

An Adaptation of Early Reading Skills (ERS) in Malayalam (ERS-M)

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PROJECT PROPOSAL

Part -A

1.0 Title of the Project : **An Adaptation of Early Reading Skills (ERS) in Malayalam (ERS-M)**

Area of Research : : Interdisciplinary

- a) Speech, Language, Hearing
- b) Clinical Psychology
- c) Special Education
- d) ENT
- e) Electronics
- f) Interdisciplinary
- g) Survey
- h) Socio-Economic
- i) Others

1.1 Principal Investigator : **Dr. Brajesh Priyadarshi**

1.2 Principal Co- Investigator(s) : **Ms. Gayathri Krishnan**

1.4 Collaborating Institution : **Nil**

1.5 Total Grants Required (in figures and in words) : **Rs. 4,36,000 (Four lakhs thirty six thousand only).**

1.6 Duration of the Project : **One Year**

2.0 Project Summary (Max. 300 words) : Early Reading Skill (ERS) test proposed by Rae and Potter (1973) in the book titled 'Informal Reading Diagnosis: A Practical Guide for the Classroom Teacher'; second edition published in the year 1981, is a test devised to assess the developmental progression of English reading skill in school going children. The test materials are simple and provide adequate information to recognize any obvious reading deficits in children. This test consists of a wide variety of reading items ranging from early reading skills to the complex reading abilities. The

test begins with simple alphabet identification and recall test and proceeds to structural analysis as well as metaphonological skill analysis, thereby covering a wide range of reading skill domain.

4 The aim of the present study is to translate and adapt Early Reading Skill (ERS) test proposed by Pae and Potter (1973; 1981) in the book titled '5 Informal Reading Diagnosis: A Practical Guide for the Classroom Teacher', in Malayalam language. Further, it is also aimed that this adapted tool serves as a measure and to assess the sequential acquisition of Malayalam reading skills in children in the grade range of I to VIIIth standard. This test will assist better in making the teacher's curriculum choices more comprehensive and meaningful. The test will also help in the assessment of reading deficits in children with learning disability.

160 typically developing Malayalam speaking children from I to VIII standard will be taken in the group (8 nos.) of 20 children (10 males and 10 females) each from different classes.

The adaptation and validation of test will be done in three phases:

7 Phase-I: Development of the test material

Phase-II: Administering the test on typically developing children.

Phase-III: Checking reliability and validity of the test.

The test will include the following:

Task-I: Testing of perceptual discrimination skills:

This will include:

1. Auditory discrimination test
2. Visual discrimination test

Task-II: Assessment of phonics and decoding process:

This will include:

1. Alphabet recognition and generation
2. Phoneme/syllable – grapheme correspondence test:
 - a. Beginning consonant
 - b. Ending consonant
 - c. Consonant blends
 - d. Vowels.
3. Blending Test
4. Syllabification test
5. Structural analysis of words.

Task-III: Assessment of oral reading

Reading paragraphs.

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3.0 Introduction (under the following heads)

3.1 Definition of the problem

: In the multilingual and multicultural country like India, it is imperative to develop and validate tests in various languages. The availability of such tools in different languages will help in promoting the slogan 'Education for all'. Also, these tools can effectively serve for children whose activity and participation is restricted due to some reading deficits in early stages of schooling. With the availability of variety of such tools, speech and language pathologists and other professionals can obtain the complete profile of a

child having reading deficit, to make or confirm diagnosis so that directives for reading intervention can be determined early.

