

Young Lives

An International Study of Childhood Poverty

INDIA

CHILD LANGUAGE TESTS – MANUAL

2010

This manual should be read in conjunction with the three language test components of the India school survey: the Assessment of language learning experience, the Telugu test, and the English test.

1.0 Overview of language test administration

1.1 Purpose of tests

We are including language tests in the school survey to assess children's literacy in and experience of learning both English and Telugu. There are three components:

- Assessment of Language Learning Experience
- Telugu Test
- English Test

You must administer the Assessment of Language Learning Experience and the Telugu Test to ALL children. You must administer the English Test to ALL children who answer YES to at least one of questions 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 or 9 on the Assessment of Language Learning Experience. It may then be necessary to terminate the English Test after Part 1, or at some point during Part 2 if the child is not able to complete items, or becomes upset or stressed at the task. Follow the guidelines outlined below to determine when this might be appropriate.

1.2 Location & Conditions of Administration

The instruments will be administered to YL children only in groups of UP TO 6 YL children at a time. If there are more than 6 YL children at the school, split the children up into equally sized groups for administration. Unless it is a school with only one YL child, try to ensure that the YL child does not complete the test on their own. You do NOT need to administer the test to NON-YL CHILDREN.

The test should be administered in a place that is away from distraction from other children and teachers and with a flat surface for the child to write on, it should not be excessively windy and must have good lighting.

It is very important that the fieldworker makes sure the conditions for assessment enable the child to respond to the best of his/her abilities.

1.3 Language used for administration

These tests are to be completed by the child themselves, and it is important that the fieldworker does not give hints or help to the child beyond reassuring and encouraging them to do their best. It is important that fieldworkers follow the guidelines about language use during test administration:

- **Assessment of language learning experience**
 - Use whichever language the child or children understands most easily to read each question to the group.
 - For this component, it is important that the child fully understands the requirements of each question so that they can answer to the best of their ability. This may require you to use a variety of different languages, as appropriate.

- **Telugu Test**

- This is a test of TELUGU but you can explain the purpose and format of the test in another language if necessary, so that the child understands what is required of them.
- Once children begin the test you **MUST NOT** explain or translate specific items or words in another language if children do not understand, since to do so would be to help the child to answer the Telugu item. Instead, offer general encouragement to do the best that they can.
- For example, a child may not understand a word or sentence in Telugu and may ask you for help in Hindi. You must not offer the child help on the test items.

- **English Test**

- This test is a test of ENGLISH but you can explain the purpose and format of the test in another language if necessary, so that the child understands what is required of them.
- Once children begin the test you **MUST NOT** explain or translate specific items or words in another language if children do not understand, since to do so would be to help the child to answer the English item.
- For example, a child may not understand a question or word or sentence in English and may ask you for help in Telugu. You must not offer help on test items, since to do so would mean the child was not answering the question based solely on their knowledge and understanding of English. Instead, offer general encouragement to do the best that they can.

If children ask for help in a way that you think may distort their test results, kindly tell the child you are not able to help but can only encourage him/her to give his/her best effort.

1.4 Duration of tests

- **ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE LEARNING EXPERIENCE:** There is no time limit for the assessment of language learning experience and this should be administered directly by the fieldworker.
- **TELUGU TEST:** Children should be given **UP TO 40 MINUTES** to complete the Telugu test. However, if children finish early, are completely stuck or become upset or stressed you may terminate the test early. Please record the start and end time on the test cover sheet.
- **ENGLISH TEST:** Children should be given **UP TO 5 MINUTES** to complete Part One of the English test. They should then be given **UP TO 35 MINUTES** to complete Part Two of the English Test. However, if children finish early, are completely stuck or become upset or stressed you may terminate the test early. Please complete the start and end time of both Parts One and Two on the test cover sheet.
- **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE DO NOT UPSET OR STRESS ANY OF THE CHILDREN IN CONDUCTING THESE TESTS.** As such:
 - For the Telugu test, ask children to attempt as many items as possible, but if they can not answer any more questions, kindly tell them that they have done enough for us and take the test away from them, completing the test time completion section and completing the comments section using the codes

detailed in Section 2.3 of the manual as well as recording any additional written comments you may have. If the child is making steady progress, allow them to work on the test for UP TO 35 MINUTES.

