



The Clinical Café'

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Insights from AGS Publishing—
What Your Test Manual Will (and Should) Tell You—Part 5

January 2005 Clinical Café by Debby Hutchins, MS, CCC-SLP

Previously we talked about scoring tests and writing diagnostic reports that give a vivid picture of a client. We were, in essence, talking about levels of interpretation. The topic for this month's Clinical Café covers in-depth analysis and interpretation. You definitely have some options with psychometrically sound tests to make them clinically useful and sophisticated. Are you getting the most from your test and manual? Read on!



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Interpreting Performance in Layers

In the *Goldman-Fristoe Test of Articulation, Second Edition* manual (page 5), also known as the GFTA-2, the authors discuss levels of analysis that lead to different layers of interpretation. If you use the Level 1 or Level 2 scoring procedures, you have different amounts of information for interpreting the normative scores and the examinee's overall performance. As you read in the manual, Level 1 scoring allows a global interpretation of the examinee's normative scores with respect to his or her same-aged peers. Level 2 scoring gives the additional categorization of errors—*how* is the sound incorrect—that deepens to another layer of interpretability.

If there are numerous errors and/or the speech sample is highly unintelligible, then you may need a still deeper layer of interpretation. The psychometrically linked partner test to the GFTA-2 is the *Khan-Lewis Phonological Analysis, Second Edition (KLPA-2)*, which organizes sound errors into 10 phonological processes divided into three process areas (manual, pages 10-14). Keep in mind that you can start right in with this layer, if your clinical judgment tells you that enough sound errors exist to warrant a process-based approach that addresses the examinee's sound system as a rule-governed system. What's more, you can analyze 34 additional phonological processes descriptively for even more in-depth interpretation.

One important point to remember: When you do articulation testing only, as with the GFTA-2, you should not refer to errors as phonological process errors. This terminology is available only with a phonological process-based test instrument such as the KLPA-2.

Interpreting Performance in Scores

Each normative score has opportunities and limitations in its interpretability. That is the reason for so many types of normative scores—each one has a specific use and value. You may want to put a bookmark in each of your test manuals at the following pages for easy reference:

- GFTA-2 pages 31-33
- KLPA-2 pages 42-48

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- OWLS WE pages 120-125

On these pages, you will find information on interpreting each of the normative scores appropriately. This is important because all too often these scores can be misunderstood and then inadvertently misused.

Interpreting Performance for Intervention and Collaboration

After completing professional analysis and interpretation of test results, you then explain these results to parents and teachers and plan intervention. The descriptive analysis worksheets for the *Oral Written and Language Scales (OWLS LC/OE and WE)* and *Comprehensive Assessment of Spoken Language (CASL)* can assist you in that process (These worksheets are available to you through our Web site www.speechandlanguage.com and are located on the right-hand side of each product page.) Likewise, the KLPA-2 provides a vehicle for describing interpretive results in the Phonological Summary and Progress Report. This handy form can be used to explain sound errors in detail, assist in developing goals and benchmarks (objectives), and provide a method of reporting progress over time.

2005—A Resolution

New Year is the time for resolutions. Consider making this resolution your own: Start utilizing all the levels of analysis and interpretation that your tests and manuals provide. Personally, I prefer this resolution to exercise regimens or diets. Bring on the chocolate!

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