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Table 1
Overview of studies included in the review

	Author (year)	Population Sample Size Age range (mean age)	Aims / Objectives *To examine:*	Areas of development / functioning	Elicitation Task	Narrative measures
1.	Bohanek and Fivush (2010)*	TD, English speaking Group 1: *n* = 37 (17F) 13-14yo (*m* = 13.57) Group 2: *n* = 29 (15F) 15-16yo (*m* = 15.48)	- Gender differences - Relations between internal state language and emotional well-being	Language performance Psychological functioning	Four personal narratives • Two positive: "really happy, excited, or proud" • Two negative: "really angry, sad, or scared"	• Narrative topic or category • TNW • Internal state language ○ Cognitive state words ○ Emotion words ○ General affect
2.	Chen et al. (2012)	TD, English speaking Group 1: *n* = 29 (13F) 12-14yo (*m* = 13.5) Group 2: n = 31 (16F) 15-17yo (*m* = 16.4) Group 3: *n* = 30 (18F) 18-21yo (*m* = 19.5)	- Age, gender, and event valence differences in coherence - Relations between narrative coherence and well-being and prosocial behaviour	Language performance Language development Psychological functioning	Two personal narratives • Low point event: "extreme sadness, loneliness, fear, despair, disillusionment, guilt" (always narrated first) • High point event: "extreme joy, excitement, happiness, or even deep inner peace" Free-recall + follow-up interview questions	• Event type • Interview length (TNW) • Narrative coherence ○ Theme (Reese et al., 2011) ○ Developmental consequentiality (Habermas & de Silveira, 2008) ○ Meaning-making (McLean & Pratt, 2006)
3.	Dianiska et al. (2024)	TD, English speaking	- Effects of rapport building techniques in	Language performance	One personal narrative	• TNW • Seriousness of event

		N = 125 (84F) 14-19yo (*m* = 17yrs)	encouraging disclosure		• Life event: “negative event or delinquent behaviour” of high seriousness	• Number of relevant timeline details • Number of evaluative details
4.	Fivush et al. (2012)*	TD, English speaking *N* = 65 Group 1: *n* = 37 (17F) 13-14yo (*m* = 13;7) Group 2: *n* = 28 (15F) 15-16yo (*m* = 15;6)	- Gender and event valence differences - Relations between narrative features and meaning-making and narrative identity	Language performance Psychological functioning	Four personal narratives • Two positive: “really happy, excited, or proud” • Two negative: “really angry, sad, or scared”	• Coherence (Reese et al., 2011) • Elaboration (Fivush et al., 2000) • Internal state language: ○ Cognitive state words ○ Emotion words ○ General affect • Reflection: Insight (McLean & Pratt, 2006) • Connection • Agency
5.	Foldager et al. (2024)	TD, Danish speaking Group 1: *n* = 12, 7-8;11 Group 2: *n* = 26, 9-10;11 Group 3: *n* = 24, 11-12;11 Group 4: *n* = 24, 13-14;11	- Relations between narrative coherence and mentalising complexity across different narrative genres	Language performance Language development Psychological functioning	Six personal narratives • Autobiographical memories (+ five fictional stories)	• Narrative coherence (Baerger & McAdams, 1999) ○ Context ○ Structure ○ Evaluation • Mentalising complexity
6.	Frensch et al. (2007)	TD, English speaking Group 1:	- Development of generativity (caring for others)	Language expression	Two personal narratives • Critical turning point event: “real impact	• Generative themes: ○ Caring ○ Productivity

