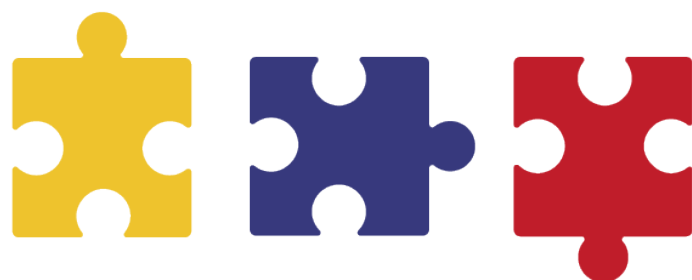




# New Directions



# Colombia

**Online | 1-3 July, 2021**

The bottom half of the poster features a large, abstract graphic. It consists of several overlapping geometric shapes: a large yellow triangle on the left, a smaller red triangle below it, and a blue triangle to the right of the red one. These shapes are layered over a photograph of a cityscape, likely Bogotá, Colombia, showing a dense urban area with many buildings and a mountain range in the background under a clear sky.

**New Directions**  
in English Language  
Assessment Conference

**#NewDirectionsLatam**



# Welcome

A very warm welcome to the 2nd Latin America New Directions in English Language Assessment 2021!

The last fifteen months or so have been difficult for everyone, as we have heard about, talked about and lived through the challenges that the Pandemic has brought to all aspects of our life and work. It's important to acknowledge that things have definitely changed and perhaps may never be the same again.

It's important to focus on some of the incredibly positive aspects that have emerged from having to negotiate and navigate this different reality we find ourselves in. And thinking about this conference, we see that there are plenty of opportunities to do that.

One definite positive is the incredible resilience and resourcefulness shown by the education community, from educators, administrators, managers, raters and researchers to test developers – not to mention learners, test-takers and parents, all working towards the same goal: to provide a high-quality, uninterrupted opportunity for learning and assessment to people all over the world.

While we may have lost the personal advantages that a face to face event offers, this year's online conference means that colleagues, who may not be able to come to Bogotá, can now join us in this virtual space. This is a huge positive in terms of making connections and celebrating diversity. In light of the way teaching, learning and testing has changed, the theme of this year's New Directions LATAM conference; "Professionalising English language assessment in learning systems" becomes even more pertinent. For some of us, interacting online has added another dimension to our professional development

needs; for others, it is an intensified extension of their existing daily work. In some contexts, the Pandemic has been a catalyst for innovation and progress. In other contexts, it has provided us with an opportunity to pause for thought and consider options. It has raised issues about the access to and inclusion in learning and assessment opportunities. Regardless of these different roles, responsibilities, contexts and goals, the current situation has compelled all those who are engaged in teaching, learning and assessment to embark on a journey of learning.

The New Directions LATAM team is extremely grateful for the enthusiasm and support we have received from everyone, including presenters and participants. We have three days of excellent presentations and engaging discussions ahead of us. On behalf of the New Directions LATAM team, our heartfelt thanks to all of you.

Finally, we hope you enjoy the conference in its entirety; the presentations, the networking, meeting up with old acquaintances, and making new connections. Explore new dimensions of language testing and assessment, learn from each other, question and challenge each other, congratulate each other on great sessions but most of all, enjoy being part of this stimulating, diverse, global, and incredibly important organic online community.

Have a wonderful, enjoyable and thought-provoking conference!

*Mina Patel*

**Mina Patel**

Conference Chair New Directions LATAM

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# About New Directions

## Professionalising English language assessment in learning systems: sharing practicalities and implications.

The conference provides perspectives and insights into trends and approaches in English language assessment at a local, regional, and international level.

New Directions aims to:

- Establish a unique platform for sharing both cutting edge developments and best practices in the English language assessment used in education systems.
- Provide a dynamic space where regional and international policy makers, educational professionals, academics, teachers and assessment practitioners may interact, exchange information and keep abreast of the latest developments in the field.
- Facilitate an ongoing conversation among a wide range of regional and international professionals about finding assessment solutions that serve local needs and satisfy global standards.

Building on the success of the first New Directions Conference in Mexico in 2019, this year's second Latin America conference, which will be hosted online from Colombia from July 1-3, 2021, will employ an online

format and feature more than 60 presentations from 15 countries in this region and other parts of the world.

The conference will focus on professional development in the area of English language assessment at all levels of the education system; the impact of planned, systematic and high-quality investment in professional development; the practicalities of implementing such programmes and the implications of not doing so.

The attendees will have the opportunity to interact with and learn from policy-makers, academics, practitioners and test developers. They will explain the importance of assessment in learning systems in response to the increasing mobility and global reach of education and employment, along with stricter demands for accountability.

This year's conference will discuss the ways in which institutional, national and even regional systems are seeking to professionalize the different stakeholders involved in choosing, planning and implementing programs and the methods of English language assessment they employ.



# Theme & sub-themes

The main theme of the 2021 New Directions Colombia Conference will be Professionalising English assessment in learning systems: sharing practicalities and implications. We will explore how institutional, national and even regional systems are seeking to professionalise the different stakeholders involved in choosing, planning and implementing programmes and the English language assessment tools and methodologies which they use.

## ► Language assessment literacy

Language assessment literacy forms the basis of the knowledge needed to both understand essential language assessment concepts as they apply to an individual (i.e. as a test-taker, a parent or a teacher) and undertake language assessment procedures, that is, to design, administer, interpret, utilize, and report on language assessment data for different purposes. An increasing importance has been given to assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning. This has had implications at all levels of the education system, starting with what happens in the classroom. The presentations in this strand explore language assessment literacy for teachers and other stakeholders in language testing and assessment.

## ► Assessing productive skills

Productive skills are regarded as crucial, insofar as they enable a person to function on a daily basis, and they open the way for education, employment and international mobility. Most international language examinations – and a growing number of national and local ones as well – test both speaking and writing. The effective assessment of productive skills has been the subject of intense discussion and wide research, even before the advent of Artificial Intelligence. At the current time, automated systems which are meant to support both test-takers and developers and streamline processes have added another dimension to the testing and assessment of productive skills. The presentations in this strand showcase the research and work being done in the assessment of productive skills in local, regional and international contexts.

## ► Operationalising the ESP construct

As the worlds of work and study change, there is a greater need for a true understanding of the role of English for specific purposes (ESP). ESP is slightly different from general language testing because it focuses on persons who need to have specific language skills, for example, doctors, lawyers and those in the tourism sector. In such cases, a knowledge of the English required by specific professions is obviously very important, and, at times, crucial. Therefore, the assessment of such language skills requires careful planning and a precise implementation at all stages of the procedure, to ensure that the participants are fully equipped for their daily work.

## ► Assessment in times of crisis

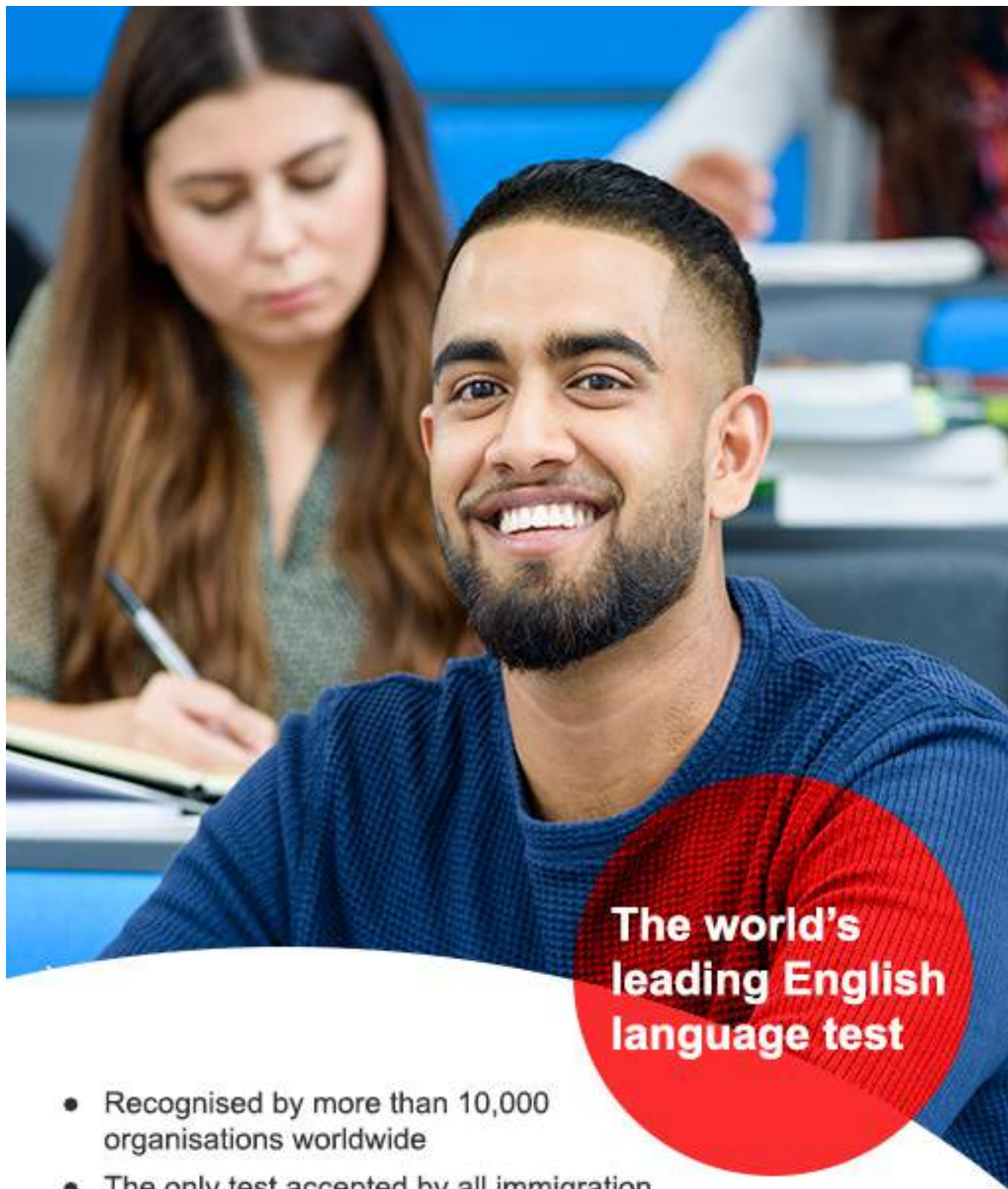
This has been an unprecedented year for all of us, a time of uncertainty, disruption, delay and the suspension of normal activities in all spheres of society. It has also been a year of resilience, perseverance, strength, innovation and team-work. The Pandemic has caused chaos but it has also forced us to think about our priorities in the field of education and find solutions to our concerns which are realistic, effective and long-lasting. This strand highlights striking examples of the work that has been done on assessment, during the Coronavirus Pandemic, to ensure that students and test-takers may continue to have the opportunity to be tested and assessed in these exceptional times.

## ► IELTS Strand

The IELTS strand focuses on two different aspects of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). On Day 1 the presentations will discuss the different approaches to EAP that may arise in the future, particularly in light of the ever increasing use of virtual reality tools. They will analyse the results of current research into different aspects of EAP and their implications for the different stakeholders. On Day 2, the presentations will specifically address the different stakeholders who engage in and interact with IELTS, from a developmental, operational or administrative standpoint and talk about aspects of language assessment literacy (LAL) which are beginning to become prominent in discussions and research about language testing and assessment.







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# Agenda

## JULY 1

8:00 - 9:30 A.M | 10:00 - 11:30 A.M

### PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

## JULY 2

8:00 - 8:05 A.M **OPENING ADDRESS:** British Ambassador

8:10 - 8:50 A.M **THE ANNUAL NEW DIRECTIONS WEIR LECTURE: PROFESSIONALISING LEARNING SYSTEMS**  
Professor Barry O'Sullivan

8:55 - 9:40 A.M **IN CONVERSATION WITH PISA: THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES ASSOCIATED WITH FOREIGN LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT IN PISA 2025**  
Professor Barry O'Sullivan | Andreas Schleicher

9:45 - 10:00 A.M **BREAK**

10:05 - 11:45 A.M **PARALLEL SESSIONS**  
Language assessment literacy | Assessing productive skills | Professionalising English assessment in learning systems | Operationalising the ESP construct | IELTS Strand | Assessment in times of crisis | Meet our partners

11:50 - 12:50 P.M **PANEL: TEACHER EDUCATION & TRAINING**

12:55 - 13:40 P.M **LUNCH**

13:45 - 14:15 P.M **PARALLEL SESSIONS**  
Language assessment literacy | Assessing productive skills | Professionalising English assessment in learning systems | Operationalising the ESP construct | IELTS Strand | Assessment in times of crisis | Meet our partners

14:20 - 13:00 P.M **PLENARY: UNPACKING THE CONCEPT OF LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT LITERACY FOR ALL KEY STAKEHOLDERS**  
Dr. Beverly Baker

15:05 - 15:15 P.M. **DAY 1 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

## JULY 3

7:40 - 8:00 A.M **ENGLISH EVALUATION IN LATIN AMERICA: A SNAPSHOT ON WHERE WE ARE TODAY**

8:00 - 9:00 A.M **PANEL: ASSESSING SPEAKING AT NATIONAL LEVEL**

9:05 - 10:10 A.M **PARALLEL SESSIONS**  
Language assessment literacy | Assessing productive skills | Professionalising English assessment in learning systems | Operationalising the ESP construct | IELTS Strand | Meet our partners

10:15 - 10:30 A.M **BREAK**

10:35 - 11:05 A.M **PARALLEL SESSIONS**  
Language assessment literacy | Assessing productive skills | Professionalising English assessment in learning systems | Operationalising the ESP construct | IELTS Strand | Meet our partners

11:10 - 11:50 A.M **PLENARY: DEVELOPING A LOCALISED SEMI-DIRECT SPEAKING TEST FOR YOUNG LEARNERS IN URUGUAY:**  
Dr. Fumiyo Nakatsuhara & Dr. Gabriela Kaplan

11:55 - 12:20 P.M **CLOSING CEREMONY**



# Keynote & Plenary Speakers



**Professor Barry O'Sullivan**

**Head of Assessment Research & Development, English & Exams  
| British Council**

Professor Barry O'Sullivan was responsible for the design and development of the Aptis test service. He has undertaken research into many aspects of language testing and assessment and its history, and has worked on the development and refinement of the socio-cognitive model of test development and validation since 2000. He is particularly interested in spreading ideas about test validation and test localisation. He has spoken about his work at many conferences around the world, while almost 100 of his studies have been published in a variety of international journals, books and technical reports. He has worked on many test development and validation projects over the past 25 years and advises ministries and institutions on assessment policy and practice.



**Dr. Beverly Baker**

**Associate Professor and Director of Language Assessment, Official Languages and Bilingualism | University of Ottawa, Canada**

Her research focuses on the intersections among stakeholders during the development and validation of language tests and assessment activities in the classroom. She also studies the development and professionalisation of language teachers, and has held workshops and consultations for more than 1500 language teachers in different countries. She is currently the Treasurer of the International Language Testing Association, and in 2019 she won the British Council's International Assessment Award.



**Dr. Fumiyo Nakatsuhara**

**Reader in Language Assessment, Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment (CRELLA) | University of Bedfordshire, UK**

Her main research interests are the nature of co-constructed interactions in various speaking-test formats (e.g. the interview and paired and group formats), the impact of the test taker's characteristics on his or her test performance, task design, the development of rating scales and the relation between listening and speaking skills. She has undertaken a number of international testing projects, working with ministries, universities and examination boards. For example, she has led three phased research for the use of video-conferencing technology to deliver the IELTS Speaking Test (2014-2018). Fumiyo has published the following books: *The Discourse of the IELTS Speaking Test* (with P. Seedhouse, 2018, CUP) and *The co-construction of conversation in group oral tests* (2013, Peter Lang).



