Current research suggests that the United States is losing the battle in the fight against illiteracy. In particular, increasingly large numbers of children are failing to acquire the early literacy skills, including vocabulary knowledge, that are necessary for reading success. Poor vocabulary knowledge generally translates into poor reading ability during the elementary school years and beyond. As a result, there exists a need to prevent reading difficulties by identifying children at risk for insufficient development of vocabulary skills and by evaluating the effectiveness of vocabulary skills interventions for these children. Unfortunately, the vocabulary measures that exist in today’s educational market were not developed to (a) describe and categorize critical vocabulary skills, and (b) allow for subsequent evaluation of vocabulary skills. Therefore, Parker (2000) developed two vocabulary measures that meet these criteria: (a) Picture Naming Fluency, and (b) Reverse Definition Fluency.

**Picture Naming Fluency**

*Description.* The Picture Naming Fluency (PNF) measure contained 44 color, randomly ordered stimulus pictures designed by a professional graphic artist. The stimulus pictures were printed four per line on three 8.5” X 11” pieces of white paper. All pictures represented common nouns such as frog, glass, and house from the *The Educator’s Word Frequency Guide* (Zeno, Ivens, Millard, & Duvvuri, 1995). To be selected, the nouns had to be included minimally five times in basal readers and children’s books that typical students are likely to encounter in kindergarten and first grade.
Following standardized procedures, examiners showed the PNF measure to each preschool student. The student then was instructed to name the pictures listed on the measure. The number of Pictures Named Correctly (PNC) by the student in 1 minute was used as the measure of performance.

**Technical Adequacy.** The technical adequacy of the PNF task is summarized by Parker (2000; 2006) and Parker & Ditkowsky (2006). The alternate form reliability is .84 for preschool and .73 for kindergarten. Reported concurrent criterion-related validity coefficients for preschoolers are as follows: DIVS Reverse Definition Fluency ($r = .77$), Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III ($r = .75$), Expressive Vocabulary Test ($r = .43$), Preschool Language Scale-Auditory Comprehension ($r = .64$), and Preschool Language Scale-Expressive Communication-($r = .67$). Similarly, reported concurrent criterion-related validity coefficients for kindergartners are as follows: DIVS Reverse Definition Fluency ($r = .58$), Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III ($r = .42$), Expressive Vocabulary Test ($r = .44$), and the OWLS-Oral Expression Scale ($r = .56$). Reported predictive criterion-related validity for preschoolers with the DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency, and Oral Reading Fluency subtests are .40, .37, and .39, respectively. Reported predictive criterion-related validity for kindergartners with the DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency, and Oral Reading Fluency subtests are .59, .50, and .42, respectively. Lastly, a construct validity study of the DIVS measures (Parker, 2000) revealed that alternate forms of the PNF measure correlated .66 for preschoolers and .82 for kindergartners with the latent construct of language competence.
Reverse Definition Fluency

**Description.** The Reverse Definition Fluency (RDF) measure contained 30 randomly ordered formal definitions that described common nouns selected from *The Educator’s Word Frequency Guide* (Zeno, Ivens, Millard, & Duvvuri, 1995). These formal definitions were developed according to specific criteria. That is, each formal definition included a copula, a superordinate, and a relative clause (e.g., a nose is a body part that helps us smell). It should be noted that the textbook *Words for New Readers* (Foresman & Wesley, 1990) was utilized as a resource when definitions were formulated for the selected common nouns.

Using standardized procedures, examiners verbally presented these formal definitions to the preschool students and told the students to name the vocabulary words being defined. Examiners timed the students only when it was their turn to respond for a total time of 1 minute. The number of Words Named Correctly (WNC) in 1 minute was used as the measure of performance.

**Technical Adequacy.** The technical adequacy of the RDF task is summarized by Parker (2000; 2006) and Parker & Ditkowsky (2006). The alternate form reliability is .86 for preschool and .76 for kindergarten. Reported concurrent criterion-related validity coefficients for preschoolers are as follows: DIVS Picture Naming Fluency (r = .77), Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III (r = .83), Expressive Vocabulary Test (r = .68), Preschool Language Scale-Auditory Comprehension (r = .70), and Preschool Language Scale-Expressive Communication-(r = .73). Similarly, reported concurrent criterion-related validity coefficients for kindergartners are as follows: DIVS Picture Naming Fluency (r = .58), Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-III (r = .75), Expressive Vocabulary
Test \( (r = .75) \), and the OWLS-Oral Expression Scale \( (r = .77) \). Reported predictive criterion-related validity for preschoolers with the DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency, and Oral Reading Fluency subtests are .37, .29, and .42, respectively. Reported predictive criterion-related validity for kindergartners with the DIBELS Letter Naming Fluency, Nonsense Word Fluency, and Oral Reading Fluency subtests are .44, .37, and .38, respectively. Lastly, the aforementioned construct validity study (Parker, 2000) suggested that alternate forms of the RDF measure correlated .85 for preschoolers and .85 for kindergartners with the latent construct of language competence.

References

