

THE POLYGLOT READING TEST (Experimental Form)

RUDOLPH F. WAGNER, Ph.D.

Richmond Public Schools

Richmond, Virginia, USA

GENERAL PURPOSE OF THE TEST

The POLYGLOT ORAL READING TEST (Experimental Form) was designed primarily as an oral word recognition test for grades Kindergarten through third grade. It is intended as an assessment of reading skills by the classroom teacher and professional worker in educational settings who wish to get a quick estimate of a child's level of oral reading ability. The test is basically one of measuring *skill* and does not directly measure the child's knowledge of word meaning, reading fluency, comprehension, or any other aspect of the reading process. However, a positive relationship between word recognition and knowledge of word meanings is assumed to exist. Valuable clues can of course also be obtained by the experienced examiner with regard to word attack, phonetic sensitivity, reversals and articulatory facility.

The words on the test were chosen on the basis of their *conceptual* rather than numerical frequency and were randomly selected from the Word Frequency Dictionary by Eaton (1940). Conceptual comparability for the words was chosen because of the multi-lingual aspect of the POLYGLOT. Thus a more specific purpose of the POLYGLOT is to make the instrument available for comparable cross-cultural research in reading skills. For this purpose, the test lists conceptually equivalent words in four languages: English, French, German and Spanish. It is hoped that cross-cultural studies with the POLYGLOT TEST will add to a better understanding of the reading process (Wagner, 1969), specific reading disabilities and teaching methodologies by being able to make comparisons from one language to another using an equivalent instrument of reading assessment.

The POLYGLOT may also be useful to teachers of foreign languages, both here and abroad, who wish to gain a quick estimate of their students' oral reading facility in a given foreign language, provided certain allowances are made for pronunciation inaccuracies due to accents deviant from a native norm. It should also be of assistance in studies of young bilingual children in the assessment of their native and secondary tongue.

STANDARDIZATION

The POLYGLOT is in an experimental stage at this time and for this reason only limited data are available. Attempts at standardiza-

tion have thus far been carried out only with the English language as a baseline. Preliminary studies show encouraging results:

- Validity:** Concurrent validity was tentatively established with the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), by Jastak and Bijou (1946). The initial samples contained an overall N of 106 children in grades K, 1 and 2, and yielded a Pearson Product-Moment correlation coefficient of $r = .968$. In a sample of 53 first graders (two whole classes in a Southeastern Metropolitan area), the correlation was $r = 0.990$.
- Reliability:** A test-retest study with 43 male and female students placed in a Learning Disabilities Center was carried out to obtain an estimate of the POLYGLOT's reliability. Statistical analysis yielded an r of .855. Further reliability studies with larger samples are in progress.
- Normative Data:** Norms of the POLYGLOT are assumed in terms of one word read correctly for one month in school (September through June = 10 months). A partial check of this assumption underlying the construction of the POLYGLOT was made with a sample of 48 male and female Negro students in the first grade. The students were tested in May, the ninth month in the first grade (1.9). Results showed a Mean score of 1.81 (SD 0.73), lending tentative support to the assumptions about norms.

Eventually, it is hoped that norms can be made available for all four languages of the POLYGLOT, Grades K through 3. Cooperation from interested educators and researchers in the United States and abroad is invited. Additional and extended test material is being prepared to deepen the precision of reading evaluation and make the POLYGLOT a predictive rather than mere assessment instrument, e.g., word reversal lists, reading for comprehension, and a check list for dyslexia.

ADMINISTRATION AND SCORING

Administration of the POLYGLOT is simple and can easily be carried out by educators and professional workers after a short period of orientation and training. It does ordinarily take no longer than a few minutes to give the test. If foreign-born students are tested, certain allowances for consistent, accented pronunciation will have to be made since a native pronunciation is an ideal rather than the rule.

After briefly establishing good rapport with the student, the

Examiner proceeds with the administration of the test by asking him to "READ JUST A FEW WORDS" and to "READ THEM OUT LOUD." Testing is always begun at K (Kindergarten) level and is discontinued after the child has failed to read ten CONSECUTIVE WORDS correctly. The student should be given sufficient time to attack the words, but it is proper to say "GO ON TO THE NEXT WORD" if there is no indication that he will come up with the correct word after approximately one minute. A TAPE RECORDING giving native pronunciations for all four languages is available from the author to assist in training and practice sessions for prospective examiners.

Recording of responses is done on the test itself. The student is given the test sheet, and the identical sheet is held by the Examiner. Any word that the student reads incorrectly is struck out, leaving the correctly read words blank. Above the failed words the Examiner should write the actual pronunciation given by the student, preferably in phonetic transcription, for further analysis of errors at a later date. Analysis of errors may be helpful if remedial programming is indicated. In order for the student not to lose the line on the test, a plain sheet of bond paper may be placed immediately under the appropriate line being read.