**Dr. Gabriela Kaplan**

**Coordinator of English programme in Plan Ceibal | Uruguay**

Gabriela Kaplan, whose passion is public education, has worked in teacher training for more than 20 years, with a special interest in the literature and culture of English-speaking countries. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from the Universidad de la República Uruguay; a B.A. in English from London University; and an M.A. in Humanities from the University of California. She co-designed the "Ceibal en Inglés" programme as a consultant in Linguistic Policies for Uruguay's National Board of Education (ANEP) and is the General Coordinator of that programme for the Ceibal Project (Plan Ceibal). She is author of the book *Is Uruguay a Nation State?* (Lambert Academic Publishing, 2015), and has published several articles about English Language Teaching.

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# Speakers

## A-Z

### ► **Adriana Paola Bendeck Rico**

**English coordinator and researcher, Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia, Colombia**

Adriana holds a B.A. from La Salle University and a Master's in teaching English as a foreign language from the Universidad Iberoamericana. She has worked in different public and private institutions, primary and high schools, and universities. She is currently an English coordinator and researcher at the Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia. She is a member of the Virtualex research group at the same University and also teaches English at the Universidad Distrital. She has spoken at different national and international events and has published several academic studies. She is a member of ASOCOPI, a non-profit organization whose mission is to improve English Language Teaching in Colombia and sharpen the skills of educators; asocopi also organizes an annual conference (now in its 56th edition), five Special Interest Groups (SIGS), webinars on the last Thursday of every month and Diploma Courses.

### ► **Adriana Molina**

**Headmaster, San Patricio School, Colombia**

Adriana is currently the Headmaster at San Patricio School in Bogotá, Colombia. She has specialized in educational research and evaluation, and was responsible for designing and implementing the research program of Colombia's evaluation institute ICFES. Adriana was also the co-director of the Education Evaluation Center of the University of Los Andes. Her experience in evaluating schools, teachers and students, has allowed her to implement a mechanism of class observation which informs and support teachers' pedagogical practice.

### ► **Adriana Valencia**

**Assistant Professor, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana Cali, Colombia**

Adriana Valencia Pérez has a B.A. in Modern Languages from the Universidad del Valle and a Master's in Education with a minor in Curriculum Design from the Universidad Javeriana. She has written textbooks on English and carried out research in the area. She has also designed the English Placement Test that is now applied at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Cali. She currently teaches English at the Language Centre of that university. She has taught in different institutions at different levels, from primary to university.

### ► **Aidan Holland**

**Teaching Products Coordinator at British Council (EU/WE), Spain**

Aidan Holland has taught English since 2004. He worked in Taiwan, Italy and the UK before settling in Spain in 2009, where he began to work for the British Council. He has had experience in a range of contexts involving young learners, teenagers and adults. At the British Council, he has held roles at a local, national, regional and global level.

He has an M.A. in TEFL/SL from the University of Birmingham and is currently studying for a second M.A. in Language Testing, at Lancaster University. Has a particular interest in language assessment testing.

### ► **Alberto Costa**

**Senior Assessment Manager at Cambridge Assessment English, Americas, Brasil**

Alberto has a Cambridge RSA Diploma for Overseas Teachers of English (DOTE) and specialized in teacher training (PRINSELT) at the College of St. Mark & St. John in Plymouth, UK. He has worked as a teacher, teacher-trainer and academic consultant for 30 years, as well as a course tutor for the CELTA, ICALT and DELTA qualifications. Based in Brazil, he has worked for the Cambridge Assessment English organization for 3 years. The continuing professional development of teachers is one of his main interests.

### ► **Alexis Lopez**

**Research Scientist in the Center for Language Education and Assessment Research, Educational Testing Service, Colombia**

Alexis López is a Research Scientist in the Center for Language Education and Assessment Research at the Educational Testing Service. His research focuses on the assessment of English language proficiency and content knowledge for K-12 English learners. He previously worked as an Associate Professor at the Universidad de Los Andes, and as a Test Development Specialist at the the Second Language Testing Inc. company. He has developed test specifications, item writing, field-testing and standard-setting, and conducted validation and alignment studies.







### ► **Amy Lightfoot**

**Acting Director English for Education Systems in South Asia, Singapore**

Amy Lightfoot is Acting Director English for Education Systems in South Asia. She leads strategy development and programme design for large-scale English language teacher education projects across the region. She also focuses on the quality assurance of education programmes and related research activities. She has worked in the field of education for 20 years, and has specialized in South Asia for more than a decade. Her interests include expertise in multilingual education, the use of digital platforms and alternative models for the professional development of teachers and the monitoring and evaluation of teacher competence and performance. She has published a number of studies of these subjects. She has an M.A. in Education and International Development from University College London and an M.A. in English Language Teaching and the Cambridge DELTA from the University of Bath.

### ► **Andreas Schleicher**

**Director for Education and Skills, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), France**

Andreas Schleicher is Director for Education and Skills, and Special Advisor on Education Policy to the Secretary-General at the OECD in Paris. He initiated and oversees the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and other international instruments that have created a global platform for policy-makers, researchers and educators across nations and cultures to innovate and transform educational policies and practices. He has worked for over 20 years with ministers and education leaders around the world to improve quality and equity in education.

### ► **Andrew Khan**

**Senior Market Development Manager, English Assessment, Pearson, UK**

Andrew is Senior Market Development Manager for English Assessment at Pearson and has been with the organisation since 2006. He travels the world, meeting with schools, universities and national governments, to help ensure that Pearson's assessment solutions best meet the needs of learners and teachers. Focusing primarily on computer-based testing, he has worked with institutions on the implementation of assessment tools ranging from in-class placement solutions to

formally certificated qualifications. Over the last year, he has worked on the launch of the at-home Versant English Placement Test with Remote Monitoring and the development of the new digital version of the Pearson English International Certificate.

### ► **Arlenys Palmero Ortega**

**Professor at Universidad de las Ciencias Informáticas, Cuba**

Arlenys has taught English for over 15 years. She has done research on speaking skills in self-access centers and on collaborative learning. She has a Master's in Education.

### ► **Barry O'Sullivan**

**Head of Assessment Research & Development, English & Exams at British Council, UK**

Professor Barry O'Sullivan was responsible for the design and development of the Aptis test service. He has undertaken research into many aspects of language testing and assessment and its history, and has worked on the development and refinement of the socio-cognitive model of test development and validation since 2000. He is particularly interested in spreading ideas about test validation and test localisation. He has spoken about his work at many conferences around the world, while almost 100 of his studies have been published in a variety of international journals, books and technical reports. He has worked on many test development and validation projects over the past 25 years and advises ministries and institutions on assessment policy and practice.

He is the founding president of the UK Association of Language Testing and Assessment (UKALTA) and has been an honorary or guest professor at universities in different countries. In 2016 he was awarded a fellowship by the U.K. Academy of Social Sciences, and was elected a Fellow of the Asian Association for Language Assessment in 2017.

### ► **Beverly Baker**

**Associate Professor and Director of Language Assessment, Official Languages and Bilingualism, University of Ottawa, Canada**

Her research focuses on the intersections among stakeholders during the development and validation of language tests and assessment activities in the classroom. She also studies the development and professionalisation of language teachers, and has held workshops and



consultations for more than 1500 language teachers in different countries. She is currently the Treasurer of the International Language Testing Association, and in 2019 she won the British Council's International Assessment Award.

### ► **Carlos Rico Troncoso**

**Program Director at the Academic Vice-Presidency, Universidad Javeriana, Colombia**

Carlos Rico-Troncoso has a Ph.D. in Intercultural Communication from Leeds Beckett University – UK, an M.A. in Social and Human Development from the CINDE and a post-doctoral degree from the CLACSO. He has been a member of the board of directors of ASOCOPI (the Colombian Association of Teachers of English) and MATSDA (the Materials Development Association).

### ► **Carolyn Westbrook**

**Test Development Researcher (Productive skills) at British Council, UK**

Carolyn Westbrook is a Test Development Researcher at the British Council in the UK. Formerly an Associate Professor in EFL, she has taught and assessed EAP and ESP for more than 25 years. A Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy of the UK, she has been a teacher, tester, teacher trainer and materials writer. Carolyn has been interested in Language Assessment since 2007. She has participated in a number of testing and assessment projects, including a major project to teach Russian university lecturers about language assessment. She has also designed and developed a Maritime English Test for cadets at naval academies.

### ► **Christopher Redmond**

**Assessment solutions consultant at British Council, East Asia**

Christopher Redmond is an assessment solutions consultant with the British Council's East Asia Assessment Solutions Team. Working closely with teachers, Christopher has developed and run numerous teacher-training workshops on the subject of language assessment. In addition, he has taught in public and private institutions in Ireland, South Korea and Mainland China, and has also delivered lectures and held workshops in Hong Kong, Russia, Malaysia and Japan. He received an M.A. in Applied Linguistics and TESOL from the University of Leicester

and has written articles for such publications as the Modern English Teacher, English Teaching Professional and Korea TESOL Journal.

### ► **Colm Downes**

**Director English, Education and Society at British Council, Indonesia**

Colm has been involved in education, specifically language education and professional skills training, for over 20 years in Europe, the Middle East and East Asia. He is currently the Director of English, Education and Society at the British Council, Indonesia. Colm has extensive experience in EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and ESP (English for Specific Purposes). He is the author of Cambridge English for Job Hunting (Cambridge University Press) and English for UN Peacekeepers. He is passionate about equipping future leaders with the specific language skills, networks and opportunities they will need to drive major social and economic changes and find solutions to global challenges.

### ► **Daniel Murcia Quintero**

**Director *Licenciatura en Bilingüismo*, Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira, Colombia**

Daniel Murcia is a language researcher for the "Estudios del lenguaje y la educación" group, certified by Colciencias, and the "Poliglosia" research group in applied linguistics. He has a B.A. in English Language Teaching (ELT), a Master's in Linguistics from the Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira and a specialist diploma in Critical Thinking and the Language Curriculum from the University of Oregon. Daniel is the director of the Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con énfasis en Inglés at the Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira. His interests include language assessment literacy, language curriculum development, and Discourse Analysis.

### ► **Daniela Sánchez**

**Teacher Supervisor, Centro Colombo Americano, Colombia**

Daniela Sánchez is a supervisor and English teacher at the Centro Colombo Americano, Bogotá. She has a B.A. in bilingual education from the Institución Universitaria Colombo Americana (ÚNICA), and an M.A. in Education with a major in English Didactics from the Universidad Externado de Colombia. Her interests include teacher-training, language assessment, flipped learning, the development of materials and technology in the classroom.



► **David Vallejo**  
**Projects Manager, British Council, Colombia**

He is a project manager and academic consultant with 3+ years of experience designing and leading education implementation projects in the private and public sectors. He is also a professor and instructional designer with 4+ years of experience designing EFL (English as a Foreign Language) training programmes for universities. He has an M.A. in Educational Technology with a focus on corporate training. He currently works as a project manager for the British Council in Colombia.

► **Diego F. Ubaque**  
**Professor of Pedagogy and research, Universidad Distrital Francisco Jose de Caldas, Colombia**

Diego has an M.A. in Applied Linguistics to TEFL. He is currently a full-time professor at the Universidad Distrital Francisco Jose de Caldas. He is interested in applying a decolonial approach to research and teaching, in order to enrich the construction of the local identities, pedagogies and epistemologies of Colombian teachers of English.

► **Dylan Burton**  
**PhD Candidate, Michigan State University, USA**

Dylan is a Ph.D. candidate in the Second Language Studies program at Michigan State University. He is currently an editorial assistant for the Language Testing journal, co-edited by Luke Harding and Paula Winke. Dylan's research interests include the development and validation of speaking tests, rater cognition, and non-verbal behaviour. He has published articles in the Language Assessment Quarterly, System, and the Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Language Testing.

► **Edgar Picón-Jácome**  
**Research Coordinator, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia**

He is a FL teacher, with an M.A. in TESOL from Greensboro College, US, and a Research Coordinator of the School of Languages at the Universidad de Antioquia, Medellín, Colombia. His research covers language assessment and testing, learner autonomy, and teacher autonomy. He has taught EFL in different contexts and LAL courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. He is the coordinator

of the "Grupo de Investigación Acción y Evaluación en Lenguas Extranjeras" (GIAE) at the Universidad de Antioquia, and is responsible for curricular innovations and classroom-based assessment.

► **Elaine Schmidt**  
**Senior Research Manager, Cambridge Assessment English, UK**

Elaine's research focuses on the cognitive aspects of language processing and learning with the use of eye-tracking and EEG. She obtained her Ph.D. in phonetics and bilingual language acquisition from the University of Cambridge, and later worked on the cognitive processes of L1 and L2 speech perception in Sydney, Australia, before she moved back to the Linguistics Department of Cambridge University. A few years later, Elaine then decided to combine her research with more practical applications and joined the Cambridge Assessment board, where she contributes her expertise in speech production and perception, eye-tracking and EEG in second language learning.

► **Eliana Kobayashi**  
**Professor, Federal Institution of Education, Science and Technology of São Paulo, Brazil**

Eliana has a Master's and Doctorate in Applied Linguistics from the Unicamp and a B.A. in Social Communication from the Unesp. She has done research on language assessment and English teacher training for Cambridge University. She has also worked in the field of Communication for companies in Brazil and other countries. She is currently a language professor at the Instituto Federal de São Paulo and researches English language assessment and English language in internationalization.

► **Elsa Adriana Restrepo**  
**Adjunct Professor, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia**

Elsa is a teacher, with an M.A. in Education from the Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia, who belongs to the "Grupo de Investigación Acción y Evaluación en Lenguas Extranjeras" (GIAE) at the Universidad de Antioquia. Her research focuses on language policies and language assessment and testing. She has taught EFL in different contexts and AL courses for future teachers; designed evaluation systems and exams; and coordinated the Testing Unit of the School of Languages at the Universidad de Antioquia.





► **Elsa Fernanda González**

**Full time professor, Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas, Mexico**

Elsa Fernanda has a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics and English Language Teaching from the University of Southampton. She currently works at the Universidad Autónoma de Tamaulipas as a lecturer and coordinator of the B.A. in Applied Linguistics. She is the Social Media Manager of the Latin American Association of Language Testing and Assessment. She was a recipient of the 2015 Research Assessment award by the British Council. She also received a Latin American Research Grant from the Michigan Language Assessment organisation in 2019 to study the validity and practicality of the Michigan English Test in Mexico.

► **Erica Balazs**

**Assessment Consultant, British Council, Spain**

Erica Balazs is an Assessment Consultant for The British Council Global Assessment team and is based in Madrid, Spain. She has a Master's in International Education and a TESOL qualification from the SIT Graduate Institute. Erica has conducted teacher training workshops and been an examiner for important international tests, with extensive experience in Mainland China and Indonesia. She has worked on several assessment projects involving test development, content creation, and stakeholder engagement. Her research interests include language assessment literacy and productive skills.



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### ► **Frank Giraldo**

**Foreign Languages Department, Universidad de Caldas, Colombia**

Frank has an M.A. in English Didactics from the Universidad de Caldas, Colombia; and an M.A. in TESL from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA. He teaches at the Foreign Languages Department of the Universidad de Caldas, Colombia. His interests include language assessment literacy, language curriculum development, and the professional development of teachers.

