A Screening Picture Vocabulary Test in Tamil

S. Buvaneswari

Student, A.I.I.S.H, Mysore

The aim of the present study was to construct a screening picture vocabulary test in Tamil. The main purpose of the test is to identify the children who lack adequate vocabulary development and to screen the vocabulary age of the language disordered children.

Initially a pilot study was conducted on 3-6 years Tamil speaking children at Neyveli to determine the number of words that the children could comprehend. For this purpose a pictorial glossary book (CIIL Publications, Mysore) which consists of picturable words from different semantic domains was used. Totally 200 words were selected and based on the percentage of response a vocabulary list was formulated. From this finally 33 words which were picturable, discriminative and unambiguous were selected.

Thus the test material consists of 33 picture plates with each plate containing 4 black and white line drawings. Among the 4 pictures one is target picture and the other 3 are distractors. These 33 plates are arranged in an order of increasing difficulty.

This test was mainly a comprehension test and the response expected was pointing to the pictures requested for.

The test was standardized on 120 normal school going children with medium of instruction Tamil, at Neyveli. The children were between the age group of 3-6 years. Three groups of 3-4, 4-5 & 5-6 years age range were made and 40 children were tested in each group among which 20 were boys and other 20 were girls.

The responses were recorded and data was subjected to statistical analysis.

Two types of scores were derived :

 1. Mean and Standard deviation were computed.

 2. Raw scores were converted to percentile ranks.

These values were tabulated for each age group respectively. Graphs were also drawn which depicted that vocabulary scores increased as a function of age.

By looking into the normative data one can determine the level of vocabulary development of any child and place him/her in any of the three levels average, below average or above average. It is also possible to compare the performance of one child with the others using this data.

To conclude as only limited number of lexical-semantic tools are available in Tamil language, this test woufd be an useful screening tool for speech and language pathologist to identify children with language impairment specifically those with auditory comprehension deficits, naming deficits and deficits in vocabulary skills.

This test however is not a sole ground for making diagnosis of any language disorders. A Battery of Tests must be used along with this and profile of child's language functions across different areas must be obtained to arrive at a diagnosis.

Tamil Word List in IPA

1. Valaijal - Bangle

2. Palli - Lizard

3. Vengajam - Onion

4. Tsakkaram - Wheel

5. inji - Ginger

6. Driva: ma ai - Vegetable Cutter

7. na u - Crab

8. mi:sai - Moushtache

9. i li - Rice Cookied

10. tu apam - Broom

11. Kokku - Crane

12. ve rilai - Pan leaf

13. sangt - Conch

14. Kombt - Horn

15. tara;su - Balance

16. salangai - Anklets

17. ki ai - Branch

18. to:l - Shoulder

19. sutijal - Hammer

20. na t - To plant

21. ve:li - Fence

22. rambam - Saw

23. metuguvarti - Candle

24. na tfatiram - Star

25. mudalai - Crocodile

26. pa;mba: i - Snake charmer

27. ja; i - Jar

28. malai - Mountain

29. ja:ke - Blouse

30. Koma: i - Bafoon

31. vatijidu - Over flowing

32. puruvam - Eye brow

33. irngt - feather