A pilot study of using the Tagalog version of the Western Aphasia Battery-Revised in the Philippines

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Introduction

The Western Aphasia Battery-Revised (WAB-R; Kertesz, 2006) is one of the most widely-used standardized assessment tools in countries with English speakers. The Tagalog version of the WAB-R (T-WAB-R; Ozaeta & Kong, 2012), was developed to provide a comprehensive evaluation of language skills in Tagalog. Through normative data obtained from 36 native speakers of Tagalog, stratified into three age groups (20-40, 41-60, and 61+ years) and two educational levels (below 16 years and 16+ years), a basis for comparison was created. Concurrent validity of the T-WAB-R was demonstrated by positive and significant correlations between similar subtests of the Tagalog version of the Bilingual Aphasia Test (BAT; Paradis & Del Pilar, 1991). Inter-rater reliability demonstrated moderate consistency (i.e., mean Spearman coefficient of 0.904 across the T-WAB-R sub-tests); while intra-rater reliability was found to be of high consistency (mean Pearson’s coefficient of 1.000).

There is a lack of extensive and updated research regarding formal assessments tools of aphasia available in the Philippines. Currently, the only aphasia diagnostic tool that is used across the country is the unpublished Tagalog version of the Western Aphasia Battery (WAB; Kertesz, 1982), which has not been researched on its statistical evidence of sensitivity and reliability. The goal of the current study is therefore to expand the research on the T-WAB-R by exploring its accuracy in capturing the characteristics of the aphasic syndromes in Tagalog-speakers with aphasia.

Methods

Four participants with aphasia, 2 male and 2 female, were recruited from the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City, Philippines. The clinical diagnosis done by author MBRJ, the speech-language pathologist in-charge of these participants at the time of recruitment, included one Conduction, two Broca’s, and one Global aphasia (Table 1). Each participant was administered the T-WAB-R and all testing was videotaped. To examine how each participant’s performance deviated from that of normal speakers, a qualitative analysis was conducted using z-scores derived from the normative data in Ozaeta and Kong (2012). Specifically, z-scores of each T-WAB-R sub-test were computed with reference to the age- and education-matched normal speaker groups.

To establish the inter-rater reliability, all participants’ T-WAB-R recordings were scored by author MBRJ and re-scored by CO. Intra-rater reliability was also achieved by CO re-scoring the tests for a second time. Spearman’s correlation coefficients were obtained.

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Results

Table 1 presents negative z-scores of each participant with aphasia. The results revealed that each participant with aphasia was inferior to the normal counterparts. A mean Pearson’s coefficient of 1.000 suggested a high consistency between both inter-rater and intra-rater reliability.

Conclusion

The near-to-perfect T-WAB-R scores among normal participants (Ozaeta & Kong, 2012) suggested high specificity within the test. The results of the current study further demonstrated the T-WAB-R to be a sensitive clinical tool for use with obtaining baseline performance of Tagalog speakers with aphasia. These findings suggest the T-WAB-R is capable of characterizing the language deficits of participants with aphasia. This serves to endorse the conclusion that this tool allows clinicians to differentiate and classify between Tagalog speakers with and without aphasia.