### ► **Fumiyo Nakatsuhara**

**Reader in Language Assessment, Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment (CRELLA), University of Bedfordshire, UK**

Her main research interests are the nature of co-constructed interactions in various speaking-test formats (e.g. the interview and paired and group formats), the impact of the test taker's characteristics on his or her test performance, task design, the development of rating scales and the relation between listening and speaking skills. She has undertaken a number of international testing projects, working with ministries, universities and examination boards. For example, she has led three phased research for the use of video-conferencing technology to deliver the IELTS Speaking Test (2014-2018). Fumiyo has published the following books: *The Discourse of the IELTS Speaking Test* (with P. Seedhouse, 2018, CUP) and *The co-construction of conversation in group oral tests* (2013, Peter Lang).

### ► **Gabriel Cote Parra**

**Professor, Universidad de Pamplona, Spain**

He is a Professor at the B.A. programme in Foreign Languages- English & French, at the Universidad de Pamplona, Colombia and has a Ph.D. in Education from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. His research focuses on learning and teaching foreign languages, which is one of the lines of investigation of the Research Group in Foreign Languages (GRILEX). He is currently researching the training of novice teachers in terms of assessment and their day-to-day practices.

### ► **Gabriela Kaplan**

**Coordinator of English programme in Plan Ceibal, Uruguay**

Gabriela Kaplan, whose passion is public education, has worked in teacher training for more than 20 years, with a special interest in the literature and culture of English-speaking countries. She holds a B.A. in Psychology from the Universidad de la República Uruguay; a B.A. in English from London University; and an M.A. in Humanities from the University of California. She co-designed the "Ceibal en Inglés" programme as a consultant in Linguistic Policies for Uruguay's National Board of Education (ANEP) and is the General Coordinator of that programme for the Ceibal Project (Plan Ceibal). She is author of the book *Is Uruguay a Nation State?* (Lambert Academic Publishing, 2015), and has published several articles about English Language Teaching.

### ► **Gemma Bellhouse**

**Test Product Quality Assurance Manager, British Council, Belgium**

Gemma Bellhouse is the Test Product Quality Assurance Manager for the British Council Aptis test and is based in Brussels, Belgium. Ms Bellhouse has a M.Sc. from Oxford in Applied Linguistics & Second Language Acquisition and has done research on test washback, teacher training, language learning strategies and corpus linguistics. She has worked on item writing and test production and maintaining the quality of standardised and international English language tests since 2015. Since joining the Global Assessments team in 2019, she has supported the quality control and general management of the Aptis examinations and has also helped to create and implement new EDI Aptis policies and manage the EDI's special accommodations.

### ► **Gladys Quevedo-Camargo**

**Professor, University of Brasilia, Brazil**

Gladys Quevedo-Camargo has a Ph.D. in Language Studies and works in the field of English language teaching and teacher education at the Department of Foreign Languages and Translation of the University of Brasília (UnB), in the capital of Brazil. She also coordinates the Postgraduate Program in Applied Linguistics at the same university. Her main interests are language testing, classroom language assessment and language assessment literacy.



### ► **Heather Koons**

**Director, Research Services at MetaMetrics, USA**

Dr. Heather H. Koons is Director, Research Services at MetaMetrics, where she helps clients to link their reading and mathematics assessments with the Lexile Framework for Reading and the Quantile Framework for Mathematics. She also coordinates research projects on text complexity, English learners, and vocabulary development. Koons taught English in East Asia and in high schools in the U.S. before working in test development at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Koons earned her M.A. in Education at Stanford University and her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology, Measurement, and Evaluation at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

### ► **Isora Enríquez O’Farrill**

**Full Professor, Enrique J.Varona Pedagogical University of Pedagogical Sciences, Cuba**

Isora Enríquez O’Farrill (PhD) is a Full Professor at Enrique J. Varona Pedagogical University of Pedagogical Sciences in Havana. She is an ELT consultant to the Ministry of Education. Her expertise is in English Language Teaching and Teacher Education and her publications are related to these themes. She is the leading author for the current coursebooks for ELT from K-12 and also for English teacher education both for language practice and ELT pedagogy in Cuba. Since 2020, she has coordinated the ELT Programs on television in Cuba. She has been the president of the national board for curriculum design and development in the teacher education programs for foreign languages. She has attended, lectured and presented papers on foreign language teaching and teacher training in the United Kingdom, Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Peru and Havana.

### ► **Ivonne de la Caridad Collada Peña**

**Director of Language Center, Universidad de las Ciencias Informáticas, Cuba**

A teacher and teacher-trainer for more than 30 years, departmental head, dean of faculty and director of the language center, she has taught undergraduate and graduate courses on Linguistics, ESP and EFL, among others. She has a Master’s in Management and studied at the British Council, the University of Windsor, Canada, several Flemish universities and the University of Bremen. She is currently the Cuban coordinator of a nationwide assessment project, and a member of the Expert Advisory Group of the Ministry of Higher Education and the Technical Expert Group of the British Council, Cuba.

### ► **Jaime Andrés Galindo Ochoa**

**Action Research Coach, Centro Colombo Americano, Colombia**

Jaime Galindo is an action research coach at the Centro Colombo Americano, Bogotá. He has a B.A. in English Teaching from the Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, and specialized in English-French-Spanish translation at the Universidad del Rosario. He also has an M.A. in Applied Linguistics from Concordia University in Canada. His areas of interests are assessment and professional development.

### ► **Jamie Dunlea**

**Senior Researcher & Manager of ARG, British Council, UK**

Jamie works on a range of language test development and validation projects for the assessment systems designed and developed by the British Council, as well as on international projects with researchers and organisations. Jamie has advised Ministries of Education and national agencies on large-scale assessment reform projects and overseen research for collaborative international projects, like linking UK examinations to China’s “Standards of English. He joined the British Council in 2013, after acting as Chief Researcher at the Eiken Foundation of Japan, a non-profit organization which develops and administers EFL examinations in Japan. He has worked in EFL education for more than 25 years, first as a teacher, then in test development and production, and assessment research.

### ► **Jin Yan**

**Professor /President of the Asian Association for Language Assessment, China**

Jin is a Professor of Applied Linguistics at the School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai Jiao Tong University. She is currently the President of the Asian Association for Language Assessment. Over the past three decades, she has worked on the development and reform of the College English Test (CET), which currently tests more than 20 million learners annually. She has been the Chairwoman of the National College English Testing Committee since 2004. Her research is mainly focused on the development and validation of large-scale language tests and she has published over 80 journal articles or book chapters. She is a founding co-editor-in-chief of the Springer open-access journal, Language Testing in Asia, which is included in the Emerging Sources Citation





Index (ESCI). She is also on the editorial boards of the Language Assessment Quarterly, and a number of other international and Chinese journals devoted to foreign language teaching and testing.

### ► **Johana Andrea Melo**

**Academic Coordinator Adult English Program, Centro Colombo Americano, Colombia**

Johana Andrea Melo is an Academic Coordinator at the Centro Colombo Americano, Bogotá. She has a B.A. in Philology and Languages from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia and an M.A. in Teaching from the SIT Graduate Institute. Teachers' development, language assessment and online learning are some of her research interests.

### ► **Johanna Motteram**

**Assessment Solutions Projects Manager, Global Assessments, British Council, Australia**

Dr Johanna Motteram works in the British Council Global Assessments team as the Assessment Solutions Projects Manager. In this role she consults with Ministries of Education and large organisations to devise and deliver solutions to their language assessment problems. She has recently been closely involved in the Singapore Workplace Literacy and Numeracy test development, a large-scale bespoke IELTS preparation course, and an investigation into English language teaching and assessment across higher education institutions in Taiwan. Prior to joining the Global Assessments team, Johanna worked as an English language teacher in a wide range of settings, as a university lecturer and as a researcher. Johanna's research interests include the interaction of language assessments and education systems, and the process and consequences of language test localisation.

### ► **Juan Felipe Zuluaga Molina**

**Professor, School of Communications, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia**

Juan Felipe Zuluaga Molina is a professor at the School of Communications of the Universidad de Antioquia, Medellín, Colombia. He is the coordinator of the Spanish-language Program for Foreigners (EHOL), which is part of the "Programa Español UdeA" in the same university. He has a B.A. in Foreign Language Teaching and a Master's in Translation from Universidad de Antioquia. His research interests are foreign language teaching, translation and corpus linguistics.

### ► **Judith Fairbairn**

**Assessment Development Team Manager, British Council, UK**

Judith Fairbairn leads assessment development projects for the British Council's Global Assessments team, which includes assessment design, item writing, test quality assurance and bespoke assessment solutions for clients. Her areas of expertise include research on rating speaking and writing tests, online rater training, rating scale development, and equality, diversity and inclusion in testing. Judith has an M.A. in Language Testing (Lancaster University) and is studying for a Ph.D. at the Institute of Education, University College, with a focus on raters' decision-making in speech tests.

### ► **Julián Mariño**

**Director, School of Education Evaluation Center, Universidad de los Andes, Colombia**

He has a B.A. and an M.A. in Mathematics from the Universidad de los Andes and is studying for a Ph.D. at the Institute of Logic and Foundations of Mathematics at the Albert Ludwig University in Freiburg, Germany; and a post-doctorate degree at Technion, the Israeli Technological Institute of Haifa. He has worked as a consultant on the evaluation of government programs and policies for twenty years.

### ► **Julio Caceda**

**Superintendent Advisor, National Superintendence of University Higher Education, SUNEDU, Peru**

Julio Cáceda has a B.A. in Philosophy and M.A. in Public Policy and Human Development by the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP). He is currently lecturer on this university and is a principal advisor on the National Superintendence of University Higher Education of Peru (Sunedu) in charge for developing research about quality assurance and quality evaluation. In 2017 he was awarded the Kuklys prize in Human Development and Capability Association (HDCA).

### ► **Larissa Tatiana Rico Buitrago**

**Professor, University of Quindío, Colombia**

Larissa Tatiana Rico Buitrago has a B.A. in Modern Languages from the University of Quindío, a major in Translation from the Universidad Autónoma of Manizales and a Master's in Didactics from Caldas University. She



currently works at the University of Quindío, where she has conducted research on the use of platforms and Apps to improve autonomous learning and metacognition. She has participated in the following programmes at the Colombian Ministry of Education: Teacher Development, the Transition and Primary English Teaching Toolkit and Inspiring Teachers. She is one of the authors of the English, please! Series (1, 2 and 3).

► **Lawrence Berlin**  
**Academic Director of Idiomas EAFIT, Colombia**

Lawrence N. Berlin, Ph.D., is the Academic Director of Idiomas EAFIT in Medellín, Colombia, and Professor Emeritus in TESOL at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago, Illinois, USA. He has published numerous articles on the teaching of English as a second language, pragmatics, and discourse analysis. He founded the "Dialogue Under Occupation" organization in 2006 and continues to undertake research in political and media discourse, critical pedagogy and participatory approaches to the teaching of languages.

► **Leonardo Varela Santamaría**  
**Assistant Professor, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia**

Leonardo has a Master's in Education from the Open University, London, England. He is a teacher-trainer and educational material developer, and has the CELTA and IBET English teacher certificates and is a qualified C2 English user. He is the Co-Coordinator of the Department of Pedagogy at the Javeriana University, with a focus on quality control, accountability, learning theory and the development of curricula, all with the aim of providing the essential skills required for the B.A. in the teaching of English & French. He has led the CLIL & Foreign Language Material Development modules during the past seven academic terms.

► **Lourdes Rey**  
**Director Department Foreign Languages, Universidad del Norte, Colombia**

Lourdes is a professor at the Universidad del Norte, where she teaches at the graduate and undergraduate levels. She is currently the Director of its Department of Foreign Languages, where she helped to create the Modern Languages and Culture program and designed innovative curricula for the English courses. She was also

member of the team that designed the English Curriculum and Basic English Learning Rights for public primary and secondary schools in Colombia. Her research focuses on intercultural competences, curriculum design, the CLIL and EMI in higher education and teacher development.

► **Lynn May**  
**Senior Lecturer in TESOL, Queensland University of Technology, Australia**

Lyn May is a Senior Lecturer in TESOL at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Australia. Her research interests include L2 speaking assessment, interactional competence and learning-oriented assessment. Lyn has published in the following journals: Language Testing, the Language Assessment Quarterly, and Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice.

► **Mabel Cristina Quinchia**  
**Adjunct Professor, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia**

Mabel is a teacher, with an M.A. in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning from the Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia, who belongs to the "Grupo de Investigación Acción y Evaluación en Lenguas Extranjeras" (GIAE) at the same university. Her research focuses on language assessment and testing, and curricular evaluation. She has taught EFL in different contexts and LAL courses for future teachers; designed evaluation systems and exams; and coordinated EFL programs at the university level.

► **Mark O'Sullivan**  
**Assessment Consultant, British Council, China**

Mark O'Sullivan has a B.A. from Sheffield Hallam University and English teaching qualifications from the University of Cambridge ESOL and Trinity College London. He began teaching full-time in 2005, specialized in IELTS from 2006 onwards, and has focused on language assessment literacy projects since 2016. He currently works as an Assessment Consultant for the British Council and has been involved in several projects to do with test development and the creation of materials. He has also held teacher training courses and workshops. He is currently studying for an M.A. in Language Testing at Lancaster University, and his research interests include productive skills and bilingual policy.



### ► **Martyna Kozłowska**

**English language instructor and researcher, Université du Québec, Canada**

Martyna Kozłowska is an English language instructor and researcher at the Université du Québec à Montréal. She obtained a Ph.D. in Linguistics from McGill University, Canada. She mainly teaches grammar, syntax, and critical reading at the École de langues, UQAM. Her research interests include generative approaches to SLA, assessment, questions of identity and L2 learning.

### ► **Misty Wilson**

**ESL Program Development & Research Manager, IELTS, USA**

Misty Wilson, Ed.D., is an ESL Program Development and Research Manager with IELTS USA, where she uses her TESOL expertise to support test taker resource development, teacher training, and research initiatives. Prior to joining IELTS USA in 2019, she taught English at the university level and directed a major program on English as a Second Language in the United States. She also taught English in the Republic of Moldova for 4 years. Her research interests include measuring the success of foreign students in the US and the use of language assessments for university admissions programs. An ardent supporter of the TESOL organization, Misty belongs to several professional organizations, including ILTA, AAAL, NAFSA, and TESOL, where she is a member of the nominating committee.

### ► **Mónica Rodríguez Bonces**

**Academic Director, Pearson, Colombia**

Mónica Rodríguez-Bonces has an M.A. in Applied Linguistics and a Ph.D. in Territorial and Economic Development in Education, with a focus on Curriculum Development and Bilingual Education. She has done research on Culture, Bilingual Ed. and Professional Development. She has worked at both the graduate and undergraduate level for twenty years, and was named teacher of the year at the U.S. institution where she taught. She has served as a departmental chair, academic dean, research director and international academic consultant. Monica is currently a lecturer at the Unica, a member of the board of directors of LAALTA and the Academic Director for Pearson Colombia.

### ► **Mónica Patricia Ospina**

**Director, Colombian Institute for Educational Assessment and Evaluation, ICFES, Colombia**

Ms. Ospina is the Director of The Colombian Institute for Educational Assessment and Evaluation (ICFES). She worked for 13 years as a professor and researcher in the Economics department of EAFIT University (Colombia). She also worked as a Consultant in Education Assessment and Evaluation for the Colombian Ministry of Education, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Development Research Centre, the Medellín Mayor's Office and for different non-profit organizations. She has been a member of the ICFES Research Advisory Committee before assuming the General Direction of the Institution in March 2020. Her research and academic work are focused on educational policies' impact evaluation, social development, educational innovation and environmental economics. She holds a Master in Economic Sciences and Environmental Economics from the Universidad de Los Andes (Colombia) and a Ph.D. in Economics from the Georgia State University (USA).

