

## Cross cultural adaptation of Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale to the Brazilian reality\*

Adaptação transcultural da Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale à realidade brasileira

Adaptación transcultural de Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale a la realidad brasileña

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To accomplish the cultural adaptation of Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale (CL-FODS).

**Methods:** This is a methodological and descriptive study. The Fear of Death Scale was originally developed in the United States and validated in different cultural contexts. The original version of the CL-FODS is composed of 28 items grouped into four dimensions. This scale is designed to evaluate the fear of death and dying.

**Results:** To get the first version was held its translation into Portuguese separately by three experts in English. The first version was submitted to the body of five judges for the “Assessment of Equivalence Semantics and Idiomatic” from which it obtained the second version, which was submitted to the second five panel of judges for the “Evaluation of Conceptual Equivalence and Cultural” (third version). Following developed the Focus Group, in which the CL-FODS was analyzed by community representatives of both genders, different age groups and levels of education, establishing the fourth version, which was submitted to back-translation and sent to author of the original version of the scale. After the suggested by him, reached to the final version of CL-FODS. **Conclusion:** According to the developed methodological steps, it is considered this instrument properly adapted to the Brazilian culture.

**Descriptors:** Translation, Transcultural Adaptation, Death, Die.

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## RESUMO

**Objetivo:** realizar a adaptação transcultural da *Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale* (CL-FODS) – Escala de Medo da Morte de Collett-Lester (EMMCL).

**Métodos:** Trata-se de um estudo metodológico e descritivo. A escala de Medo da Morte foi originalmente elaborada nos Estados Unidos da América e validada em diversos contextos culturais. A versão original da CL-FODS está constituída por 28 itens agrupados em quatro dimensões. Essa escala é destinada a avaliação do medo da morte e do morrer. **Resultados:** Para se adquirir a primeira versão, foi realizada a sua tradução para a língua portuguesa, separadamente, por três peritos em inglês. A primeira versão foi submetida ao corpo de cinco juizes para a “Avaliação das Equivalências Semântica e Idiomática” da qual se obteve a segunda versão, que foi submetida ao segundo grupo de cinco juizes para a “Avaliação das Equivalências Conceitual e Cultural” (terceira versão). A seguir desenvolveu-se o Grupo Focal, no qual a EMMCL foi analisada por representantes da comunidade, de ambos os gêneros, diferentes faixas etárias e graus de escolaridade, estabelecendo-se a quarta versão, que foi submetida à *back-translation* e enviada ao autor da versão original da escala. Após os ajustes sugeridos por ele, alcançou-se a versão final da EMMCL. **Conclusão:** De acordo com as etapas metodológicas desenvolvidas, considera-se o presente instrumento devidamente adaptado à cultura brasileira.

**Descritores:** Tradução, Adaptação Transcultural, Morte, Morrer.

## RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** realizar la adaptación de trans-cultural de la *Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale* (CL-FODS) - Escala de Miedo de la Muerte de Collett-Lester (EMMCL).

**Métodos:** Se trata de un estudio metodológico y descriptivo. La Escala de Miedo a la muerte fue originalmente desarrollado en los Estados Unidos de América y validado en diferentes contextos culturales. La versión original de CL-fods se compone de 28 items agrupados en cuatro dimensiones. Esta escala está diseñada para evaluar el miedo a la muerte y del morir. **Resultados:** Para comprar la primera versión, su traducción al portugués se realizó por separado por tres expertos en Inglés. La primera versión fue presentada a un comité de cinco jueces para la “Evaluación de los equivalencia semántica e idiomática” cuando se obtuvo la segunda la versión que fue presentada al segundo grupo de cinco jueces para la “Evaluación de las equivalencias Conceptual y Cultural” (tercera versión). A continuación, se desarrolló el grupo focal, en el que el EMMCL fue analizado por representantes de la comunidad, de ambos sexos, diferentes edades y niveles de educación, obteniendo la creación de la cuarta versión, que se sometió a *back-translation* que fue enviada al autor de la versión original de la escala. Después de arreglar los ajustes sugeridos por él, se llegó a la versión final de EMMCL. **Conclusión:** De acuerdo con los pasos metodológicos desarrollados, se considera la presente escala correctamente adaptada a la cultura brasileña.

