

Communication Attitude of Slovenian Preschool Children who do and do not Stutter

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Abstract

Objective: The aim of this paper was to investigate the communication attitude of Slovenian preschool children who stutter by means of the Communication Attitude Test for Preschool and Kindergarten Children who Stutter (KiddyCAT), and to determine whether differences in communication attitude existed among preschool children who stutter, and their peers who are fluent speakers. In addition, the test's discriminant value, its internal reliability and the factors underpinning the Slovenian version of the KiddyCAT were explored.

Methods and Procedure: Data were gathered on a normative sample of 49 preschool children who stutter and 74 who do not stutter. The children were divided into two subgroups according to age: a "younger" (3 to 4,4 years old) and "older" (4,5 to 6 years old) group.

Outcomes and Results: Results showed that preschool children who stutter scored statistically significantly higher on the KiddyCAT than preschool children who do not stutter. The effect size was large. A mean increase in scores among the preschool children who stutter was observed, but was not statistically significant. An opposite observation, again not significant, was made for preschool children who do not stutter. Also gender did not affect the test results. The test is internally reliable and has construct validity.

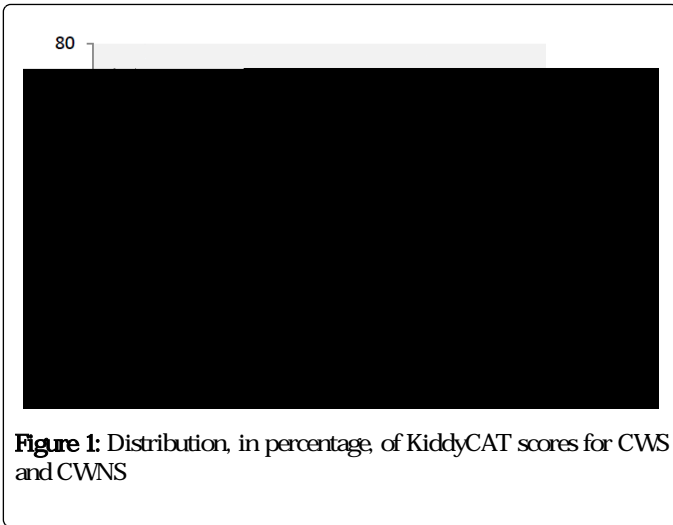
Conclusion and Implications: The KiddyCAT is a useful tool for earw

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indicate that children age three and older are *aware* of their fluency or dysfluency, but that CWS also *think* negatively about their speech. The present study's aim was to explore whether or not the documented negative belief system among preschool CWS also holds-up for Slovenian preschoolers. In order to test this premise, a Slovenian version of the KiddyCAT was used as diagnostic tool.

Aim

In Slovenia, no instrument for the assessment of speech-associated attitude among CWS exists. It was thus the aim of the present research study to adopt and translate the KiddyCAT into Slovenian and to obtain data for the Slovenian population. The goal was (a) to determine if a difference in communication attitude exists between CWS and CWNS, (b) to establish the discriminant value of the test, (c) to



In the Vanryckeghem and Brutton [6] study, the mean CWS score was 4.36 (SD=2.78), and 1.79 (SD=1.78) for CWNS. Another USA-based study [13] revealed a mean score for the experimental group of 4.42 (SD=2.53) and 2.61 (SD=2.20) for the control group.

W sierska, Vanryckeghem, Jeziorczak and Wilk [19] obtained a similar mean score for their group of Polish CWS (4.60, SD=2.46). T e

335, $p=0.566$, Cohen $d=0.007$ and CWNS: $F=1.132$, $p=0.717$, Cohen $d=0.017$.

	Boys (n=71)		Girls (n=52)	
	CWS	CWNS	CWS	CWNS
Mean	5.34	0.87	4.82	0.74
SD	2.87	1.47	3.23	1.58

Table 4 Means and Standard Deviations of CWS and CWNS boys and girls on the KiddyCAT

As expected, there was a statistically significant difference between the boys in the experimental compared to the control group ($F=71.850$, $p=0.000$, Cohen $d=0.510$), and girls in the CWS versus CWNS group ($F=37.930$, $p=0.000$, Cohen $d=0.431$).

As found in other studies, gender does not seem to affect the result of the KiddyCAT. The current findings are in agreement with those found by Clark et al. [13], Wsierska and Vanryckeghem [17], Vanryckeghem and Brutton [16], and Vanryckeghem, De Niels and Vanrobæys [14], who also failed to find significant within-group differences in communication attitude according to gender. All research studies did show significant between-group gender differences.

Internal reliability

To determine the internal consistency of the KiddyCAT, a Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated. The resulting reliability coefficient was 0.93 for both groups, which indicates that

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