

## T.A.T.-A Test of Articulation in Tamil •

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This study was carried out to design an articulation test in Tamil for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes, since no such standardized tests are available.

Ten vowels and twenty-five consonants of Tamil were selected for the present study. Two hundred and fourteen words with these sounds in various word positions, which were picturable and unambiguous, were selected and a word list was prepared. This list was administered to Tamil speakers in the age range of 15-30 years for familiarity ratings. 5 point rating scale was provided. The words which were rated as highly familiar by 75% of subjects were considered for the test. These words were picturized on cards of 4" X 3" size to make the test.

For obtaining the normative data this test was administered to 180 normal school children in the age range of 3-6 years selected from different schools of Coimbatore City. They were divided into six age groups of six months interval each. The cards were visually presented to elicit oral output. These responses were recorded manually. Audio recording was also done.

• Master's Dissertation, University of Mysore, 1986.

The data for each age group was statistically analysed. Mean and cut-off scores were obtained. ANOVA was used to obtain the variance.

It was found that performance varied from one age group to another. As the age increased the scores also increased.

The difference between males and females in terms of articulatory skills were found to be significantly different. Females exhibited superior articulatory skills when compared to males, except for a slight decrease between V and VI groups.

It was observed that all the vowels were acquired by the age of 3 years. Most of the consonants were acquired by the age of 3 years except fricative [ s ] laterals l and [ l ], flap [ r ] and trill [ r ].

[ s ] was acquired at 6 years [ l ], [ l ], [ r ] were not completely acquired by 6 years even though they were found in the younger groups. [ r ] was acquired by 4½ years. Most of the misarticulated sounds were either substituted or omitted. No errors of distortion were observed.

When compared with the Western studies it was noticed that Eastern population acquired speech sounds earlier.

The early articulatory acquisition in Tamil speaking children may be attributed to cultural differences.

The cut-off scores for all the age groups are provided.

In general the pictures used in this test were found to be of use. None of them were ambiguous which indicates that the test can be used as a diagnostic articulation test. However before using it as a diagnostic test further standardization of the same is necessary. This warrants further study in terms of the following :

- (1) Standardization of the test on large population.
- (2) Administration of the test to Tamil speaking children with different

dialects to find out the dialectal differences.

- (3) Collecting data for the test below age of 3 years.
- (4) Studying further variables in acquisition, of articulation like socio-economic status, birth rank, intelligence, laterality, auditory discrimination, etc.
- (5) Administering the test of articulation to the clinical population, to test the validity of the test.

It can be concluded that the present articulation test in Tamil would be found helpful in finding out the articulation problems, planning and choosing therapy techniques and in estimating prognosis.