		n = 35 *(m* = 16yo) Group 2: *n* = 32 (16F) (*m* = 20yo)		Psychological functioning	on the kind of person you are today”	○ General generativity (Peterson & Stewart, 1993)
7.	Gordon (1986)	English speaking Group 1: Effective writers *n* = 5F (16;1 – 18;8) Group 2: Ineffective writers *n* = 5F (16;5 – 17;11)	- Differences between spoken and written language - Differences between effective and ineffective writers	Language performance	Two personal narratives • A time you were in danger or frightened (+ two written narratives)	• Segmentation • Narrative / Evaluative clauses Labov & Waletzky, 1967) • Lexicon • Syntax • Information and propositions (Clark & Clark, 1977)
8.	Hill, Whitworth, et al. (2021)	TD, English speaking *N* = 160 (88F) 12;0 – 15;11 (*m* = 13;1)	- Differences in language across four different genres	Language performance	Three personal narratives - weekends - accidents / injury - holiday	Micro-linguistic: • TNU • Number of maze words, % maze words • NDW • MLU Micro-structural: • Cohesive frequency • Cohesive adequacy (Liles, 1985) Macro-structural: • Coherence – local and global (Glosser & Deser, 1991) • Correct Information Unit (Nicholas & Brookshire, 1993) ○ Relevance ○ Efficiency

						Super-structural: • Schema deviations • Order deviations • Genre shifts

9.	Kawar et al. (2019)	Arabic speaking
		
		Group 1:
		Deaf / Hard of hearing
		n = 61 (29F)
		12-16yo
		(*m* = 13;8)
		Group 2:
		TD
		n = 63 (27F)
		12-16yo
		(*m* = 13:7)
			- Differences between adolescents with and without hearing loss	Language performance	One personal narrative
					• A time when you felt in danger or frightened
						Macrostructure:
						• Story grammar (Labov, 1972)
						• High point analysis (Peterson & McCabe, 1983)
						Microstructure:
						• Productivity
						  ○ Number of content words
						  ○ Number of grammatical morphemes
						  ○ Number of syntactic units
						• Morpho-syntactic errors
						• Percentage of complex sentences
						(+ Use of Modern Standard Arabic)

10.	Kayama et al. (2015)	Students who had received school suspensions English speaking *N* = 31 (10F) 11-17yo (*m* = 14.4)	- Use of criminal justice language	Language expression	One personal narrative • Specific incident which led to school suspension Additional interview prompts	Criminal justice terms

11.	King et al. (2013)	English speaking
		
		Group 1: High-functioning, ASD
		n = 27
		11-14yo
		(*m* = 12.9)
		Group 2: Language-matched
		n = 27
		5 – 15yo
		(*m* = 11.4)
		Group 3: Age-matched
		n = 27
		11-14yo
		(*m* = 12.9)
			- Differences between adolescents with ASD and TD	Language performance	Six personal narratives
					• Specific events (e.g., going on holidays, a birthday, a time you felt scared)
					
					(+ six recounts of general events)
					
					Picture prompts used for adolescents with ASD
						• Number of main body words
						• TNU
						• MLU
						• Number of different word roots
						• Number of mazes
						• Number of maze words
						• Evaluative devices
						  ○ Mental states
						  ○ Causal statements
						  ○ Character speech
						  ○ Negative comments
						  ○ Emphatic markers
						  ○ Hedges

12.	Kuvač Kraljević et al. (2023)	TD, Croatian speaking Group 1: *n* = 20 (15F) 7.3 – 8.11yo (*m* = 7.7yo) Group 2: *n* = 20 (7F) 9.6 – 11.5yo (*m* = 10.0yo) Group 3: *n* = 20 (12F) 12.1 – 13.9yo (*m* = 12.3yo)	- Age, gender, and event valence differences - Age sensitivity of Global TALES protocol	Language performance Language development	Six personal narratives • Emotion-based events	Lexical diversity • Lemma-token ratio • NDW Productivity • TNW Syntactic complexity • MLU-words • Clausal density Narrative coherence (Reese et al., 2011)

