

OBTAINING A LANGUAGE SAMPLE

- A language sample analysis is used throughout children's toddler and preschool years in order to study their language abilities.
- First step in analyzing language production transcripts is to obtain samples of the child's language.
- Need a sample that is reliable (similar across multiple recording contexts for the same child) and valid (accurately represent the quantity and quality of language a child can produce). It should reflect the child's optimal performance.

FACTORS AFFECTING A LANGUAGE SAMPLE

Nature of Interaction:

- Refers to the person with whom the child is interacting and to whether that participant asks questions or engages in conversation during interactive play.
- You can obtain a number of language samples with the child interacting with a variety of people, including the clinician, a parent, a sibling, or a peer.
 - o Children often talk the most with their mother.

Setting:

- Using more than one setting is optimal: home, school, clinic, or daycare.

Materials:

- Children with language disorders talk more about new and unique toys rather than familiar toys.
- However, the opposite seems true for children with normal language. They appear to talk more with toys they enjoy and are familiar with.
- It is wise to provide a variety of developmentally appropriate materials and encourage the child to interact with as many materials as possible.

Sample Size:

- Obtain a specific number of utterances from a child, or transcribe that number from a sample, containing a larger number of utterances.
- 50 – 200 utterances are recommended for a language sample analysis.
- **100 utterances** for this project.

Method of Recording:

- **Optimum method is video-taping** because it allows clinicians to either interact freely with the child or to watch undistracted as others interact with the child.
 - o Helps to see detailed changes in the non-verbal context.

- **Second method is audio-taping.** The clinician is free to interact with the child, but must make notes about the child's activities during the taping to provide non-verbal context for transcription.
- Last method is on-line transcription, which is transcribing what the child says, as he/she says it. Often may under represent or over represent the child's actual productions. Non-verbal context notes must also be made during on-line transcription.

Context of the Situation:

- Final variable that affects the quality of language sample is the specification of context.
- The utterances preceding and following a child's utterance may dramatically affect the interpretation of the child's utterance.
- In addition, objects that are present and the events that are taking place as the child produces an utterance greatly influence the interpretation of the child's utterance.
- Overall, a quality transcription must include a detailed account of both the linguistic and non-linguistic context.

TRANSCRIBING A LANGUAGE SAMPLE

- Adult and child utterances should be transcribed in Standard English except when the utterances are unintelligible, or when the child's approximations deviate substantially from expectations. These should be marked XXXX and not be counted in the number of utterances.
- Specifying the non-linguistic or situational context is very important. (See *Guide* sample Table 1.1 pgs 14-15).

Numbering Language Transcripts:

- Each fully intelligible utterance should be assigned an utterance number. If an utterance is repeated with no intervening activity or utterance by the other speaker, the utterance is considered a repetition and does not receive an utterance number.
- Totally or partially unintelligible utterances should not be assigned a number.
- Incomplete utterances should not be assigned a number. (See *Guide* Sample Transcript pg. 19).