

## NUTRITION EDUCATION AT THE PRIMARY SCHOOL: CHILDREN'S TAXONOMY OF FOODS

J.M.P. Edema

## PROJECT I. HOW CLASSIFY CHILDREN FOODS?

## METHOD

13 test papers submitted in 1 class of 7 different primary schools in town A.  
Population: 117 children, 10-11 years old.

## RESULTS

Test 1: Group the 26 foods of this list and name each group.

Criteria used (n=168):

taste (hot, sweet, soft, etc.)	138x
fruits	107x
mealtime	96x
beverages	77x
bread	64x
sweet/snacks	51x
proper use	46x
meat(s)	41x
supplier (cow, pig, baker, etc.)	25x
milk/dairy products	18x
cakes/pastry	9x
miscellaneous	55x

Test 2: In each row of 4 words one does not fit. Which one? Why not?

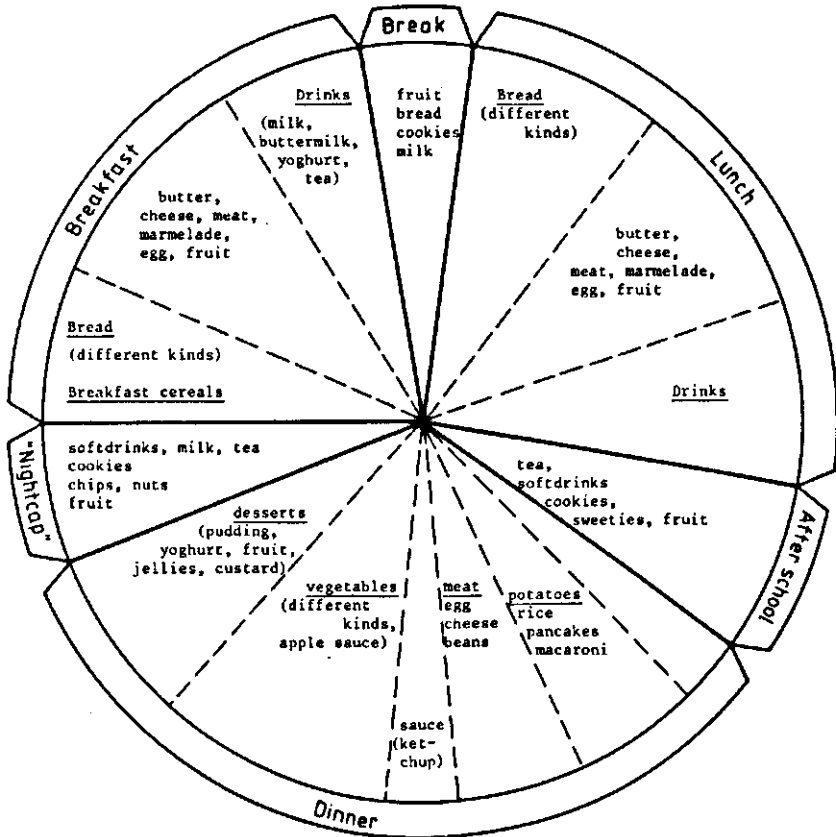
Example: paprika - cucumber - tomato - radish

Criteria used (n=168):

the quality differs (hot, soft, bitter, etc.)	329x
it is prepared differently	164x
it has a different colour/shape	159x
it combines differently	145x
it is made from a different ingredient	133x
it belongs in another class of foods	120x
it is consumed at other times	117x
it is grown differently	39x
it makes you fat/non-fat	32x
the supplier differs	22x
it contains (more of) a specific nutrient	11x
miscellaneous	77x
no response	93x

Other data from this project point in the same direction: The concept "mealtime" is for children a concrete and unambiguous criterium, that figures high in their ethnotaxonomy. Therefore a tentative "Children's Food Disk" was developed.

### A tentative Children's Food Disk.



#### PROJECT II.

Use children the same criteria for classifying foods as are applied in a) the tentative Children's Food Disk, b) the Meal Guide, and c) the Food Board?

#### METHOD

3 test papers submitted in 1 class of 4 different primary schools in town B. Population: 95 children, 10-11 years old.

## RESULTS

Test: In each row of 4 words one word does not fit. Which one? Why not?

Answer	a <sup>1)</sup>	b <sup>2)</sup>	c <sup>3)</sup>
right criterium x right word	30	26	3
right criterium x wrong word	10	-	-
wrong criterium x right word	23	29	19
wrong criterium x wrong word	37	45 *	78 <sup>o)</sup>
total (%)	100%	100%	100%
total (abs)	1231	1160	1298
no answer	194	265	127

- 1) 3 word from same, 4th from another segment of the tentative Children's Food Disk
- 2) Ditto of the Meal Guide
- 3) Ditto of the Food Board
- \*) 15% included in the 45% "wrong criterium" were "mealtime"-criteria
- o) 15% included in the 78% "wrong criterium" were "mealtime"-criteria

## CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding the tentative Children's Food Disk rests on data of 117 children only, it yielded better results (40% right criterium) compared with the Meal Guide (25% right criterium) and the Food Board (3% right criterium) respectively.