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Welcome to the MiMo language analysis tool!

What is MiMo?

The name MiMo stands for “Minimal Input, Maximal Output”.

Minimal Input

MiMo allows you to enter text **quickly** and **efficiently** without needing to learn special conventions.

Maximal Output

MiMo provides a **rich output**, automatically identifying complex sentences, and colouring in words according to their word class so you can ‘see’ the structure of sentences.

Other reasons for using MiMo

1. It is **cross platform**. Because it runs as a web app you can use it on Mac, PC and Linux, and even on mobile phones and tablets (Android and Apple iOS)
2. It works in **over 60 different languages**. So if a child speaks Ancient Coptic, you know where to turn!
3. It is completely **open source** so anyone with sufficient technical knowledge can adapt it to their own ends.
4. It provides **up-to-date norms** from the **Childes** database

Who is MiMo intended for?

The app is aimed at Speech and Language Therapists, and other language professionals, who want to do a quick and easy analysis of language data. It is **not** intended as a tool for researchers. A better alternative for research purposes is the CLAN software and CHAT transcription system.

Viewing these help pages

If you wish to see a version of these help pages with a **handy navigation menu**, please click [here](#). You may also wish to download a Word and pdf version of these help pages.

Brief Acknowledgements

MiMo couldn't have been written without the R programming language, the R Shiny Apps framework, and the CHILDES database of child language corpora. I should also thank my institution, Newcastle University, for supporting me. See the end of the document for further acknowledgements.

Basic Usage

PRACTICE 1 - Entering data

1. Select **Let's get started!** (at the top of the page) > (1) **Enter text**

- Click the Radio Button **Enter text in textbox**, and enter your text-to-be-analysed in the text box. Here is some text for you to copy and paste into the text box.

Tardigrades, which are also known colloquially as water bears, or moss piglets, are a phylum of water-dwelling, eight-legged, segmented micro-animals. They were first described by the German zoologist Johann August Ephraim Goeze in 1773, who gave them the name of “little water bears”. The name Tardigrada, meaning “slow steppers”, was given three years later by the Italian biologist Lazzaro Spallanzani.

- Then select **Let's get started!** (at the top of the page) > (2) **Check language**
- If the language detected is correct (it *will* be correct if you enter the above text), proceed to **Let's explore!** > (2) **Coloured output**
- You should see a colourful table with word classes shaded according to their colour...

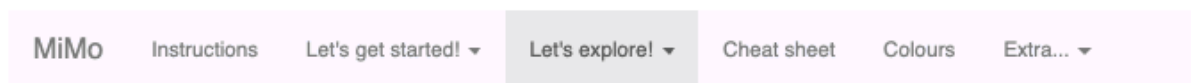


Table will take a few seconds to appear/refresh...

Search: **Universal Filters**

line	speaker	sentence_coloured
		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">All</div> <div style="float: right; color: red; font-weight: bold;">Specific Filters</div>
3	xxx:	The name Tardigrada , meaning " slow steppers " , was given three years later by the
2	xxx:	They were first described by the German zoologist Johann August Ephraim Goeze in 17
1	xxx:	Tardigrades , which are also known colloquially as water bears , or moss piglets , are

Showing 1 to 3 of 3 entries

Exploring the coloured output

You can do a lot of cool things with the table.

... Mouse hovering...

If you hover the mouse over a word, you will see a “tooltip” showing the grammatical category of that word. Give it a try!

... Filtering...

If you enter text in one of the boxes at the top, you can select (or “filter”) particular lines

For example, if you type **hasPron** in the big search bar at the top of the screen, it will find all sentences containing pronouns, or if you type **hasCop** it will find sentences containing the copula (verb “to be” when used as the MAIN VERB). Give it a try!

You will find a list of search terms in **Cheatsheet** tab.

... Sorting...

You can also sort lines

... Highlighting lines...

If you click on lines they will be shaded in dark grey. This may be useful if you wish to highlight particular lines in the transcript.

NB don't scroll too far along, as many of the columns are slightly scary-looking are not designed to be looked at by the user! In general, there is no need to look at columns beyond the vertical line.

A note on parsing accuracy

'Parsing' is the process of identifying word classes (and other syntactic) information from text. MiMo depends on Universal Dependencies annotation scheme. The Universal Dependency project is an international project designed to create parsing models of the world's languages. Though the Universal Dependencies do a fantastic job, they are only around 95% accurate. This should be borne in mind when using MiMo to analyse natural language data.

