

Conversation Database

Database	Context (Subgroup)	Age Range	Grade in School	# Samples	Location	Special Coding
Conversation	Con	2;9 – 13;3	P, K, 1, 2, 3, 5, 7	584	WI & CA	SI



Participants

The Conversation database contains samples from typically developing English-fluent students located in Wisconsin and California. Age, gender, and grade data are available for all participants.

- *Wisconsin*: students, ranging in age from 2;9 -13;3, were drawn from preschools in Madison, the Madison Metropolitan Public School District, and rural areas in northern Wisconsin. The children were 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.
- *California*: students, ranging in age from 4;4 - 9;11, were drawn from two public school districts in San Diego County; San Diego City Schools and Cajon Valley School District. The students were described as typically developing and average performing in the classroom as determined by performance on standardized classroom assessments, teacher report, and absence of special education services. The participants reflected the county's demographics and were balanced by race, ethnicity, gender, and socioeconomic status. Socioeconomic status was determined by mother's highest level of education.

Elicitation Protocol

Materials

- audio or video recorder
- quiet location free of distractions with a table and two chairs

Preparation

Check the recorder for loudness levels. Record the date, student's name or ID, birth date, age, and grade.

Directions

Use one or more of the following conversational topics. Suggested questions and prompts are listed for each topic. Introduce at least one topic absent in time and space from the sampling condition, e.g. for holidays, "*What did you do?*" or "*What will you do?*".

1. Classroom activities

"Tell me about some of the things you've been doing in school lately."

Ask about specific classroom units.

2. Holidays

"Did you do anything special for Halloween (or appropriate holiday)?"

"Tell me about that."

"Are you going to do anything special for Christmas?"

3. Family activities, visits, locations, etc.

"Are you going to visit your grandma and grandpa?"

"Where do they live?" "How do you get there?" "What do you do there?"

4. Family pets

"Do you have any pets at home?" "Tell me about them."

"What do you have to do to take care of them?"

"Do they ever get in trouble?"

Transcription Notes

Utterances were segmented into Communication Units (C-units). The transcripts begin and end with the student's first and last utterance, respectively. 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 errors
- [EW:word] marks other word-level errors
- [EU] marks utterance-level errors

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 (see Appendix O).

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