

Language Sampling in the Schools

ArSHA Convention April 29, 2011
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Objectives for this afternoon...

- Understand the research evidence for use of language sampling
- Understand options for eliciting, transcribing, analyzing and interpreting
 - Conversational samples
 - Narrative samples
 - Expository samples
 - Written language samples
- Begin practicing, sharing and exchanging strategies for using language sampling efficiently in a school setting

Resources

- <https://docs.google.com/leaf?id=0BxH5o8ux1iQ3Y2UwZjA4MTMtMTRmNC00MjE1LThjMjQzMzZkMjExMWZlMThl&hl=en>
 - All forms discussed today will be posted on a google documents site
 - Please share other resources regarding language sampling by posting to this site
- SALT <http://www.saltsoftware.com/>
- NAP <http://preschoollab.osu.edu/nap/>
- Justice, L.M. & Ezell, H.K. (2008) The Syntax Handbook: Everything You Learned About Syntax...But Forgot. Eau Claire, WI: Thinking Publications.

Why complete language samples?

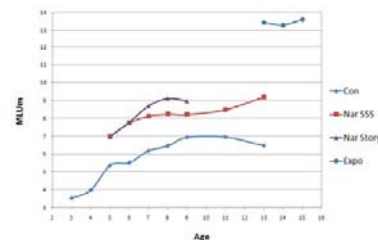
- Our goal for all clients is to help them become more effective communicators
- Sampling their language abilities in a natural context provides a meaningful measure of their ability to communicate effectively
- Language sample analysis has been the “gold standard” for evaluating oral language skills in children (Heilmann et al., 2008)

What does the research say?

- Young children’s language abilities serve as an important foundation for and predictor of their later reading skills, social and behavioral competence, and general academic performance (Catts, Fey, Zhang & Tomblin, 2001; Pankratz, Plant, Vance, & Insalaco, 2007)
- Language sampling provides one of the most authentic measures of language abilities (Miller, Heilmann, Nockerts, Iglesias, & Fabiano, 2006)

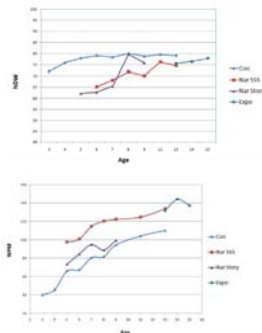
What does the research say?

- Measures obtained from language samples are correlated with advancing age (MLUm long established general measure of syntactic complexity Miller 1987; Miller & Chapman, 1981).
- Figure below shows mean length of utterance for SALT databases



What does the research say?

- Measure from language samples (NDW) are sensitive to disordered language performance (Miller & Klee, 1995)
- Measures of verbal fluency (WPM) has been proposed as an index of language proficiency for second language learners (Riggenback 1991)



Further evidence supporting language sampling in the school

- During school-age years, eliciting a narrative appears to be one of the most authentic contexts (as opposed to conversation) by which to obtain a language sample (Justice et al 2010; Leadholm & Miller, 1992)
- Narrative discourse plays a critical role in the development of discourse, literacy, and socialization abilities (McCabe, 1996)
- Narration is a precursor and a predictor of literacy attainment (Bishop & Edmundson, 1987; DeHirsch, Jansky, & Langford, 1966)

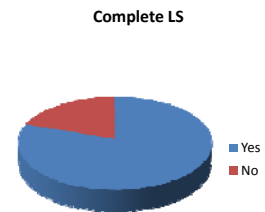
Studies of Children with Language Disorders