PRACTICE 2 - Filtering and sorting

- (a) Practice filtering the lines. Type individual words in the small search box above the coloured text. NB you can also search for groups of words, but **this will only work if you type them in the "universal" search bar**
- (b) Now practice filtering for word classes. Type **hasPron** and **hasCop** into the "Universal" search bar (the large bar at the top)
- (c) Now practice sorting. Go to the **num_clauses** column, and sort so that the sentences with the most clauses are at the top.

Specifying speakers

The above text on Tardigrades does not specify a speaker. Note that in the speaker column the "speaker" is specified as **xxx:**, i.e. some unknown individual.

If you wish to specify speakers, merely type a word at the beginning of an utterance which ends in a colon, e.g. **Jack: CHI: Mum: babysitter:**. Once you have specified a speaker then all the following lines are assumed to belong to that speaker *unless another speaker is specified*.

PRACTICE 3 - Specifying speakers

Try entering the following conversation in the text box, and then check the language.

CHI: Gimme that! ADULT: Can you say "Please"? CHI: Gimme please! ADULT: That's right. Here you go. What do you think that is?

You will notice that the language detection doesn't quite work. This is because the algorithm prioritises speed over accuracy. To set the right language, click on the radio button **Select another language** and then enter the name of the language ("English") in the box (make sure you spell it correctly or the app will crash).

Now have a look at the coloured output. You will see that the speakers have been added to the Speaker column.

Delimiting utterances

The following characters are utterance-final delimiters:

1. One or more periods (full stops) in a row, e.g.
2. One or more question marks in a row, e.g. ? ?? ??? ????
3. One or more exclamation marks in a row, e.g. ! !! !!! !!!!

Note that the RETURN character is not defined as an utterance-final delimiter. This means that you do not need to bother to enter RETURN characters. So you could enter all utterances as below without any RETURN character. MiMo would only assume a new line where it identifies an utterance-final delimiter.

CHI: Gimme that! ADULT: Can you say “Please”? CHI: Gimme please! ADULT: That’s right. Here you go. What do you think that is?

Note that there is one punctuation convention that is specific to MiMo. When typing out a COMMAND, finish the sentence with a single exclamation mark, e.g. “Eat your dinner!/Put down that toy!”. When typing out an EXCLAMATION, finish the sentence with **more than one** exclamation mark, e.g. “We had such a nice time!! That’s such a funny toy!!”

Intermediate usage

Uploading documents

You will note that the app gives you the opportunity to upload a document. You can upload a Microsoft Word format document (with the extension .doc, or docx) or a plain text file (with the extension .txt). Unfortunately R cannot recognise other formats (e.g. .odt).

PRACTICE 4 - uploading a text document

Try creating a document with some text in and uploading it.

More about filters

You can see that there are two types of filters...

Table will take a few seconds to appear/refresh...

Search: **Universal Filters**

line ▴ ▾	speaker ▴ ▾	sentence_coloured
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<div>All</div> <div>Specific Filters</div>
3	xxx:	The name Tardigrada , meaning " slow steppers " , was given three years later by the
2	xxx:	They were first described by the German zoologist Johann August Ephraim Goeze in 17
1	xxx:	Tardigrades , which are also known colloquially as water bears , or moss piglets , are

Showing 1 to 3 of 3 entries

- (1) A “specific” filter which is shown at the top of columns. This only searches inside the column.
- (2) A “universal” filter at the top in the middle. This filter can be used to search for text in ANY column.
The universal filters are described in the **Cheat sheet** tab.

All of these filters are blind to case, so they will work if you use upper instead of lower case and vice versa. So **hasPrep**, **hasprep** and **HASPREP** will all do the same thing. Note that for filters to work, you only need to type **the minimum string which identifies a specific filter from a list of all filters**. So you are likely to see the columns being filtered even before you have finished typing them.

When typing in the universal filter bar, you can search for multiple words from a sentence. For example, typing **cat mouse** will find all the sentences containing the words **cat** and **mouse**. This can be useful for quickly finding sentences of interest. Note that this *only* works in the universal filter bar.