- The English test is split into two parts. Children should ONLY be given the test if they have answered 'YES' to at least one of questions 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 or 9 of the 'Assessment of Language Learning experience.'
 - All children who meet this criteria should then attempt all the questions in PART ONE, for UP TO 5 MINUTES. If children are UNABLE TO ANSWER ANY OF THESE ITEMS CORRECTLY, kindly tell them that they have done as much as is necessary and that they can return to their classes. Complete the comments section for Part One using the codes detailed in Section 2.3 of the manual and record any additional comments you may have.
 - IF THEY ARE ABLE TO ANSWER ANY OF THESE ITEMS CORRECTLY, allow them to proceed with Part Two of the test. However, continue to monitor children's progress through Part Two. If they reach a point where they are unable to continue, (e.g. if it is more than 3 minutes since they answered a question, taking care not to interrupt if they are reading a comprehension passage) or if they become anxious or stressed, kindly take the test away from them, tell them they have done as much as necessary today, complete the time of completion section at the front of the test, and complete the comments section for Part Two using the codes detailed in Section 2.3 of the manual and record any additional comments you may have. If the child is making steady progress, allow them to work on PART TWO of the test for UP TO 35 MINUTES.
- Do not terminate a test if a child is just slow in completing questions, give them the full time allowed.
- It is very important that the fieldworker registers the exact time in which the administration of each part of the Telugu and English tests begin and end. The fieldworker must have a watch that allows him/her to control the duration of the tests.
- If the child seems frustrated with the items, the fieldworker should try to calm him/her down by saying ***"Don't worry, if you don't know the answer to a question, why don't you continue with the next one"*** or ***"This is a hard question, do your best but don't feel bad if you don't know an answer"***. Do not offer specific help on an item.
- If the child requests to continue answering the test after the maximum time period because he/ she is not done, the fieldworker must say kindly to the child that that's not necessary and stop the administration. If the fieldworker notices the child is very upset or anxious he must try to calm her/him down by saying that what he/she did is enough and that it is not necessary to complete all the items in the test.

1.5 Sequencing of Tests & Breaks

Firstly, fieldworkers should administer the 'Assessment of Language Learning Experience' and note whether children answer 'YES' to any of questions 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 or 9, since this is the criteria for the administration of the English test.

Secondly, fieldworkers should administer the Telugu test to all children.

Thirdly, fieldworkers should administer the English test to those children who have answered 'YES' to at least one of questions 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 or 9 in the Assessment of Language Learning Experience. If a child does not meet this criteria the

fieldworker should complete the cover sheet of the test and enter code 00 into the comments section which indicates that the test was 'not administered because child indicated no knowledge of English in the Assessment of language learning.'

These tests take quite a lot of time (up to 40 minutes each for the Telugu and English). You must use your judgment to give the children breaks where needed and may need to spread the tests over more than one day, as necessary. **DO NOT ADMINISTER ALL TESTS (language and maths) AND THE CHILD QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE SAME DAY.** The important thing is that children are not too tired to answer the questions, and that they are not put under unnecessary stress or pressure.

1.6 General Testing Guidelines

- The fieldworker must not, under any circumstances solve doubts about the content of the questions, nor read the questions to the child or lead him/her to an answer. The fieldworker should just encourage him/her to give his/her best effort.
- The tests must be picked up and **NOT** left with the participant. The items of the test should not be photocopied by anyone external to the project.

1.7 Notes for Supervisors

- When checking the completed items, please ensure that where a child has not attempted or completed each question, or where they have stopped before the 40 minute period for each test has elapsed, the fieldworker has provided an explanation in the comments section on the front page as per section 2.3 of the manual.
- Ensure that you do not leave copies of the test at schools or with teachers. Parts of this instrument may be used in subsequent rounds of data collection and it must remain only in the hands of those conducting the Young Lives survey.