- Narrative Comprehension
 - Difficulty remembering critical elements in stories and understanding the gist of stories (Bishop, 1997; Raining Bird & Chapman, 1994)
 - Difficulty drawing inferences (Bishop, 1997 and others)
- Narrative Production: Macrostructure level
 - Incomplete references to characters and story contexts (Garnet, 1986)
 - Fewer story grammar propositions related to character plans, actions, complications and reactions (Dollaghan & Campbell, 1992)
- Narrative Production: Microstructure level
 - Restricted vocabulary (Greenhalgh & Strong 2001)
 - Fewer complex sentences ((Gillam & Johnston, 1992)
 - More grammatical errors (Dollaghan & Campbell, 1992)
 - Fewer or problematic cohesive ties (Boudreau & Chapman, 2000)
 - Difficulty in marking temporal ordering of events (Johnston, 1982; Liles, 1985a; Olley, 1989)

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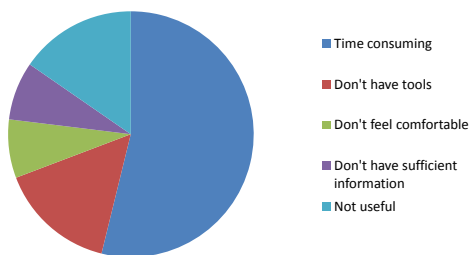
What do SLPs in AZ schools say?

- Do you complete language samples for students on your caseload?

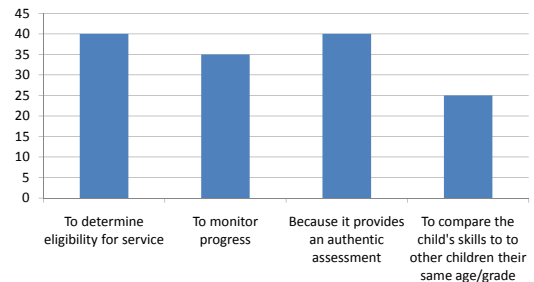


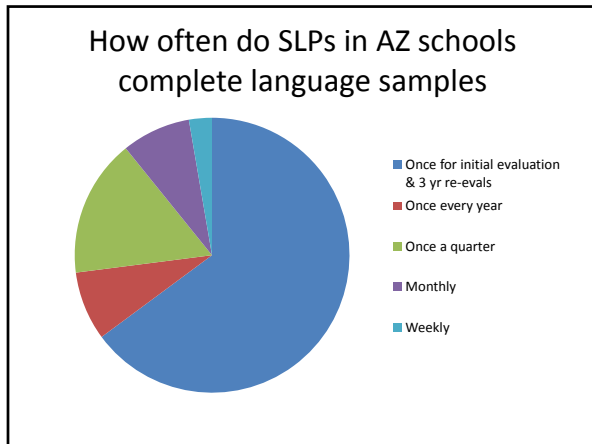
What do SLPs in AZ schools say?

Reasons SLPs do NOT complete samples



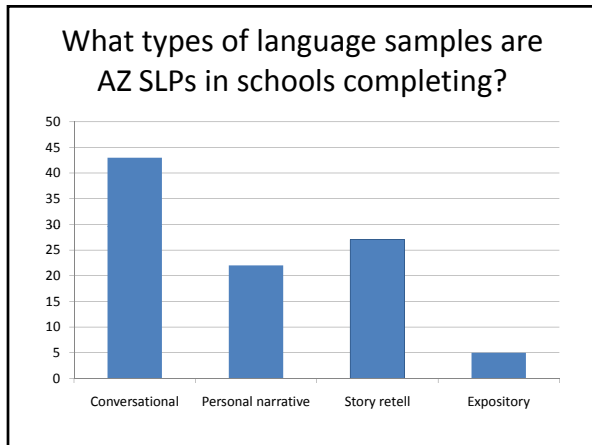
Why do SLPs in AZ schools complete language samples?