### ► **Nahal Kabbazbashi**

**Senior Lecturer in Language Assessment, CRELLA, University of Bedfordshire, UK**

Nahal Kabbazbashi is a Senior Lecturer in Language Assessment at the CRELLA Center of the University of Bedfordshire. Her research interests include speech assessment, the effects on performance of task and test-taker variables, the use and impact of technology on assessment, and new constructs in the digital age. Nahal has led the research strands of a number of high-profile test development and validation projects in different educational and language testing contexts, from schools in Uruguay to universities in Egypt. She has published articles in the following journals: Language Testing (2020; 2017), Linguistics and Education (2019), and Language and Education (2019).

### ► **Natalia González**

**Evaluation and Assessment Director, The Colombian Institute for Educational Assessment and Evaluation, ICFES, Colombia**

Ms. Gonzalez is the Evaluation and Assessment Director of The Colombian Institute for Educational Assessment and Evaluation (ICFES). She is an Economist from the Universidad del Valle (Colombia). She has a Master's





from the University of London and a M.Phil. and Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Warwick in England. She worked as researcher for the United Nations Development Program and has also been a school and university teacher.

► **Navil Chowdhury**  
Deputy National Examiner Manager, British Council, China

Navil Chowdhury currently manages a team of over 70 examiners and examiner trainers for the British Council in Guangzhou, China. He previously worked with the British Council as a teacher, trainer, coordinator, senior teacher and academic manager in 3 countries for over 12 years. He has also had over 10 years' experience as an IELTS examiner. Navil has an M.A. in Economics, a degree in academic management, DELTA and CELTA certificates and an interest in quantifying qualitative phenomena.

► **Neus Figueras**  
MA tutor, University of Barcelona. Former coordinator of the Exams and Curriculum Unit in the Catalan Ministry of Education, Spain

Neus Figueras has a Ph.D. in language testing from the University of Barcelona. She started her career as a teacher of English and coordinated the development of foreign language curricula and certificate examinations for adult learners in Catalonia, Spain, for over 20 years. She has been involved in a number of international research and development projects related to assessment at different educational levels and has given courses and lectures at universities in Spain, other European countries, Asia and the USA. She has been teaching the Assessment module in the University of Barcelona's Master's programme for Teachers of Spanish as a Foreign Language for over 10 years. She collaborates with the Council of Europe in the dissemination of the CEFR in testing and assessment and is one of the authors of the Manual for Relating Examinations to the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2009). She is a founding member of the EALTA (European Association for Language Testing and Assessment), and was the first President (2004-7) of the Association. She is currently the coordinator of the EALTA CEFR SIG. She is also a founding member of the GIELE (Grupo de Interés en Evaluación de Lenguas en España).

► **Nick Saville**  
Director, Research and Thought Leadership at Cambridge Assessment English, UK

Nick is the elected Secretary-General of the Association of Language Testers in Europe (ALTE). He co-authored a book on Learning Oriented Assessment (LOA) with Dr. Neil Jones (SiLT 45, CUP) and recently wrote a chapter in the book Learning-Oriented Language Assessment, (Routledge) on LOA as a way to analyze and improve language learning. His research interests include assessment and learning in the digital age; the ethical use of AI; language policy and multilingualism; the CEFR; and Learning Oriented Assessment.

Nick was a founding associate editor of the Language Assessment Quarterly and is currently the joint editor of Studies in Language Testing (SiLT, CUP) and editor of the English Profile Studies series (EPS, CUP). He sits on several Cambridge of University Boards, including: the Interdisciplinary Research Centre for Language Sciences; the Institute for Automated Language Teaching and Assessment (ALTA); and English Language iTutoring (ELiT), providing AI-informed automated systems. He was a member of the Advisory Council for the Institute for Ethical AI in Education whose final report was published in March 2021.

► **Nicola Walsh**  
Senior Teacher, Primary and Early Years, British Council, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Nicola Walsh is a teacher, school principal and schools' evaluator, with over 30 years' experience in Primary and Early Years education in the UK and other countries. She has been a head teacher in the UK; the principal of a large, regional school in Sri Lanka; an inspector of State schools in the UK; an evaluator for the UAE Ministry of Education and lead inspector for the British Schools Overseas accreditation. She has also been a consultant for charities and trained teachers in Cambodia, Egypt, Oman and Sri Lanka. Among her extensive writings, she has published articles on education in a leading business magazine. She is currently the Senior Teacher for Primary and Early years at the British Council in Sri Lanka.



### ► **Olena Rossi**

**PhD student / Associate Lecturer, University of Lancaster, UK**

Olena Rossi is a doctoral student at Lancaster University, UK, specialising in language testing. She has an M.A. in Language Testing, and her main research interests are item-writing, item-writer training, and assessment literacy for test stakeholders. Her doctoral thesis investigates item-writer training with the aim of proposing a framework for item-writing skills. She previously was a language teacher and teacher trainer in Ukraine, Malaysia, and China. She has run assessment-related workshops and item-writing courses.

### ► **Oscar Soler-Canela**

**Teacher, Instituto Cervantes, Spain**

Oscar Soler-Canela has an M.A. in Language Teaching from Lancaster University, where he focused in language testing and relating examinations to the CEFR. He has been a teacher of Spanish as a Foreign Language (SFL) for more than 20 years in Tunisia, the UK, the USA and Egypt at the further and higher education levels. He currently works at the Test Validation Unit of the Instituto Cervantes, where he designs, develops and validates the official DELE examinations and participates in the development of the SICELE (International System of Certification of Spanish as a Foreign Language) in order to create quality parameters for the standardization of the different SFL exams or certificates.

He has run many teacher training workshops, particularly on language testing and classroom assessment, and he also teaches the Assessment Module in the UNIBA-University of Barcelona online M.A. programme for Teachers of Spanish as a Foreign Language.

### ► **Philip Horne**

**Test Quality Assurance Manager, British Council, UK**

Philip is the Test Quality Assurance Manager at the British Council Global Assessments, where he manages item development and trains the global pool of item writers. He has a Cambridge diploma in English teaching and an M.A. in Language Testing from Lancaster University. His thesis was on a rater's interpretation of pronunciation descriptors in holistic rating scales. He is currently studying for a Ph.D. (also in the field of testing), focusing on pragmatics and computer-based tests.

### ► **Rafael Hernandez**

**Professor, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana Cali, Colombia**

Rafael Alberto Hernández Cuesta is a professor at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Cali. He has a B.A. in Industrial Engineering and a Master's in the Senior Management of Educational Services. He is an English and Spanish teacher with extensive experience at the undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral levels. His research interests include bilingual curriculum design and language policies. He is a permanent member of the Colombian Association of English Teachers (ASOCOPI). He is also a member of the "Spanish as a Foreign Language Network" (EnRedELE), and the editorial boards of different publications. He has published articles in language journals and spoken at different academic events.

### ► **Reza Tasviri**

**OSM Senior Team Leader and Research Lead, IDP, UK**

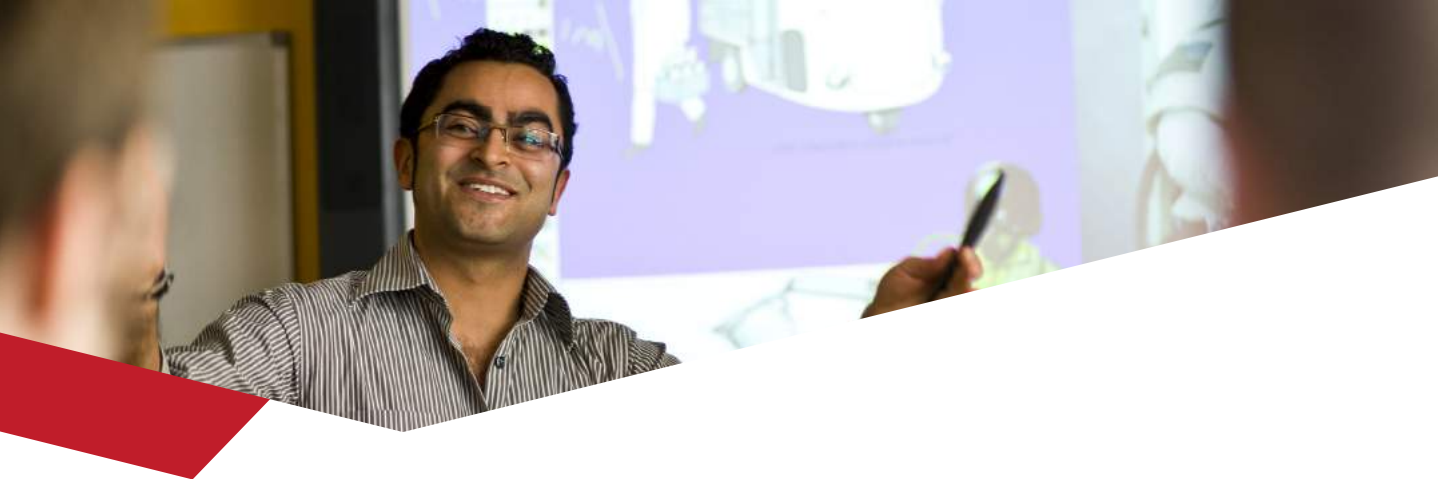
Reza Tasviri is a Senior Team Leader and Research Lead at IDP Education. He is currently a member of the partnered IELTS Research Group (IRG), the Joint-funded Research Programme (JRC) and a number of cross-partner working groups. He has participated in a number of high-profile partnered research projects and been closely involved with the IELTS for 13 years as an Examiner, Senior Examiner and Senior Team Leader. He has worked in the ESL sector for 24 years as an ESL/EAP/ESP teacher, and lecturer in Language Teaching Methodology, Advanced Writing, Language Assessment and Research Methodology.

Reza's research interests are Language Assessment, Discursive Psychology and Discourse Analysis. He has been involved in developing, benchmarking and revising assessment scales; training raters; and investigating writer identity, and assessment literacy.

### ► **Richard Spiby**

**Test Development Researcher (Receptive skills), Assessment Research Group, British Council, UK**

Richard Spiby has worked as a Test Development Researcher for receptive skills with the British Council Assessment Research Group since 2016. His main responsibilities include overseeing operational analysis and developing the reading and listening components of new tests. He also participates in a variety of international



assessment development and training projects. Richard previously worked in test production, management and research in the UK and Turkey, mainly in the university sector. His interests include language assessment literacy, test-taker strategies, test analysis and inclusivity in language assessment.

► **Rodrigo Rodríguez**  
Professor, Universidad del Norte, Colombia

Rodrigo has a Ph.D. in English from Purdue University. He currently teaches at the undergraduate and graduate levels at the Universidad del Norte. He also has a Master's in ELT from the Universidad del Norte. His research focuses on classroom assessment, corpus linguistics and reading and writing skills in a foreign language. He has participated in different ETS research projects and received a grant from the 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund.

► **Rose Clesham**  
Director of Academic Standards and Measurement, Pearson, UK

Rose is the Director of Academic Standards and Research at Pearson, and works in Global Assessment. She began as a teacher and teacher-trainer and later ran governmental programmes on national and international assessment. The content, standards, fairness, reliability and validity of assessments are central concerns of her work, in particular, meeting the needs of evolving international educational scenarios. Her research interests include the emergence of digital assessment (especially Artificial Intelligence), on-going educational strategies and policies, and promoting social justice in terms of educational access and achievement.

► **Roxana Antohi**  
Academic Operations Manager, Oxford Education LIT, Mexico

Born in Romania and educated at the University of Cambridge, she worked in educational projects for the European Union in China and Turkey before turning to language assessment in Latin America, with an emphasis on improving the current assessment of language literacy in Mexico, from her position at Oxford Education LIT. She is currently creating a fully digitalized, state-of-the-art, English language assessment tool for the Oxford Tutorial College Certificate.

► **Salomé Villa Larenas**  
Academic researcher, Universidad Alberto Hurtado, Chile

Salomé Villa Larenas is a language teacher, language tester, teacher educator, and researcher with experience in curriculum design and test development. She has a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics (language testing) from Lancaster University. She has taught at different levels in Chile, from primary school to university courses in English teacher-training. She is the co-founder and current president of the Latin American Association for Language Testing and Assessment (LAALTA). Her research interests are language assessment in teacher education, and language assessment literacy.

► **Sandra Gattolin**  
Professor, Universidade Federal de São Carlos, Brazil

Sandra Regina Buttros Gattolin has a Doctorate in Applied Linguistics from the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP) and has worked for the Federal University of São Carlos, in São Paulo, Brazil, for 15 years, where she teaches English to undergraduates who will be future language teachers. Her interests in research are language assessment and the education of foreign language teachers.

► **Sara Araujo**  
Researcher, National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira, Brazil

Sara has a degree in English language and a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics. She is currently a researcher at the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira and a member of the team of languages, codes and their technologies of the General Coordination of Exams for Certification, part of the Directorate of Evaluation of Basic Education, since 2014. Her team is responsible for performing the activity of instructing teachers linked to federal institutions of higher education and teachers of basic education from different parts of Brazil. They also perform activities that include instructional design, face-to-face and distance training events, equivalent to teaching at Universities. In addition, they supervise the construction of items, and prepare/design and validate large-scale high-stake exams, such as, The High School National Exam (ENEM), a non-mandatory, standardized Brazilian national exam.





### ► **Sheryl Cooke**

**Director East Asia Assessment Solutions Team, British Council, China**

Sheryl has had 20 years of experience in language assessment, including examiner training and item writing. Her qualifications include an M.A. in Language Testing (Lancaster University), an M.A. in Linguistics (SOAS), and the DELTA certificate. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Jyväskylä (Finland), focusing on the assessment of pronunciation and the implications of English as a lingua franca. Her research interests include comprehensibility as a construct, new technologies in language testing and the ethics of language assessment in the global context.

### ► **Simon Cook**

**Director, Language Testing & Assessment Services, UK**

Simon Cook is a teacher, teacher trainer, examiner, examiner trainer, materials developer, and exams developer with close to 40 years' experience in EFL and ESP training and assessment. He led the team that developed the EALTS between 2004-2010, and is currently the Director of Examinations at LTAS Ltd, the administrators of the EALTS, where he is responsible for all of its services, including the on-going maintenance and development of the test.

### ► **Simon Higginson**

**Team Leader for Language Assessment Consultants, British Council Education Consulting, China**

Simon Higginson is a Team Leader for Language Assessment Consultants at the British Council in Guangzhou, China. He was previously an IELTS Examiner Trainer in Chile where he also worked for 20 years as an English Teacher, Academic Coordinator and tutor at the tertiary level including over 15 years at the University of Chile. He has an M.A. in Applied Linguistics and a TESOL certificate and over 2 decades of experience in Language Assessment.

### ► **Sirin Soyoz Yilmaz**

**Team Leader for Language Assessment Consultants at British Council Education Consulting, China**

Sirin Soyoz Yilmaz holds a BA degree in English Language Teaching (ELT) from the Middle East Technical University

in Ankara, Turkey (2004), a Postgraduate Diploma in Online and Distance Education from the Open University, United Kingdom (2013), and an MA in Curriculum and Instruction from Yeditepe University in Istanbul, Turkey (2019). She is currently a Ph.D. student in Curriculum and Instruction at Yeditepe University. She works for the British Council as a teacher educator and e-moderator in online teacher development courses and community building projects. Her research interests include teacher education, e-learning, and online communities of practice.

