



New Zealand - Australia Story Retell Database

Database	Context (Subgroup)	Age Range	# Samples	Location
NZ-AU Story Retell	Nar (AGL)	NZ: 4;0 - 7;7 AU: 5;3 - 8;9	NZ: 264 AU: 212	New Zealand Australia

Participants and General Description

This database contains oral language samples collected from New Zealand children, aged 4;0 - 7;7, and from Australian children, aged 5;3 - 8;9. The language samples were collected from the participants in a story retelling context using a story format and vocabulary that is familiar to children in New Zealand and Australia.

The initial data were collected in 2000/2001 from 4;6 to 7;7 year-old children who had been randomly selected from kindergartens and schools in Auckland, Hamilton, and Christchurch (major urban areas in New Zealand) as well as secondary urban areas surrounding Christchurch. Approximately 80% of the participants were from the Auckland/Hamilton region to reflect New Zealand's population density in these areas. Children with diagnosed disabilities were excluded from the sample. The schools reflected a range of socio-economic areas, and English was the first language of all children included in the database. There was an even gender distribution. The ethnicity of the group comprised of the following: New Zealand European: 62%, Maori: 22%, Pacific Island 5%, Asian 3%, Other 8%.

A second set of data was collected in November 2009 from 76 children aged 4;0 to 4;11. All children attended their local kindergarten in Christchurch, New Zealand. The kindergartens reflected a range of socio-economic areas, and English was the first language of all children. There were 58% girls and 42% boys. Ethnic make-up of the group was as follows: NZ European 89%, Maori 8%, Pacific Island 1.5%, Other 1.5%.

Two sets of samples were collected in Australia in 2012. The first set was based on the story "Ana Gets Lost". These samples were collected from 85 children (ages 5;5 to 7;7) attending the first two years of primary school: Grade 0 (Prep or Foundation) and Grade 1 across Queensland, representing the full range of socio-economic areas (1 – 10). There were 44 (52%) girls and 41 (49%) boys. All children spoke English as their first language and were progressing normally at school as indicated by their teachers. Ethnic make-up of the group was as follows: Australian 80%, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 4.7%, European 3.5%, Unspecified 10.6%, Other 1.2%.

The second set of samples collected in Australia was based on the Bus story. This database contains language samples collected from Australian children attending the first three years of primary school: Grade 0 (Prep or Foundation Year), Grade 1, and Grade 2 across Queensland (regional: 55; City: 72), representing the full range of socio-economic areas (1 – 10). The language samples were collected from the participants in a narrative context, using the story retelling task "The Bus Story" (Renfrew, 1995). Ethics approval for this project was granted by the University Human Ethics Committee (PES/31/12/HREC). Approval was also granted by the Department of Education and Training, Queensland Government (550/27/1258). Of the schools who agreed to participate, teachers were asked to identify children who 1) were in their first three years of primary schooling; 2) spoke English as their first language; 3) were progressing normally at school; and 4) had no history of speech and/or language impairments. Consent forms were sent home to these children via the teachers. From the children for whom consent to participate was obtained, participants were randomly selected, making sure there was an equal distribution of girls and boys, and an equal number of participants across the three grades. A

total of 127 children participated in this study, from Grade 0 (n = 44), Grade 1 (41), and Grade 2 (n = 42). These children were from the following ethnic backgrounds, as indicated by their parents on the project consent forms: Australian (85.5%), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (3.9%), Pacific Island (.8%), Other (3.1%), and Non-specified (6.3%).

Other criteria

The therapists and educators involved in the project were trained by one of the researchers on the assessment procedures and language sampling protocol. Each child was seen individually in the child's school setting. Children's language samples were excluded from the database for reasons such as poor recording quality, not engaging in the task (i.e., unwilling to retell the story), or not able to retell the story without using the pictures in the book as a visual prompts.

Elicitation Procedures – Subgroup AGL

The child was required to listen to two audio-recordings of an unfamiliar story (while looking at pictures in the story book). Following the second listening of the story the child was asked to retell the story without the use of the pictures. The child listened to an English translation of the story "Ko au na galo"; *Ana Gets Lost* (Swan, 1992). The story is about a Pacific Islands girl who gets lost in the city while looking for her mum and dad. It is a 10-page 'reader' (of the type typically used in New Zealand Year 1 and 2 classrooms) with colored pictures and Tokelauan text. The story was selected for several reasons: The story has not been published in English, which minimized the chances of children being familiar with the book. Presenting text in an unknown language also prevented the children reading the text while they heard the story and thus removed any reading advantage. Having a text written in another language also provided a convincing reason for listening carefully to the recording of the English version of the text. Further, children from different cultures living in New Zealand or Australia were expected to be familiar with the story content and vocabulary translation, such as 'policeman', 'beach', and 'dairy'. The original translation of "Ko au na galo" was adapted to add a little further length and complexity to the story.

Prompt: "I brought a book to show you. We can't read this book as it is written in another language, but I have the story on tape, in English. Let's listen to the tape. I will ask you some questions about the story afterwards".

