Wepman’s Auditory Discrimination Test, Second Edition (ADT)

Publisher/Date:
- Western Psychological Services, 12031 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA. Published, 1987.

Purpose:
- Assesses a child’s ability to recognize subtle differences between phonemes used in English speech. Identifies children who are delayed in developing auditory discrimination and who may have difficulty learning the phonics necessary for reading.

Provides:
- Using a very simple procedure, the Auditory Discrimination Test - Second Edition assesses a child’s ability to recognize the fine differences between phonemes used in English speech. The examiner reads aloud 40 pairs of words, and the child indicates, verbally (or gesturally) whether the words in each pair are the same or different. The entire test can be administered and scored in just 5 minutes. The ADT-2 provides standard scores and percentile norms at half-year intervals for children between the ages of 4 and 8 years.

Standardization Issues:
- Norms were based on a sample of 1,885 children ages 4-8 years, from 30 states and purportedly representing different ethnic and SES backgrounds. Specific data breakdowns related to balance and representation of the sample were not available.

Reliability and Validity Issues:
- Alternate-form reliability estimate of .92 was reported. Test-retest reliability estimates ranged from .88-.91. Validity may be affected by fundamental debate as to the degree that poor auditory discrimination is actually linked to poor production.

Additional Points:
- The norms for the test may be outdated, and the information provided in the independent review did not specify the norm sample characteristics in any detail.
- A concern of the test’s predecessor was that the test “may” include a vocabulary factor or weighting, which could have implications with low-SES and/or cultural-linguistic differing children.
- Poor performance on the measure can also be attributed to undiagnosed hearing loss or poor listening and/or attention problems.
• Inter-examiner reliability data is an important set of data that is not available, and would be helpful given some concerns regarding reliability of results because of differences inherent in examiner presentation (rate of presentation, emphasis of word pairs) as well as differences in listening (environmental) conditions.
• Compelling evidence of the test’s results and reading achievement have not really been established.