### ► **Susan Jones**

**Lead Academic, English Language (Americas), Trinity College London, UK**

Susan is currently based in Nevada, USA, where she is expanding the presence of Trinity College London in the Americas. From 2015-2018, Susan was based in Dubai, UAE, where she supported Trinity's work in Asia. Between 1999 and 2015, she was a member of the English Language and History faculties, a faculty mentor and IT trainer, and the Associate Director of the Center for Educational Innovation at Zayed University, Dubai. She previously worked on outcomes-based education in South Africa and taught at the University of Nevada and Georgia State University. Susan has a B.A. (1991) and a TESL M.S. (1996) from Georgia State University.

### ► **Suzanne Springer**

**English language instructor and researcher, Université du Québec, Canada**

Suzanne Springer is an English language instructor and researcher at the Université du Québec à Montréal. She has an M.A. in Applied Linguistics from Concordia University, Canada and a Professional Certificate in Language Assessment from the University of Melbourne, Australia. She mainly teaches academic writing and reading at the École de langues, UQAM. Her research focuses on language assessment, and, recently, proficiency measurements and raters' reliability.

### ► **Tahiri Perez Perdomo**

**Language Center Director and English Profesor, Universidad de Sancti Spiritus José Martí Pérez, Cuba**

Tahiri holds a master's degree in Educational Science and has been a teacher and teacher trainer for 25 years. She was head of the English Department and is currently the Director of the Language Center at the University of



Sancti Spiritus. She has taught different major courses at the university as well as postgraduate courses for professionals of the field. Her research interests include assessment, TESOL methods, curriculum development, grammar, language teaching, and classroom management.

► **Tatiana Mesa Hoyos**

**Full Time Academic Professor, Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia**

Tatiana Mesa Hoyos, who has an M.A. in Education in the field of cognitive development, creativity and learning, has been a professor and researcher in the Department of Languages at the Javeriana University since 2013. Her most recent research deals with teaching strategies for the development of ICC in English as a foreign language.

► **Thom Kiddle**

**Director, NILE, UK**

Thom Kiddle is the Director of NILE, where he has worked since 2011, after moving back to the UK from Chile, where he was the head of academic research and educational technology at the Chilean-British University. He previously worked in language teaching, teacher training and language assessment in Portugal, the UK, Australia and Thailand. He has a Master's in Language Testing from Lancaster University and the Cambridge Delta diploma. His role at NILE involves strategic and organisational management, and training and consultancy in a range of areas, including testing and assessment, learning technologies, materials development and language teaching methodology.

Thom is also the chairman of the Equals Board of Trustees; treasurer and a founding director of AQUEDUTO – the Association for Quality Education and Training Online; and webmaster for the Testing, Evaluation and Assessment Special Interest Group of IATEFL. He has published in the Applied Linguistics, Language Assessment Quarterly, and System journals, and in 2019, wrote two chapters in the Routledge Handbooks of Language Teacher Education. Thom will be a plenary speaker at the IATEFL 2021.

► **Thomas Treutler**

**Computer Security Officer, Certix LLC, USA**

Dr. Thomas H Treutler combines a long experience in EFL and higher education with the mindset of an innovator, having been at the forefront of new developments with companies in Germany and the US. As the Director of Idiomas EAFIT, Colombia's largest university-based language center, he increased the student base by 80% in

just 5 years and renewed its academic programs. He is now the Program Director of EAFIT's Master's in International Business (MIB) and the head of Certix, a Florida-based startup that offers smart ways to avoid fraud.

► **Tony Clark**

**Senior Research Manager, Cambridge Assessment English, UK**

Tony Clark is a Senior Research Manager at Cambridge Assessment English. Since joining Cambridge, he has been responsible for the IELTS Joint-funded Research Programme and the Caroline Clapham Master's Award; acted as Permanent Secretary/Chair of the Joint Research Committee; led a number of high-profile cross-partner research projects; and run several standard setting workshops. His other interests include the Chinese and Japanese educational systems, academic writing for overseas learning, test preparation, pedagogy, diagnostic assessment and lexical studies. Before becoming a full-time researcher, he was a test preparation instructor for the British Council (in Japan and Morocco) and taught in Italy, Hungary and the UK.

► **Trevor Breakspear**

**Innovation Projects Manager, British Council, China**

Trevor Breakspear has had 18 years of teaching and training experience in the Chinese ESL and EAP contexts and over 10 years of project management experience in the fields of localisation and assessment. He currently plays an innovative role on the British Council's East Asia Assessment Solutions Team, as the person responsible for coordinating and turning academic and stakeholder research into new test concepts and developing new assessment solutions. He is completing an M.A. in Language Testing at Lancaster University.

► **Victoria Clark**

**Global Assessment Solutions Manager, British Council, Spain**

Dr. Victoria Clark is currently the British Council's Global Assessments Solutions Manager. She worked as an EFL teacher and teacher-trainer before specialising in language assessment. She has written numerous books on the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT); has lectured in different parts of the world; and has a Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics from the University of Reading, England and 2 Master's Degrees: one in Applied Languages and the other in TEFL.



### ► **William Bayliss**

**Assessment Solutions consultant, British Council, China**

William Bayliss has worked in the field of language teaching and assessment for 10 years. He was a teacher and then an academic manager in private Chinese language schools before becoming an assessor. He has a wealth of experience in team management, programming and assessment delivery, backed by an M.Sc. in Applied Linguistics from Edinburgh University.

### ► **Yadira Adriana Gómez Torres**

**Project manager, Evaluation, Universidad de Los Andes, Colombia**

Yadira's work focuses on the design and application of qualitative and quantitative instruments leading to the construction and implementation of monitoring and evaluation systems of university programs. She is currently part of the team that develops the survey of student perception of courses and professors at Universidad de Los Andes.

### ► **Yenifer Agudelo Correa**

**Teacher, Universidad del Quindío, Colombia**

Yenifer holds a B.A. in Modern Languages from Universidad del Quindío and a Master in English Didactics from Universidad de Caldas. She has been a professor at different levels in the Universidad del Quindío and has experience in different courses for undergraduate students (Grammar, Methodology, Oral Comprehension and Production, Reading and Writing) at the B.A. in

Modern Languages at Universidad del Quindío. She has worked in training In-Service teachers by delivering input sessions and providing feedback, and has had the opportunity to deliver workshops in the State Teacher Training Programme "Proyecto Quindío Bilingüe y Competitivo 2018 - 2019" and the National strategy "Inspiring Teachers 2019-2020" from the Ministry of Education along with the British Council. She has been involved in research projects related to teaching and learning.

### ► **Yéssica Aguilera Fuentes**

**Teacher of English, Universidad Católica de la Santísima Concepción Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María, Chile**

Yéssica Aguilera has been an English language teacher for 14 years, working with students of different ages and in different educational contexts. She has a Master's in Curriculum and Assessment. She is the head of the English Department at the Concepción campus of the Universidad Federico Santa María.

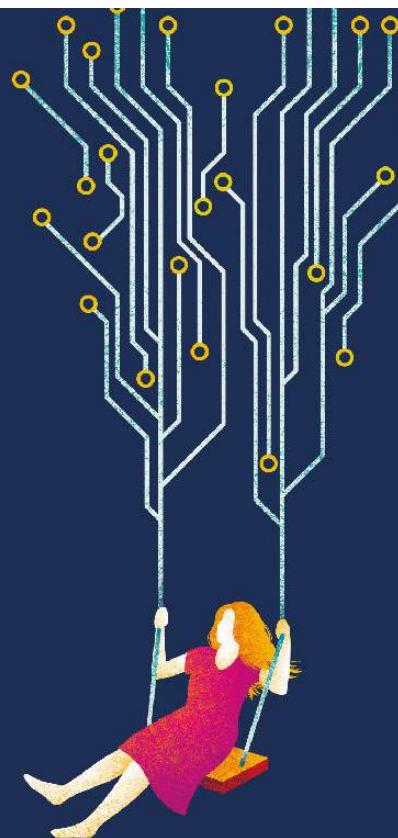


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# Pre-conference Workshops

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**8:00 - 9:30 A.M**

## ► Workshop 1

## How language assessment works

Christopher Redmond

The assessment of speaking is a significant challenge for teachers, particularly those more accustomed to teaching the receptive skills of Listening and Reading. Across the world, the demand for higher levels of assessment literacy among teachers and other assessment practitioners is increasing, and “How Language Assessment Works” has been created for those currently lacking the knowledge, skills and abilities required to design, develop, maintain or evaluate standardised large-scale and/or classroom-based tests. The Speaking module –like the Reading, Listening and Writing modules – has been devised to create a launch pad from which the participants can begin to acquire the key skills and abilities needed to assess speaking effectively.

A knowledge of assessment literacy is crucial to this approach, so this module will draw the participants' attention to the principles and concepts that guide and underpin speaking assessment practice. More specifically, the workshop will focus on a range of test settings and tasks, as well as an analysis of the rating scales that are used for the FCE and IELTS tests. The participants will be encouraged to reflect on the suitability of different rating scales for different settings. Additionally, they will be given time, in groups, to consider the assessment of speaking in their context, which will give them the opportunity to apply the principles and practices learned in the workshop to create a Speaking Assessment model for a specific group of learners.

## ► Workshop 2

## Classroom-based writing assessment: 'Task wording affects task difficulty'. Discuss

Carolyn Westbrook | Richard Spiby

Writing is often challenging for learners for a variety of reasons. These include an insufficient command of vocabulary or grammar, unfamiliarity with the genre and a lack of the background knowledge needed to effectively accomplish the task. However, the way a writing task is presented can also have an impact on its difficulty and can elicit very different uses of language, which can be problematic when trying to maintain the same standards in different assessments.

In this workshop, the participants will learn about the ways in which the formulation of the task may affect its difficulty and they will discuss its implications for ensuring that test is fair for all of the test-takers. We will deal with the importance of using test specifications which provide a consistent assessment of the members of different groups. The Workshop participants will then jointly design two tasks of approximately the same difficulty.



10:00 - 11:30 A.M

### ► Workshop 3

## Validity and validation processes: basic concepts and possible applications

Neus Figueras | Oscar Soler-Canela

\*The workshop will be delivered in Spanish

Validity is the most important feature of any assessment system. During the past few decades, this concept has changed from the assumption that validity is a characteristic of the assessment tool to the notion that it entails a process of data gathering which allows us to validate the uses and interpretations of the assessment results. (Mendoza, 2015; O'Sullivan & Chalhoub-Deville 2020).

With this in mind, the workshop will briefly outline the present state of validation and discuss the different approaches to and models of language assessment now in use. The presenters will analyze the aspects of any validation process and the participants will learn about the implications of a validation process and how to adapt and/or put them into practice, with the resources available to them.

### **Validez y procesos de validación: conceptos básicos y posibles aplicaciones**

*La validez es la cualidad más importante en un dispositivo de evaluación. En las últimas décadas este concepto ha ido evolucionando desde una perspectiva orientada a considerarlo como una característica del instrumento de evaluación, hacia entenderlo como un proceso de acumulación de pruebas que nos permite validar las interpretaciones y usos que hacemos de los resultados de esos instrumentos (Mendoza, 2015; O'Sullivan & Chalhoub-Deville 2020).*

*Desde esta perspectiva, en el webinar se describirá brevemente el estado de la cuestión, presentando los diferentes enfoques y modelos que se han ido proponiendo en el ámbito de la evaluación educativa y, en particular, en la evaluación de lenguas extranjeras. Se abordarán cuestiones relacionadas con todo proceso de validación, y los participantes tendrán ocasión de reflexionar sobre cómo adaptar y aplicar las propuestas presentadas a sus respectivos contextos de trabajo, según los recursos disponibles.*

*Los participantes inscritos recibirán, dos semanas antes del taller, actividades de preparación para facilitar el máximo aprovechamiento del webinar.*

### ► Workshop 4

## Introduction to Item Writing for Classroom-Based Assessment

Philip Horne | Olena Rossi

Providing effective assessment for an entire department or school is a stumbling block for a lot of educational institutions. To address this problem, this workshop introduces teachers to item writing for classroom-based assessment and offers practical suggestions about standardizing item writing for classroom assessment, so that the results of tests which are administered by different teachers or have different versions are comparable. The focus is on designing productive skills tasks, since they are notoriously prone to variation: standardizing speaking/ writing task production will result in less variation, thus making assessment more reliable.

Towards that end, the participants will be introduced to task specifications and discuss effective speaking/ writing task characteristics. The workshop's practical activities will deal with what needs to be included in task specifications and comparison with existing samples. The processes involved in large-scale test production will be explained and suggestions will be offered about their adaptation to classroom use, including peer review, task revision and task trials. The characteristics of effective speaking/writing tasks will be analysed, and the participants will also look at faulty tasks and think up ways to improve them.

Finally, they will develop tasks by following the specifications for task production: creating a first draft, submitting it for review, and revising it in accordance with the comments of the reviewer.

### ► Workshop 5

## Fundamentals of Data Visualization

Dylan Burton | Richard Spiby

This interactive workshop will discuss the fundamentals of data visualization for the benefit of language assessment researchers and practitioners. The participants will learn about what makes visuals effective and what we can do to improve the storytelling capacity of our data. Also important is our look at a range of data sources and consideration of the best ways to visualize them, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of everything from bar graphs to more complex visuals. A key feature of the session will be data interpretation, which is crucial for obtaining and writing up one's results. The session will conclude with a discussion of the current tools—including free ones—which can be used to present and document the findings of your research. This session is open to anyone and does not require any prior experience. It will be particularly useful for students, teachers and researchers starting on their careers who are interested in data analysis.





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# Conference Day 1

8:00 - 8:05 A.M

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## Opening address

Mr. Colin Martin-Reynolds, British Ambassador

Colin Martin-Reynolds, British Ambassador, arrived in Bogotá in September 2019. A career diplomat, he joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1990. He has served in over 20 embassies, in a variety of policy and operational roles.

8:10 - 8:50 A.M

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## The Annual New Directions Weir Lecture: Professionalising Learning Systems

Professor Barry O'Sullivan

*Professor Cyril Weir (1950 – 2018) was a hugely important figure in the world of English language testing. His pioneering work in the area of communicative language testing in the 1980's led to a stellar career in test development and validation which saw him influence how testing was perceived across the world. He published many books and helped build three successful research centres (Testing and Evaluation Unit – University of Reading; Centre for Research in Testing, Evaluation and Curriculum – University of Roehampton; Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment – University of Bedfordshire). His seminal work on the socio-cognitive frameworks for test development and validation (2005) continues to influence our field.*

*The Annual New Directions Weir Lecture commemorates the work of Professor Weir, and is intended to reflect the connection of testing and assessment to the learning system – a concept recognised by Cyril – while all the time recognising the centrality of language models is driving that system.*

While most people will readily acknowledge the need for the elements that make up a typical learning environment to somehow fit together, it is not at all unusual to find that these elements are seen as being very different from each other, since they were developed by individuals or teams working in isolation. The elements I refer to are the curriculum, all things related to the delivery of the curriculum, and all aspects of assessment.

In this talk I will outline a working model of what I have referred to in the past as a comprehensive learning system. The model presents the learning context as a system, which the three elements described above symbiotically contribute to. Where no clear link is made between the elements, the system is destined to fail – a situation that exists all too frequently across the world. This situation is made more likely by the typical isolationist approach to development described above. The solution to this involves some significant changes in the way we currently view learning professionals. The concept of the expert whose focus is solely on one element of the system is essentially redundant. The benefits of designing and building learning systems with integrated teams simultaneously overseeing all three elements and consisting of individuals with specific expertise, but with a broader system and contextual knowledge, will be outlined.

While all three elements are equally important, my focus in this talk will be on the integration of assessment into the system. The primary concern here is the need for appropriate, system-specific assessment, which brings to mind the associated need for local or localized assessment systems. These ideas will be presented and examples of good and bad practice will be discussed and pitfalls pointed out.





