

Panel name: Internationalization of the Intelligibility in Context Scale

Presentation: Translation and community-based research using the Intelligibility in Context Scale in South Africa

*Background:* In South Africa, there are eleven official languages yet there are few assessment materials available in languages other than English. Cross-cultural adaptation of a subjective parent rating scale such as the Intelligibility in Context Scale (ICS) may help speech-language therapists (SLTs) working with children with speech sound disorders in this context by providing a screening tool that could be used with speakers of any of the official languages.

*Aims and objectives:* In this presentation we will describe the cross-cultural adaptation of the ICS into all South Africa's official languages in addition to English. Objectives of the study were to describe: (1) translation of the ICS into the ten official languages of South Africa (other than English); (2) the role of community feedback in this process, and (3) the perceptions of SLTs about its applicability to the South African context.

*Methods:* Twenty-five participants translated the ICS into ten official languages using forward and back translation. Community checking then took place to ensure that conceptual equivalence and cultural relevance had been achieved. Next a survey of 23 SLTs practicing in South Africa, and semi-structured interviews with five SLTs working in Cape Town, took place.

*Results:* There were some discrepancies regarding conceptual and linguistic equivalence across South Africa's official languages. Concepts that were challenging to translate from English into many of the Bantu languages included those relating to immediate/extended family, acquaintances, strangers and hearing/understanding. Linguistic challenges in translation related to dialectal differences and the use of pronouns. The SLTs in the sample found the ICS easy to use and saw it as a useful component of assessment especially when working with families who do not share a language with the SLT.

*Discussion:* For SLTs working in South Africa, the ICS is now available in all official languages of the country. These versions of the ICS could be used to evaluate a child's intelligibility at the initial meeting with the family. There are few resources of this nature available in South Africa, and this preliminary study suggests that SLTs may find it a valuable tool. The tool is likely to require further refinement, and will be enhanced by the development of other assessments to evaluate South African children's speech and language in greater depth. Overall the study contributes to the development agenda of SLTs working in South Africa to improve access and quality of services offered to all the families they serve.

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