

The mat-3: metalinguistic ability test n.3 for adolescents and adults.

Maria Antonietta Pinto¹, Paolo Iliceto

This article describes the structure and psychometric characteristics of a test on meta-linguistic abilities, specifically addressed to the range adolescents-adults, the so-called MAT-3, with the number indicating a complete series of further meta-linguistic tests conceived for younger age ranges. In a brief overview of the main models of meta-linguistic development, the late-adolescence-adult phase is seen as the extreme point of a developmental continuum, which goes parallel with cognitive development, and is more dependent on cultural and linguistic factors. This paper-pencil test includes 3 trials, two out of which are of meta-semantic nature, *Comprehension* and *Pictorial language*, and 1 is of meta-grammar and metasyntactic nature, *Acceptability*. There are two kinds of subsequent questions: the first yields dichotomies: yes/no, right/wrong, and is based on intuitive knowledge of language rules (acronym: L), whereas the second requires explicit justification of the previous answer, that is an explicit meta-linguistic analysis (acronym: ML). A sample of 621 participants was recruited, coming from central Italy regions; the sample was divided into 3 age ranges: 16-18-year olds attending high schools; 19-30-year olds attending university; 31-58-year-old professionals, socio-culturally differentiated into middle-low and middle-high level. The factorial structure of the L part of the test perfectly fit the 3 dimensions of the construct, namely the 3 trials, whereas factorial analysis of the ML part of the test contributed with a fourth component within the *Comprehension* trial. Convergent validity of the test, analyzed through correlations between MAT-3 and Progressive Raven's Matrix PM38, seems to be satisfying, since correlations are very high, in particular with ML scores, which express the essence of the test construct. Test-retest correlations and across-test correlations are all significant for probability, $p < .01$. Cronbach's Alpha and Cohen's Index values were satisfying as well, computed in a sub-group of the sample including 80 individuals.

¹*Facoltà di Psicologia 2 dell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza"*

E-mail: mariantonietta.pinto@uniroma1.it, paolo.iliceto@laboratoriopsicometrico.it

Indirizzo per la corrispondenza: Facoltà di Psicologia 2 Università di Roma "La Sapienza" Via dei Marsi 78 – 00185 ROMA.