

## **MALAYSIAN PRE-SCHOOL LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT TEST (MPLAT): RELIABILITY & VALIDITY**

**Siow Yee Kuan**

The present study investigated the reliability and validity for the developing Malaysian Pre-school Language Assessment Test (MPLAT). The MPLAT is planned to be a standardized language test in Malaysia. It is designed based on the beliefs, life perspectives, culture and language of the Malay preschoolers' population. Test-retest and inter-judge reliability were carried out. The type of validity investigated was content validity. In addition, this study also profiled the language development of Malay preschoolers in Klang Valley based on the subjects' performance in MPLAT. The sample consisted of 42 Malay preschoolers aged 4;0 to 6;11. They were divided into six age groups which were 4;0-4;5, 4;6-4;11, 5;0-5;11, 6;0-6;5 and 6;6-6;11. Each group comprised seven subjects. The MPLAT was conducted on every subject. Six subjects, one from each age group, were randomly selected to be retested by the same judge in two weeks time in order to determine test-retest reliability. Another six subjects, one from each group, were randomly selected to be retested by a different judge in order to determine inter-judge reliability. In addition, content validity of MPLAT was determined by two speech language-pathologists and one linguist. The findings using Spearman Correlations revealed high correlations in both test-retest and inter-judge reliability ( $r_s \geq 0.60$  in all sub-tests). Subjective ratings by the three mentioned professionals suggested that the content in all sub-tests tallied with their respective objectives. They also rated the content as suitable for Malay preschoolers but modifications were needed to improve the quality of the test. The analysis of the subjects' performance using Pearson correlations showed that scores increased with age. A developmental pattern was noted in children aged 4;0-6;11 in terms of receptive and expressive language, lexical semantics, syntax and literacy. Findings of this study demonstrated positive indications to the suitability of MPLAT as a language assessment tool for Malay preschoolers. These findings lay a strong foundation to subsequent researches on the psychometric properties of the test.

Siow, Y.K. 2008. *Malaysian Preschool Language Assessment Test (MPLAT): Reliability and Validity*. Bachelor of Speech Science thesis. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.