

## **The Consonant Acquisition of Malaysian English Speaking Children**

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### **Abstract**

This research aims to provide valid and reliable normative data for the phonological development of Malaysian English speaking Chinese children between the ages of 3 and 7 years. This study provides a description of the children's phonological system in Malaysian English in terms of i) age of phonemic acquisition of consonants according to articulatory features and syllable positions (initial and final) and ii) percentage of consonants correct (PCC) by taking careful account of local dialectal features of Malaysian English. This study also compares the significant differences between females and males in these aspects. 264 typically developing Malaysian English speaking Chinese children between the ages of 3 and 7 years were recruited to participate in this cross-sectional study. A list of 195 words which sampled 24 consonants in various word positions was illustrated and presented colourfully in composite pictures to elicit a large and well-controlled single word speech sample. All the speech data gained were transcribed phonetically and analyzed quantitatively and statistically. The present study will provide useful and locally appropriate normative developmental data on consonant acquisition for Malaysian English speaking Chinese children. Speech-language pathologists in Malaysia will be able to use them as guidelines in assessing and treating clients with articulation and phonological disorders. In addition to that, this normative developmental data is a prerequisite to the eventual establishment of a phonological assessment tool specifically designed for Malaysian English.

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