There are limited standard tools available to assess reading skills in school going children in Malayalam. As reading is an individualized process and varies with language dialect and instruction, an urgent need has been felt to obtain normative data on Malayalam reading tests for Indian population. Most of the Malayalam speaking children starts to learn Malayalam at home. But their sequential acquisition of Malayalam reading skills remains unexplored. The present study is aimed at the adaptation of Early Reading Skills proposed by Rae and Potter (1973, 2nd edition in 1981) in Malayalam language. The study will consider and incorporate the suggestions reported in 'An Adaptation of Early Reading Skills in Hindi' by Priyadarshi and Goswami (2012) and also in 'Descriptive analysis of the sequential progression of English reading skills among Indian children' by Monika Loomba (Unpublished Master's Dissertation, 1995), later edited by Jayaram, Prema and Savithri (2003) as a publication of the All India Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore.

The above mentioned test and analysis provide an assessment of wide range of reading materials ranging from initial perceptual discrimination skills to the more complex structural analysis of words. ERS also constitutes metaphonological skills as a part of phonics and decoding process assessment. In short, all the essential spheres of reading have been included in the test.

The proposed test will be adapted in such a manner that it can be used as an aid to professionals for an educational assessment of reading deficits. It will be a tool which will give information on each child in relation to explicit criterion, therefore, will act as a profiling tool too.

3.2 Objectives

- This study is proposed with the following objectives:
1. The prime objective of the present study is to translate and adapt Early Reading Skill (ERS) test proposed by Rae and Potter (1973; 1981) in the book titled 'Informal Reading Diagnosis: A Practical Guide for the Classroom Teacher' in Malayalam language.
 2. It is also aimed that this adapted tool serves as a measure and to assess the sequential acquisition of Malayalam reading skills in children in the grade range of I to VIIIth standard.
 3. The test will also help in the assessment of reading deficits in children with learning disability.

3.3 Review of status of research and development in the subject

The present study is aimed at the adaptation of Early Reading Skills proposed by Rae and Potter (1973, 2nd edition in 1981) in Malayalam language. The study will consider and incorporate the suggestions reported in 'An Adaptation of Early Reading Skills in Hindi' by Priyadarshi and Goswami (2012) and also in 'Descriptive analysis of the sequential progression of English reading skills among Indian children' by Monika Loomba (Unpublished Master's Dissertation, 1995), later edited by Jeyaram, Prema and Savithri (2003) as a publication of the All India Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore.

Literature suggests that there exists a developmental continuum which facilitates the development of reading skills. Early reading skills and reading competency are the two skill sets which are closely interrelated and have a mutual effect (Yopp, 1992). There are two major stages of reading development as identified by Chall (1983): period when children “learn to read” (grades 1, 2, and 3) and period when children “read to learn” (grades 4 and beyond). The standard model of reading acquisition was proposed by Frith (1986). The first *logographic (logo means picture/symbol)* stage when the child processes words like visual object or symbol. In the *alphabetic* stage the child represents ordered sequences of letters and in the *orthographic (spelling) lexicon* the child stores whole-word grapheme sequences. Goswami and Bryant (1992) assert that knowledge of spelling helps the ability to spell. Ehri’s (1992) four stages of reading development: in the *Pre-Alphabetic Stage* the reader uses visual clues of the printed word to identify the word as no appreciation of the alphabetic principle exists. In the *Partial Alphabetic Stage* the reader focuses on specific and easily identifiable parts of the word. In the *Fully Alphabetic Stage* the words are memorized as a unit known by sight. In the *Consolidated Alphabetic Stage* the readers store letter patterns across different words after repeated encounters with the words. A six phase acquisition of reading was described by Spear-Swerling and Sternberg (1996).

Mohanty (1990) investigated the degree of

relationship between reading comprehension and various measures of metalinguistic skills and found that the good readers were better able to use words flexibly and in a context free manner, and could differentiate words based on their salient characteristics. Gokani (1992) compared the extent of relationship between phonological awareness and orthographic features in learning to read in Gujarati; using tests of listening comprehension, word reading, and word recognition and speech segmentation. Rhyme recognition and syllable stripping scores were similar, phoneme stripping was better for English medium children, and word reading and speech segmentation ability were poorly correlated in Gujarati medium children. This shows that phoneme level tasks are sensitive to orthographic variations.