Types of Language Samples

Conversational	Narrative	Expository
Purpose is to exchange ideas and information	Purpose is to entertain or inform	Purpose is to instruct
Speaker and listener are actively engaged	One speaks, one listens Delayed feedback from listener or none at all (writing)	
Speaker and listener must follow pragmatic rules for success	Listener has expectations for what the narrative will be like (e.g. story grammar)	Listener may not be familiar with framework Arrange facts / information in a sequence that facilitates understanding
Can be used across all ages/developmental levels	Develops during the school-aged years	Develops later than narrative discourse



- ### Conversational Samples
- Most common/familiar to us
 - Engage student in conversation with SLP or with peers
 - Engage student in extended discourse

- ### Narrative Samples
- Production of a fictional or real account of an experience or event that is temporally sequenced
 - Narrative language skills develop during school-aged years
 - Narrative skills are important to academic success
 - Children with language impairment have difficulty with narratives
 - Narrative analysis permits closer examination of the FORM, CONTENT, and USE of language
 - Allows comparison of comprehension and production
 - Varying degrees of support can be provided for a child's narrative giving you valuable information about the kind of teaching needed (dynamic assessment or mediated learning)

- ### Expository Discourse Samples
- Expository discourse explains or describes a topic
 - 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

Written Language Samples

Why?
Language is both oral and written...

- Oral Language
 - Speaking
 - Listening
- Written Language
 - Reading
 - Writing

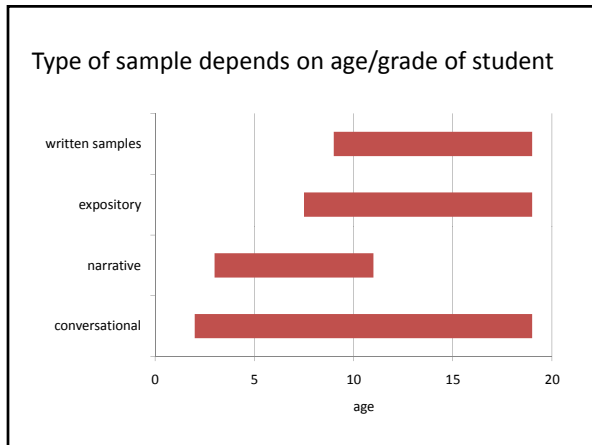
Narrative or expository written samples are appropriate for analysis

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What type of sample should you collect?

Why are you completing the sample?
Do you want to compare it to performance by other children?

SALT Reference Database	Samples	Ages/Grades
Conversation	612	Ages 2;8-13;3
Narrative: Student Selects Story	330	Ages 5;2-13;3
Narrative Story Retell (book)	345	Ages 4;4-10;0 Grades P – 4th
Expository	87	Ages 12;7-15;9
Bilingual Spanish Story Retell	2,070	Ages 5;0-9;9
Bilingual English Story Retell	2,070	Grades K-3
Gillam Narrative Tasks	500	Ages 5;0-11;11



Collecting Conversational Samples

- How to collect?
- SALT guidelines/suggestions
- For young children a play-based will likely elicit the most language
 - Follow child's lead
 - Comments rather than questions
- Length 50 utterances
- Audio and video record

Audio record? Video record? Or transcribe as you go?

- What do AZ SLPs in schools do?

- What are the pros and cons?

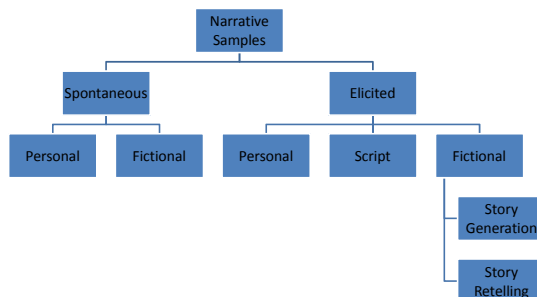
Eliciting a Good Conversational Sample

- Students are more likely to converse if they believe others are really interested in what they have to say
- Be enthusiastic
 - Show interest with smiles, vocal inflection and eye contact
 - Give the speaker your undivided attention
- Be patient
 - Allow time for the speaker (pauses are okay!)
 - Use open-ended prompts when necessary
- <http://www.saltsoftware.com/training/elicitation/protocol/>