13.	Lind et al. (2019)	Psychiatric inpatients (two weeks post-admission) - multiple mental health diagnoses English speaking *N* = 70 (56F) 12-17yo (*m* = 15.37)	- Narrative coherence and identify diffusion	Psychological functioning	One personal narrative • Generated in Child Attachment Interview (Target et al., 2007) (+ two parent narratives)	Narrative coherence (Baerger & McAdams, 1999)
14.	McMain (2022)	TD, "male adolescents of colour" English speaking *n* = 4 (4M) 15 – 17yo	- Formation of gendered identity	Language expression Psychological functioning	Two personal narratives • A time when someone calmed you down • A time when you calmed someone else down	Content analysis of themes: • Masculinity • Friendship • Choices
15.	Mossige et al. (2005)	Children and adolescents who report being sexually abused Norwegian speaking *N* = 10 (8F) 7-16yo *n* = 2F 13 & 16yo	- Language differences in telling events of sexual abuse compared with a stressful event - Meaning-making of experiences	Language performance Psychological functioning	Two personal narratives • Most complex narrative pertaining to sexual abuse • Most elaborate narrative pertaining to a stressful event (extracted from therapy session)	• Level of elaboration (Stein & Albro, 1996) • High point analysis (based on Peterson & McCabe, 1983) • Contextual embeddedness (Buckner & Fivush, 1998) • Causal coherence (Habermas & Paha, 2001)
16.	Noel (2011)	Youth offenders in correctional facility English speaking *N* = 15M 16;0 – 18;11	- Narrative skills and social problem-solving skills in high-risk adolescents	Language performance Social problem solving	Three personal narratives • wanting something different • asked to do something that not supposed to do	Syntactic complexity • MLU Story grammar (Fey et al., 2004)

		Group 1: Typically achieving *n* = 5 Group 2: Emotion Disorder *n = 5* Group 3: Learning disability *n = 5*			• being told to do something that wasn't liked	Landscape of consciousness (Westby & Clauser, 1999) • Emotions • Metacognitive • Connective words Social problem-solving steps (Hazel, 1981)
17.	Noel and Westby (2014)	Youth offenders held in correctional facility English speaking Diagnosis of Emotion Disorder *n* = 3 (male) 17;0 – 19;11	- Intervention efficacy (targeting social problem solving strategies)	Language performance Social problem solving	Four personal narratives: three at baseline, one at mastery of intervention • wanting something different • asked to do something that not supposed to do • being told to do something that wasn't liked (+ additional specific prompts)	Story grammar (Fey et al., 2004) Landscape of consciousness (Westby & Clauser, 1999) • Emotions • Cognitive states • Judgement Social problem-solving steps (Hazel, 1981)
18.	Ravid and Cahana-Amitay (2005)	TD, Hebrew speaking Group 1: *n* = 20; 9-10yo Group 2: *n* = 20; 12-13yo Group 3: *n* = 20; 16-17yo Group 4: *n* = 20; adult graduates	- Use of verbal and adjectival nominals	Language development	One personal narrative • A time when you had a problem with someone (+ one written narrative)	TNU-clauses Number of finite and non-finite lexical verbs Number of verb- and adjective-related nominals Total predicative content

19.	Recchia et al. (2015)	TD, English speaking Group 1: *n* = 34 (20F) 6.05 – 8.14 (*m* = 7.28) Group 2: *n* = 33 (16F) 9.98 – 12.11 (*m* = 11.10) Group 3: *n* = 33 (16F) 15.00 – 17.19 (*m* = 16.12)	- Moral development comparing prosocial and transgressive behaviour	Language expression Psychological functioning	Two personal narratives • A time when you hurt or upset someone • A time when you helped a good friend ('Help' narratives last)	TNU-clauses Narrative elements • Helpful or harmful actions • Conflict and reasons for harm or help • Consequences Self-related insights
20.	Recchia et al. (2020)	TD, English speaking *N* = 275 Group 1: *n* = 91 (46F) 6.3 – 8.5 (*m* = 7.27) Group 2: *n* = 93 (45F) 10.4 – 12.5 (*m* = 11.4) Group 3: *n* = 91 (45F) 15.3 – 18.0 (*m* = 16.47)	- Relationship between expressions of emotion and motivations, behaviours interpretations, and evaluations - Development of emotional, psychological, and social understanding	Language expression Psychological functioning	One personal narrative • A time when a friend did or said something that hurt you • A time when kids wouldn't let you join in • A time when a friend did or said some-thing that made you feel hurt or angry (combined three data sets)	Narrative elements: • Emotion terms • Relationship contexts • Behavioural responses to harm • Motivations • Interpretations / evaluations
21.	Reese et al. (2017)	TD, English speaking Māori *n* = 90 Chinese *n* = 88	- Relationship between narrative identity, personality traits, and well-being	Language expression	One personal narrative • Turning point – an event that has changed your life	Topic (adapted from Thorne et al., 2004)