Prema (1997) profiled acquisition of reading and writing skills in Kannada and found a developmental change in reading, writing, knowledge of orthographic principles, and reading comprehension across the 5 grades. Mullimani (1997) and Anne (2000) found a moderate correlation between reading and listening comprehension among Grade III and IV children. Akhila (2000) found a significant relationship between phonological awareness and orthographic skills in Tamil speaking children of Grade III and IV. Iyer (2000) found that reading skills and phonemic/syllabic segmentation skills improve over the grades in Malayalam speaking children of Grades I to IV. Sonali Nag (2007) found that early reading of 5–10-year-olds (a) took longer for akshara knowledge acquisition and (b) slower to emergence of

phoneme awareness than English.

Some Reading related tests available for assessment in different Indian languages are as follows:

- Oral reading test in Kannada (Bai, 1958) is a screening test to identify children at risk for reading disability.
- Reading Readiness Test in Kannada (Devi, 1978) assesses auditory discrimination, visual discrimination and vocabulary and can be administered on children from 3 years to 6.5years.
- Reading comprehension test in Kannada (Ramaa, 1985) is both for diagnosis and remediation of dyslexia. The test assesses auditory reception, visual reception, visual verbal association, word recognition, letter recognition, aural comprehension word analysis, reading comprehension and academic achievement inventory.
- Graded reading comprehension test in Oriya (Mohanty and Sahoo, 1985).
- Diagnostic Reading Test in Kannada (Purushothama, 1991) helps to identify good readers from poor readers on the basis of the factors of automaticity rules of orthography and sequential processing.
- Shipra (1992) developed a test of word finding abilities in children in Hindi language and found this skill showing a developmental trend.
- Yeshoda (1994) developed a tool to assess the acquisition of writing and found that children

studying in Kannada medium schools did not fully develop writing skills till the age of 6 years.

- Loomba (1995) administered the informal reading diagnosis by Rae & Patter (1975) on Indian children studying in class I to VIII with Hindi as their mother tongue and English exposure since start of schooling. The results showed that the sequence of progression of reading skills was in consonance with acquisition of reading by native speakers of English, but with a lag as English reading instruction and exposure began only in school.
- Checklist for screening language based reading disabilities (Che-SLR) was developed by Swaroopa (2001) in Malayalam and rhyming, alliteration, rapid naming, language expression, listening skills, and non verbal imitation were identified as potential predictor variables.
- Seetha (2002) profiled V to VII graders on various parameters of reading, metaphonological skills in Malayalam.
- Jayashree (2003) developed a tool for screening children with writing difficulties (TOSC-WD).
- Shilpashri (2004) developed a Remedial Manual of Metaphonological Skills (Kannada).

3.4 International and national status

and : The ERS is extensively utilized in Foreign countries. It is also utilized in Indian context; but, using the English version of it. One adaptation of ERS has been done in Hindi language by Priyadarshi and Goswami (2012). Other than this, no such adaptations have

been made in other Indian languages; preventing the use of this widely accepted test on Indian individuals with language disorders.

3.5 Importance of the proposed project in the context of current status : The presence of reading disability cases in our schools is a serious problem at all levels of academic ladder. Especially in Indian society where public awareness is minimal, the instances of reading disabled children remains in oblivion, and as a consequence the child goes through emotional trauma. Thus there is a need for diagnostic instruments which can identify reading disabled as efficiently as possible.

Performance norms of most reading assessments available in India, except ERS-Hindi (2012) have been developed with populations of children in other countries. The level of performance on reading tests depends largely on reading curricula and programs, thus, some discrepancies may be present between the average Indian reader and the average reader represented in the norms established in other countries (Misra, Sahoo, & Puhan, 1997). A review of the Indian studies also points towards the lack of an adequate assessment tool to identify children with reading disability in Malayalam language.