**Descriptores:** Traducción, Adaptación Transcultural, Muerte, Morir.

## INTRODUCTION

Death is a phenomenon that arouses fear and fascination in the human being, being an inevitable component of vital development. Historically and socially, the fear of death has always permeated the imaginary of the people and fomented debates in the health sciences and other related areas.<sup>1</sup>

Considering the individualities and socialities of social groups, the fear of death involves philosophical and existential questions of human life, based on values,

beliefs, rites and myths. In any case, the fact is that people's death, their own death and consequent suffering, often represent feared, painful, and almost insurmountable experiences.<sup>2</sup>

The evaluation of the fear of death is relevant because the meaning of death entails a certain negation and avoidance of this phenomenon in our society, including also health professionals. Reflecting on human existence, on the fear of death and finitude, confronting the desire for eternity and the grief of our own loss, however bad it may seem to us, still ought to be more desirable than to deny it, to hide it in favor of a more authentic and fulfilling life experience.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, there is no more room in the contemporary world for so many anxieties about dying (process) and death (product). These phenomena need to be widely discussed, studied and interpreted so that they can be better understood and accepted.<sup>3</sup>

Through a search conducted in several databases, a considerable number of publications on topics related to death were observed, such as: the death and dying process, patient out of therapeutic possibility, end-of-life humanization and palliative care.<sup>4-12</sup>

However, research on the fear of death and dying is still very scarce in the international literature, and recently the interest in providing valid instruments for the measurement of this construct has contributed to the growth of scientific production related to the theme.<sup>13-15</sup>

In Brazil, Kovács<sup>16</sup> translated the Multidimensional Fear of Death Scale into Brazilian Portuguese and evaluated the idiomatic equivalences between the original scale and the translated version, which was called the Multidimensional Scale to Measure the Fear of Death (EMMM). The EMMM consists of 42 items, divided into eight dimensions. More recently, the cross-cultural adaptation of the Multidimensional Orientation Toward Dying Death Inventory (MODDI-F) has been carried out to the Brazilian reality.<sup>3</sup> This scale evaluates the reactions and attitudes of people in relation to the fear of death and dying and consists of 47 divided items in eight areas.

However, the Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale (CL-FODS) is perhaps the instrument of gauging the fear of death and dying most commonly used in scientific circles, since it clearly and systematically covers the key dimensions that make up the construct.<sup>17</sup> This scale, originally elaborated in the United States of America, is constituted by 28 items grouped in four subscales. It should be emphasized that CL-FODS is already validated in several cultural contexts, showing acceptable psychometric characteristics.<sup>13,15, 18-20</sup>

Considering the above and for setting up an alternative to evaluate the fear of death and dying among Brazilian individuals, the translation of CL-FODS into Portuguese becomes relevant. Therefore, the present study aims to cross-culturally adapt CL-FODS to Brazilian Portuguese.

## METHODS

### Study and instrument design

The present study was of the methodological and descriptive type. The cross-cultural adaptation of CL-FODS to Brazilian Portuguese was carried out with the authorization of the author of the original version of the scale.

Considering that CL-FODS refers to a scale with a complete approach to the subject of death and dying, as well as its use in several countries, such as: Australia, Canada, Chile, Spain, United States, Iran, Kuwait, Nigeria and Turkey, opted By his choice, which will be very useful in assessing the various aspects of death and dying.

The CL-FODS was created in 1969 to eliminate the problem of heterogeneity of the contents of the items of the scales used, until then, to gauge the fear of death. Regarding the conceptual foundation of CL-FODS, it is based on the premise that fear of death is a multidimensional concept with several possible causes, which can lead a person to react differently to the idea of death as a state and / or as A process. Likewise, emotional reactions and attitudes could be different when it comes to one or the other. Thus, four subscales were established: fear of one's own death, fear of one's own death process, fear of the death of other people, and fear of the dying process of others.<sup>15,18,21</sup>

The first version of CL-FODS was composed of 36 items, with different number of items in each of the four subscales. In 1994, a revised version was published that had the same number of items in each subscale (32 items in total). Subsequently, in 2003, those items of each subscale that did not contribute to the significance of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient were eliminated, resulting in a final version with 28 items.<sup>22</sup>

Therefore, CL-FODS is multidimensional in nature, consisting of 28 items, grouped into four subscales with seven items each (Table 1). Likert responses vary from 1 (nothing) to 5 (very). Scores are obtained for the full scale and for each subscale, by means of the mean responses. The higher mean scores indicate greater fear of death / dying and lower mean scores indicate the opposite.<sup>23</sup>

### Ethical Aspects of the Research

The present study was submitted and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Vale do Sapucaí, according to the Opinion, under Protocol no. 1222/10.

