Hi John and Alon,

I put together a short paragraph with information about the corpus analysis that Barbara wanted. Since we have 25 corpora in this search, I decided not to list the name of each corpus. I checked to make sure the children included in this search are all typically developing. Most of the tokens (1273/3494) are from the Hall corpus. Let me know if there is anything you would like me to edit or add before sending it to Barbara.

Summary:

Using a sample of 3,494 child-produced tokens from 126 typically developing children and 25 corpora of CHILDES, we selected 12 symmetrical verbs with the highest token frequency. Participants were between 36 and 59 months old, 74 males and 48 females (4 missing gender information) from North America, and monolingual speakers of English. We followed the matching criteria from Hafri et al. (in-prep), where the symmetrical and nonsymmetrical verb pairs were similar in meaning apart from symmetry. These pairs could be used in similar contexts, for example, the symmetrical verb "trade" and the nonsymmetrical verb "sell." The symmetrical predicates had to meet the linguistic and logical properties of symmetry. The linguistic property requires the intransitive structure to entail a reciprocal event (Gleitman et al. 1996, Gleitman & Partee in-prep). For instance, "John and Bill boxed" entails that they boxed with each other. Compared to "John and Bill drowned," which does not entail they drowned each other. The logical property of symmetry states that a relation R is symmetrical iff for all x, y: if xRy, then yRx. For example, if "John and Bill boxed," then Bill boxed with John and John boxed with Bill. Contrast this with "John punched Bill," which does not entail that Bill punched John. Nonsymmetrical predicates were selected based on how similar they were in meaning to their symmetrical partners, and they had to fail the linguistic and logical criteria of symmetry. The nonsymmetrical verbs did not always match the token frequency of the symmetrical items due to most of the tokens coming from the nonsymmetrical verbs (2,844 of 3,494 child-produced tokens).

Best,

Abimael