		European *n* = 90 Group 1: *n* = 80 (39F) 12-14yrs Group 2: *n* = 92 (52F) 15-17yrs Group 3: *n* = 96 (51F) 18-21yrs	- Comparisons between three cultural groups	Psychological functioning Cultural differences	(+ specific follow-up questions)	Causal coherence (adapted from Habermas & de Silviera, 2008) Thematic coherence (Reese et al., 2011) Emotional expressivity • Judgement • Event/emotion valence • Evaluation
22.	Reilly et al. (2013)	English speaking Group 1: Right hemisphere lesion *n* = 15 (6F) Younger *n* = 9 7.1 – 11.9yrs (*m* = 9.8) Older *n* = 6 13.19 – 16.67 (*m* = 14.45) Group 2: Left hemisphere lesion *n* = 20 (11F) Younger *n* = 12 7.92 – 11.44 (*m* = 9.59) Older *n* = 8 12.47 – 16.58 (*m* = 14.30) Group 3: TD *n* = 60 (30F) Younger *n* = 30	- Later language development - Comparisons between groups with perinatal stroke and TD	Language performance Language development	One personal narrative • A time when someone made you mad or sad Prompting for specific narrative elements	Productivity • Number of propositions Morphosyntactic errors Syntactic depth Complex syntax rate Overall story grammar (Labov, 1972) Narrative sophistication (Tolchinsky et al., 2002) • Setting

		7.5 – 11.81 (*m* = 9.52) Older *n* = 30 12.01 – 16.75 (*m* = 14.45)				
23.	Senland and Higgins-D'Alessandro (2013)	English speaking Group 1: High-functioning ASD + Nonverbal learning disorder *n* = 16 (5F) 13-18yo (*m* = 15.56) Group 2: TD *n* = 16 (4F) 12-18yo (*m* = 15.00)	- Development of moral reasoning and empathy	Language expression Psychological functioning	One personal narrative • A difficult time when you had a problem and didn't know what to do Follow-up questions to explore further	Content analysis for: • Empathic concern • Perspective taking • Sociomoral event types
24.	Voswinckel and Stangier (2021)	TD, German speaking Group 1: 2nd generation Turkish immigrants *n* = 30 (15F) 13-18yo (*m* = 16.8) Group 2: German peers *n* = 30 (17F) 13-18yo (*m* = 16.0)	- Intensity and regulation of pride experiences - Comparison between two cultural groups	Language expression Cultural differences	One personal narrative • A time when you felt proud about yourself (+ specific prompts for narrative elements)	Content analysis of pride categories: • Antecedents/triggers • Source of evaluation • Responses

25.	Wallis and Westerveld (2024)	TD, English speaking *n* = 44 (23F) 12;2 – 17;11yo (*m* = 15;2)	- Comparison across four genres	Language performance	Six personal narratives • A happy/exciting time • A worried/confusing time • A problem time • An annoying person • A bully • An important person/event	TNU - C-units MLU-words Moving average - NDW Words per minute
26.	Zaman and Fivush (2011)*	TD, English speaking *n* = 65 Group 1: *n* = 37 (17F) 13-14yo (*m* = 13.57) Group 2: *n* = 28 (17F) 15-16yo (*m* = 15.50)	- Gendered narrative identity - Comparison of intergenerational stories	Language performance Language expression Psychological functioning	Two personal narratives • A really positive event, happy, excited, or proud (+ two stories each about mother and father)	TNW Narrative elaboration (adapted from Fivush et al., 2000) Narrative theme • Affiliation • Achievement Emotion words Cognitive state words
27.	Zaman and Fivush (2013)*	TD, English speaking 13 – 16yo (*m* = 14.41)	- Attachment and intergenerational stories	Psychological functioning	Four personal narratives • Really positive event • Really negative event (+ two stories each about mother and father)	Coherence (Reese et al., 2011) Emotion words / references