**Table 1** - CL-FODS subscales and their corresponding items

Your own death	1,2,3,4,5,6 e 7
Your dying	8,9,10,11,12,13 e 14
The death of others	15,16,17,18,19,20 e 21
The dying of others	22,23,24,25,26,27 e 28

### Development of the study

The development of the cross-cultural adaptation of CL-FODS followed the following methodological steps: translation of the instrument from its original language into the Brazilian Portuguese language; Evaluation of the semantic and idiomatic equivalences between the original and the translated version; Evaluation of the conceptual and cultural equivalence of the second version originated from the semantic and idiomatic equivalences; Focus group and back-translation or back-translation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the present study consist of the presentation of the steps that established the Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale - CL-FODS transcultural adaptation to the Brazilian reality, which are as follows:

### Translation of Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale

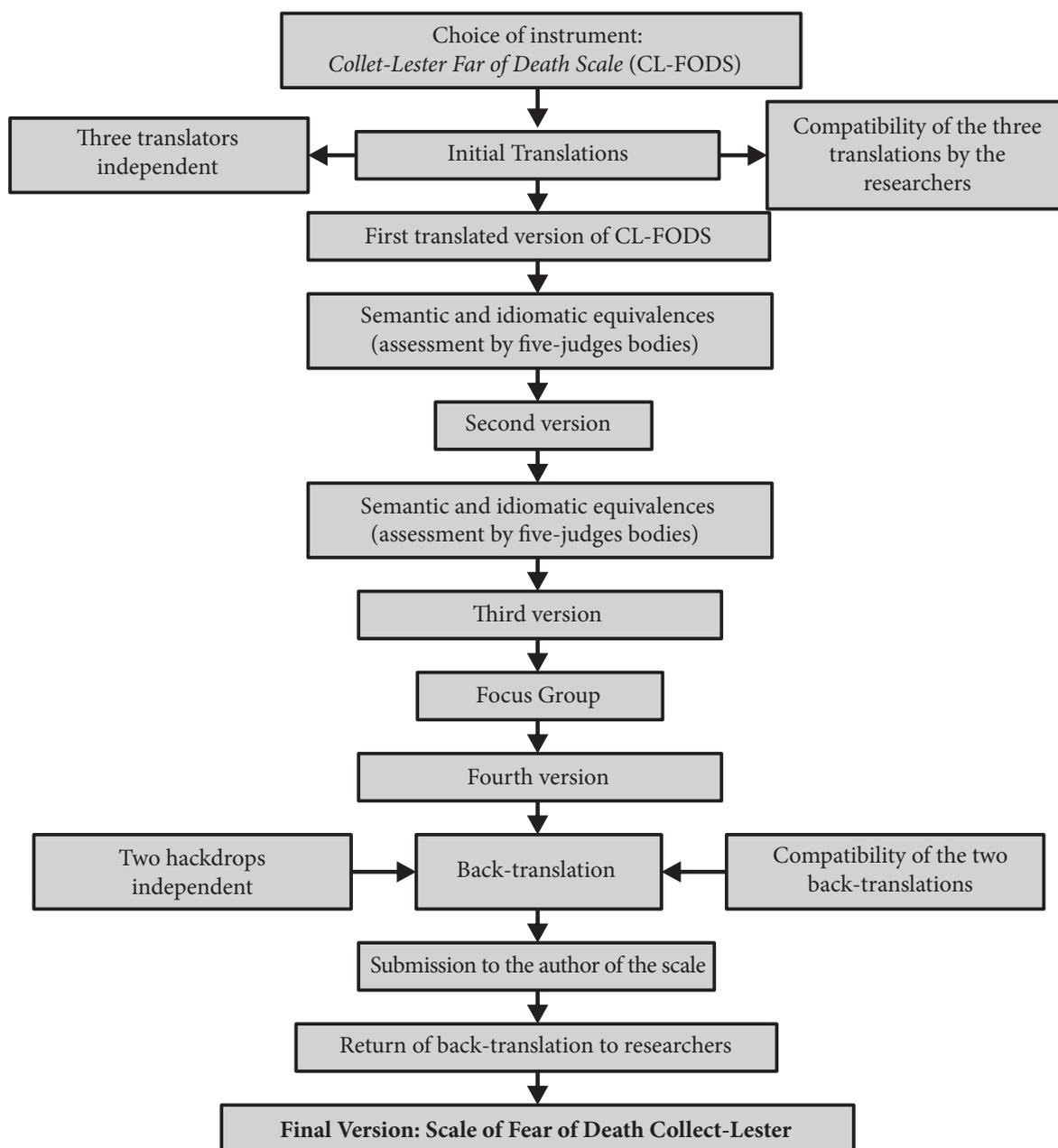
The CL-FODS translation into the Brazilian Portuguese language was done separately by three English experts. For the translation of the instrument, three English teachers with extensive experience in teaching English in language schools located in a university city of the State of Minas Gerais were selected. The translations seek to consider the linguistic aspects and the meaning attributed to the terms in our reality. Subsequently, already in possession of the translations, the researchers met and the three translated versions were analyzed item by item. Among the three translations, they tried to choose the items with language that was closer to the Brazilian reality. Based on the analysis of the three translations, another version was created called "the first translated version of *Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale*."