2.0 Conducting the language tests

- Gather the YL children together in a location which meets the requirements set out above.
- Make sure there is sufficient space between children so they are not able to copy.
- Explain that you will be asking them some questions about language and then giving them tests in Telugu and maybe English. Reassure them that these tests are not going to be monitored by their school, and that they must just do their best to answer the questions as best as possible. Make clear that the tests get more difficult and they shouldn't worry if they are not able to complete it.
- It will be necessary to include breaks between the administration of each test, since they take up to 40 minutes per test. Use your judgment to assess whether the children need a break or rest. **DO NOT ADMINISTER ALL TESTS AND THE CHILD QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE SAME DAY AS THIS WOULD BE VERY OVERLOADING FOR CHILDREN.**

2.1 Assessment of language learning experience

- This assessment is FIELDWORKER ADMINISTERED and can be carried out in whichever language children prefer to use.
- Give each child a copy of the assessment and ask them to complete the cover sheet.
- Then read each question out loud to the group of children and ask them to complete the answer on their answer sheet. Ensure each child has understood and completed the question before moving on to the next item.
- If any child responds 'Yes' to at least ONE of questions 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 or 9 then they may have some basic knowledge of English and you should give them at least Part One of the English test.
- In one school it is possible some children may have sufficient knowledge to complete the English test, while others do not. You should be guided by the child's knowledge of English, NOT by the school's language policies.
- Collect the questionnaires and move on to the next component.

2.2 Telugu Test

- The second item you should administer is the Telugu test.
- Give each child a copy of the test and ask them to complete the cover sheet.
- Tell them that they should read each question carefully and that they have 40 minutes in which to complete it but that if they finish early, or can not go any further that is not a problem, and they should just raise their hand and let the fieldworker know that they have finished as much as they can do.
- You may use a language other than Telugu to explain the purpose and format of the test if necessary, so that the child understands what is required of them.
- However, if any child asks for any help during the test, make sure that you **DO NOT EXPLAIN OR TRANSLATE ANY OF THE TELUGU QUESTIONS IN A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE IN A WAY THAT WOULD MEAN THE TEST IS NO LONGER A TEST OF THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF TELUGU.** Instead, offer encouragement.
- Make a note of the time at which each child starts the test and monitor their progress.
- If the child can not answer any more of the questions, and has clearly attempted to address each question, kindly tell them that they have done a good job, take the test paper away from them, complete the time at which the test ended and make a note in the 'comments' section as outlined in section 2.3 of the manual and record any additional written comments you may have. **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU DO NOT LEAVE CHILDREN SITTING WITH A TEST PAPER, UNABLE TO ANSWER ANY MORE QUESTIONS, FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME (e.g.**

more than 3 minutes), except if they are clearly reading a comprehension passage before answering the questions.

- If the child completes the test before the 40 minute period is over, kindly tell them that they have done a good job, take the test paper away from them, complete the time at which the test ended and make a note in the comments section that the child finished early as outlined in section 2.3 of the manual and record any additional written comments you may have.
- Otherwise, allow the children to have the 40 minute period to complete the test then kindly tell them that they have done a good job, take the test paper away from them, complete the time at which the test ended and make a note in the comments section that the child finished early as outlined in section 2.3 of the manual and record any additional written comments you may have.