Note. TD = typically developing (as defined by the original authors), F = female, TNW = total number of words, TNU = total number of utterances, NDW = number of different words

* Studies 1, 4, 26, and 27 drew on data from the same participant pool

** Studies 16 and 17 drew on data from the same participant pool

Table 2
Descriptive Overview of Language Measures Identified as of Interest

Language Measures	SLR articles[#]	Referred to as*	Scoring
Word-level measures			
Total number of words / content words / main body words / morphemes	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 26	Narrative length Language productivity Macrostructure	Count
Number of different words / moving average-number of different words / type-token ratio / words-used-once ratio / different word roots / lemma-token ratio	7, 8, 11, 12, 25	Lexical diversity	Count Proportion
Number of specific words: - emotion terms, general affect - cognitive / mental state verbs / metacognitive - intent, desire, judgment - connective words	1, 3, 4, 11, 16/17, 20, 26, 27	Lexicon Internal state language Evaluation / evaluative devices Landscape of consciousness	Count Percentage
Evaluation: intensifiers, emphatic markers	7, 11	Evaluative devices	Count
Correct information unit – relevance	8	Macro-structure	Percentage
Number of finite / non-finite verbs, number of verb- & adjective-nominals	18	Lexico-syntactic	Count Percentage
Words per minute Correct information unit per minute	11, 25	Verbal facility Microlinguistic Efficiency	Average (per min.)
Error processes at word level: Morpho-syntactic errors Dysfluency: number of maze words	9, 22 8, 11	Morpho-syntax Microlinguistic Microstructure	Count Percentage

Sentence-level measures

Total number of utterances / C-units / T-units / propositions / clauses	8, 9, 11, 18, 19, 22, 25	Narrative length Language productivity	Count
Mean length of utterance - in words / morphemes / C-unis / T-units	8, 11, 12, 16, 25	Syntactic complexity	Average
Complex syntax - clausal density / syntactic depth / percentage of complex sentences	7, 8, 9, 12, 22	Syntactic complexity	Count Percentage
Grammatical form (e.g. clause forms, functions, position)	7	Syntax	Count Percentage
Narration / Narrative clauses / timeline units	3, 7	Narrative Coherence	Count Percentage
Evaluation: Evaluative units / negative comments, causal statements, hedges, character speech, explicatives, etc.	7, 11	Evaluation	Count

Text-level measures

General narrative theme / topic / category / event type	1, 2, 21	Language expression	Semantic / Category Present / Absent
Narrative themes specific to study / research focus	2, 5, 6, 10, 14, 15, 16/17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26	Multiple constructs	Semantic Present/Absent Rating scales
Event valence	1, 2, 4	Multiple constructs	Semantic Category
Story grammar analysis	9, 16/17, 22	Macrostructure Coherence	Count Rating
High point analysis	9, 15	Narrative structure Macrostructure Coherence	Rank / Level

Elaborated structure / Elaboration	4, 15, 26	Structure	Rank / Level Rating scale
Information / propositional analysis	7	Information	Count
Coherence: Context, thematic, chronology (NaCCS, Reese et al., 2011)	2, 4, 12, 27	Coherence	Rating scale
Coherence: Context, structure, evaluation, integration (Baerger & McAdams, 1999)	5, 13	Coherence	Rating scale
Local / Global coherence (Glosser & Deser, 1990)	8	Macro-structure Coherence	Rating scale
Context / setting / orientation / contextual embeddedness	4, 5, 12, 13, 15, 22	Coherence Narrative sophistication	Count Rating scale
Developmental consequentiality / causal (Habermas & De Silveira, 2008)	2, 15	Coherence	Rating scale
Reflective insight, Connection, Agency	4	Self-reflection	Rating scale
Cohesion: Frequency, adequacy	8	Microstructure	Count Percentage
Correct information unit: efficiency	8	Macrostructure	Percentage Average (per min.)
Intonation units & centres-of-interest	7	Segmentation	Semantic
Structural errors: schema deviations, order deviations, genre shifts	8	Superstructure	Count

Note. # Articles are represented by the numbers assigned in Table 1; * Terms reflect those used by the original authors