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ELIAS British Picture Vocabulary Scale II (BPVS II)

Information & Guidelines

A. General Information

- Standardized test instrument to determine the receptive vocabulary of 3-15-year old L1 speakers of English (2571 probands) and of 3-8-year old children learning English in Great Britain as an additional language (EAL, standardized with 410 probands)
- Test is based on the US-American Peabody Picture Test (PPVT, Dunn, Dunn & Williams 1997) and accounts for a number of British cultural particularities.
- Entries were checked in order to cover a wide range of language levels as well as word classes and are allocated to different semantic and/or grammatical groupings (actions, adjectives, animals and parts, books, body parts of humans, buildings and all other structures, emotions and social expression, food, geographic scenery including space, household items etc., cf. Dunn et al. 1997: 25)
- The test consists of 14 sets and each set contains 12 vocabulary entries
- Value of test instrument:
 - Measuring the receptive vocabulary can be seen as an advantage as L2 production lags behind receptive skills; additionally in the kindergarden context many children are unwilling to produce L2 words or utterances in an experimental situation.
 - Test has not been designed to test children's knowledge in a specific kindergarden scenario but a representative vocabulary that is typical of a child's environment and his/her needs between the ages of three and six years.
 - The standardized test instrument reveals information about a universal development of children's receptive lexicon that is comparable to children's data in other kindergarden programmes.

B. Administering the BPVS II

How to start:

- The individual sets are allocated to age levels (the first set has been conceived for two-and-a-half-year old children, the second one for four-to five-year olds, etc.). When administering the BPVS II for L1 speakers, the first set is selected according to the age of the tested children; with L2 speakers all children start with the first set as it is not possible to predict the children's level of receptive vocabulary based on their age.
- For L2 speakers, the first set is always the basal set. Testing is discontinued if 8 or more errors are made in one set (this set then is the ceiling set). In other words, children have to score at least 5 correct answers in the sets in order to be tested on higher sets.
- Even if a child answers the first 8 questions incorrectly, all 12 set items need to be asked before ending the test; thus once a set of 12 questions is begun, it should be completed. (On average, ESL preschool children do not exceed the third set.)

Interpreting the results:

- The sum of all correct answers form the raw score, which is later transferred to a standardized score for a particular age level and an age equivalent with the help of



conversion tables (L1 standardized score: Testbook Manual p. 40-47; L1 age equivalent: Testbook Manual p.48-49; EAL standardized score: Technical Supplement p. 5-6; EAL age equivalent: Technical Supplement p. 7)

- **Standardized Score:** reveals the grade of deviation from an average score which is attained by L1 English children of the same age.
- **Age equivalent:** determines a score which can be expected for a certain age level; thus, we can find out whether a score correlates with a certain age group or whether it is ahead of it or lagging behind.

What to consider during testing:

- Two examiners test each child individually in a quiet room (make sure that interruptions from outside are avoided)
- While the one conductor is in direct contact with the child and asks for the vocabulary items, the other one takes down the child's answers on the Performance Record Sheet (the child should not see the stimulus words or observe the scoring of the test)
- Both the examiner and the person who takes down the answers must be able to see the set card and the child's pointing response.
- The examiner should know the correct pronunciation of the words to be administered; the educator's local pronunciation of the words should be given along with the standard form if this is different from the educator's pronunciation in the kindergarten.
- Best test results are usually obtained when both the examiner and the subject are in a relaxed frame of mind therefore the examiner should try to make the atmosphere as warm and comfortable as possible.
- Video taping is not essential as there is no production tested, but can be helpful for later reconsideration.
- Testing takes about 8 minutes per child
- Examiner uses instructions such as "Show me ..." "Can you find ..." or "Point to ..." (+ vocabulary entry). Nouns are not preceded by an article (a, an, the) as it would give a clue as to which word class is required, neither does the examiner change word endings or embeds the items in sentences since this may provide extra information apart from the item that is tested.
- Praise should be given equally for correct and incorrect responses so as to motivate subjects to do their best. Comments such as "Good! You are doing well" have been found effective, but be careful not to overdo praise, otherwise the child may feel deceived by unearned compliments.
- Even when an incorrect response is made, encouragement should always be given.
- Subjects may take any reasonable amount of time to make their selection for each test item. However, after approximately half a minute, they should be encouraged to make a choice. Children should understand that there is no penalty for guessing on this test and they should be encouraged to make an attempt at every question.
- When a child spontaneously changes his/her choice, record and score the final response.