

Language Development

I. Background Information

Measure/ Source:

- **Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – Third Edition (PPVT-III)**
- Publisher: American Guidance Service, Inc.

Purpose of Measure:

As used in the Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES): This is a measure of the breadth of the child’s receptive vocabulary in Standard English.

Population Measure Developed With:

- 2479 children in the FACES sample between the ages of 3 and 5.
- The FACES sample was randomly drawn from a stratified probability sample of 43 Head Start programs selected to represent the universe of Head Start programs in the 50 states, excluding migrant programs and American Indian programs.

	African American		White		Hispanic		Other		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	343	13.8	471	19.0	363	14.6	65	2.6	1242	50.1
Female	383	15.4	415	16.7	371	14.9	68	2.7	1237	49.9
Total	726	29.3	886	35.7	734	29.6	133	5.4	2479	100

Key Constructs of Measure:

Receptive vocabulary. A child with receptive vocabulary skills can recognize the meaning of a word, but not necessarily use it correctly in a spoken or written expression.

In this task, the child is presented with a series of spoken words of increasing difficulty. The child is asked to select one of four pictures that best shows the meaning of each word. The child’s score is based on the number of words whose meanings are correctly identified. Raw scores are converted to standard scores. If a child has an average vocabulary for his or her age, he or she would have a standard score of 100.

Norming of Measure (Criterion or Norm): Norm

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II. Administration of Measure

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – Third Edition (PPVT-III) (Con't.)

Who is the Respondent to the Measure?:

It is suitable for a wide range of ages from 2 1/2 through adulthood.

Who Administers Measure/ Training Required?:

Trained assessors. Training is required for the standardized administrative procedures of the PPVT-III.

Setting (e.g. 1 on1, group level, etc): 1 on 1

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III. Functioning of Measure

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test – Third Edition (PPVT-III) (Con't.)

Reliability:

Reports from “The Technical Reference Guide to the PPVT-III” (Williams & Jang, 1997):

Internal Consistency (Cronbach’s Alpha)

- Range from .92 to .98, with a median of .95

Test-Retest

- Range from .91 to .94.

Alternate Forms (Dunn & Dunn, 1997)

- Range from .88 to .96, with a median of .94

Reliability with FACES data

Internal Consistency (Cronbach’s Alpha)

- .97 (Spanish version: .92)

Test-Retest (6-9 month interim period)

- .82 (Spanish version: .53)

Validity: For first cohort of FACES study (1997-1999), we conducted validity analyses for entire FACES battery, of which the PPVT-III was a component. Two outcome variables were used in these analyses: ECLS-K Reading Scale and ECLS-K General Knowledge Scale.

1.) Predictive Validity:

- Correlation between PPVT-III scores at end of Head Start year (spring 1998) and ECLS-K Reading scale scores at end of kindergarten year (spring 1999): $r = .42$
- Correlation between PPVT-III scores at end of Head Start year (spring 1998) and ECLS-K General Knowledge scale scores at end of kindergarten year (spring 1999): $r = .79$

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- In multivariate regression analyses with the scale scores from entire FACES battery at the end of Head Start year predicting ECLS-K General Knowledge scores at end of kindergarten year, PPVT-III was the best predictor in the model (beta = .62)

2.) Concurrent Validity:

- Correlation between PPVT-III scores and ECLS-K Reading scale scores at end of kindergarten year (spring 1999): $r = .54$
- Correlation between PPVT-III scores and ECLS-K General Knowledge scale scores at end of kindergarten year (spring 1999): $r = .77$

Sensitivity to Environmental Variation:

- Head Start children showed significant gains against national norms over the course of the program year. Average standard score gain was 4.3, effect size = .29.
- PPVT-III scores have been found to be associated with child disability status, language minority status, parental education level, minority racial or ethnic status, and monthly family income (Zill, Resnick, McKey, Clark, Connell, Swartz, O'Brien, & D'Elio, 1998).

Concerns, Comments & Recommendations:

- In FACES, the PPVT-III is part of a battery of tests used to assess school readiness in preschool children from low income families.
- Short, objective test with good validity and reliability.
- A Spanish version is available (Test de Vocabulario en Imagenes Peabody (TVIP)) for assessment of Spanish vocabulary, but the scores are not comparable to the PPVT-III scores.
- An important advantage in using the PPVT-III is that the administration is relatively easy and well standardized.
- Test does not discriminate against children who are shy about talking to an adult assessor.