

Expert and Child Familiarity Evidence for Mandarin Oral-DDK Word Stimuli

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Abstract

Background: Oral diadochokinesis (oral-DDK) is commonly used in speech-language assessment, but Mandarin oral-DDK tasks require careful stimulus design. Real-word stimuli may differ in semantic transparency, lexical familiarity, syllable structure, and articulatory configuration. These differences may affect performance, especially in young children, and may reduce the interpretability of oral-DDK tasks if stimuli are selected only on the basis of phonetic form.

Aim: This presentation describes the development and preliminary validation of Mandarin real-word stimuli for pediatric oral-DDK assessment, with a focus on expert consultation and child familiarity evidence.

Methods: Candidate Mandarin real-word stimuli were selected according to four criteria: semantic understandability, word-use frequency, syllable-structure similarity, and articulatory-place similarity. Expert consultation was conducted with professionals from linguistics, speech-language rehabilitation, and special education. Expert authority, judgment basis, familiarity, and coordination indices were summarized. Child familiarity was examined using a graded response procedure, including direct naming, naming after explanation, pointing after explanation, and failure to identify.

Results: Candidate stimuli differed in expert-rated suitability and child familiarity. Expert consultation identified stimuli with stronger semantic and phonological suitability, while child familiarity testing showed that some words were easier for young children to recognize and repeat than others.

Conclusion: Mandarin oral-DDK real-word stimuli should be selected through both expert-based and child-based evidence. Combining Delphi consultation with child familiarity testing may support more interpretable and developmentally appropriate Mandarin speech-language assessment materials.

Keywords: oral diadochokinesis; Mandarin; speech-language assessment; word stimuli; child familiarity; Delphi