

AN EVALUATION OF THE SINGAPORE COLLOQUIAL ENGLISH ACTION PICTURE TEST FOR USE IN MALAYSIA

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Owing to the lack of appropriate, non-bias formal language tests in English in Malaysia, this study aims to evaluate the Singapore Colloquial Action Picture Test (SCEAPT), which is a cultural and linguistic adaptation of the Renfrew Action Picture Test (RAPT), for use in Malaysia. This study focused on 43 normal six-year-old Chinese children in the capitol city of Sarawak, Malaysia. All subjects use mesolectal English as their second language. Both RAPT and SCEAPT were performed on the subjects alternately. T-test results indicate that the children scored significantly higher marks in SCEAPT consistently compared to RAPT. Girls scored better than the boys in both tests, but were not statistically significant. Test-retest and inter-tester reliability were high, suggesting freedom from tester bias. However, internal reliability was low. Overall this study proves that SCEAPT is a better and more appropriate language test compared to RAPT as it is sensitive to the Malaysian culture and linguistic variations of Malaysian English, which is similar to Singapore Colloquial English (SCE). The scoring system is based on the features of SCE as compared to the standard English language in RAPT. The normative data of SCEAPT is more representative to the achievement of the subjects. The format of SCEAPT is found to be better. More prompts and trial items elicited better language samples from the subjects. Thus, SCEAPT provides a more accurate picture of the children's language skills and is less biased towards Malaysian Chinese children.

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