

# Analysis of English Language Proficiency Tests for Young Learners in Korea

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These days in Korea, there is a great interest in taking English language proficiency (ELP) tests and gaining a high score on them for various purposes such as getting a good job or entering a good school. This trend also affects young language learners of English in Korea; as a result, a number of children take ELP tests, which have a similar format to those for adults, but has easier content. However, whether this type of tests is really appropriate for the age of test takers in terms of their developmental or intellectual stage remains in question. Therefore, in this presentation, we would like to evaluate ELP tests for young learners, which exist in Korea.

First of all, we will briefly present the general characteristics of young language learners and then the purpose, format and content of ELP tests for them; JET (Junior English Test), Jr. G-TELP (General Tests of English Language Proficiency), PELT Jr. (Primary English Level Test), and TOSEL (Test of the Skills in the English Language).<sup>1)</sup> These tests are officially approved tests that have been examined for young learners in public schools and private language institutes in Korea.

Next, we will provide the results of our research on young language learners that are 6 to 8 years old. The research is about having twenty first and second graders in the elementary school take one of the four ELP tests mentioned above and collecting data on how they score on the test, how they feel about the test, and where they have difficulty during the implementation of the test through interviews and think-aloud methods.

Finally, based on the result above, we will discuss the problems underlying the current ELP tests for young language learners. Also, we will suggest the further development for ELP tests for young learners, referring to the general education literature and psychology literature on testing children.

Through this presentation, test developers or researchers on language testing will benefit from the analysis of current ELP tests for young language learners and recognize some problems in them. In addition, we can think about what kind of ELP tests will fit for young language learners.

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