Middle East Journal of Rehabilitation and Health Studies
Volume 8 · Issue 2 · e111673

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Unanalyzable Utterances in Language Sample Analysis Based on the P-LARSP: Preliminary Data of Typical Children Aged 18 - 60 Months

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SUBMITTED	REVISED	ACCEPTED	DOI
28 Nov 2020	6 Mar 2021	7 Mar 2021	10.5812/mejrh.111673

About this report

This open peer review (OPR) report shows the public comments made on this article during peer review, by the reviewers, the associate editor and the editor-in-chief, for every revision round, together with the authors' replies. Comments appear only with the consent of the people who wrote them. Reviewers who chose to sign their report are named; the others are shown as "Referee". Comments are edited for language only, and confidential remarks to the editors are not included.

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1 Original submission

3 comments · 10 Dec 2020 – 28 Dec 2020

Referee 1 Reviewer

MAJOR REVISION 10 Dec 2020

Dear AE,
Comments for the authors:
Abstract
- The structure of the abstract is poor. For example, in the results, the authors should present the results with values.
Introduction
- The manuscript should be edited for English language usage.
- The rationale for conducting this study is not clear.
- The authors did not give any hypothesis for their research.
- The authors did not provide any explanation about unanalyzable utterances in other languages.
- The methods and results are satisfactory.
Discussion
- The authors should compare their findings with previous studies and state good reasons for similar or different findings. In this manuscript, they did not do so. They should rewrite the discussion.
Thanks.

Associate Editor

MAJOR REVISION 27 Dec 2020

Dear EIC,
Thank you for the opportunity to review this manuscript. I carefully read the manuscript as well as the comments of the reviewers. Based on the reviewers' comments, the manuscript needs major revision.
Thanks.

Editor-in-Chief

MAJOR REVISION 28 Dec 2020

Dear Authors
According to the reviewers' and associate editor's comments, your article needs major revision. Please respond to each reviewer's comments separately.
Thanks.

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Revision 1

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

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14/ January/ 2021

Dear Editors in Chief

Dr Kukhayi & Dr Ehsani

We are deeply appreciative that our manuscript received an in-depth consideration by your respected reviewers and your editorial team. We did our best to consider all comments in our revision. Below you can find our point-by-point responses to the reviewers' comments. We are more than happy to answer any ambiguity and question.

We do hope our revised manuscript may satisfy you, your editorial team and respected reviewers.

Sincerely yours, RN

Number	Reviewer's Comments	Answer
Title-1	*In my idea it is better to mention to the LARSP in the title, because you used its instruction for determining Unanalyzable Utterances which is not applicable for other purposes or language sampling protocols*	Done
Introduction -1	*. In the literature review section, you criticized the distracting pattern of presented details in 10-minute Persian language samples, while in my idea some of these samples have their own protocols in concordant with their purpose, and contrary to what you say, "the lack of an established standard for comparison or lack of a systematic procedure to define analyzable utterance", they demonstrate their own systematic procedure with a possibility for comparison with other similar studies.*	Corrected
Introduction - 2	*In line with this utterance: "However, SLPs need convincing evidence to show the amount of information that they can obtain*	Done

	from the LSA based on a procedure such as P-LARSP.", you can add another aim including, comparison of MLUm for total number of T-units and total number of analyzable T-units.	
Method 1	*Please mention your sampling method*	Added
Method 2	*How did you control and screen probable neurological disorders and visual and auditory problems? And how about cognitive disorders, and ASD in your study? As you know, in many cases health centers reports are not very accurate & enough and can not be used in order to control inclusion and exclusion criteria in research works.*	We believe a revise in this section would make this issue resolved: "because of speech issues and health issues such as obvious signs of neurological disorders, visual and auditory problems. Teachers or kindergartens' principals confirmed children's problem or health because of their routine evaluation of auditory, visual and health. Nevertheless, the health condition of the other 178 children was confirmed by children's health centers before any language sample was taken." Few paragraphs later, you can see that children's health received a triple check out with their parents. "To save time, confirming children's health, and avoid disturbing parents, the parents of the remained 96 children completed a questionnaire to provide information about their children's language and developmental history, the mothers' educational levels, and the parents' ethnic and racial background." Three times checking would be enough to confirm children's health.
Method 3	*During how many sessions did the speech therapists evaluate the*	We believe these revisions

