

# New Zealand Story Retell Database

Database	Context (Subgroup)	Age Range	# Samples	Location
New Zealand Story Retell	Nar (AGL)	4;0 – 7;7	264	New Zealand

## Participants

This database contains spoken language samples collected from New Zealand children aged 4;0 - 7;7. 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.

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, 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%, Pasifika 5%, Asian 3%, and 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%, Pasifika 1.5%, and Other 1.5%.

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 taping 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.

This database was created with two options. A language sample taken from a child can be compared against this population distribution as a whole or against a database including Maori children only.

## Elicitation Protocol

The child was required to listen twice to an audio-recording 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, E., 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 coloured pictures and Tokelauan text. The story was selected for several reasons: The story has not been published in English, which minimised the chances of children being familiar with the book. Presenting text in an unknown language also prevented the children from 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 tape recording of the English version of the text. Further, children from different cultures living in New Zealand 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 Script

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?”*

### 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 ('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'.

The following plus lines were inserted as part of the header information:

+ Context: Nar

+ Subgroup: AGL

+ Ethnicity: Maori (only included for Maori subset)

When comparing samples to this database, you have the option of restricting the comparison to the Maori subset.

### Acknowledgements

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