THE DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF A DIAGNOSTIC EFL VOCABULARY TEST FOR 6TH GRADERS

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This presentation discusses findings of a validation study aiming to test the breadth and depth of English vocabulary of Hungarian grade 6 students. The test battery comprised various types of tasks and they were administered in paper-and-pencil format.

The test battery integrates four modalities (passive and active recognition, passive and active recall) of vocabulary knowledge, as stipulated by *Laufer*, *Elder*, Hill and *Congdon* (2004). The validation study aimed to answer the following research questions: (1) How do the items function in the test battery? (2) How do results on the different tests correlate with one another? (3) How difficult are the seven tests?

When creating the test, I took into consideration validated vocabulary tests of the past 30 years (*Laufer* & *Nation*, 2005; *Meara*, 1989; *Nation*, 1990; *Paribakht* & *Wechse*, 1999). I chose words up to the 2,000 band of frequency. The selection of the words was determined on the basis of the frequency lists of the British National Corpus (*Kilgarriff*, 1997) and a framework for testing young learners of English (*Nikolov*, 2011).

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The battery included seven tasks with ten items each (70 items). Each task contained 9 items plus a sample item and a distractor. In task 1 and 2 students had to match spoken words with pictures and definitions, respectively. In task 3, the meaning of words had to be recognized based on pictures. In tasks 4 and 5 written words had to be matched with pictures and definitions, respectively. In task 6 the meanings of words had to be written next to pictures. Task 7 was a depth of vocabulary task.

A total of 103 6th graders participated in the test in November 2013 in South-Eastern Hungary. The test proved to be fairly reliable (Cronbach's alpha=.82). Five of the items failed to discriminate and had to be substituted by new items. The strongest correlation was found between task 1 and task 4. There was also a strong correlation between task 1 and task 2 (r=.64, p<.05). No significant difference was found between students' word recognition whether they heard or read the word (t=2.02, p>.05). However, there was a significant difference between the tests tapping into receptive and productive knowledge (t=3.42, p<.05). Task 3 proved to be the easiest among all the tasks (mean=84%), whereas task 7 was the most difficult (mean=29%). As for word classes, nouns proved to be easier than any other word type (t=2.84, p<.05)

Following the analysis of the results, the online version of the test battery has been completed on the eDia (*Molnár*, 2014) platform for the purpose of online large-sample testing. A decision has been made to remove task 7 from the test. The instrument is the first online FLV test for YLs that assesses the knowledge of words in all four modalities.