### Evaluation by body of judges

#### - Analysis of semantic and idiomatic equivalences

The first version prepared by the researchers was submitted to a body of five judges, who were asked to evaluate the original and final versions of the scale (1st translated version of CL-FODS). This committee of experts carried out the analysis of the semantic and idiomatic equivalences of all CL-FODS items. For the analysis of these equivalences,

Figure 1 - Diagram of the development of cultural adaptation of CL-FODS<sup>24</sup>



the instrument “Assessment of Semantic and Idiomatic Equivalences”, adapted for the present study was used.<sup>25</sup>

After the analyzes, the changes were individually suggested by the evaluators, accepting as equivalent the items with at least 80% agreement among the judges.<sup>25</sup> The following criteria were considered for the committee of experts: Brazilian, English experts with a baccalaureate in Letters and who had vast knowledge of the English and Portuguese languages. It was explained by the researchers, the evaluators, the evaluation process and the importance of their contributions to the development of the transcultural adaptation of the scale.

After the evaluations of the instrument were returned by the judges, the analysis of the items and the changes suggested by the evaluators were carried out by the researchers.

Of the 28 items evaluated, those of numbers 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 28 were considered as equivalent and therefore received no change.

On the other hand, items 3, 5, 6, 11, 20 and 27 did not reach agreement of 80% of the judges and were altered according to the evaluators’ suggestions.

From this, the second translated version of CL-FODS.

## - Analysis of cultural and conceptual equivalences

The second version was sent to another committee of experts, also composed of five judges, to analyze the cultural and conceptual equivalence of the items. The instrument "Evaluation of Cultural and Conceptual Equivalence" was used and items that presented at least 80% agreement between the evaluators were considered.<sup>25</sup> Those who presented a lower equivalence level were modified by the researchers of the present study. To compose this committee of specialists, were chosen: professionals with doctor's degree in the areas of health and human; With command of the English language; Knowledge of the processes of

construction and adaptation of instruments of measures of psychosocial variables, as well as knowledge on the theme "death and dying".

Of the 28 items evaluated, those of numbers 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 28 received from the body of Judges, minimum level of agreement of 80%, so they were not modified.

The items 1, 2, 6, 8, 10, 11, 25, 26 and 27 presented a level of equivalence of less than 80%, which were modified according to suggestions made by the expert committee.

In order to obtain the concordance index among the judges regarding the conceptual equivalence of the items, the model presented by Waltz, Strickland and Lenz.<sup>26</sup>

$$IVC = \frac{n^{\circ} \text{ de itens avaliados como equivalentes por dois juizes}}{\text{total de itens da escala}} \text{ Onde, IVC} = \text{Índice de Validade de Conteúdo}$$

The evaluations of each judge were compared with the evaluations of all the others, by calculating the CVI for each pair (judge A x judge B, judge A x judge C; ...; judge B x judge C; judge B x judge D, and so on). In the present study, the results obtained by the evaluation of the conceptual equivalence of CL-FODS items were all higher than 0.8, indicating the content validity of the evaluated instrument.

The result of the analysis of the cultural and conceptual equivalences allowed the elaboration of the third translated version of CL-FODS.

