Adaptation of Systematic Analysis of Language Transcripts (SALT) for Bangla Data

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Systematic Analysis of Language Transcripts (SALT) (Miller & Chapman, 1984) is a widely used transcription software that was originally designed for analysing English language data, and was later adapted for a range of other languages. SALT was used in a study on the morphosyntactic development of Bangla-speaking children (Sultana, 2015), and a set of directions were prepared to guide the use of the software for researchers working on Bangla. For the ease of adaptability, minimal adjustments were made, and no alteration in the coding of the original software was required.

Children's Bangla utterances were transliterated using the Roman alphabet. Since both Bangla and English use a postpositional inflection system, the SALT version in use (Miller, Gillon, & Westerveld, 2012)[1] for English data did not require major adjustments to arrange for Bangla analyses. The SALT conventions used for the Bangla language samples are presented below.

1. The transcription manual prepared by Klee (2010) was followed for general guidelines on SALT transcriptions.
2. The issue of agglutinative morphology, i.e. each stem attaching more than one suffix where there is a one-to-one relationship between the grammatical marker and the grammatical function, was addressed by adding multiple inflectional suffixes separated by slashes (/).
3. As an investigation of morphological development, children's utterances were coded only at the morphological level.
4. Following the SALT convention, an error of omission in the morpheme was marked with an asterisk (*) before the morpheme.
5. Errors of commission were expressed using SALT flags [ ], since there was no existing convention in SALT for this.

[1] SALT-NZ (Miller, Gillon, & Westerveld, 2012) was used in the study.

6. Substitutions were marked with an asterisk mark (*) for omission and a flag [FLAG] for commission.
7. In contexts, where the present simple form was permissible to function as the present progressive form, such a use was not considered erroneous in the language samples.
8. If an error was repeated in the immediate next sentence, it was entered and coded as an error. However, it was coded as a maze so that the repetition did not affect the scores.
9. Customary expressions were considered as one unit and written as a word, i.e. *thikase* (It's alright), *thankyou*, *eije* (Here/ There you go).
10. Compound words (or semi-compounds words) were transcribed as one word. The assumption here was that children were not likely to have enough linguistic exposure to be able to view them as analysed items.
11. Substitution or distortion of phonemes was not noted for morphological analyses.
12. Wrong forms, such as a wrong vowel alteration (/Dhaka dao/ instead of /dhekhe dao/), were not marked incorrect since they did not involve any of the target morphemes. However, they were noted separately for future analysis.
13. Inappropriate grammatical forms that required explanation were flagged with [WF], i.e. Wrong Form.
14. Idiosyncrasies in terms of pronunciation were ignored.

A detailed description of the regular SALT conventions can be accessed from http://ir.canterbury.ac.nz/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10092/5025/12627694_transcription_manual_for_research_v2010.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

References

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