Ana Gets Lost Story

One Saturday morning, Ana's mum and dad went fishing on the beach.
Ana had been sick all week, so she had to stay at home with her big brother, Tom.
She asked Tom if he wanted to play with her.
No thanks, he said, I want to read a Sports Magazine.

Ana got bored.
So when Tom fell asleep, she decided to go looking for her mum and dad.
She quietly opened the front door and went outside.

Ana walked towards the beach, but she got lost.
She kept walking until it got dark.
Ana got very scared and she started to cry.
She stopped outside a dairy.

She was still crying and didn't know what to do.
Then Ana felt a pat on her shoulder.

She looked around and saw a policeman.
Hello, he said, are you Ana?
Yes, said Ana, giving him a big smile.

The policeman took Ana home in the police car.
Mum and Dad were very happy to see Ana.
They thanked the policeman for finding Ana, and bringing her home safely.
The policeman told Ana not to get lost again.
Then he smiled and drove away.

Following the first listening of the story, the child was asked eight questions about the story, to evaluate story comprehension. Four questions tapped factual comprehension (1,4,6,7), and four questions required inferential comprehension (2,3,5,8). To reduce the influence of story comprehension on individual children's retelling performance, all children were provided with the correct information if they did not respond to the question or if their answer was clearly incorrect.

Questions

1. Who is the story about?
2. Why did Ana have to stay at home?
3. Why did Ana get bored?
4. Where did Ana go to find her parents?
5. Why did Ana get scared?
6. Who found Ana?
7. What did the policeman do?
8. Why were Ana's parents happy to see her?

Following the second listening of the story the child was asked to retell the story without the use of the pictures.

Prompt: "Let's listen to the story a second time. Afterwards we will put a new tape in the recorder and then I would like you to tell the story, so that other children can listen to it later".

Listen to the story together. Put the book aside before asking the child to tell the story.

Prompt: "OK, now it's your turn to tell the story. Let's start at the beginning".

If the child does not start telling the story spontaneously, one or two of the following prompts can be used:

- "What was the story about?"
- "What happened in the beginning?"
- "Just use your own words".
- "Just tell me what you remember".

The following prompts are used to encourage the child to continue telling the story:

- "And then?"
- "Anything else you can remember?"

Elicitation Procedures – Subgroup BUS

The Bus Story (Renfrew, 1995) was administered using the standard elicitation guidelines as reported in the manual. In this task, the examiner reads the story, while the child follows along with the pictures in a wordless book (four pages containing three pictures each). After listening to the story, the child is asked “Now you tell me the story. Once upon a time, there was a ...?” (p. 5). Following the administration guidelines, only minimal or indirect prompts should be given, when needed. For example “and then?” or “so...?”. The model story contains: 15 utterances (UTT), MLU: 12.4, number of different words (NDW): 102, and clausal density (CD; total number of clauses divided by the number of utterances): 1.6. Refer to Westerveld and Vidler (2015) for more information.

Transcription Notes

The utterances were segmented into Communication Units (C-units). A C-unit includes an independent clause with its modifiers (Loban, 1976). All transcripts were timed and pauses, within and between utterances, of two or more seconds in length, were marked. Age and gender information is included for all participants.

The following types of utterances were excluded from analysis by inserting an equal (=) sign in front of the utterance: 1) official title, e.g., “Ana Gets Lost”, 2) comments unrelated to the story, e.g., child comments on someone entering the room, 3) official ending, e.g., *The end*.

The following error codes were inserted in the transcripts: [EO:word] to mark overgeneralization errors, [EP:word] to mark pronoun errors, [EW:word] to mark other word-level errors, and [EU] to mark utterance-level errors. [NGA] was inserted to mark an utterance that is 'not grammatically accurate'.

All New Zealand samples contained the following plus lines:

- + Context: Nar
- + Subgroup: AGL
- + Ethnicity: Maori (only included for Maori subset)

All Australian samples contained the following plus lines:

- + Context: Nar
- + Subgroup: AGL or BUS

Database Location and Ethnicity Selection Options

This database was created with two location options (New Zealand and Australia) and one ethnicity option (Maori). A language sample taken from a child can be compared against this population distribution as a whole or against a subset selected by location and/or including Maori (New Zealand) children only.

Acknowledgements

The New Zealand databases are a result of the collaboration with Gail Gillon from the Department of Communication Disorders, University of Canterbury and Marleen Westerveld from Griffith University. Speech-language therapists from Group Special Education in Auckland, Hamilton, Christchurch, and Canterbury districts in New Zealand were involved in the collection of the language samples. The New Zealand Ministry of Education allowed the participation of Special Education speech-language therapists in the project. Financial assistance for the project was provided by the University of Canterbury, The Don Bevan Travel Scholarship, and the New Zealand Speech Language Therapists' Association.

The Australian databases are the result of a collaboration between Dr. Marleen Westerveld from Griffith University, and Kath Vidler from the Department of Education, Training, and Employment. Speech pathologists employed by the Department of Education, Training, and Employment across the State of Queensland were involved in the collection of the language samples. Financial assistance for the project was provided through a Griffith University Emerging Researcher Grant and by SALT Software LLC.