Expository Reference Database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Context (Subgroup)</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Grade in School</th>
<th># Samples</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Special Coding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expository</td>
<td>Expo</td>
<td>10;7 – 18;9</td>
<td>5-7, 9-12</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>WI</td>
<td>SI, ESS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Introduction

The expository database contains samples from middle and high school students, ages 10;7 through 18;9. Exposition was chosen for the following reasons:

- Exposition is central to curriculum in middle and high school
- Exposition is included as part of state standards for speaking and writing
- Challenges students to use language in context (authentic, naturalistic, real speaking and listening)
- Allows documentation of oral expository skills relative to peers

Participants

354 typically developing, English-fluent students, ranging in age from 10;7 through 18;9.

The students were drawn from public schools in two geographic areas of Wisconsin: Milwaukee area school districts (Brown Deer, Fox Point-Bayside, Nicolet, Shorewood, Waukesha, Wauwatosa, and West Allis-West Milwaukee), and from the Madison Metropolitan School District. They 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 based on eligibility in the free lunch program (25% qualified for free or reduced lunch). Ability level was determined by GPA scores and teacher reports (9% were low, 49% were average, and 42% were high). The race/ethnicity of the students was similar to that of the geographic area from which they were drawn (75% White, 13% African American, 7% Hispanic, 4% Asian, and 1% Hmong). Age, grade, and gender are provided for all samples.

Elicitation Protocol

Overview

The elicitation protocol is easy to administer and provides optimum opportunity for the student to produce a “good” expository. Following a script, the examiner asks the student to explain how to play a game or sport of the student’s choosing. Discourage the student from talking about video games as they may be unfamiliar to the examiner and often result in limited content. The student is given a few minutes to complete a planning sheet which contains eight topics (Object, Preparations, Start, Course of play, Rules, Scoring, Duration, and Strategies). Listed next to each topic is a brief description of what’s covered within that topic and space for making notes. Following the planning phase, the student is asked to explain the game or sport using his/her notes.

Using this protocol, expository samples tend to be between 5 – 6 minutes in length and have between 50 – 60 complete and intelligible utterances.
Script

I’m interested in finding out how well you do at giving explanations. I’m going to make a recording so I can remember what you say. If you want, you can listen to the recording when we’re finished.

I want you to imagine that I am a student about your age. I’m visiting the United States from another country and I want to learn as much as I can about life in the U.S. You can help me by explaining how to play your favorite sport or game. You have lots of choices. For example, you could pick a sport, such as basketball or tennis. You could pick a board game, such as Monopoly or chess. Or you could pick a card game, such as Poker or Rummy. What sport or game do you want to pick?

The student offers an appropriate choice. If a choice is not offered or is inappropriate (such as a video game), reread the examples given above and/or add more examples to aid the student in making an appropriate choice. If the student is still having difficulty making a selection, suggest picking a game or sport recently played in the student’s physical education class.

Assume that in my country we don’t play [name of sport or game]. I’d like you to explain everything I would need to know so I could learn to play. I’ll expect you to talk for at least five minutes. To help you organize your thoughts, here’s a list of topics I’d like you to talk about [hand the student a copy of the planning sheet found on the next page]. Please take the next few minutes to plan your explanation by taking notes in the blank spaces [indicate empty column on the right]. But don’t waste time writing sentences. Just write some key words to remind you of what you want to say. You can talk about the topics in the order they are listed, or else you can number the topics any way you wish. If you don’t want to take notes, you can use the backside of the list to draw a diagram or make a graphic organizer. Do you have any questions?

If student expresses difficulty with reading any portion of the checklist, read the unclear portions aloud. If the student has difficulty understanding the vocabulary, give an example from a sport or game different from the one the student has chosen.

Go ahead and start planning.

Allow enough time for student to write something for each topic on the checklist or to complete a diagram or graphic organizer. If the student stops writing or drawing before planning is finished, prompt with, “Please do some planning for [topic name (s)].”

I’m ready to turn on the recorder. You will be doing all the talking. I’m going to listen to what you have to say. Take as much time as you need to give a complete explanation. Remember: I expect you to talk for at least five minutes.

Turn on recording device and have the student begin speaking. After the student has finished speaking from his/her planning sheet, turn off recording device. If the student finishes speaking before five minutes has elapsed, prompt with, “Is there anything else you can tell me?”. Review the recording for quality before releasing the student.

Examiner’s role during the exposition

Be an attentive listener. Do not give specific cues to the student during the task. You can use nonverbal cues such as head nodding and smiling to promote continued talking. You can also use prompts such as “uhhuh” and “keep going” if the student stops talking before the task is completed. Asking questions or providing too much information to the student compromises the process of capturing the student’s true language and ability level.
As stated in the protocol, if the student finishes talking before five minutes has elapsed, prompt with, “Is there anything else you can tell me?”. If the student does not respond, the elicitation is over.

