Assessing Readability of Spanish and English Caregiver Forms of Norm-Referenced Adaptive Behavior Rating Scales

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Introduction
- Of foreign-born individuals in the US, most are from Mexico and most speak Spanish (Motel & Patten, 2014).
- In Mexico, 42% of 15 year-olds who took an international test of academic skills (PISA) scored below Level 2 on reading, the level deemed necessary to participate in modern society (OECD, 2015).
- When we are evaluating students for special education services, we often use rating scales to assess behavior. Handing a form to a parent does not ensure that they are able to read it, which is a particular concern for parents who are immigrants.
- The purpose of this study was to determine the readability of parent forms of adaptive behavior rating scales in Spanish and in English.

Methods
- Obtained parent forms of adaptive behavior rating scales from publishers (ABAS-3: Western Psychological Services; Vineland-3: Pearson)
- Calculated readability of each section of the rating scales twice
  - In the case of disagreement between two scores, the score was calculated a third time, and the score obtained twice was retained
- Each section of the rating scale was evaluated separately for readability

Materials
Adaptive Behavior Rating Scales:
- Adaptive Behavior Assessment System, Third Edition (ABAS-3)
- Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, Third Edition (Vineland-3)

Readability Formulas:
- Flesch Reading Ease (English)
- Fernandez-Huerta (Spanish)
- Automated Readability Index (ARI; English and Spanish)

Results
ABAS-3
- Flesch, Fernandez-Huerta

Vineland-3
- Automated Reading Index

Conclusions
ABAS-3
- Average English and Spanish readability around 7th grade level
- Spanish tends to be less difficult than English

Vineland-3
- Average English readability around 4th grade level
- Average Spanish readability around 5th grade level

Implications
- While readability scores between the 4th and 7th grade level appear to make the rating scales accessible to all, it is possible that this still exceeds an individuals’ reading ability.
- We need to tactfully determine parents’ reading abilities rather than make an assumption.

Limitations
- Readability scores are approximations and limited in utility.

References