Example:

small	about	✓	live
small	above	book	love
kein	✓	Buch	✓
klein	oben	Buch	Liebe

Scoring the test is done by counting the number of words read CORRECTLY up to the break-off point (ten consecutive failures). ONE POINT is given for each correctly read word, or one point for each correctly identified letter on the K level, respectively. A decimal point is then placed in front of the last digit, giving the student's equivalent grade level in reading. For example, if the student read 26 words correctly, his reading grade is 2.6. If only 6 letters were identified correctly, his score is 0.6. The final score is then entered in the space provided for at the top right side of the test sheet, under the appropriate language. If the child read all letters and words correctly, this is recorded at 4.0+. Observations are also recorded on the test sheet under OBSERVATIONS at the bottom of the test. These may be of diagnostic value in later evaluations.

INTERPRETATION

Interpretation of test results expressed in a Grade Equivalency Score for oral word recognition should be made with the necessary caution and under consideration of all circumstances that may affect

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the reading ability of a given child, e.g., intelligence level, cultural environment, emotional reactions, physical handicaps, etc. It should be borne in mind that a score such as obtained on the POLYGLOT would be considered the child's INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL, while his COMPREHENSION LEVEL where he can read for enjoyment and his POTENTIAL LEVEL where he *should be* reading under optimal conditions would be somewhat higher than the POLYGLOT score.

POLYGLOT ORAL READING TEST
(Experimental Form)

Rudolph F. Wagner, Ph.D.

READING GRADE:

English _____
French _____
German _____
Spanish _____

Level	.1	.2	.3	.4	.5	.6	.7	.8	.9	1.0
E	O	T	S	C	F	L	K	m	h	GOOD
F	O	T	S	C	F	L	K	m	h	BON
K	O	T	S	C	F	L	K	m	h	GUT
G	O	T	S	C	F	L	K	m	h	BUENO
S	O	T	S	C	F	L	K	m	h	
E	milk	cow	nan	school	red	tall	small	mother	woman	book
F	lait	vache	horns	école	rouge	grand	petit	mère	femme	livre
G	Milch	Kuh	Mann	Schule	rot	gross	klein	Mutter	Frau	Buch
S	leche	vaca	hombre	escuela	rojo	grande	chico	madre	mujer	libro
E	three	room	young	tree	water	above	drink	green	child	love
F	trois	place	jeune	arbre	eau	dessus	boire	vert	enfant	amour
G	drei	Raum	jung	Baum	Wasser	oben	trinken	grün	Kind	Liebe
S	tres	lugar	joven	árbol	agua	arriba	beber	verde	niño	amor
E	ocean	cause	stream	write	idea	strong	exact	price	throw	tongue
F	océan	cause	courant	écrire	idée	fort	précis	prix	jeter	langue
G	Ozean	Grund	Strom	schreiben	Idee	stark	genau	Preis	werfen	Sprache
S	océano	causa	corriente	escribir	idea	fuerte	preciso	precio	arrojar	lengua

Name of Student: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____ Sex: _____

Estimated Intelligence Level: Below Average / Average / Above Average

Lateral Dominance: Hand left/right; Eye left/right; Foot left/right

Observations:

REFERENCES

1. Eaton, H. D. *Word Frequency Dictionary*. 1940, New York: Dover Publications.
2. Jastak, J. and Bijou, S. *The Wide Range Achievement Test*. 1946, Wilmington, Delaware: Guidance Associates.
3. Wagner, R. F. Blueprints for Better Reading: An Inquiry into the Nature of the Reading Process. 1969. *Revista Interamericana de Psicología*, 2(4), 245-258.

ABSTRACT

The POLYGLOT ORAL READING TEST was designed to test a student's oral word recognition, Grades K through 3, and uses words which are conceptually equivalent in four languages: English, French, German and Spanish. The reading score obtained is a Grade Equivalency Score. Potentially, the test can be useful in research where an assessment of reading skills is needed for cross-cultural comparisons which in turn, might give insight into the reading process, reading

disabilities and teaching methodologies as practiced in various countries.

RESUMEN

El Test Poliglota de Lectura Oral fué diseñado para examinar a niños de kindergarden al tercer año en su capacidad para reconocer palabras en forma oral. Utilizando palabras que son equivalentes en cuatro idiomas: Inglés, Francés, Alemán y Español. La calificación obtenida equivale al grado escolar. Potencialmente, esta prueba puede ser de utilidad en investigación en donde se requiere la evaluación de la habilidad de lectura para comparaciones transculturales las que en cambio pudiera proporcionar información sobre el proceso de lectura, deficiencias en la lectura y metodología para enseñarla tal como se realiza en varios países.

RESUMO

O *polyglot oral reading test* foi criado para avaliar o reconhecimento oral de palavras por parte de crianças frequentando escola primária (jardim de infância, primeiro, segundo e terceiro ano), utilizando-se palavras que representam conceitos equivalentes em quatro línguas: inglês, francês, alemão e espanhol. O escore obtido é definido em termos do nível escolar do sujeito. O teste é de possível valor em pesquisas requerendo uma avaliação da habilidade de leitura para comparações inter-culturais; estas avaliações possivelmente esclareceriam o processo de leitura propriamente dito, bem como problemas relacionados, e as metodologias de ensino usadas em vários países.