The filters are designed so that you can explore the data. You can do a whole host of things including

- (a) Selecting utterances only from a particular speaker
- (b) Identifying the more complex utterances
- (c) Finding particular structures (e.g. passives)
- (d) Searching for word classes
- (e) Search for particular types of verbs, e.g. past tense, infinitives, etc.
- (f) Finding utterances containing particular words
- (g) Finding questions, commands and exclamatives
- (h) Searching for tags you have added (see below)

PRACTICE 5 - Using filters, PART 2

Have a go at using the filters with the following transcript (invented by the author)

ADULT: Look. Look at the car. CHILD: Yes. Car!! That's a blue one. ADULT: Yes it is, isn't it? CHILD: Yes, it is. ADULT: Can you make it go. CHILD: I can make it. . . . I make it go very fast. Watch me! This is the car that Cookie Monster drives. Look! It got real smashed! I put it in the box now. ADULT: That's right. You're putting it in the box.

Now copy and paste this into the MiMo, and look at the **Let's explore!** > (1) **Coloured table** tab. Now use the sorting and filtering functions to

- (1) Find sentences produced by the child containing prepositions.
- (2) Find sentences produced by the child containing pronouns.
- (3) Find sentences produced by the child containing an exclamation (note exclamations have 2 exclamation marks, while imperatives have only one).
- (4) Find sentences produced by the child containing an imperative.
- (5) Find sentences produced by the child containing a present participle form.
- (6) Find sentences produced by the child containing a past participle form.
- (7) Rank the child's sentences in terms of length or complexity.
- (8) Calculate the percentage of the child's utterances which are complex (multi-clausal) (NB, to do this have a look at the numbers at the bottom table, e.g. "Showing 1 to 3 of 3 entries" which show you the number of rows which have been selected)

Language metrics

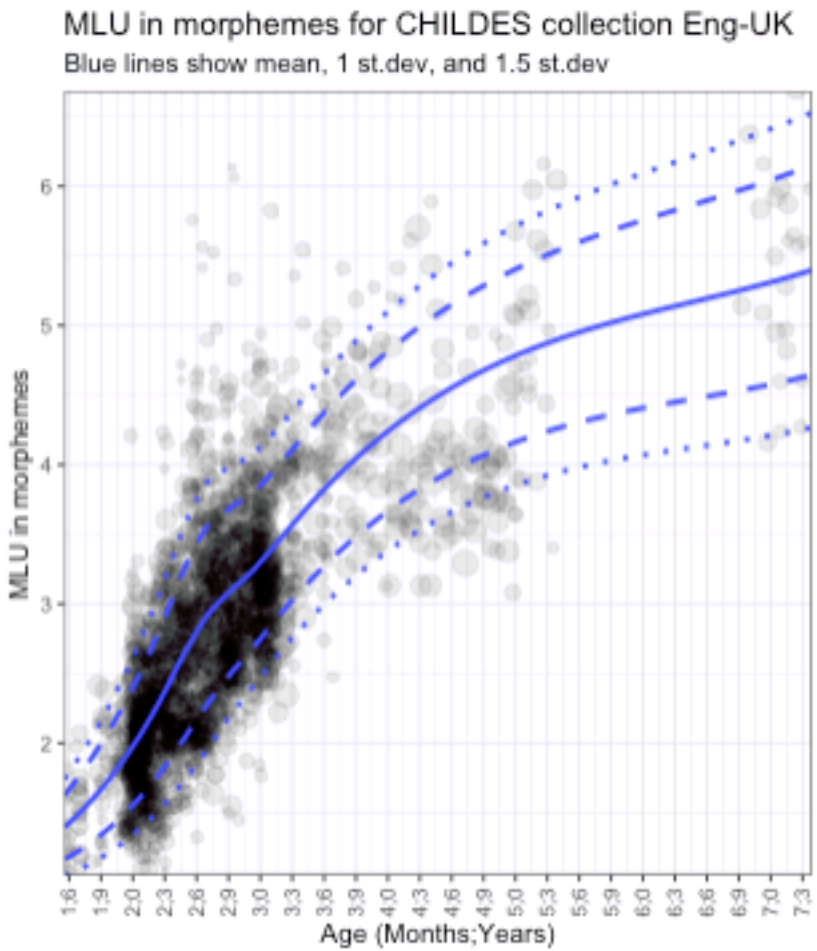
Now go to (2) **Syntactic measures**. This tab shows you (a) a table with important syntactic metrics (Mean Length of Utterance in words (MLUw), Mean Length of Utterance in Morphemes (MLUm), Mean Number of Finite Clauses per utterance (MNumCl),

Now go to the (3) **Lexical measures** tab. This contains two measures of lexical diversity: "HDD", and Type Token Ratio (TTR). HDD stands for "Hypergeometric Distribution Density". It is virtually identical to the VOC-D metric which is calculated by the CLAN language analysis software. For example, McCarthy and Jarvis (2007) found correlations of $r = 0.971$ between HDD and VOC-D (McCarthy, P.M., Jarvis, S., Vocd: A theoretical and empirical evaluation, *Language Testing*, 2007.<https://doi-org.libproxy.ncl.ac.uk/10.1177/0265532207080767>).

