

Date: Fri, 11 Jan 2002 10:26:19 -0800
From: "Barry T. Hirsch" <barryt@USINTER.NET>
Subject: Re: Mechanical v. clinical test interpretation

There is no end to esotery. I have gone through a variety of procedures to try and determine the best way to insure that the client is taking an MMPI that they can comprehend. At this point I believe there is no "best way." Rather, there is the way that I think is the best and that I have used and successfully defended in Court.

IMHO the definitive analysis of the reading levels of the MMPI-2 and MMPI-A is set forth in Dahlstrom, W. G., Archer, R. P., Hopkins, D. G., Jackson, E., & Dahlstrom, L. (1999). Assessing the Readability of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory Instruments - the MMPI, MMPI-2, MMPI-A (Rep. No. Fourth Printing). University of Minnesota Press. This work looks at the different methods of determining readability, and there is quite a variation in the results depending upon which method is used. Nevertheless, I agree, the final determinant is the ability to comprehend the items, which is not always definitively picked up by TRIN, VRIN, F, etc. Therefore, following Archer, R. P. (1997). Administration and Scoring Issues. In MMPI-A - Assessing Adolescent Psychopathology (Second ed., pp. 59-67). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

I have my staff administer the MMPI's in a format in which they ask the person to read the instructions to themselves, then to read aloud five pre-chosen items, representing the extremes of ease, midpoint of difficulty, and greatest difficulty in readability. As each item is used, they are asked to explain what the item means to them in their own words, and then, following the instructions they have read, to respond to the item. Their explanations are recorded and their ability to correctly place the "T" and "F" in the corresponding answer sheet position is noted. If they have problems I am notified and come in to see what is going on.

There is a pre MMPI screening questionnaire asking about known organic problems including questions about learning deficits, AD or AD/HD, visual problems, present state of functioning - (within the last week have you had any ?)

I also utilize the above procedure with the MMPIs using the tapes (the instructions and the same items were excerpted from the tapes and recorded onto separate intro tapes for a corresponding auditory administration the MMPIs). Of course, this administration procedure violates the standardization protocols, but, 'ya pays ya money and ya does what yuz wants to do.'

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