



SIGN LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT: TOWARDS EQUITY IN LANGUAGE TESTING FOR BILINGUAL DEAF STUDENTS

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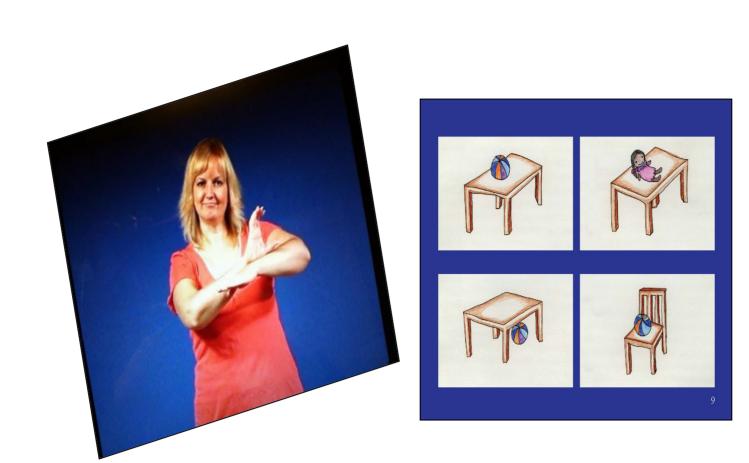
Background

ASL Receptive Skills Test

ASL Expressive Skills Test

ASL Phonological Awareness Test

- It is important to develop parallel testing instruments for multilingual children in order to measure their development in all their languages.
- Multilingual issues are also of concern for deaf children, as increasing heterogeneity within Deaf communities has been reported in many countries (Christenson & Delgado, 1993).
- There is an increasing demand for formal signed language assessment tools as these are frequently missing in multilingual and multimodal educational programs for deaf students.
- Here we describe three
 American Sign Language
 (ASL) tests. Each test
 has been developed to
 measure young
 children's development
 of various components
 of ASL (i.e., receptive
 grammar, phonological
 awareness, and narrative
 skills).
- Standardized versions of these three tests will help educators support the language and literacy development of multilingual deaf students.







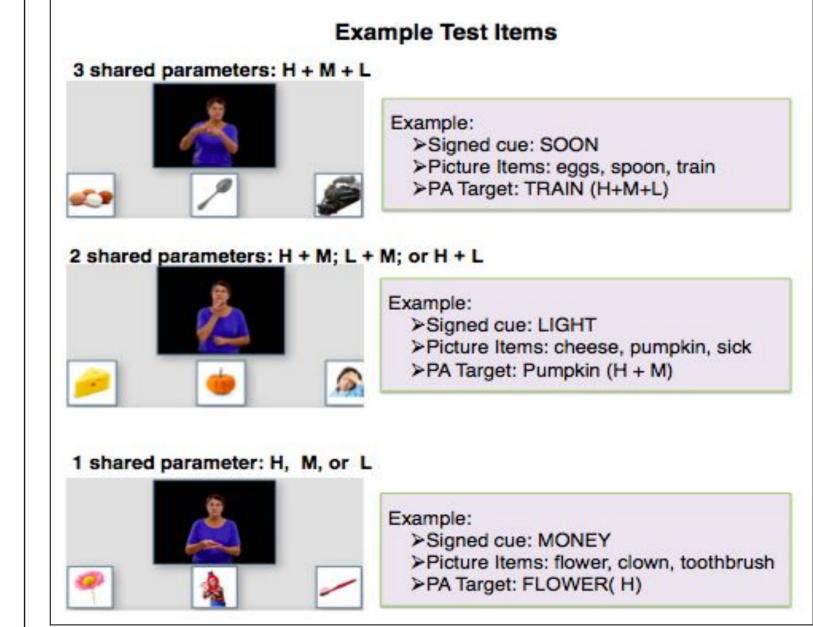
- The ASL Receptive Skills
 Test assesses a child's
 comprehension of ASL
 grammar in phrases and
 sentences. The test is an
 ASL adaption of the
 British Sign Language
 Receptive Skills Test
 (Herman, Holmes, &
 Woll,1999) and is intended
 for use with children ages
 4 to 13.
- The test includes a vocabulary check of 20 words, three practice items, and a total of 42 test items.
- Eight grammatical categories are assessed: Negation Number/distribution Noun/verb distinction Spatial verbs (location and movement) Size/shape specifiers Handling classifiers Role shift Conditionals
- The ASL-RST has been standardized and is available at:
 northernsignsresearch.co

• The ASL Expressive Skills Test (ASL-EST) assesses story re-telling skills. The process of eliciting narratives (story re-telling) is an effective approach for measuring children's expressive language development (Cravens, 2013). This research also builds on a test developed for British Sign Language to assess children's narrative skills (Herman, et. al., 2004).



- The ASL-EST involves the child watching a short, language-free (no signing or talking) video and then re-telling the story in ASL.
- The child's story is assessed for narrative content and structure, as well as ASL grammatical structures (spatial verbs, agreement verbs, aspect, manner, role shift).
- Normative testing on 215 children between the ages of 4 13 years is completed and percentile ranking is used to compare raw scores to developmental age groups. Examiners must be trained to use the test.

- The ASL Phonological Awareness Test (ASL-PAT) measures a child's awareness of the phonological building blocks of ASL (i.e., the sub-lexical parameters of handshape [H], location [L], and movement [M]) and the ability to identify phonological similarity relations in signs sharing three, two or one parameters.
- The ASL-PAT is designed for use with children ages 4 to 14.
- The ASL-PAT is a
 web-based assessment
 application. The testing
 procedure consists of five
 phases: a) log-in and brief
 background demographic
 questionnaire, b)
 vocab-ulary check, c)
 instruction video in ASL, d)
 four practice trials, and e)
 test block of 24 items. The
 testing takes about 15
 minutes for each
 test-taker.



- Normative testing with over 175 children has been completed.
- Psychometric analyses are underway.