Ideas for Eliciting Good Conversational Samples

- Make it real
- Set up the situations that you want to assess
 - Peer interaction
 - Pragmatic skills (e.g., greetings, requests for clarification)
 - May need to elicit specific syntactic structures
- Use materials that are developmentally and culturally appropriate and generate conversation
- SALT suggestions
 - “Tell me about what you’ve been doing in school”
 - “Tell me about what you do for ___”(holiday)
 - Family activities, visits, locations

Collecting Narrative Samples: Hierarchy of Narratives



Collecting Narrative Samples

- Personal Narratives “To get a good narrative, tell a good narrative”
- Scripts for eliciting narratives
 - Birthday party
 - Trip to the doctors
 - A time when you were scared

SALT: Student Selects Story

1. Tell about a movie s/he saw.
 “Do you go to the movies?” “Do you watch movies at home?” “Do you own any movies?”
 “What’s your favorite movie?” “What’s the last movie you saw?”
2. Tell about a book s/he read.
 “Have you read any good books lately?” “What’s your favorite book?”
 “Have you read (insert current books likely to be of interest)?”
3. Retell an episode from a TV program.
 “What TV programs do you like to watch?” “Tell me about that one, I haven’t seen it.”
 “What happened on the last one you watched?”
 “Do you ever watch (insert current programs likely to be of interest)?”
4. With young children: Retell a familiar story such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood, and The Three Little Pigs. Picture prompts should only be used after every attempt is made to elicit spontaneous speech. This is not a labeling activity.
 “Do you know any stories?” “What is one of your favorite stories?”
 “Oh, I don’t know that one very well, will you tell it?”
 “Do you know Little Red Riding Hood, etc.? Oh, tell me about that one.

Eliciting Narratives: Story retell

- SALT Database Narrative Story Retell
 - Kindergarten and 1st grade: **Frog, Where Are You?** by Mercer Mayer,1969
 - 2nd grade: **Pookins Gets Her Way** by Helen Lester, Houghton Mifflin Co.,1987
 - 3rd grade: **A Porcupine Named Fluffy** by Helen Lester, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1986
 - 4th, 5th, and 6th grade: **Doctor DeSoto** by William Steig, Farrar, Straus and Giroux,1982

Eliciting Narratives: Gilliam Narrative Tasks *Test of Narrative Language (TNL)*

Format	Comprehension	Production
No picture	McDonald’s Story Examiner tells story with no picture cues; child answers questions	McDonald’s Retell Child retells the McDonald’s story
Five sequenced pictures	Shipwreck Story Examiner tells story as child looks at 5 pictures sequencing the events in the story; child answers questions	Late for School Story Child tells a story that corresponds to 5 sequenced pictures illustrating events that caused boy to be late for school
Single picture	Dragon Story Examiner tells story as child looks at single picture of a dragon guarding a treasure; child answers questions	Aliens Story Child tells a story to go with a picture depicting aliens landing on earth

Eliciting Expository Discourse - SALT

- Following a script, the examiner asks the student to explain how to play a game or sport of the student's choosing
- 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)
- Following the planning phase, the student is asked to explain the game or sport using his/her notes.
- The average length of the expository is between 5 – 6 minutes and between 50 – 60 complete and intelligible utterance

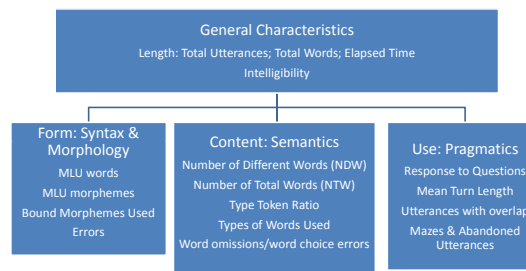
Transcribing the Sample

- Transcribers do NOT need to be experienced clinicians
- Transcribers should be fluent in language of the sample
- Computer assisted analysis
 - SALT <http://www.saltsoftware.com/>
 - CLAN <http://childes.psy.cmu.edu/>
- Your analysis is only as good as your transcription

SALT Transcription Conventions

- Transcript header information
- Transcription format
- Conventions for bound morphemes
- Codes
 - Word Codes C The big frog were[EW:was] mad.
 - Utterance Codes C: And a frog not was there [EU].
 - Error Codes C: He falled[EO:fell].

