



TNL/TNL2 Narrative Database Descriptions

Samples used to norm the TNL: Test of Narrative Language (Gillam & Pearson, 2004) and TNL2: Test of Narrative Language – Second Edition (Gillam & Pearson, 2017)

Database	Context (Subgroup)	Age Range	# Samples	Location
TNL Narrative Samples	Nar (TNL)	5;0 – 11;11	500	USA
TNL2 Narrative Samples	Nar (TNL2)	4;0 – 14;11	778	USA

Participants

- **TNL**

This reference database consists of narrative samples from participants ranging in age from 5;0 to 11;11, including 50 five-year olds, 100 six-year olds, 100 seven-year-olds, 100 eight-year-olds, 50 nine-year-olds, 50 ten-year-olds, and 50 eleven-year-olds. There are an equal number of boys and girls at each age. Children came from four US regions (Northeast, South, Midwest, and West). Their primary language was English and they had not been identified with a disability and were not receiving any special education services. The race/ethnicity distribution of the children in the sample is 71% white (not Hispanic), 11% black or African- American, 10% Hispanic, and 8% other or not reported.

- **TNL2**

The “TNL2 Narrative Samples” reference database consists of narrative samples from 778 children, ranging in age from 4;0 to 14;11, including 41 four-year-olds, 59 five-year-olds, 73 six-year-olds, 103 seven-year-olds, 114 eight-year-olds, 122 nine-year-olds, 109 ten-year-olds, 81 eleven-year-olds, 29 twelve-year-olds, 29 thirteen- year-olds, and 18 fourteen-year-olds. The children were in grades PK, K, 1 - 8. The normative sample is representative of the United States as a whole with an equal percentage of male and female participants. Children came from four US regions (Northeast, South, Midwest, and West). Their primary language was English. The race distribution of the children in the sample is 78% white, 14% black or African-American, 5% Asian/Pacific Islander, 2% two or more races, and <1% American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut. Hispanic status consisted of 22% yes and 78% no. Twelve percent of the sample had been identified with a disability. This is consistent with US Department of Education disability statistics. The exceptionality distribution of the sample was 5% Specific Learning Disability (including Developmental Language Disorder), 3% Intellectual Disability, 2% Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, 1% Physically Impaired, 1% Other Disability.

Sample Elicitation

Examiners collected data on children's ability to tell stories in three formats: (1) a script-like story, (2) a story about five sequenced pictures, and (3) a fictional narrative based on a single picture. The examiner scripts and picture stimuli that were used to elicit the narratives are available in the Test of Narrative Language (Gillam & Pearson, 2004) and the Test of Narrative Language – Second Edition (Gillam & Pearson, 2017). Refer to the [elicitation protocol](#) for details.

When selecting language samples from the database, you have the option of including all three stories or restricting the selection to a specific story by specifying one of the following subgroups:

- All 3 Stories - all three narrative story tasks
- McDonalds - the first narrative task only (script retell)
- LateForSchool - the second narrative task only (five sequenced pictures)
- Aliens - the third narrative task only (single picture)

Transcription Notes

Language samples were transcribed according to SALT standard codes conventions by undergraduate and graduate students in Communication Sciences and Disorders who completed SALT training on transcription and reached 90% or better agreement on three training transcripts. Utterances were segmented into C-units, which were defined as groups of words that could not be further divided without loss of their essential meaning. After the audio file was transcribed by one research assistant, a second research assistant listened to the audio and marked disagreements with any of the original segmentation and/or coding decisions. All disagreements were resolved by a PhD level research coordinator who listened to the audio as she made a third pass through the transcripts.

- **TNL**
Timing information was not coded. Gender, age, and ethnicity information is included in the header.
- **TNL2**
All samples were timed, with separate timing markers inserted for each task. Gender, age, and grade information was included in the header. Parentheticals were marked with double parentheses, e.g., *The boy ((I don't know his name)) order/ed a sandwich*. Pauses of two or more seconds within and between utterances 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*.

Transcript Format

Each transcript contains all three stories. The stories were separated by plus lines with the headers +[BeginMcDonalds], + [BeginMcDonalds], +[EndMcDonalds], +[BeginLateForSchool], +[EndLateForSchool], +[BeginAliens], +[EndAliens].

TNL (no timing lines)	TNL2 (timing lines)
+ [BeginMcDonalds] C The boy and the girl came home. C And they wanted to go eat. E Ok. C C And that's all I know. + [EndMcDonalds]	+ [BeginMcDonalds] - 0:00 C The boy and the girl came home. C And they wanted to go eat. E Ok. C C And that's all I know. - 1:05 + [EndMcDonalds]
+[BeginLateForSchool] C The boy woke up. C And he was late for school. C C The end. + [EndLateForSchool]	+[BeginLateForSchool] - 2:20 C The boy woke up. C And he was late for school. C C The end. - 4:15 + [EndLateForSchool]
+ [BeginAliens] C A boy and a girl were walking in a park. C They saw a big ship land. E Mhm. C C And that's it. + [EndAliens]	+ [BeginAliens] - 4:55 C A boy and a girl were walking in a park. C They saw a big ship land. E Mhm. C C And that's it. - 7:10 + [EndAliens]

Using SALT to Compare Samples to the TNL/TNL2 Narrative Database

Use SALT's Database menu to compare your sample with age or grade-matched samples selected from the TNL/TNL2 Narrative database. SALT looks at the "+ Context" and "+ Subgroup" plus lines in your transcript to determine which database to pre-select. To pre-select the TNL or TNL2 Narrative database, include the following plus lines in your transcript:

- + Context: Nar
- + Subgroup: TNL (or + Subgroup: TNL2)

Although you can type these plus lines into your transcript, the easiest way is to select the correct sampling context (Nar) and subgroup (TNL or TNL2) when first creating a new transcript (by completing the New Transcript Header information dialogue box).

When selecting language samples for comparison, you have the option including all three stories or restricting the selection to a specific task by specifying one of the following subgroup/story options:

- All 3 Stories - all three narrative tasks
- McDonalds - the first narrative task only (script retell)
- LateForSchool - the second narrative task only (five sequenced pictures)
- Aliens - the third narrative task only (single picture)

To compare your entire transcript (three narrative tasks) to entire transcripts in the database, use the default Subgroup/Story setting “All 3 Stories”. To compare a specific task you would change the current transcript cut (Setup menu --> Transcript Cut) which determines the section of your transcript that you want included in the comparison. For example, to compare the section of your transcript which contains the narrative based only on McDonalds, you would change the transcript cut to begin with the line containing the code [BeginMcDonalds] and end with the line containing the code [EndMcDonalds]. Then you would compare this section of your transcript to the same task from the database by selecting the “McDonalds” subgroup/story.

Acknowledgements

- **TNL**
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- **TNL2**
The narratives in this database were collected for the standardization of the TNL-2: Test of Narrative Language (Second Edition), funded by Pro-Ed Inc. Sandra Gillam, PhD coordinated the transcription process. Megan Israelsen supervised the transcribers and checked the transcripts while she was a doctoral student at Utah State University in Logan. The transcribers were Haley Ashcroft, Alison Barlow, Tiegan Beck, Hannah Car, Kennedy Eggertsen, Cecily Froerer, Natalie Green, Sarai Holbrook, Natalie Johnson, Aubrey Passey, Madeline Peterson, Rebecca Polson, Amy Siler, Sierra Southwick, Ashlynn Thompson, Jenice Winterton, Daylene Weller, and Samantha Woodward. Gillam, R., & Pearson, N. (2017). *Test of Narrative Language* (Second Edition), Austin, TX: Pro-Ed Inc.