	children? Were the participants controlled in terms of inclusion and exclusion criteria in the same language sampling session? And how was this done?	would clarify these issues: "Nevertheless, the health condition of the other 178 children was confirmed by children's health centers before any language sample was taken." "Two senior SLP students trained by first author were in charge to interact with children. To do so, they were at kindergartens earlier and spent at least 30 minutes with children in their own class and then they went to another room to start language sampling from children one by one. The whole 20 to 30 minutes (based on the child's willingness) of interaction was recorded in one session. If the child did stop cooperating, the whole session was repeated in another time."
Method 4	*Given the importance of knowledge and experience in language sampling, please state what was the level of education and experience of clinical practice of two SLPs which was engaged in language sampling?*	Added: Two senior SLP students trained by first author were in charge to interact with children. Another two SLPs (one with 16 years of clinical experiences and the other one as a master student in SLP)
Method 5	*Why did not you use demographic questionnaire first, before language sampling?*	Added: To save time avoid disturbing parents, , and confirm children's health, the parents
Method 6- 7- 8- 9	*6. Why did you say (label) text-unit?* *7. What did you mean by "Utterances were segmented into text units (11) based on LARSP."? Did you segment utterances in in this way and Did you define the boundaries of utterances in this way?* *8. What does A-unit mean? Please*	Revisions in introduction & methods would probably solve all these issues: "Fletcher & Garman (1988) recognized certain distinct elemants that make up a text (11). They named these distinct elemmants as "text-units". They adapted Minimal Terminable

	explain a little more. 9- *In number 5 T-unit, did you mean every kind of complex utterance including coordinated or uncoordinated compound sentences?*	known as T unit procedure into “Analysis-unit” or “A-unit” for longer utterances. In this way, they took all connectives except “and” to mark boundries between clausal text-units within their A-units. In this way, each occurance of “and” marks a new A-unit. Th econstarins of this procedure were repaired in text units numbered as 5 below. Utterances were segmented into text units (11) as below”
Method 10	*Please state one Persian example for more clarification in: "If “and” marked a boundary of a new A-unit, that counted as an independent unit."*	Added to the manuscript: For example: “rafteh budam bazaro kafsh kharidam” as “I went to the mall and bought a pair of shoes” will be considered as one text unit; this example “khune ro jam konid o man lebas bepusham o ghaza ro bardaram, rah mioftim” will be segmented into three text units or A-units as below: - “khune ro jam kanid” as “you clean up the house” - “o man lebas bepusham o ghaza ro bardaram” as “and I put on my cloths and pack the food” -“rah mioftim” as “we will move”
Method 11	*As you stated in your manuscript, The SLPs followed the rules of LASRP to exclude the utterances that were un-analyzable and difficult (8-10) except for repetitions and irrelevant. As you mentioned Crystal considered “repetition” as analyzable utterances and “irrelevant” as un-analyzable utterances, but you considered both of them as un-analyzable?*	We corrected this part, now it makes more sense: The SLPs followed the rules of section A of LASRP to recognize the utterances that were *‘Unanalyzed’* and *‘Problematic’* (8-10) in language samples (table 1). Remained utterances from section A were analyzed further as ‘normal’, ‘abnormal’, and ‘problematic’ (table 1). The ‘abnormal’ utterances include

		“structural abnormality” and ‘zero responses’. The *structural abnormality* happens where the grammatical pattern of the client’s response does not match that required by SLP’s stimulus, as in *SLP 'what're you making! Child ‘yes!’*. …. There is one column to report ‘repetitions’. If the client repeats the whole or part of SLP’s stimulus, those repetitions recorded as ‘*Repetitions’*. Repetition of the speaker’s utterance does not represent a complete thought of the client. Besides, it might increase the chance of misinterpretation if the SLPs do not report the number of repetitions in their notes. Thus, considering ‘repetitions’ & “structurally abnormal” utterances, as unanalyzable utterances, will reduce plenty of risks in LSA.
Method 12	*In the introduction section, as a critique, you have mentioned the omission of some of the utterances including one-word utterances in the LSA, which leads to a discontinuity of the language sample, while you yourself have omitted some of the informative utterances in the language sample which can cause discontinuity of the language sample. For example, "deviant, incomplete, ambiguous, stereotyped, repetition, and irrelevant". Elimination of deviant utterances and the like in the developing normal children, can lead to elimination of some of typical developmental errors during LSA. In this way you eliminate an important part of language sample data.*	In-depth revision of introduction resolved these issues.
Method 13	*Please give a Persian example for*	Done