Plotting data

If you go to **Extra...** > (2) **Plot data** you can create a graph showing normative data for particular language measures (e.g. MLU and HDD), and you can also show an individual child on that plot.

The graph will look something like this.



The trend lines show the mean score, plus and minus 1 standard deviation, and plus and minus 1.5 standard deviations. The **Nitty Gritty** section (below) contains information about how these lines have been calculated and drawn.

To plot this kind of graph you need to choose a “Collection” from the sidebar on the left hand side.

Collection

PLEASE CHOOSE... ▼

Variable

MLU in morphemes ▼

Min. utterances

100

Bin width

10

Table will take a few seconds to appear/refresh...

You can also alter

- (1) the variable
- (2) the minimum number of child utterances in the corpus (to exclude unreliable corpora where the child does not produce many utterances)
- (3) the “bin” width. For details of what a “bin” is and how it is used see **Nitty Gritty** below. If in any doubt about this, you should leave this at 10, which works pretty well.
- (4) the shading. If you graph looks too dark you can make each dot lighter
- (5) maximum and minimum values using the “Trim” slider. This may be useful if you have extreme values which are influencing the lines of best fit. By trimming these values you can redraw the lines.

PRACTICE 6 - Exploring CHILDES corpora

Load a variety of different corpora to look at developmental trends.

Comments and tags

Use comments and tags for sections of text which you do not want MiMo to analyse (e.g. categorise them according to their word class, or use them as the basis for calculating MLU). Comments are marked using round brackets, while tags are marked using square brackets, e.g.

(this is a comment) [and this is tag]

The only difference between a comment and a tag is that you can search for content within tags (using the “hasTagCONTENT_OF_TAG” universal filter), and there is also a tab which provides summary data for the tags.

PRACTICE 7 - Exploring CHILDES corpora

To explore content and tags, copy and analyse the following fragment. This is the same as the above chunk, but tags have been added containing rudimentary speech acts. I have also used tags and comments to codify a reformulated utterance. Note that by making the reformulated chunk a comment (by enclosing it in round brackets) it will not be used to calculate the metrics (e.g. MLU)

ADULT: Look! [directive] Look at the car. [directive] CHILD: Yes. [oneWordResponseToDirective] Car!! [exclamative] That's a blue one. [comment] ADULT: Yes it is, isn't it? [comment] CHILD: Yes, it is. [comment] ADULT: Can you make it go? [interrogative] CHILD: (I can make it)[reformulated] I make it go very fast. [comment] Watch me! [directive] This is the car that Cookie Monster drives. [comment] Look! [directive] It got real smashed. [comment] I put it in the box now. [comment] ADULT: That's right. [comment] You're putting it in the box. [comment]

Copy and paste this into MiMo and have a look at the coloured table. You can now search for specific tags using “hastagCONTENTS”, e.g. “hastagDirective”.

Comments and tags are designed to be *simple* to use but also *highly flexible*. You could use them to analyse almost any aspect of linguistic data.

In addition to allowing you to use tags and comments, the app also summarises tag data. To see a summary go to **Let's explore > (4) Tags** (note if there are many tags you will need to scroll horizontally to see them all). The Tags tab will show you on how many of these tags occur per utterance for that particular speaker. From this it is easy to calculate the percentage of utterances involving reformulations.

PRACTICE 8 - Exploring the “(4) Tags” tab

Copy and paste the above transcript into the text box, and then go to the **(4) Tags** tab. What percentage of the adult's utterances contain directives?

Again, the *Advanced Usage* section provides information on how to alter the appearance of the graph, and plot a data point for a particular child.

