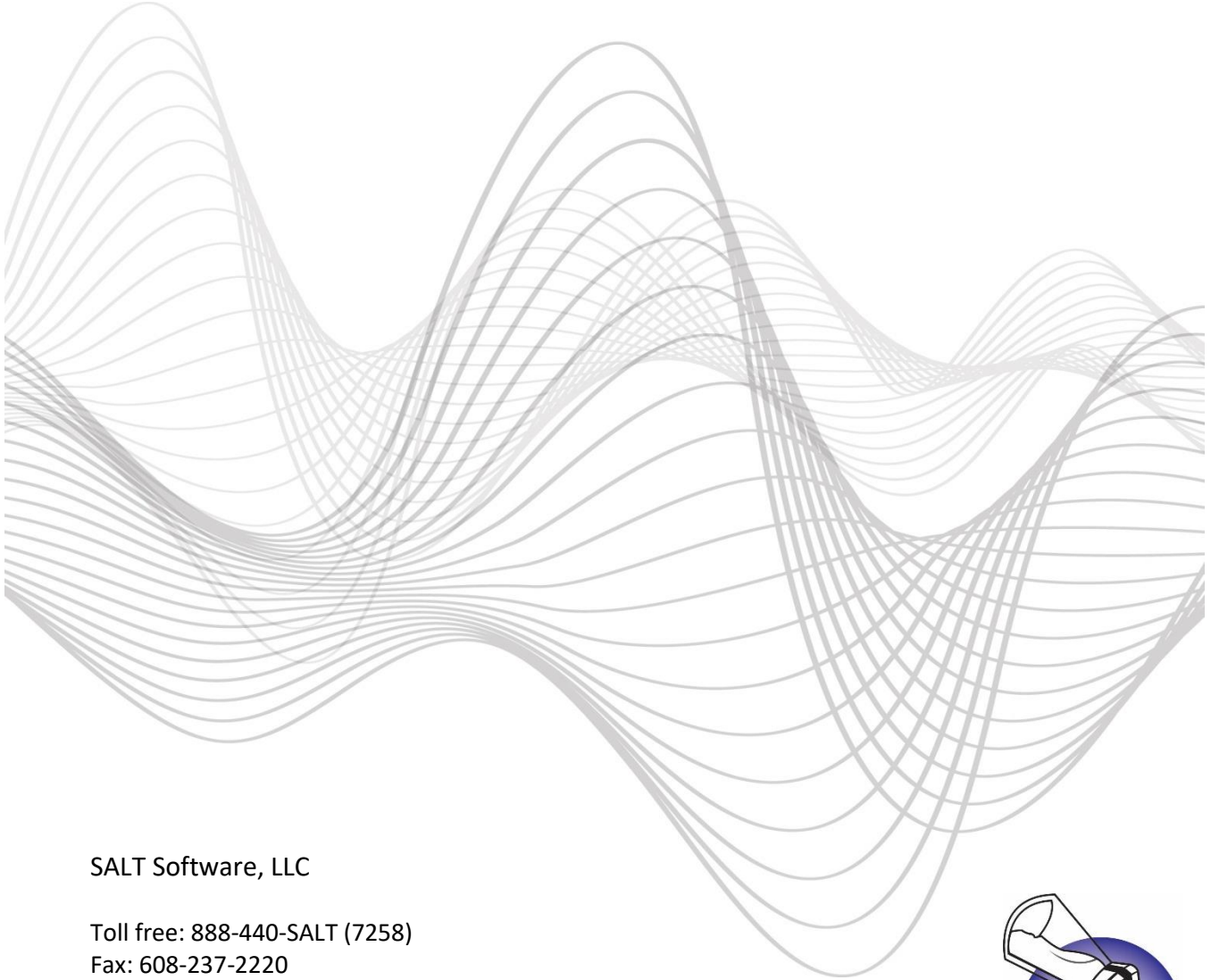


# Using SALT to Assess Errors



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## Using SALT to Assess Errors

Speakers make different types of errors, some of which are captured using the standard conventions, e.g., omitted words or bound morphemes, repeated or revised segments. There are other errors, however, for which there isn't a standard convention, e.g., overgeneralization errors, subject-verb agreement errors, incorrect pronoun use, incorrect word choices. These errors are captured through the use of error codes. The focus of this document is on the use of error codes.

### A. Default Error Code List

There is a special category of codes called "error codes". The five codes listed in this section, [EO:=], [EP:=], [EW:=], [EW], and [EU], are the default error codes (*note that the equal sign in these codes is a placeholder matching any 1 or more characters*). This list of codes, which SALT recognizes as error codes, can be changed to suit your needs using the *Setup menu* → *Lists* → *Current Code Lists* option. The following error codes are used consistently when transcribing samples for the reference databases.