	"Ambiguous" utterances for more clarification and better discrimination from "Deviant" ones.	
Method 14	*Echolalia as an irrelevant utterance, is a pathologic language behavior similar to non-fluencies, which is acceptable to delete them, but how about other irrelevant utterances that are grammatically correct but do not follow the previous utterance and come from nowhere (such as private speech), as you defined in the manuscript?*	We do apologize for our misleading writing; our revision may clarify the issue.
Result 1	*Your sample size in 4 different age groups in order to presenting descriptive information in a developmental perspective, as you declared is not enough*	We eliminated “developmental perspective”, and added “preliminary data”
Result 2	*Your statistical analysis is so simple, please add and report analytical results.*	Added.
Result 3	*. What did you mean by saying "To evaluate unanalyzable utterances in a child-adult interaction, it is important to see how cooperative the child was regarding his/her responsiveness and assertiveness."? Please explain what was their relation in your study, and how did these 3 kinds of responses influence on the evaluation of unanalyzable utterances*	*This part was irrelevant, and eliminated.*
Result 4	*As you demonstrated the percentages of children’s verbal, and nonverbal responses in table 2 as the study variables, please show or explain how did you measure them.*	*This part was irrelevant, and eliminated.*
Result 5	*I suggest you match the tables 3 & 4 by name: table 3: Analysable versus Unanalyzable Text Units table 3: Different Kinds of Unanalyzable Text Units*	Done
Result 6	*Please Check and match the spelling of the words: analyzable and unanalyzable*	Done
Discussion 1	*You mentioned "For younger*	Removed

	children, SLPs should add other contexts (e.g., book reading) to get more responses since younger children did not respond to more than twenty percent of SLPs' stimuli in the context of free play". Based on your work even in the youngest group, children respond verbally to more than 60 percent of SLPs' stimuli in the context of free play, then why did you declare that? If you quoted it, please insert its reference.	
Discussion 2	*Was there total number of analyzable text-units equivalent with the total number of utterances in MLU in your study?*	Yes and corrected.
Discussion 3	*Please explain C-unit for more clarification in a short sentence, if is it possible*	Added.
Discussion 4	*In the discussion you stated " If the SLPs search for grammatical abilities in children, they will need to include all these types of analysis to present a representative language profile. Any LSA that does not present this data in advance may not deliver the right picture of a child's language abilities.". This is absolutely true. then why did you eliminate them in the LARSP?*	This was blurred and we removed it.
Reviewer 2		
Abstract	*The structure of abstract is poor. For example in results they should present the results with values.*	The whole abstract was rewritten.
	The rationale for conducting this study is not clear.	We revised the whole introduction; we believe it has a proper argument now.
	The authors did not give any hypothesis for their research	We intended to discover and describe.
	The authors did not provide any explanation about unanalyzable utterances in other languages.	As far as the word limit allowed, we added up.
Discussion	*The authors should compare their findings with the previous studies and state the good reasons for similar or different findings. In this*	As far as the word limit allowed, we added up.

	manuscript, they did not perform such direction. They should rewrite the discussion.	
	The manuscript should be edited for English writing.	Done

2 Revision 1

3 comments · 1 Feb 2021 – 13 Feb 2021

Referee 2 Reviewer

ACCEPT 1 Feb 2021

Dear AE,
Thanks for submitting this manuscript titled "Unanalyzable Utterances in Language Sample Analysis according to P-LARSP: Preliminary Data from Typical Children Aged between 18 and 60 Months of Age" to MEJRH. I believe substantial changes and revisions have been correctly made to the manuscript.
Thanks.

Associate Editor

ACCEPT 12 Feb 2021

Dear EIC,
The revised version of the manuscript titled "Unanalyzable Utterances in Language Sample Analysis according to P-LARSP: Preliminary Data from Typical Children Aged between 18 and 60 Months of Age" is ready for publication according to reviewers' comments.
Thanks.

Editor-in-Chief

MINOR REVISION 13 Feb 2021

Dear Authors
Thank you so much for your efforts to improve the manuscript. However, some grammatical problems are still observed in the manuscript. The manuscript should be edited by a native English editor to be accepted for publication in this journal. Please send certification from the English editing center to the journal.
Thanks.

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Revision 2

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

The authors did not provide a point-by-point response to the reviewers' comments in this round.

3 Revision 2

1 comment · 7 Mar 2021

Editor-in-Chief

ACCEPT 7 Mar 2021

Dear Authors
We are pleased to inform you that your article is accepted for publication in this journal.
Thanks.