8:55 - 9:25 A.M

## In Conversation with Pisa: The challenges and opportunities associated with Foreign Language Assessment in PISA 2025

Professor Barry O'Sullivan | Andreas Schleicher

From 2025, the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) will include a foreign language assessment (FLA). The target language for 2025 will be English, while the assessment will focus on three skills (listening, reading and speaking). In addition, there will be a set of questionnaire modules for teachers, students, schools and parents as well as a system-level questionnaire to collect context and policy-relevant information. Since the decision to participate in the FLA is optional, this opportunity to talk with Dr Andreas Schleicher, the initiator and Director of PISA comes at an opportune time for ministries of education and other key stakeholders in the region.

9:30 - 9:45 A.M

## Break

### Parallel Sessions

10:05 - 10:35 A.M

#### ► Language assessment literacy 1

### Item writing training: crucial for quality assessments and an opportunity for educators

Erica Balazs | Mark O'Sullivan

Item writing is the process of creating questions and tasks used in assessment systems. The quality of test items is crucial to test validity, and thus item writing is a critical and central component in test development. Due to the recent global pandemic, international exams have been halted and many institutions have had to rely on their own assessment tools to determine the progress of their current or incoming students. Unfortunately, few organizations place an emphasis on assessment literacy or offer professional development in this area. This presentation will focus on item writing training as a professional development opportunity for educators and detail the reported benefits.

Training in item writing can be beneficial to a wide array of educators in a number of ways. Such training can provide the background knowledge needed to understand the importance and impact of quality test items and the item writing process; the specifications and standardized examples to model them on; and skills needed to write test items as well as employ appropriate resources. Not only does this training improve the development of the items, it also sharpens one's ability to critique and evaluate assessment tools. The abilities of a skilled item writer are transferable and can be applied to different language frameworks or disciplines, and therefore item writing training is one of the most beneficial opportunities available for professional advancement.

The adaptation of British Council's internal item writing training to an external audience will be outlined, highlighting selected participant achievements which demonstrate increased assessment literacy and professional development.

#### ► Language assessment literacy 2

### LAL: Bridging theory and practice within a high-stakes language policy

Mabel Cristina Quinchia | Edgar Picón-Jácome

In Colombia, several studies have identified the need to offer language teachers more possibilities to develop language assessment knowledge and skills. For instance, López and Bernal (2009), found that very few language teaching programs offered assessment courses, and that although all Masters' programs in EFL offered them, very few teachers completed a Master's degree in the country. In the same vein, Herrera and Macías (2015) found a connection between lack of assessment preparation, both in teacher education and professional development programs, and the mostly summative approach of many language teachers. Consequently, as an effort to help them overcome the challenges that they face when applying the alternative assessment system of the new Institutional EFL program, a compulsory module on Language Assessment has been designed and is currently being applied at a Colombian public university. As part of the team that designed the module, in this presentation we will share how it was structured to meet the faculty's need to carry out their assessment practices successfully. The main topic addressed in the talk is thus Language Assessment Literacies (LAL), defined by Inbar-Lourie (2017) as the knowledge, skills and principles that stakeholders must master in order to perform assessment tasks. At the end of the presentation we will share teachers' voices as evidence of the impact that the module has had so far on the faculty's practice.





## ► Professionalising English assessment in learning systems 1

### Developing localised tests to professional standards

Johanna Motteram | Gemma Bellhouse

This talk is aimed at test development practitioners. Using case studies from three projects, the challenges and principled compromises of developing local language and numeracy tests that meet professional standards will be critically explored. A theoretical model of localisation (O'Sullivan and Dunlea, 2015) was used to develop the language and numeracy tests. This part of the talk will examine this model and include a discussion of topic, lexical and numeracy localisation; cultural or context clashes; and linguistic theory on localisation decisions. The next part of the talk will examine the importance of stakeholder engagement in the test development process. The objective was to produce quality local tests that achieve the overall aims of all stakeholders, including cross-national teams of test developers, clients, test takers, policy makers and teachers. With regard to the socio-cognitive model of test development (O'Sullivan, 2011), examples of the implications for stakeholders of the test development process, as well as the consequences for and impact of the test on stakeholders and learning systems will be shared. The final part of the talk will use examples from these three projects to critically examine how the British Council's circular-flow model of test development (Fairbairn and Dunlea, 2018) worked in practice. This talk will provide participants with practical examples of what test development involves in practice, as well as contribute to the expansion of our academic understanding of test development.

## ► Operationalising the ESP construct

### A practical framework for ESP / CLIL self assessment

Colm Downes

There is no more important role for ESP practitioners than the design of authentic learning tasks and assessment. Drawing on more than ten years of professional experience in ESP course design, delivery and evaluation, I will present a practical framework for ESP learners and trainers to set learning objectives and measure progress. Using real examples, from ESP courses delivered to civil servants, UN peacekeepers and digital entrepreneurs, I will outline a straightforward approach to writing measurable performance objectives for ESP courses, facilitating the effective measurement of communicative competence, including linguistic, strategic and sociolinguistic competence. During my talk I will demonstrate the design

and use of authentic scenario exercises, including video capture, which will enable learners to self-reflect, self-evaluate, and provide peer feedback. This practical talk is designed to help ESP teachers develop an approach to course design, supported by a simple assessment framework, enabling learners and teachers to effectively measure ESP learner performance and achievement.

## ► Assessing productive skills 1

### Investigating validity of an AI speaking feedback system

Trevor Breakspear

Over the past few years, there has been a proliferation of AI-driven learning and assessment solutions providing automated scores and feedback on learner pronunciation. Whilst testing authorities have commissioned a variety of studies of the validity of automated scoring systems for summative assessment (Bernstein J, et al. 2010), there are fewer studies of the efficacy of automated bespoke feedback processes that could, when delivered, effectively support language progress within individualised learning ecosystems. This presentation will outline research into the validation of an AI-driven evaluation engine that provides bespoke pronunciation feedback at the word level. Two main research questions are posed: 1. How can modification of pronunciation rating approaches improve inter-rater reliability? 2. Is the AI engine sufficiently reliable to consistently and accurately identify "strong" and "weak" examples of learner pronunciation? To address Question 1, the presentation will show a comparative analysis of two human rating scales and rating processes, using correlation statistics and multi-faceted Rasch analysis to ascertain corresponding inter-rater reliability. To address Question 2, the presentation will show a study which analyzes the correlation between the human and machine ratings of 500 word-level audio files, and the validity implications for the automated selection of formative feedback examples for learners. This presentation will conclude by presenting findings on improving automated feedback processes and thus the quality of the diagnostic feedback provided to learners and teachers. Reference: Bernstein, J., Van Moere, A., & Cheng, J. (2010). Validating automated speaking tests. *Language Testing*, 27(3), 355–377.



## ► Assessing productive skills 2

### A five-tiered guide to assess productive skills in CLIL

Leonardo Varela Santamaría

Developing a five-tiered guide to assess productive skills in Content & Language Integrated Learning (hereafter referred to as CLIL) learning environments: The experience of the program of Modern Languages at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana. CLIL teachers must accept the challenge of designing, implementing, testing and appraising students' productive skills performance in CLIL learning environments. CLIL teachers need to be conversant with reliable, formative and criterion-referenced assessment materials to do it. This work-in-progress presentation briefly looks at the considerations behind the creation of a five-tiered guide to develop assessment-oriented materials. I'll do so from a perspective that integrates the sociocultural and academic underpinnings of the students' learning settings. The variety of CLIL teaching environments demand materials that look beyond formative practices and include summative and synoptic assessment. The five-tiered guide offers teachers and language assessment practitioners alike an instrument to appraise students innovatively but still do it in line with the foundational & instructional principles of formal academic institutions. The participants in the work-in-progress presentation will explore the guide and comment upon its user-friendliness, consistency and validity. Their well-informed feedback and expertise will provide essential data for the consolidation of CLIL assessment practices in the program of Modern Languages at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.

## ► IELTS Strand

### The emerging construct of academic speaking in digitally-mediated communication in Higher Education settings

Fumiyo Nakatsuhara | Lynn May | Nahal Kabbazbashi

This presentation reports on results from an empirical study exploring the language functions and skills utilised in technology-mediated academic speaking contexts. Using an embedded mixed-methods approach, the research involved: a) a language function analysis of spoken communication in online lectures/tutorials, and supervision meetings and, b) a thematic analysis of students' and lecturers' self-reports on distinctive features of online academic speaking and what constitutes successful online speaking interaction in those contexts. We analysed a total of over 40 hours of recordings, consisting of 17 video-recorded lectures/tutorials from four undergraduate and postgraduate units in an Australian University (n=40 students; n=4 tutors), and 23 video/audio recordings of online Ph.D. supervision meetings from a UK university (n=7

students; n= 5 supervisors). This was followed by an online questionnaire and online semi-structured interviews with selected participants. In order to examine the construct of online academic communication, we adapted O'Sullivan et al.'s (2002) language function checklist to our purposes. This checklist has been extensively employed in other studies and therefore allowed us to compare our data with previous research that investigated language functions elicited in face-to-face classroom settings in higher education (e.g. Ducasse & Brown, 2011) and in speaking tests via video-conferencing technology (e.g. Nakatsuhara et al., 2017). Analyses of the questionnaire and interview data helped us to understand which skills are thought to be important for successful online interaction. In this presentation, we will share our main findings and discuss their implications for a deeper understanding of the emerging construct of effective academic speaking in the digital era.

## ► Assessment in times of crisis

### Skills based assessment for PYL of English as a second language

Nicola Walsh

This presentation will focus on how the assessment of Primary Young Learners (PYL) and Early Years (EY) students was used to raise the quality of teaching and learning across Sri Lanka Teaching Centres during the recent pandemic. Making use of assessment and feedback is an important element of the revised British Council teaching standards. During the recent pandemic, teachers have been able to improve their competences. Teachers can now describe the student's performance in relation to the criteria and use this to plan online tasks well matched to learner needs. During the Covid situation in 2020, the British Council, Sri Lanka moved all lessons online for all EY and PYL students for most of 2020 and into 2021. Immediately prior to the pandemic, a set of assessment criteria, referred to as Expected Outcomes, (EO) were created by teachers at the Colombo centre. These became a very useful tool as we moved to online classes. The EO are based on the acquisition of language and literacy skills across the 4 areas of reading, writing, speaking and understanding. They detail the expected attainment levels of students at the end of an academic year by level of class. They follow from the EY outcomes. A shared understanding of what was expected of students in each level of class enabled the resources to be allocated accurately on Microsoft Teams. The teachers communicated on the team's channel, knowing what was expected of the students on that level. This improved the teachers' dialogues, support for one another and sharing of materials closely matched to learner needs. Improved communication with parents, end of year reporting, teacher expectations, level moves and placement testing became more focused, for both EY and PYL.



## Parallel Sessions

10:40 - 11:10 A.M

### ► Language assessment literacy 1

#### **Feedback in EFL classroom: A revision of the Chilean context**

Yéssica Aguilera Fuentes

During the past few decades, feedback in the learning process has been widely studied in different classroom contexts. A vast number of studies have analyzed the feedback beliefs, perceptions, practices and strategies used by those involved in the EFL learning process. (Brown, Harris & Harnett, Jennifer, 2012; Contreras-Pérez & Zúñiga-González, 2017; Jodaie, Branch, Farrokhi, & Zoghi, 2011). However, there are few studies aimed at analyzing the feedback strategies used in the Latin American context, particularly in the Chilean EFL classrooms. A systematic review was done in which the studies carried out in the last ten years about feedback in the Chilean EFL context were compiled and revised in order to define the feedback practices used in primary, secondary and higher education contexts. The findings show that Chilean teachers of English mainly provide corrective feedback (Ellis, 2009), in other words, their feedback strategies focus on identifying students' mistakes. Studies carried out in the last ten years focus their attention on the students' performances in writing tasks, where the center of interest is grammar, spelling and vocabulary accuracy. To conclude, the results so far show that, in the Chilean EFL classrooms, corrective feedback is preferred to other types of feedback which focus more on the students' progress, learning goals or task performance (Voerman, Meijer, Korthagen, and Simons, 2012).

### ► Language assessment literacy 2

#### **A survey on language assessment literacy in Latin America: preliminary results**

Elsa Fernanda González | Gladys Quevedo Camargo  
Salome Larenas Villas

Language assessment literacy (LAL) is understood as the knowledge, practices and principles that stakeholders have of language assessment (Davies, 2008; Fulcher, 2012). It may go beyond this knowledge by including a decision-making process of how and when to apply this knowledge (Malone, 2013; Coombe, Troudi & Al-Hamly, 2012) within a specific context (Chen, Kettle, Klenowski, & May, 2013; Yan, Fan & Zhang, 2017). LAL research has set

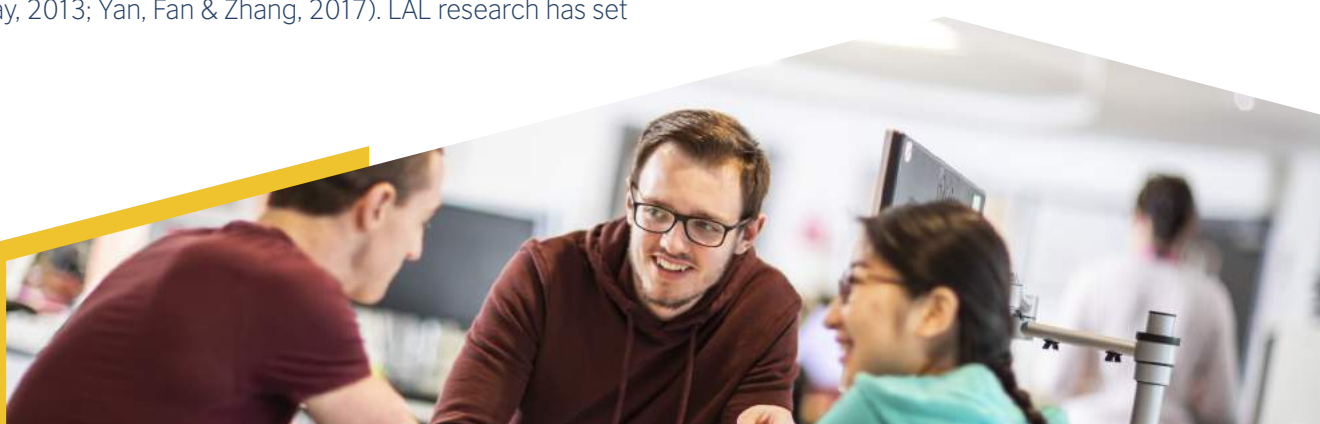
out to understand teachers' assessment literacy beliefs and views concerning their needs and assessment practices. It has included places such as Asia (Koh et al., 2017), the United States (Nier et al., 2013; Malone, 2013; Weigle, 1998, 2007), Europe (Hasselgreen et al., 2004; Vogt & Tasagari, 2014; Fulcher, 2012), Australia (Knoch, 2011) and a worldwide perspective (Crusan, et al., 2016). However, little is known about the nature of language assessment literacy in Latin America and the views of those involved in the language assessment processes. Therefore, this presentation discusses a survey-study whose purpose was to explore Latin American teachers', policy makers' and/or language teacher educators' views of their language assessment knowledge, assessment training needs and assessment training experiences. The survey, adapted from Hasselgreen et al.'s (2004), Kremmel and Harding's (2015), and Vogt and Tsagari's (2014) surveys, was distributed electronically to several countries in Latin America, among stakeholders in Colombia, Chile, Brazil, Mexico and Argentina. The presentation discusses the study that was carried out, the results obtained and their implications.

