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Summary: In an effort to assess learners' language proficiency in mathematics, researchers in South Africa developed a mathematics vocabulary questionnaire (primary) (MV(P)). The study examines the steps involved in designing the preliminary questionnaire to standardizing the final instrument. The 12-item vocabulary questionnaire was given to 1,103 fourth to seventh grade students in the North West Province. The results showed strong evidence of validity and reliability for the MV(P).

Assumptions:

- An instrument is needed to assess a learners' language proficiency in mathematics.
- Poor math abilities may be connected to a limited technical mathematical vocabulary.
- Having an instrument to test a student's proficiency in mathematics can help educators with creating appropriate intervention programs and best practices.

Results:

- The MV(P) had sound psychometric properties.
- There was a strong content validity and construct validity for all three groups tested: Afrikaans-, English-, and Tswana-speaking learners.
- The reliability of the MV(P) was strong.

Conclusion:

- MV(P), a 12-item measurement instrument, can accurately and reliably test a student's proficiency in mathematical vocabulary.
- The validity of the instrument's psychometric properties remains strong for Afrikaans-, English-, and Tswana-speaking students in grades 4-7.

Suggestions for Teachers:

- Teachers may want to consider using the MV(P) to assess the student's mathematical vocabulary.
- Teachers can use the knowledge gained from the MV(P) to create intervention programs and facilitating best practices.

Suggestions for Literacy Leaders:

- Literacy leaders should explore instruments that measures mathematical vocabulary.
- Provide training in diagnosis and remediating mathematical vocabulary.