2.2 English Test

- The third item you should administer is the English test BUT NOTE that children should be allowed a break between tests.
- This item should ONLY be administered if children have indicated through answering 'Yes' to at least ONE of questions 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 or 9 in the Assessment of Language Learning that they have some knowledge of English. If they do not meet this criteria, they do not need to complete this test may return to their classes. Please complete a test cover sheet for these children and note the reason for non-completion in the comments section, as per section 2.3 of the manual and record any additional written comments you may have..
- Give each remaining child a copy of the test and ask them to complete the cover sheet.
- This test is split into two parts.
- Part One involves matching numbers and words and words and pictures. Children may take up to 5 minutes on this section of the test, and you must record the start and end time on the front of their test paper.
- You may explain the purpose and format of the test in the language in which children are most fluent or which they understand the best.
- However, if any child asks for any help during the test, make sure that you DO NOT EXPLAIN OR TRANSLATE ANY OF THE ENGLISH QUESTIONS IN A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE IN A WAY THAT WOULD MEAN THE TEST IS NO LONGER A TEST OF THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH. Instead, offer encouragement.
 - If a child is able to answer ANY of the items in Part One CORRECTLY, then he/she should be asked to continue to Part Two. Complete the Part one Comments section using the codes outlined in Section 2.3 of the manual and record any additional written comments you may have.
 - If a child is NOT able to answer ANY of the items in Part One correctly, or if they become visibly stressed or upset at not being able to answer these items, reassure them that they have done a good job and take the test away from them so that they DO NOT CONTINUE WITH PART TWO. Make the appropriate note in the Part One comments section, as per section 2.3 of the manual and record any additional written comments you may have.
- Part Two involves a number of harder items including comprehension, filling in the gaps and writing sentences. This section is timed.
 - Tell the children that they should read each question carefully and that they have 35 minutes in which to complete it but that if they finish early, or can not go any further that is not a problem, and they should just raise their hand and let the fieldworker know that they have finished as much as they can do.
 - You may explain the purpose and format of the test in a language other than Telugu if necessary, so that the child understands what is required of them.

- However, if any child asks for any help during the test, make sure that you DO NOT EXPLAIN OR TRANSLATE ANY OF THE TELUGU QUESTIONS IN A DIFFERENT LANGUAGE IN A WAY THAT WOULD MEAN THE TEST IS NO LONGER A TEST OF THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF TELUGU. Instead, offer encouragement.
- Make a note of the time at which each child starts this section of the test.
- If the child can not answer any more of the questions, becomes stressed or upset, or has clearly attempted to address each question and can go no further, kindly tell them that they have done a good job, take the test paper away from them, complete the time at which the test ended and make a note in the 'comments' section with one of the codes outlined in section 2.3 of the manual. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU DO NOT LEAVE CHILDREN SITTING WITH A TEST PAPER, UNABLE TO ANSWER ANY MORE QUESTIONS, FOR A LONG PERIOD OF TIME (e.g. for more than 3 minutes), except if they are clearly reading the comprehension passage, before answering the questions.
- If the child completes the test before the 35 minute period is over, kindly tell them that they have done a good job, take the test paper away from them, complete the time at which the test ended and make a note in Part Two of the comments section that the child finished early as per section 2.3 of the manual and record any additional written comments you may have.
- Otherwise, allow the child 35 minutes to complete as much of the test as possible, then kindly tell them they have done a good job, take the test paper away from them, complete the time at which the test ended and make a note in the Part Two comments section that the child finished early as per section 2.3 of the manual and record any additional written comments you may have.

2.3 Completing the 'Comments' section

- Once you have completed the **Telugu** you must ensure you have entered one of the following into the 'comments' section on the front of the instrument:
 - 01=administered fully
 - 02=administered but discontinued due to child not being able to complete any further items
 - 05=administered but discontinued due to child becoming upset or stressed
 - 06=Other (Specify)
- Once you have completed either Part One and/or Part Two of the **English** you must ensure you have entered one of the following into the Part One and Part Two 'comments' section on the front of the instrument:
 - 00=not administered because child indicated no knowledge of English in the Assessment of language learning
 - 01=administered fully
 - 03=administered but discontinued after Part 1 due to no correct responses
 - 04=administered but discontinued during Part 2 due to child not being able to complete further items
 - 05=administered but discontinued due to child becoming upset or stressed
 - 06=Other (Specify)
- If you have any additional written comments about the way in which the test was conducted, please also write them by hand in this section.