### ► Professionalising English assessment in learning systems 1

#### **A nationwide proficiency certification system for English in Cuban universities**

Ivonne de la Caridad Collada | Arlenys Palmero Ortega |  
Tahiri Perez Perdomo

Due to the need for an increasing proficiency in English by Cuban university graduates, the Ministry of Higher Education (MES) implemented, in 2015, a new policy for English education, which implied changes in teaching, learning and assessment. The changes included considering the CEFR as the main proficiency framework, and were especially relevant in the field of assessment, where it was necessary to improve classroom-based assessment and to implement a national test for certification. A project was designed for developing a nationwide test to enable language centres to validly and reliably certify the proficiency level established as a university exit requirement. This endeavor has been coordinated, since 2017, by the Universidad de las Ciencias Informáticas, in Havana, and has consolidated a network of teachers from every Cuban university, under the expert guidance of Professor Claudia Harsch, from the University of Bremen, Germany. The initiative has had the support of the above-mentioned institutions, the MES, the British Council, Cuba and UK, the Flemish VLIR ICT university cooperation Network Program and ILTA.





The presentation of the project focuses on describing the implementation of different phases, the assessment literacy fostered, the partial results achieved (mainly test specifications), guidelines for teachers, rating scales, validation, and the expected impact of the new assessment on teaching.

#### ► Operationalising the ESP construct

### Hackatons: assessing agency and collaborative innovation

David Vallejo

The British Council, the Local Education Authority of Bucaramanga and the Chamber of Commerce of Bucaramanga, have been working together on the design and implementation of the “Municipal Bilingual Program” in this Colombian city for more than 3 years by now. One of the direct audiences of this programme are the students of 10th and 11th grade from public schools who have been part of an ESP strategy. This component of the project aimed at developing essential communicative skills in English, this being understood as a key asset for the workplace in the context of the economic dynamics of Bucaramanga. This report presents a series of insights into the implementation of an ESP course for public schools’ students in the city of Bucaramanga, emphasizing the use of a hackathon model for communicative skills assessment. Moreover, it explores the existing connections between agency and collaborative innovation as a result of an active learning environment.

#### ► Assessing productive skills 1

### How do computers assess speaking skills?

Rose Clesham

This session presents an insight into how computers assess speaking proficiency, and in particular, how speaking constructs, assessed using AI, have been required to develop over time, in order to reflect the way in which speaking assessment is used in a particular context. There are often misperceptions about the item types used in automated speaking assessments and what speaking traits they can measure. Speech recognition is not particularly new, and is now evident in everyday use and found on most smart devices. What separates speech recognition software and language assessments is the application of the measurement and calibration of speech. The assessment of speaking proficiency using AI has been operationalized for over ten years by now, using a combination of acoustic modelling and the application of Rasch measurement calibration and achieving very high levels of reliability as verified by expert human raters.

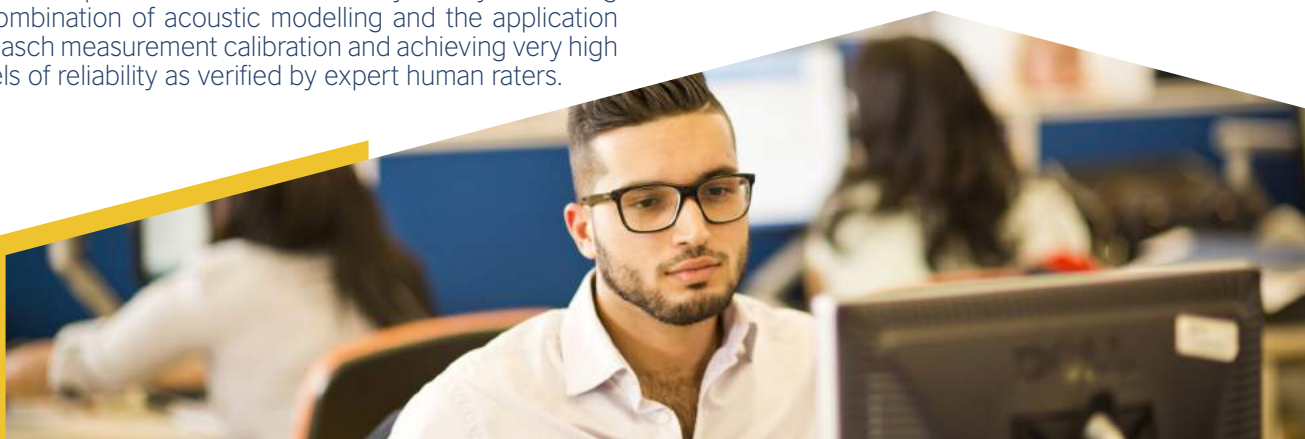
During this time, several factors have had an impact on the use of automated speech assessment. The sophistication of technology, algorithms and machine learning is certainly one major factor; however, in order to assess not just with reliability, but with validity, the technology needs to serve the purposes of assessment. This includes the increasing emphasis on collaboration, mediation and intelligibility as language proficiency indicators. Also, language assessment needs to reflect the needs of learners in schools, those entering higher education, professionals and economic migrants, through the use of authentic, integrated skill tasks. This session will demonstrate, with examples, how automated speaking items have developed over the last ten years and discuss the potential next steps.

#### ► Assessing productive skills 2

### CAF: Upgrading speaking assessment paradigms

Jaime Andrés Galindo Ochoa

This session reports the preliminary findings of an ongoing study in which the supervision team at the Centro Colombo Americano, Bogotá, observed a series of classes to analyse how speaking assessment was being approached in the classroom. As a result, it revealed that most current practices are teacher-led corrections that focus on accuracy feedback, namely grammar and pronunciation. On the basis of such results, it became paramount to develop an action plan that not only conceived of speaking as a multidimensional construct, but also encouraged students to participate actively in their speaking assessment process. A framework based on Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency (CAF) therefore became the basis of a method which enables students to become aware of the multiple components involved in the speaking process as well as understand the criteria needed for self-monitoring processes. Indeed, this assessment framework guided teachers and students to a better comprehension of the holistic skills and sub-skills needed to improve their spoken performance over time. This session will, therefore, show the impact of using this framework in our institution and how the monitoring responsibility was gradually handed over to the students to foster their autonomy. The discussion will not be limited to a theoretical review of concepts and a research report, but it will also provide some practical ideas ready-to-use in the classroom.



## ► IELTS Strand

### **Incorporating mediation descriptors into rating criteria for an integrated EAP writing task**

Carolyn Westbrook | Tony Clark | Richard Spiby | Reza Tasviri

Academic writing often requires the integration of receptive and productive skills in an academic essay. Thus, it is important to reflect 'the level of processing and the production required' (Council of Europe, 2018: 52) in the rating scale. The Mediation descriptors in the Companion Volume to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CV) (Council of Europe, 2018) are designed specifically for this purpose.

This presentation reports on a project to design an integrated writing task and accompanying rating scale for a high-stakes EAP test, drawing on the CV 'Processing text in writing' and 'Writing reports and essays' scales' (Council of Europe, 2018).

As part of an iterative and cyclical process, the task and the rating scale were designed, then tested with experienced examiners before being tested by a wider rater pool. In each case, the examiners completed follow-up questionnaires and participated in focus groups to provide expert feedback on the interplay between the task and rating scale, their confidence in using the scale, the clarity of the descriptors and the practicalities of rating such tasks on a large-scale.

Concurrently, a qualitative analysis of the performances investigated test takers' source text use. In line with other findings (Cumming et al., 2005; Plakans and Gebril, 2013), the preliminary results suggest that more verbatim reproductions were evident at lower levels, while paraphrasing was more skilfully employed at higher levels, with further insights expected to follow. The implications of the study for test task design, further scale revision and rater training will also be discussed.

## ► Assessment in times of crisis

### **Assessment in times of crisis**

Andrew Khan

With traditional testing methods still disrupted, many schools, universities and companies have needed to think creatively about how to assess achievement and proficiency. In this session, we'll look at different models for testing in the COVID-19 era, as well as some of the positive and negative responses to the idea of assessing learners at home, and also cover test tips and lessons learned from the delivery of Pearson's digital English tests.



## Parallel Sessions

11:15 - 11:45 A.M

### ► Language assessment literacy 1

#### **A validity case for procedural assessment literacy for EFL teachers**

Philip Horne

Pill and Harding (2013) presented a cline identifying five stages of Language Assessment Literacy (LAL), from total inexperience (1) to complete expert (5). O'Sullivan (2016) suggests that most English teaching practitioners are in or around the third (functional) stage, meaning that key concepts are understood in broad strokes. However, moving all professionals towards a more principled understanding (the fourth, or procedural stage) of LAL is both an important and neglected aspect of validation. This session is based upon a replication study of Fulcher (2012), who conducted a self-evaluative questionnaire on perceived awareness of LAL among various practitioners. My study replicated that questionnaire, conducted in this instance among 50 English teachers and examiners. It also addresses the limitation in the original study of only using self-evaluative data by additionally asking participants to write brief definitions of terminology such as "construct validity". The results were analysed using summary item statistics and thematic coding in NVivo. This paper empirically consolidates the abovementioned conclusions of O'Sullivan (2016), by demonstrating i) that many teaching professionals are indeed at the functional stage, ii) there are key areas of LAL in which practitioners are not even aware of the nature of the knowledge gap, and iii) that addressing these gaps through LAL training would lead to an overall increase in test validity, including, for instance, improved classroom testing, or better communication with stakeholders. English teaching in Latin America is used as a context to suggest practical frameworks for LAL development.

### ► Language assessment literacy 2

#### **Exploring feedback practices at an adult English program**

Johana Andrea Melo | Daniela Sánchez

This exploratory study emerged as a formal inquiry about a group of teachers' views and practices of the ongoing assessment and feedback processes at the Centro Colombo Americano, Bogotá. The needs analysis displayed a generalized perception of the challenges

posed by the application of formative assessment on a daily basis with adult learners. Thus, this qualitative research aims at understanding how teachers regard the feedback principles proposed by the language institution. The purpose of the study is to understand educators' beliefs and insights when they are asked to incorporate alternative feedback practices (Spiller, 2014) in which feedback is considered as an account of language learning performances that encourages both students and teachers to focus on future learning goals and take action on them. The participants in the study were nine ELT teachers who were selected because of their considerable experience in the English program. The instruments used to collect data were field observations (McMillan, 2005) situational interviews and questionnaires. The preliminary findings show that despite certain constraints on providing ongoing feedback, teachers have developed a wide range of strategies to help learners construct learning goals that fit their specific needs, such as individualized talks, group feedback sessions and getting to know students' learning patterns in their own contexts.

### ► Professionalising English assessment in learning systems 1

#### **Digital English language assessment in Mexican public schools**

Roxana Antohi

Oxford Education's proposal focuses on a project undertaken in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Education (SEP) in Mexico (2019). A Certification exam was distributed to 11,447 students aged 13-15 from 30 public schools in Mexico. Listening, Reading, Use of English and Writing were tested. The project has a national significance – for Mexico – and the potential for an international significance through comparison with other Latin American countries. The project was designed to contribute towards SEP's vision of a digitalised English language education in Mexican schools. The pilot showed that the SEP's vision was not compatible with the current resources needed to assess English language literacy in public schools. This was due to outdated hardware and software and a lack of internet access. These issues were dealt with by providing innovative solutions, such as the distribution of modems, tablets, usage of an app format and regular technical support. The findings showed that over 99% of candidates tested had a basic level of English (A1-A2), while only 0.24% were at an intermediate level (B1-B2). 41.42% of the candidates tested did not attempt





to complete the Writing assignment. The results of the project demonstrated the need for further development of the English language programme in public schools in Mexico, as well as the need for revised and regular assessment to monitor progress. The pilot also led to a change in the scoring of Writing exams for The Oxford Tutorial College Certificate, using a more structured scoring system.

#### ► Operationalising the ESP construct

### Developing an English for aviation assessment: a case study

Simon Cook

The testing of ESP is an area of growing relevance in industries where, in addition to well-established General English tests, specific domains demand their own specific language proficiency assessments. In March 2003, the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organisation adopted a comprehensive set of SARPs that strengthened the minimum 'plain' language proficiency requirements for pilots and air traffic controllers involved in international operations and established English as the common language of the skies. For these populations, by March 2008, English for Aviation language proficiency assessment had become mandatory. This conference presentation describes a practical response to the industry requirement for an ESP Aviation test through the development of the English for Aviation Language Testing System (EALTS). Beginning with a description of how the implementation of the new ICAO standards would demand fundamental changes in classroom practice, and going on to the operationalisation of the ESP Aviation construct and the development of the EALTS, the presentation will look at some of the issues involved and the challenges faced, before offering a consideration of possible future developments around the exam and the impact that new technologies may have. The presentation will also tell how successful collaborations with training and industry partners allowed a language assessment process developed for clients within a UK college of EFL to become an internationally administered test of English for Aviation, the certificates of which have been recognized by national aviation authorities for pilot and air traffic controller license endorsement purposes in over 100 ICAO member states.

#### ► Assessing productive skills 1

### Metacognition tools to improve writing

Larissa Tatiana Rico Buitrago | Yenifer Agudelo

Many strategies have been used in order to improve writing skills at the university level. After having taught grammar

and reading-writing courses in the Licenciatura Program of Modern Languages at the Universidad del Quindío, the faculty was highly interested in tools which help students to use their metacognitive learning strategies to improve writing. As a result, three metacognitive strategies have been implemented in different courses. These strategies have been analysed in two research projects that followed three stages: a) a diagnostic one whose aim was to reveal the main difficulties in the writing performance, done with interviews, questionnaires, diary entries and a pretest. b) an action stage which consisted of the application of the chosen metacognitive strategies; and c) an evaluation to know the impact of the strategies. The findings reported the effectiveness of using metacognitive strategies for enhancing writing in content, vocabulary, mechanics, accuracy and fluency, which subsequently allowed for an increase in the students' self-motivation, self-awareness and self-confidence about learning. Finally, the presenters will share a proposal they use at the university to help students improve writing at the three levels: linguistic, pragmatic and semantic, called the "Metacognition App", that can be downloaded and used in computers, tablets or mobile phones.

#### ► Assessing productive skills 2

### Assessing the intercultural communicative competence in second language contexts in a pre-service program

Tatiana Mesa Hoyos | Carlos Rico Troncoso

The Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) approach has become a mainstream objective in the teaching of English as a foreign language since authors

like Byram and Fleming (1998), Fantini (2000) and Corbett (2003) started articulating the importance of teaching local, national and international culture rather than just the use of the language in second language contexts, especially for future language teachers (Fang, 2011). There is an assumption that teachers are already moving forward in this direction not only in the development of activities and materials to foster ICC, but also the creation of assessment tools and/or strategies in order to identify and foster this competence (Sercu, 2005). This study outlines the different dimensions which Byram (1997) and Rico-Troncoso (2012) have attributed to the development of ICC and the possible assessment strategies that can be used to assess it (Humphrey, 2007; Sinicrope, C., Norris, J., & Watanabe, Y., 2007; Oxford, 1990). This qualitative case study identified the



ways in which teachers were assessing ICC and the knowledge that they fostered in a context of foreign language teaching in a teacher training program, through class observations, interviews and a focus group, with professors of a B.A. in modern languages. The findings of this research show some progress in the assessment of ICC in English language teaching in Colombia from the perspective of metacognitive and social strategies; however, further training and more teacher awareness of this matter will be necessary.