**Transcription Notes**

The language samples were segmented into Communication Units. 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) and Expository Scoring Scheme (ESS) Coding**

SI and ESS 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.

ESS assesses the content and structure of an expository language sample, similar to how the Narrative Scoring Scheme provides an overall measure of a student’s skill in producing a narrative. The ESS is comprised of 10 characteristics for completing an expository language sample. The first 8 characteristics correspond to the topics listed on the planning sheet that is given to students.

**Analysis Notes**

The SALT group transcribed the samples following the SALT format and performed a series of statistical analyses to describe the dataset for consistency, differences among types of expository samples, age-related changes, and differences when compared to existing conversation and narrative samples. (Malone, et al., 2008). The following summarize the results of these analyses:

- Different expository contexts (team sport, individual sport, game) do not result in significantly different outcomes. Students describing how to play a team sport provided similar samples in terms of length, vocabulary, sentence complexity as students describing an individual sport or game. This finding is very useful in that it allows students to select the type of game they know best, optimizing their performance on this task.
• Measures of language production were significantly different for expository samples than conversational and narrative samples on measures of utterance length and complexity. Students produced significantly more complex sentences in the expository samples than conversation or narratives. This finding is similar to the findings of Nippold, et al. (2005; 2008).

Using SALT to Compare Samples to the Expository Database

Use SALT’s Database menu to compare your sample with age or grade-matched samples selected from the Expository database. SALT looks at the “+ Context” plus line in your transcript to determine which database to pre-select. To pre-select the Expository database, include the following plus lines in your transcript:

+ Context: Expo

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

Planning Sheet

The planning sheet is found at the end of this document. Print a copy of this planning sheet for the student to use. Following the planning sheet are two example planning sheets.

References


Malone, T., Heilmann, J., Miller, J., DiVall-Rayen, J., Rolland, M. (2010), Reaching the Tweeners: Extending Two SALT Databases to Grades 5-6, Presented at the American Speech and Hearing Association, Philadelphia, PN.


Acknowledgements

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We would like to thank the following clinicians who collected the expository samples:

- **Brown Deer School District**: Kari Anewenter, Thomas O. Malone, Katherine E. Smith
- **Fox Point-Bayside School District**: Jody Herbert
- **Nicolet School District**: Karen Kingsbury
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- **UW-Milwaukee graduate students**: Taylor Hansen, Maggie Long, Maricel Schulte

Samples were transcribed and coded by the University of Wisconsin students working in the Language Analysis Lab and by the staff at SALT Software, LLC. This project was funded in part by SALT Software, LLC.

Resources

- Planning sheet - found at the end of this document
- **Elicitation materials**
  - includes laminated protocols, pad of planning sheets
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>What's Covered</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Object</strong></td>
<td>What you have to do to win</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Preparations** | Playing Area and Setup  
Equipment and Materials  
What players do to get ready |       |
| **Start**    | How the contest begins, including who goes first                             |       |
| **Course of Play** | What happens during a team or player’s turn, including any  
special plays, positions, or roles, both offensive and defensive |       |
| **Rules**    | Major rules, including penalties for violations                             |       |
| **Scoring**  | Different ways to score, including point values                              |       |
| **Duration** | How long the contest lasts, including how it ends and tie breaking procedures |       |
| **Strategies** | What smart players do to win, both offensively and defensively                |       |

Please use the backside of this page for an optional diagram or graphic organizer, or for additional notes.
# Planning Sheet Examples

## What to Talk About
When Explaining a Game or Sport

Basketball as an example, by Emily (age 14:10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>What's Covered</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Object</td>
<td>What you have to do to win</td>
<td>Get more points within time limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparations</td>
<td>Playing Area and Setup Equipment and Materials</td>
<td>Courts, balls, uniforms, start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What players do to get ready</td>
<td>shooting, playing against each other, dribbling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start</td>
<td>How the contest begins, including who goes first</td>
<td>Jump ball, whoever wins gets dipped on start, be diplomatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course of Play</td>
<td>What happens during a team or player's turn, including any special plays, positions, or roles, both offensive and defensive</td>
<td>Offense-to-score-by-passing, dribbling, shooting, plays, different positions: Forward, Center, Guard, defense-defending, ball going back on offense, fouling, stepping people while they're shooting, arguing, free throws</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules</td>
<td>Major rules, including penalties for violations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scoring</td>
<td>Various ways to score, including point values</td>
<td>1 basket = 2 points, foul = point, three point = 3 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>How long the contest lasts, including how it ends and tie breaking procedures</td>
<td>Overtime, quarter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies</td>
<td>What smart players do to win, both offensively and defensively</td>
<td>Learn plays other team, doesn't know, learn to write with hands practice a lot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please use the backside of this page for an optional diagram or graphic organizer, or for additional notes.
Scooter Soccer as an example, by Tiffany (age 1)

This team tries to kick the balls into the other teams net. They can use their hands on the soccer ball, but not the small ball.

This team tries to do the same.