Advanced Usage

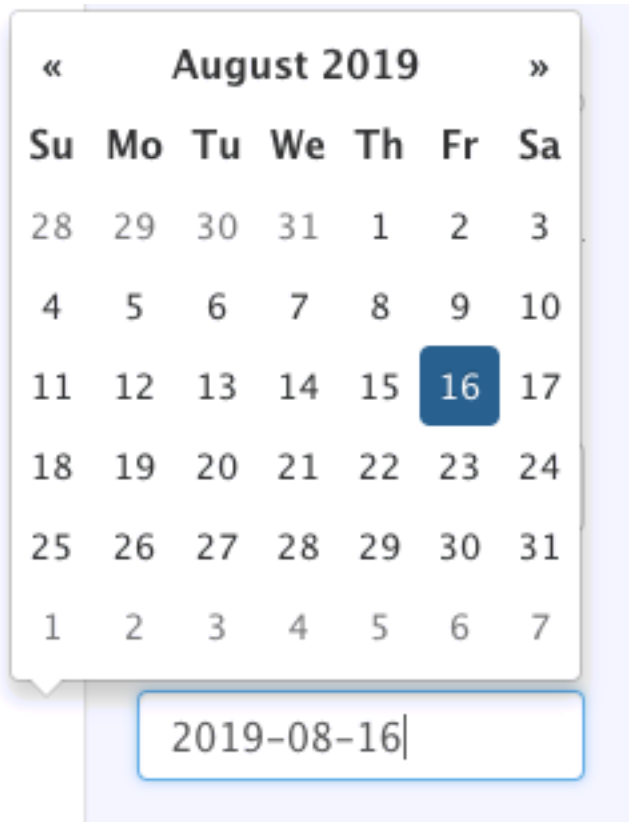
Changing the appearance of graphs

Zooming

You can **zoom into** the graph by selecting an area with the mouse, and double-clicking on that area. You can zoom out again by double-clicking anywhere on the plot. Zooming does not redraw the lines of fit (means and standard deviations).

Plotting children on the figures

You also have the ability to plot an individual child on the graph. To do this, select the child from the drop-down, enter the age of the child, and the age of the child at “test” (i.e. the date when the child was recorded).



The age for the child will be calculated, and a red marker corresponding to that child will be shown on the graph.

Changing the width of the bins

The lines of best fit are created by grouping the children into “bins” of a pre-specified size. This may be altered. By increasing the bin size the lines become smoother, but are likely to fit the data less well.

PRACTICE 9 - Changing the appearance of graphs" tab

Go to **Extra...** > (2) **Plot data**. Now that the graph is drawn experiment with its appearance by

- (1) zooming in
- (2) trimming the data at the extremes
- (3) changing the shade of the graph
- (4) changing the minimum number of the utterances
- (5) changing the size of the bins

Now select the child participant from the dropdown and plot their data on the graph (NB to do this, you will need to enter a random age for the child)

Extras (1) - Coloured Output CnP

The first item in the **Extras...** tab, (1) **Coloured Output CnP**, provides a simpler version of the Coloured Output which allows you to copy individual lines and paste them into other document (you will found out

that copying and pasting does not work very well for the (1) Coloured Output tab). This may be useful if you writing a report, and wish to give examples of the child’s language.

“Nitty Gritty”

How words and morphemes are coded

Words are assumed to be separated by spaces. If you want to treat two words as a single word, remove the space between them, e.g. `cheese biscuit` > `cheeseBiscuit` (capitals can be used to improve readability, but don’t capitalise initial letter). You can check that it has been analysed as a single word in the Coloured Output tab.

Morphemes are slightly trickier. Unfortunately, the software does not do a sophisticated morphological analysis, but instead operates with a simple set of rules.

1. *Regular past tense affix -ed*: if a word is analysed as a past tense verb and ends `-ed` it is coded as having a regular past tense morpheme.
2. *Third person singular present tense -s*: if a word is recognised as a third person singular present tense verb, and it ends in `-s` it is coded as having a third person singular present tense morpheme.
3. *Regular plural -s*: if a word is coded as a plural noun and ends in `-s` it is coded as having a plural suffix.

And that’s all there is to it! Though these rules are fairly basic they are reliable, as all of these morphemes are orthographically encoded in a regular fashion, e.g. all regular past tense endings are written “ed”.

Note that this set of rules is language specific. Therefore MLUs in morphemes for languages other than English will not be accurate and will be identical to the MLU in words. However, there is no reason why further sets of morphological rules for different languages cannot be added to MiMo.