- [EO:word]

This is a word-level error code used to mark overgeneralization errors. The correct word is put inside the brackets following a colon. There is no space between the word and the code. Consider the following utterances which all contain overgeneralization errors with the root form of the word identified using the vertical bar and the [EO] code attached to the end of the word:

- 1) C He falled|fall[EO:fell].
- 2) C There were deers|deer[EO:deer] in the woods.
- 3) C That/'s hises|his[EO:his] wife.
- 4) C The next day the boy woked|wake[EO:woke] up.
- 5) C Then the dog droppeded|drop/ed[EO:dropped] the bee\_hive.

In examples 1 – 4 the overgeneralized words are identified with the root form of the word. Notice that the bound morphemes in these words are not marked because we don't want to give the child credit for an incorrectly-used bound morpheme. In example 5, however, the child is given credit for the first correctly-used bound morpheme but not for the second incorrectly-used bound morpheme (*notice that the bound morpheme is slashed in the word following the vertical bar rather than in the overgeneralized form*).

- [EP:word]

This is a word-level error code used to mark pronoun errors. The correct word is put inside the brackets following a colon. There is no space between the word and the code. The samples in the SALT reference databases used the [EP] code to mark errors with personal pronouns, possessive pronouns, and reflexive pronouns. Consider the following utterances which all contain pronoun errors with the root form of the word identified using the vertical bar and the [EP] code attached to the end of the word:

- 1) C Dr\_De\_Soto worked with her[EP:his] wife.
- 2) C Him[EW:he] look/ed everywhere.
- 3) C That/'s ours[EP:our] car.
- 4) C She did it by herself[EP:herself].

- [EW:word]

This is a word-level error code used to mark other words which are used incorrectly for which you know the intended word or part of speech. The correct word, if known, is put inside the brackets following a colon. There is no space between the word and the code. Examples:

- 1) C The big frog were[**EW:was**] mad.
- 2) C He check/ed on[**EW:in**] the boot.
- 3) C The boy was find/ing[**EW:looking**] for him.

- [EW]

This is a word-level error code used to mark extraneous words. There is no space between the word and the code. Examples:

- 1) C And then the boy is a[**EW**] sleep/ing.
- 2) C Then the kid climb/ed a rock to see more[**EW**] better.
- 3) C And they were[**EW**] have nine baby/s.
- 4) C The boy was in[**EW**] mad.
- 5) C And after that the boy that[**EW**] climb/ed the tree.

- [EU]

This is an utterance-level error code used to mark errors which cannot be associated with a specific word. It alerts the user to an utterance that would need more detailed analysis later. Look at the examples and notice that the [EU] code is inserted between the last word and the ending punctuation mark. Examples:

- 1) C And they came to stop/ed [**EU**].
- 2) C They scream for everywhere [**EU**].
- 3) C He was have/ing a frog [**EU**].
- 4) C He was a tree [**EU**].

The [EU] code is also used when there are too many things to fix by marking omissions and/or word errors.

## B. Using the SALT Editor to Insert the Error Codes in your Transcript

Error codes are typically inserted when transcribing the sample, as opposed to going back and inserting them later. You may find it easiest to just type in the error codes since most of them require inserting the correct form as part of the code, e.g., was[EW:were].

The SALT editor, however, contains an option for selecting the error code from a list. Select *Edit menu: Insert Code* to bring up the dialogue box “Code Lists Used to Facilitate Inserting Codes in a Transcript”. At the bottom left of the dialogue box, check the “Error Codes” option. The default codes are listed. The code list can be changed, or customized, and saved for future use if desired. After accepting the default list of codes, or customizing your own set of codes, click OK in the upper right corner of the dialogue box. The “Select code to be inserted” dialogue box is displayed. You are provided with options for the position of the codes. They can be inserted at the point of the cursor in the transcript, at the beginning of a word, at the end of a word, or at the end of an utterance.

## C. Using SALT to Analyze the Error Codes

There are several analyses where the error codes are identified separately from the other codes in the transcript. These analyses include:

### Analyze menu

- Standard Measures Report: includes the variables *% Utterances with Errors* (also includes omissions) and *Number of Error Codes*.
- Errors Summary: includes the variables *% Utterances with Errors* (also includes omissions) and *Number of Error Codes* (lists counts for each error code found in the transcript).
- Omissions and Error Codes: lists all error codes with counts and utterances containing them.
- Standard Utterance Lists: lets you select *Utterances with ... Error Codes*.
- Word Code Tables: lets you restrict the selection of word codes to *Error codes*.
- Utterance Code Tables: lets you restrict the selection of utterance codes to *Error codes*.

**Database menu:** the reference databases included with the software have all been coded for errors.

- Standard Measures Report: includes the variables *% Utterances with Errors* (also includes omissions) and *Number of Error Codes*.
- Errors Summary: includes the variables *% Utterances with Errors* (also includes omissions) and *Number of Error Codes* (lists counts for each error code found in either the transcript or the database samples).