Analysis of Conversational Samples



Analysis with SALT

- Sample can be compared to database or compared to another sample (e.g., pre and post therapy)
- Standard Measures Report
 - Length and Intelligibility
 - Syntax/Morphology MLU
 - Semantics NDW/NTW/TTR
- Bound Morpheme Table
- Standard Word Lists
 - 15 standard word lists (question words, negative, conjunctions, auxiliaries, pronoun lists)
- Code Summary and Word Code Table

Preschool Language Scale Checklist

- Checklist of skills observed
 - Form: syntax/morphology
 - MLU
 - Tense markers; early morphemes; negation; questions
 - Content: semantics
 - Type of words used
 - Use: pragmatics (social language)
 - Function of communication
 - Early conversational rules

Count Your Clauses*

- (Review courtesy of Dr. Anthony Koutsoftas)
- Counting clauses???
- Remember to count the verbs/verb phrases...
- A quick syntactical review
 - The boy went to the store.
 - The boy went to the store and he bought some milk.
 - The boy went to the store and bought milk.
 - The boy, who has a very short attention span, went to the store to buy milk.
 - The boy, named Anthony, has a short attention span which causes him much trouble.

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Narrative Analysis Protocol (NAP)

- NAP designed to assess children’s spoken narrative language abilities elicited with *Frog, Where are You?*
- Facilitates coding of a narrative sample in real time and eliminates need for narrative transcription
- Examines 5 aspects of narrative microstructure
 - Sentence structure
 - Phrase structure
 - Modifiers
 - Nouns
 - Verbs
- <http://preschoollab.osu.edu/nap/>
- Justice, L., Bowles, R., Pence, K., & Gosse, C. (2010). A scalable tool for assessing children’s language abilities within a narrative context: The NAP (Narrative Assessment Protocol). *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 25* 218-234.

SALT: Narrative Scoring Scheme (NSS)

- Rubric that uses a 5 point scale to rate seven story characteristics:
 - Introduction
 - Character development
 - Mental states
 - Referencing
 - Conflict/Resolution
 - Cohesion
 - Conclusion

Narrative Analysis (CELF-R)

RATING	STORY ORGANIZATION	STORY DETAILS*	SENTENCE STRUCTURE AND MEANING	STORYTELLING MECHANICS
EXCELLENT 4 points	Preserves the original story order, with beginning, middle, and end	An accurate retelling of details	Appropriate use of syntax and semantics	Rate, fluency, intonation, and stress patterns combine for an animated retelling
ACCEPTABLE 3 points	Maintains beginning, middle, and end; events may be incomplete or out of sequence, but logical	An accurate retelling of details; minor omissions or inaccuracies are acceptable	Appropriate use of syntax and semantics with a few minor errors	Rate, fluency, intonation, and stress patterns combine for an adequate retelling
MARGINAL 2 points	Story is poorly sequenced; a beginning and end are told; major events have no logical sequence or are missing	Incomplete and/or inaccurate retelling of details	Some major or frequent minor errors in syntax and/or semantics	Rate, fluency, intonation, and stress patterns do not sound like a story presentation
UNACCEPTABLE 1 point	Story order is unrecognizable, with no discernible beginning and/or end	Little or no reporting of details	No clear sentence or meaning structure	Rate, fluency, intonation, and stress patterns are distorted or absent

*Details: characters, actions, location, time, feelings, reactions, etc.