How means and standard deviations are drawn

The lines have been drawn via a two-stage process. Firstly, “rolling” means and standard deviations are calculated. This involves ranking observations by age, and taking a set (or “bin”) of a pre-specified size (the default size is 10). Then means, and standard deviations are calculated. After that, the bin is shifted upwards by 1. So while the first bin contains observations 1 to 10, the second contains observations 2 to 11. The third bin will contain observations 3 to 12 and so on. Note that when we approach the extremes the bins will become smaller than their prespecified size, which will affect the reliability of the means / standard deviations.

The second stage of the process is slightly more complicated. R uses an algorithm called “loess” to draw a smooth line through the rolling means and standard deviations. “Loess” is complex and difficult to describe without using heavy maths.

How the software works

This section is only for people who understand the coding language R!!

The software is written using the *Shiny Apps* R package. It loads a variety of libraries. The two most important ones which involve linguistic data are `chilDesR` for reading data from CHILDES corpora, and `udpipe`, which “parses” the natural language input (i.e. it analyses the structure of sentences and assigns word classes). The software also uses the `korpus` library for calculating the lexical diversity metrics. All of the libraries loaded by the software are listed in the *Acknowledgements* section below.

The code is hosted on **github** at <https://github.com/nickriches/MiMo>

Acknowledgements

The software is written by Nick Riches at nick.riches@newcastle.ac.uk using the following R packages. . .

Functions for plotting and data manipulation:

Hadley Wickham (2017). tidyverse: Easily Install and Load the ‘Tidyverse’. R package version 1.2.1. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=tidyverse>

Functions for accessing statistics from CHILDES corpora:

Mika Braginsky, Alessandro Sanchez and Daniel Yurovsky (2019). childsr: Accessing the ‘CHILDES’ Database. R package version 0.1.1. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=childsr>

Functions for creating documents:

Yihui Xie (2014) knitr: A Comprehensive Tool for Reproducible Research in R. In Victoria Stodden, Friedrich Leisch and Roger D. Peng, editors, Implementing Reproducible Computational Research. Chapman and Hall/CRC. ISBN 978-1466561595

Functions for importing text files and Word documents:

Kenneth Benoit and Adam Obeng (2019). readtext: Import and Handling for Plain and Formatted Text Files. R package version 0.74. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=readtext>

Functions for importing grammars from the Universal Dependencies database:

Jan Wijnfells (2019). udpipe: Tokenization, Parts of Speech Tagging, Lemmatization and Dependency Parsing with the ‘UDPipe’ ‘NLP’ Toolkit. R package version 0.8.2. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=udpipe>

Functions for creating the tables, which allow for filtering and sorting.

Yihui Xie, Joe Cheng and Xianying Tan (2019). DT: A Wrapper of the JavaScript Library ‘DataTables’. R package version 0.6. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=DT>

Functions for automatic language recognition

Hornik K, Mair P, Rauch J, Geiger W, Buchta C, Feinerer I (2013). “The textcat Package for n -Gram Based Text Categorization in R.” *Journal of Statistical Software*, 52(6), 1-17. doi: 10.18637/jss.v052.i06 (URL: <https://doi.org/10.18637/jss.v052.i06>).

Functions for calculating ages

Jared E. Knowles (2019). eeptools: Convenience Functions for Education Data. R package version 1.2.2. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=eeptools>

Functions for calculating running averages

Achim Zeileis and Gabor Grothendieck (2005). zoo: S3 Infrastructure for Regular and Irregular Time Series. *Journal of Statistical Software*, 14(6), 1-27. doi:10.18637/jss.v014.i06

Functions for creating the colour tab

Dean Attali (2017). colourpicker: A Colour Picker Tool for Shiny and for Selecting Colours in Plots. R package version 1.0. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=colourpicker>

The project employed norms from the CHILDES collection of corpora available Talkbank:

MacWhinney, B. (2000). The CHILDES Project: Tools for Analyzing Talk. 3rd Edition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associate

And last, but not least, here are the citations for R itself and the Shiny Apps frameworks:

R Core Team (2019). R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. URL <https://www.R-project.org/>.

Winston Chang, Joe Cheng, JJ Allaire, Yihui Xie and Jonathan McPherson (2019). shiny: Web Application Framework for R. R package version 1.3.2. <https://CRAN.R-project.org/package=shiny>