Updates to the LTS

Presented by:

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Workshop Aim

The aim of this workshop, divided into 3 parts, was to share with the BILC testing community the updates that have been incorporated into the LTS and solicit input on possible areas for further course revisions.

Part I

First, presenters introduced the new Day 6 statistics module. The new module contextualizes test analysis within the test development process, highlights principles of criterion-referenced scoring, and guides participants through the Neoclassical approach to test analysis developed by Dr. Ray Clifford. Using real data and actual items piloted by the Slovakian testing team, participants work through a scenario where they group test takers into Masters/Non-masters, calculate item facility value (IF), discrimination index (DI), and complete the distractor analysis for both groups. Using the data, participants identify potential problematic items/distractors and apply this insight to the actual test items, discussing courses of action for each (retain/revise/reject). This new module was developed by Maria Vargova and Dr. Edelmira Nickels with input and guidance from Dr. Ray Clifford, Dr. Matthew Wilcox, and Branka Petek. It was piloted in February 2023, and after minor changes, has been successfully integrated into the course. Participant feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and the user-friendly quality of the lesson, including ready-to-go, pre-formulated Excel documents that even novice Excel users can handle, ensures the new Day 6 is relevant, addresses participants of all skill levels, and provides meaningful test statistical analysis practice that everyone enjoys!

LTS facilitators can all be confident that they will be able to present Day 6. A tutorial and materials will be available in the near future.

Part II

Some changes have already been incorporated into the course. The presenters discussed the following changes:

- HUGHES TEXT- The plan is to use the updated 2020 version of the text which includes some new content: "Beyond testing: other means of assessment" and "New technology and language testing"
- PRESENTATIONS-- Updating look of PPTs; breaking up longer PPTs to engage the audience; less PPT, more hands-on application and activities
- WRITING- Eliminate BAT-W rating; focus just on prompt rating (Sustained/Does not sustain activity); sample rating/norming; group prompt writing
- RUBRICS- Eliminate the analysis of various types of rubrics
- OPIs- use the BAT audio for listening, not the old OPI videos

<u>Part III</u>

Finally, the presenters asked groups the following discussion questions and will analyze the feedback and suggestions to inform additional course updates:

1. Some participants have said there is a lot of repetition in the course—for example, the CTA highlighting; writing specs for each skill, etc. Do you think there could be a better way for these activities to be conducted? Do the benefits of repetition (it sinks in, it stresses importance) outweigh the rote aspect of repetition (making it boring, annoying, etc.)?

2. The course was developed in 2000... 23 years ago! Much in the testing world has changed. How can we incorporate our current digital-age considerations/issues/concepts (like use of video, AWE tools for rating, transcript audio features, text messaging, ChatGPT, use of Spellcheck, etc.) in the course? SHOULD we discuss these topics, or is it better to leave these ideas aside and continue to focus on laying the foundations of STANAG 6001 testing?

3. The pre-course work consists of reading the Hughes text and completing the Study Guide, which we go over in Week 1. Is this good practice? Should there be a variety of readings instead? Is there a better way to discuss Hughes? Should we consider other activities for pre-course work?

4. Homework in the course— Is the amount of homework realistic? Is there a better use of time? Are there more productive activities to do for homework (for example, a flipped classroom approach where they read/watch PPT and then apply the theory to practice in class)? Should we even assign homework?