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4.0 Work Plan

4.1 Method

Subjects / Participants : 160 typically developing Malayalam speaking children from Grade I to Grade VIII will be participating in the group (8 nos.) of 20 children (10 males and 10 females preferably).

Material : The test items of ERS (Rae & Potter, 1973) will be taken as the base. The test material will also be comprised of appropriate pictures and toys wherever applicable. The pictures required for the test items will be drawn by an artist. The required toys will be collected and the final kit will be prepared.

Procedure

: The development and validation of test will be done in three phases:

Phase-I: Development/adaptation of the test material and pilot study.

The test items of ERS (Rae & Potter, 1973) will be translated into Malayalam. A review of the available literature on sequential reading acquisition skills will also be made by referring to books, journals and web-based sources and existing tools in India. The common categories of items will be maintained and any additional items specific to Malayalam language will be added; and the final test material will be compiled. The test material will also be comprised of appropriate pictures and toys wherever applicable. The pictures required for the test items will be drawn by an artist. The required toys will be collected and the final kit will be prepared. The test will include the following:

Task-I: Testing of perceptual discrimination skills:

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3. Blending Test
4. Syllabification test
5. Structural analysis of words.

Task-III: Assessment of oral reading

Reading paragraphs.

Pilot study: A pilot study will be carried out as a preliminary try-out and for familiarization of administration. It will be tested on a total of 16 children (two in each of the eight groups). According to the performance of the children the final test material will be designed incorporating the necessary modification to suit to the needs of the children.

Phase-II: Administering the test on typically developing children.

The test material will be administered on 160 typically developing Malayalam speaking children.

Phase-III: Checking reliability and validity of the test.

Reliability - The inter-judge reliability will be carried out. The data will be audio-video recorded, out of which 10 percent of the data will be retested by a language expert.

Validity - To assess the validity of the developed test, it will be administered on "N" number of learning disabled children.

Procedure for data collection:

- a) The aim of the study, procedure, and duration of testing will be explained to the participant/caregiver.
- b) Prior written consent will be taken from the participant/caregiver for the participation in the study.
- c) All the participants will be tested in a quiet, noise free environment at home, school or clinical setting.
- d) The audio-video recordings of the session will be carried out while administering the test.
- e) The stimuli will be presented in auditory, visual, orthographic and gestural mode separately.
- f) Separate scoring will be carried out for each mode.

Scoring:

A common scoring system will be used for the subtests. A score of 1 will be given for each item answered correctly. Therefore, the maximum score for each subtest will vary according to the number of items in it. The performance of the participant on each item in the test will be scored on a three point rating scale as given below:

1 point: If a participant performs a given test item without any assistance.

Half point: If a participant performs a given test item with an assistance or verbal prompt.

0 point: If a participant cannot perform a given test item even with verbal prompt.

Analyses

: Obtained scores will be tabulated and appropriate statistical analyses will be carried out.

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**6.0 Implications of the results
of the study (Illustrative)**

- a) **Presentation of** : The findings of the study will be presented in the national and international forums. The outcomes of the study will be published in national/ international scientific papers in professional seminars / journals. publication of articles
- b) Discussion with professionals : The findings of the project will be discussed with the practicing clinicians/professionals as it will provide a means by which the reading skills could be surveyed in Malayalam speaking children in more efficient manner.
- c) To utilize the results in the development of remediation : It is proposed that the project will produce field tested validated assessment material in Malayalam language which can be used by the clinicians/professionals for identification of reading skills deficits in children ranging from Grade I to Grade VII; and also in planning appropriate management strategies for children with learning disability.

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7.0 Utilization of results of the study

The test adapted and validated in this study can be utilized as a reference manual in speech and language clinics for assessment of reading skill deficits in Malayalam speaking children ranging from 4 to 8 years of age.

An Adaptation of Early Reading Skills (ERS) in Malayalam (ERS-M)

ORIGINALITY REPORT

12%	9%	5%	5%
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