A Test of Word-Finding Abilities in Children (Hindi) [TWAC - H]

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There has been a dianostic gap in the assessment of wordfinding disorders in children. Although professionals have long been aware of this expressive language disorders in children (Johnson & Myklebust 1967; Denckla & Rudel, 1974; Wiig & Semel, 1976), until recently there has been no standardised diagnostic measure and assessment. This gap has been particularly evident to professionals responsible for providing diagnostic and remedial services to children with linguistic disorders. As Weigel-Grump & Dennis (1986) state -

"It would be useful to have a clinical test of naming and word-finding.... that compares different forms of lexical access for the same set of words, that measures both accuracy and speed of naming; that permits an analysis of error patterns and that presents statistical age-represents information about normal performance over the school years (1986).

Lack of standardised procedures for assessment prompted the development of the National College of Education Test of Word Finding, which is a nationally standardised diagnostic instrument designed to provide professionals with an opportunity to observe systematically children's word-finding skills in a set of psychometrically sound naming task and which is based on the diagnostic model for the assessment of word finding skills.

Considering the sound statistical properties and diagnostic value of this test of word finding and the lack of any test of word-finding abilities in India, the TWF was the ideal and evident choice as a model for the Test of Word Finding Abilities in Children (Hindi) [TWAC - H] presented here.

The Test of Word Finding Abilities in Children (Hindi) [TWAC - H] was considered using almost identical methodology used in TWF and was administered to 100 normal children all of whom had Hindi as mother tongue. Using the mean and standard deviation scores, the Accuracy Index and Speed Index of each child could be determined and based on this their profiles could also be noted. Percentile ranks for each age group was also calculated which can be used to detect as to what is the performance level of a child with respect to his age group.

Response analyses was done by giving response categories to each error made and by noting down the secondary characteristics of the child gestures and extra verbalisations.

Both qualitative and quantitative analysis led to following interpretations :

1. As age increases the number of correct responses increases. Hence as the age of the child increases his word finding abilities improve, thus showing a developmental trend.

2. As age of the child increases his efficiency with respect to time increases and he performs quicker on a word-finding task.

3. As the age of the child increases his need for a phonetic cue or a semantic cue for a word-finding task decreases.

4. More of circumlocution, locative attributes and compositional attributes are used by the children of younger age groups (5-7 yrs).

5. More of co-ordinates, subordinates and Super-ordinate errors made by the older age group children (8-10 yrs).

6. Secondary characteristics i.e. extraverbalisation and gestures were shown more by children of younger age groups (5-7 yrs).

Thus the presented Test of Word Finding Abilities in Children (Hindi) [TWAC - H] becomes a helpful tool for the speech and language pathologist, learning disabilities professionals and other school personnel as a first step in a comprehensive evaluation of a child's word finding skills. Through careful and correct administration an examiner can obtain much insight into a child's expressive language which can be examined in follow up informal observations. Use of TWAC-H to direct and complement diagnostic procedures in word finding will provide the examiner with helpful guidance in the overall assessment of children's word-finding skills.