After this step, the Collett-Lester Death Fear Scale was defined and the researchers decided to adopt the acronym EMMCL to name the translated instrument.

## Focal Group

The researchers submitted the EMMCL to the evaluation of a group from the community of Itajubá, MG, which, methodologically, is called the Focal Group (GF), formed by five people of both genders, aged between 20 and 80 years and level of varied schooling. The objective of the GF was to evaluate the comprehension of each item of the scale in question.

For the GF meeting, the procedures described below were adopted. At the scheduled time and place, the participants were received by the researchers, who explained the methodological process of cross-cultural adaptation, specifically, of the instrument to be analyzed.

Then, using the data show, the scale items were designed, one by one, for participants to analyze.

Of the 28 items analyzed by the participants, 27 were considered, by consensus of the group, as "easy to understand" and did not suffer any modifications. Regarding item six, there was a proposed change and, with the group's assent, the matter was changed.

After the GF, the 4th version of EMMCL was obtained.

## Back-translation

It is important to note that, in most transcultural adaptation research, back-translation is performed after the translation of the scale - 1st version.<sup>27-29</sup> However, in a study carried out by the 4th author of the present study, together with Kimura,<sup>30</sup> the author of the original version of the scale that was being adapted to the Portuguese language requested that the back-translation be performed after obtaining the version originated from the conceptual and cultural equivalences. Associated with this, the 3rd and 4th authors of the present study have already developed a research in which back-translation was performed from the focus groups<sup>3</sup> and therefore it was decided in this study that back-translation was performed after GF.

The purpose of back-translation was to verify whether there were divergences in the meaning and content of the original and translated versions of the scale. For this reason, the two retro-translators were not oriented on the objectives and concepts involved in the content of the material. Thus, the back-translation was carried out independently.

For the choice of back-translators the following criteria were considered: translators should be native speakers of English-speaking countries; Fluent in the colloquial forms of the language of origin and with command of the Portuguese language.

From the two backtranslations, at the invitation of the researchers, another American translator, a professor of English and with a command of the Portuguese language, assisted the authors of this work in the elaboration of the final version of back-translation. To do so, after the analysis of the back-translations, the items considered more adequate were maintained and the necessary adjustments were made in the others.

After obtaining the final version of the back-translation, the scale was sent to Dr. Lester, who, after learning about

the methodology used in the translation of the scale from English to Portuguese and back-translation, revised it and presented only suggestions of changes to items six and nine.

To make the adjustments indicated by Dr. Lester, the researchers met again with the North American translator and, after considerations, analyzes and consensus, made the modifications pointed out.

Subsequent to these adjustments, another version of the back-translation was obtained, which was again sent to the author of the original scale, acquiring their agreement.

The modifications adopted for the second version of the back-translation were also modified in the fourth version of the culturally adapted scale, from which originated the fifth and last version of the instrument.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Collett-Lester Fear of Death Scale (CL-FODS) is appropriately adapted to Brazilian culture, after the development of several methodological stages: translation, analysis of semantic, idiomatic, conceptual and cultural equivalence, focus group and back-translation.

The Collett-Lester Scale of Fear of Death (EMMCL) was easy to understand and could be useful to evaluate how social groups face the reality of death and dying and from there to offer strategies and interventions that can guide and help people deal with this inevitable event. In this context, it is evident that nursing, through the care process, is often faced with this reality and, for this, needs resources and subsidies.

It should be emphasized that the validation process of EMMCL for use in Brazil is being coordinated by researchers from the School of Nursing of the University of São Paulo (EEEUSP). In the future, after EMMCL validation, it will be possible to obtain data to measure the fear of death and dying among Brazilian individuals. It will also be feasible to compare this information with the knowledge about the fear of death and dying produced in different places on the planet.

Finally, this methodological study contributes to teaching and research, as it describes in detail the steps that make up the process of cross-cultural adaptation of scales that evaluate subjective constructs.

## Contributors

C. R. O. Júnior participated in the conception of the study, analysis and interpretation of data, critical review of the intellectual content and approval of the version to be published. D. R. Machado contributed in the analysis and interpretation of the data, writing of the article and approval of the version to be published. F. S. Santos collaborated in the conception of the study, relevant critical revision of the intellectual content and approval of the final version to be published. J. V. da Silva participated in

the conception of the study, analysis and interpretation of the data, writing of the article and approval of the version to be published. E.A.R. Domingues participated in the preparation of the article.

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