

Analysis Pointers

1) Clause level

Analyse sentences into their constituent sentence elements: **S, V, O, A, C**

Where a sentence includes two Object elements, specify which is the direct Object (**O_d**) and which, the indirect Object (**O_i**)

Where a sentence includes a Complement and both a Subject and an Object element, specify whether it is the Subject (**C_s**) or Object (**C_o**) Complement

In the case of a complex sentence in which one clause is embedded within the other, (ie functions as an element within the other) analyse the sentence as a whole and the embedded clause independently, eg

S	V	A	
<u>The little boy was crying because he had dropped his ice-cream</u>			

S	V	O	
because, <u>he had dropped his ice-cream</u>			

NB. Underlining the sentence elements will help you with the phrase level analysis.

2) Phrase level

Children progress from producing one word utterances, eg 'doggie' to combining two or more words. At the clause level, we are interested to know how many clausal elements they can combine in one sentence. At the phrase level, we are similarly interested in the length of the phrases they use to realise individual clausal elements.

'Doggie barking' is of interest at the clause level because the child has combined two clausal elements: S and V. At the phrase level, there is nothing to note since each clausal element is realised by a single word only, ie the head word.

'Nice doggie barking' is also a 2 element SV clause. In this example, however, there is something of developmental interest to note at the phrase level. The child is using an expanded noun phrase, that is, they are able to provide additional information about the head, in this example, through use of the pre-modifying adjective.

'Nice doggie is barking' is also a 2 element SV clause. In this example, the V element is also realised by an expanded phrase. Rather than just using the main lexical verb,

the child is able to convey temporal information through use of the auxiliary verb.

At the time that children start using expanded phrases, they also start using pronouns. Use of a form of 'be' as the main verb (and other copular verbs such as 'become', 'appear') is also developmentally of note.

In sum, at the phrase level, we are interested primarily in the child's use of:

- expanded phrases, ie phrases comprising two or more words
- pronouns
- copular verbs

NB. In the case of expanded verb phrases, eg 'is barking', note this as 'Aux' (rather than 'Aux Main'). Presence of an auxiliary implies presence of a main verb. Children produce main verbs as single words and then add auxiliaries. They don't produce auxiliary verbs as single words. So we can save time by just noting the auxiliary (where this is present)

Abbreviations

Noun (N)	Determiner (D)
Pronoun (Pron)	Preposition (Prep)
Adjective (Adj)	Auxiliary verb (Aux)
Adverb (Adv)	Copular verb (Cop)

3) Word level

Note use of inflectional endings and contracted verb forms, eg 'I'm hungry' (contracted copular), 'I'm feeling hungry' (contracted auxiliary, present progressive), 'he's walking home' (contracted auxiliary)

Abbreviations

pl	plural (regular and irregular)
-ed	past tense (regular and irregular)
3s	third person present tense singular form
-ing	present participle
-en	past participle (both -en and -ed forms)
gen	genitive marker
-er	comparative
-est	superlative
'cop	contracted copular
'aux	contracted auxiliary