Another “NAP” Narrative Assessment Profile

- Bliss, McCabe, Miranda, J.Comm.Dis. 31[1998], 347-363
- The NAP was designed to evaluate the multidimensional nature of narrative discourse with children and adults exhibiting communicative impairments.
- The following six dimensions of narration are evaluated simultaneously:
 - Topic maintenance
 - Event sequencing
 - Explicitness
 - Referencing
 - Conjunctive cohesion
 - Fluency

Practice

- Two narrative sample analysis
 - Narrative Assessment Protocol (NAP)
 - Analysis of the microstructure of a child’s narrative
 - Narrative Scoring Scheme (NSS) SALT
 - Analysis of macrostructure (rating of story structure)

Analysis of Expository Samples

- Macro analysis
 - Examines essential characteristics of a coherent expository
 - SALT Expository Scoring Scheme (ESS)
 - The expository database in SALT contains samples from middle and high school students, ages 10;7 through 15;9

SALT Expository Scoring Scheme

- Rate 5 point scale
 - Immature/minimal -> emerging -> proficient
- Rate 10 characteristics
 - First 8 correspond to the eight topics from the student planning sheet used to elicit sample
 - Terminology (terms are introduced and defined)
 - Cohesion (organization and transition)

Microanalysis of Expository Samples

Verbal Productivity

- Total number of C-units (utterances)
- Total number of words
- Words per minute

Complexity

- Number of Different Words
- Words per C-unit (MLCU)
- Clauses per C-unit (SI or CD)

Accuracy

- Grammatical accuracy (percentage of grammatically accurate C-units)
- Mazing behavior (% maze words)

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Analysis of Written Samples

Anthony D. Koutsoftas PhD

Productivity

- Total number of words
- Total number of sentences

Complexity

- Number of Different Words
- Clauses per sentence
- Words per sentence

Accuracy

- Grammatical
- Spelling

Mechanics

- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Paragraphing

Written Language should be analyzed for Productivity, Complexity, Accuracy, and Mechanics

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Accuracy

- Grammatical errors per sentence
 - Subject-Verb Agreement
 - Inter-sentential
 - Intra-sentential
 - Pronominal Errors
 - -ed; -ing; -es; -s
- Proportion of different spelling errors (Silliman, et al., 2006)
 - Phonological
 - Orthographic
 - Morphological
 - hug/hugged
 - their/there

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Mechanics

- Capitalization
 - Beginning of sentences
 - Proper nouns
 - Beginning of quotes
- Punctuation
 - End of sentence punctuation
 - Comma usage
 - "What's the deal with the oxford comma?"
 - Quotation Marks
 - Let's discuss
- Paragraphing
 - Indentation
 - Segmenting ideas
 - Regarding quotation marks

Productivity

- Total number of words
- Total number of sentences

Complexity

- Number of Different Words
- Clauses per sentence
- Words per sentence

Accuracy

- Grammatical
- Spelling

Mechanics

- Punctuation
- Capitalization
- Paragraphing

If children revise their writing, it is important to look at the change from rough to final copy. This will tell you what areas they are metalinguistic about and which areas they are not.

Evaluate the change from rough draft to final copy in each area:

- Increase
- Decrease
- No Change

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Recommendations to students hoping to become SLPs in the schools...

- YES! Do language samples!
- How often?
 - One complete “comprehensive” sample each year
 - Once a quarter “quick sample” to provide authentic assessment of therapy objectives
- Video record
- Use SALT for analysis of “comprehensive” sample
- Use “checklists” for analysis of samples used to measure progress

Recommendations to students hoping to become SLPs in the schools...

- What type of sample?
- The most representative and authentic
 - Preschooler
 - Conversational and narrative
 - School-age
 - Narrative and expository
 - Oral and written samples

Recommendations...Tools that are helpful for analysis of language samples in the schools

- Systematic Analysis of Language Transcripts (SALT)
- Narrative Assessment Protocol (NAP)
- Test of Narrative Language (TNL)
- Kyrene’s Checklist
- CELF-4 Pragmatic Checklist
- PLS-4 Language Sample Checklist

Thanks!

- References posted on google.docs site
- Please add and share
- YOU present next year at ArSHA!