#### ► IELTS Strand

### Comprehensibility features in rating scale design: a preliminary study

Sheryl Cooke | Elaine Schmidt

Research into comprehensibility suggests that linguistic features such as speech rate, syllable-level errors and Medium Length of Run (MLR) have an impact on comprehensibility ratings (Kang, 2010; Ginther, et al., 2010; Saito, et al., 2017), with MLR, in particular, showing a strong correlation with high ratings of comprehensibility across different studies (Hincks, 2005; Isaacs & Trofimovich, 2012). This study focused on linguistic correlates at different levels of proficiency in a proof-of-concept (PoC) speaking test and scale revision project.

The PoC revision included the introduction of new task types – an integrated listening-into-speaking computer delivered task and a revised Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) – as well as revision of the rating scales. Speech samples from the integrated task only (n=23\*4 – four separate short samples for each test-taker) were analytically rated by experienced examiners, including application of the comprehensibility scale.

The analysis looked at fluency and pronunciation features identified in previous studies, specifically MLR, speech rate, and errors at the segmental level that included phonemic, syllabic and word stress errors, and how these correlated with the comprehensibility scale ratings. The range of features analyzed was limited by practical considerations including time, software, and resource constraints, as well as the quality of the audio files. Despite some anomalies, the findings showed a positive correlation between fluency measures and higher levels of proficiency and a negative correlation between segmental errors and performances that were rated as more comprehensible. This talk presents the findings in more detail and suggests further research into the link between comprehensibility and rating scales.

#### ► Assessment in times of crisis

### Accessibility in remote-delivered and computer-based English tests: What is the British Council doing?

Gemma Bellhouse

This presentation will discuss the British Council's experience of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) with regard to the Aptis English test and its computer-based delivery and remote-invigilated assessment. Firstly, this presentation will show how accessibility can be incorporated into ongoing test operations, using an approach which provides individualised accommodations for test-takers. Then, the impact on inclusivity of the remote-delivered Aptis and the process of inclusion screening assessments for projects and policies at the British Council will be described. Finally, this presentation will introduce the new EDI Quality policy which was written on the basis of the recent EDI Content Review which investigated gender, privilege and sociocultural biases within the Aptis test content. This EDI Quality policy is to be used by the Global Assessments test item writers and quality reviewers to regulate the inclusion and representation of test content for Global Assessments English language tests, as well as to ensure that our tests are accessible and conscious of all test candidates. The EDI Quality policy provides guidance on creating items and selecting resources (such as images) that are representative and inclusive. Rather than upholding and being limited to outdated and biased stereotypes and a 'one rule fits all' test delivery style, the Global Assessments team intends to deliberately and consciously provide a flexible English language test experience that is representative and inclusive of all ethnicities, disabilities and backgrounds.



11:50 - 12:50 P.M

## Panel: Teacher education and training for language assessment

Panellists: Susan Jones | Salome Villa Larenas | Alberto Costa | Amy Lightfoot

Chair: Thom Kiddle

There have been numerous studies of the knowledge and skills needed by English language teachers in the area of assessment, all of them recommending that for the most effective teaching and learning to take place, teachers need to know about assessment and its role in the classroom and how to integrate it into daily practice.

If assessment is seen as an integral part of the teaching and learning process, then it seems obvious that assessment-related input be included in teacher education and training. However, the importance given to assessment in teacher development has been sporadic and sometimes even minimal –assessment is often not seen as a priority, with other aspects of teaching given more prominence. With the Coronavirus, online teaching and the development related to it have become critically important as teachers grapple with the technicalities of virtual classrooms.

Where does assessment fit into this? The presenters will talk about how important it is for teachers and trainers to know about, understand and use assessment effectively, the role of assessment in projects they have worked on and whether technology is a help or a hindrance to developing teachers' assessment literacy.

12:55 - 13:40 P.M

## Lunch Break



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## Parallel Sessions

13:45 - 14:15 P.M

### ► Language assessment literacy 1

#### **Creating assessments that promote learning**

Susan Jones

The goal of any assessment instrument should not be just to give a grade, but to have a positive impact on teaching and learning. Of course, teachers must assign grades and make judgments about what learners know and can do, but good tests, whether diagnostic, formative or summative, should have a positive impact on what teachers do in the classroom, and therefore on what learners learn. There is often an assumption that teachers automatically know how to make good tests. But the majority of teacher training programmes do not include enough about assessment literacy, in order to equip teachers to make or adapt tests so that they will more effectively support learning. And little attention is given to formative assessment, to highlight what has been learned, what a student can do, and how the student may improve, especially his or her speaking. Communication skills can open many opportunities for our students, so it is critical that language assessments support students in developing these skills. To deliver good tests, teachers must have the knowledge and confidence to create assessments which more authentically test the desired skills. This will have a direct and positive impact on how those skills are taught and practiced in the classroom. This presentation will review the fundamental principles of test design, not only validity and reliability, but also impact, authenticity and fairness. It will present strategies for teachers to develop more effective tests, and evaluate or adapt tests that are prescribed in the curriculum or textbook, with examples of the benefits for learners.

### ► Language assessment literacy 2

#### **Self-assessment and achievement tests: a case of high school students**

Eliana Kobayashi | Sandra Gattolin

This paper presents the results of an investigation of self-assessment which aimed at a better understanding how students see self-assessment in English language and analyzed the correlation between the English language self-assessment done by high-school students and their scores in achievement tests applied by their English

subject teacher. The research was conducted in a high school class of a public educational institution located in Great São Paulo and used a mixed methodology with qualitative and quantitative analysis. Questionnaires were applied in order to first of all identify the students' perceptions and opinions of self-assessment and also to know how they assessed their linguistics skills in the English subject. The results show positive and negative aspects of self-assessment, according to the participants' views, like the possibility of working with the teacher to determine the students' scores but also their frustration and anxiety. On the other hand, the quantitative analysis using the paired-sample t-test does not reveal a correlation between the self-assessment and the achievement tests, since students tend to claim that their linguistics skills are better than the achieved scores. These results are similar to some other studies in the area and also emphasize that self-assessment results should be used with caution.

### ► Professionalising English assessment in learning systems 1

#### **How an external test affects instruction in an EFL program**

Lourdes Rey | Rodrigo Rodríguez

In 2006, the implementation of foreign language standards based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) started in Colombia, which reshaped English instruction and created different types of expectations for all stakeholders. The first generation of students schooled completely under these standards has recently reached higher education institutions and the profiles of students, combined with the demands of the job market, have influenced the rethinking of priorities in the English language program in a large private university. Traditionally, an online test was used to both place incoming students and also as an exit test. While the components of the traditionally used test (i.e. vocabulary, grammar and listening) have strong correlations with general language proficiency, the university required a direct measure of receptive and productive skills for program evaluation purposes. This presentation describes the process of finding the right test for the program aligned with the CEFR, moving from one test to another, dealing with administrative and financial situations to use the test locally, and more importantly, analyzing how the use of a new proficiency test influenced the adjustment and modification of the syllabi of all English instructional levels to account for the skills assessed in the new test. The data used in the presentation come from 4000 scores of two externally



designed and locally administered tests, curricular documents and syllabi from different stages of the process and a log of interviews with and the reflections of instructors and staff on practical issues related to the administration of both tests.

#### ► Operationalising the ESP construct

### Developing job profiles: measuring English for professionals

Mónica Rodríguez

GSE Job Profiles has been created to provide information for teachers of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) on the English language skills needed for specific jobs. GSE Job Profiles was created using job descriptions from the O\*NET database. Each task in a job description was mapped into the Global Scale of English (GSE) Learning Objectives for Professional Learners, in order to identify the linguistic skills that someone would need to master and so carry out that task in English. During the presentation the research behind the GSE Job Profiles and the database will be presented, along with a tool which enables teachers to know how to measure and match Jobs and English performance.

#### ► Assessing productive skills 1

### Expressing test performance (writing, speaking) in terms of the CEFR

Suzanne Springer | Martyna Kozłowska

The use of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) to describe English proficiency is common in North America and now becoming widespread across Latin America (Cronquist & Fiszbein, 2017). This shift requires language assessors to revisit the placement and proficiency tests that were created before the CEFR became so prevalent. Indeed, the Council of Europe recommends that institutions which wish to express results from non-CEFR based language tests in terms of CEFR proficiency levels carry out a mapping procedure to validate alignments (CoE, 2009). A study reporting on such a mapping process, involving the linking of scores on a university proficiency and placement English language test (the ANG Test) to the proficiency levels of the CEFR, is the focus of this presentation. We report on the results of Phase 1 of the study, concerned with constructed response sections of the ANG test, i.e. written and oral production. A range-finding procedure, followed by a pinpointing procedure, was employed in line with the Body of Work Method (Kingston et al., 2001). 575 constructed responses to writing and speaking questions were ranked

in terms of CEFR levels, which provided approximately 1800 judgments. An initial regression analysis ( $p < 0.001$ ) and ROC Analysis suggest that the existing cut-off scores for placement in CEFR level courses are similar to those found in the study. However, the findings thus far indicate that adjustments in evaluation procedure and constructed response prompts should be made in order to continue using the ANG Test for placement and proficiency.

#### ► Assessing productive skills 2

### Off-topic and out of luck? Examiners' views of topic relevance

Dylan Burton

A major concern in the foreign and second language testing of speaking is whether the relationship between what happens in the testing environment matches what happens in real life. In order to strengthen this relationship, developers must thus approximate target language use scenarios and contexts (McNamara, 2006), while also invoking situationally appropriate response processes (Zumbo & Hubley, 2017), which are the cognitive and psychological processes that are tapped into while speaking. When assigning scores, however, to what extent do aural skills indicate appropriate oral response processes? Should off-topic responses be penalized? As part of a larger study on test-task engagement, this presentation will report on exploratory quantitative and qualitative findings about raters' views of topic relevance in the context of a high-stakes speaking test. Fifty-eight raters scored ten speech samples, of which two were off-topic, using a novel instrument developed to measure authentic engagement. A small subset of the raters additionally participated in stimulated verbal recall to explore their perceptions and thought processes. The study provided evidence that the rating instrument was used consistently, but principal components analysis showed unexpected relationships between response processes, speaking proficiency, and topic relevance. Appropriate response processes did not correlate highly with topic relevance. Verbal recalls revealed that raters compensated for breakdowns in aural skills when perceiving test-takers as tapping into the intended cognitive and psychological processes involved in speaking. These results have important implications for scale development and rater training when awarding penalties for off-topic responses in speaking tests.



## ► IELTS Strand

### Investigating the impact of time constraints on an expeditious reading task

Richard Spiby | Tony Clark | Elaine Schmidt

In a university context, readers are expected to process large amounts of material in order to complete course assignments (Weir et al., 2009). Such demands are exacerbated by the fact that L2 English readers may take much longer than L1 counterparts to read assigned texts (Phakiti and Li, 2011). Therefore, students need to develop expeditious reading strategies (Khalifa and Weir, 2009), allowing them to process text quickly and within determined time constraints. However, in high-stakes English language testing, reading tests have historically focused on careful reading, and expeditious reading tasks have been underrepresented.

In the first stage of the present study, various prototype tasks were produced, targeting global expeditious reading at the discourse and intertextual levels of text processing. Qualitative feedback was then obtained from various stakeholders, leading to a decision to proceed with a multiple text model. In the second stage, the selected reading task was tested on 200 test-takers randomly allocated to two-time conditions. Each group was also administered a separate EAP reading proficiency task. Rasch analysis was used to monitor test performance across the different reading tasks. The test-takers also completed a questionnaire investigating strategy use and perceptions of the difficulty of the task. This questionnaire data was also triangulated with themes emerging from focus groups conducted with test-takers and expert judges. The results are discussed in terms of their theoretical and practical implications for reading test design and the impact of different time constraints on the operationalisation of the expeditious reading construct.

## ► Assessment in times of crisis

### Fostering large scale assessments and evaluation tools in times of crisis: The Colombian case

Natalia González

Since the onset of COVID-19, countless countries have suggested that large scale assessments don't make sense during these times. Some education specialists have even encouraged governments to step down and cancel evaluation and assessment programs to focus on strategies for children to work efficiently from home, so that learning gaps don't increase. However, the former shouldn't be ruled out in order to achieve the latter. Here in Colombia, the ICFES, has made huge efforts to maintain large scale assessments, such as administering two out of three nationwide assessments in a computer-based format; a leap we wouldn't have taken if it weren't for the pandemic. Not only did we work side by side with the Ministry of Education to guarantee that the country understood the public and social value that evaluation and assessment has as a cornerstone for making policy and institutional decisions, but we offered *Evaluar para Avanzar*, a program designed for teachers. We provided evaluation tools, such as, (a) test booklets for students from the 3rd to 11th grades, (b) teachers' guides for interpreting the students' results, (c) students' reports for teachers and (d) instructional videos for teachers so that they could identify their student's strengths and weaknesses and design teaching and learning strategies. Furthermore, the solution isn't to cancel large scale assessments, because the unavailability of students' results both in high school and undergraduate programs is worse for the educational system than counting students' performance results even if they fail.

It's best to have evidence on how the pandemic has impacted learning and what better way to report it than through large scale assessments? Of course, this standpoint can be interpreted as if assessment had a punitive aspect, but on the contrary, what we have done is to work together with the entire education community to provide evaluation tools to support teachers and foster teaching strategies for them to work with students. The ICFES would like to share these experiences and hear about yours too.





## ► Meet our partners

10:05 - 10:35 A.M	10:40 - 11:10 A.M	11:15 - 11:45 A.M	13:45 - 14:15 A.M
<b>IELTS</b>	<b>Oxford University Press</b>	<b>Jamestown</b>	<b>Richmond</b>
<b>Proctorio</b>	<b>Cambridge Assessment</b>		
<b>ASOCOPI</b>	<b>Skills for English</b>	<b>Pearson</b>	<b>British Council Aptis</b>

**14:20 - 15:00 P.M**

## **Plenary: Unpacking the concept of language assessment literacy for all key stakeholders**

Dr. Beverly Baker

The New Directions Conferences aim to bring policy makers, practitioners, and researchers together for meaningful conversations on universal issues and local concerns in language assessment. We meet because a greater understanding of and proficiency in assessment systems is indispensable for all these stakeholders, as well as for test takers themselves. This greater understanding and proficiency is generally termed “language assessment literacy”, although this term can be inconvenient, with its connotations of basic remedial knowledge for non-testing people, rather than the lifelong competency development essential to everyone, including language assessment specialists themselves (see Baker & Riches, 2018; InbarLourie, 2013; Taylor, 2013).

In this talk, I will unpack the notion of competency development from both the educational and workplace professional perspectives. I will then explore the extent to which language assessment literacy reflects competency development, using recent research to narrow in on relevant sub-competences necessary for each of these stakeholders. For example, professional workplace competency development for teachers includes learning technical skills and deciding on the cultural relevance of assessment topics. For policy makers, competency in language assessment includes awareness of appropriate and inappropriate uses of language assessment information. For students and other test takers, competence includes using test expectations to enhance their agency in identifying strategies to improve their learning.


**15:05 - 15:15 P.M**

## **Day 1 summary and conclusions**

Jamie Dunlea




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# Conference Day 2

7:35 - 7:55 A.M

## English evaluation in Latin America: A snapshot on where we are today

A video presentation of the English language assessment landscape in the region. We will showcase a collection of short videos from different countries in Latin America and share key information about English language assessment.

8:00 - 9:00 A.M

## Panel: Assessing speaking at national level

Panellists: Gabriela Kaplan | Jin Yan | Neus Figueras | Adriana Paola Bendek  
| Gladys Quevedo-Camargo | Ivonne de la Caridad Collada Peña  
Chair: Carolyn Westbrook

Assessing speaking can be challenging whether it is classroom based or part of a more formal summative process. Assessing Speaking at a national level requires a culmination of factors to be brought together to enable assessments to take place, be rated and the results communicated to relevant stakeholders. Seen like this, it can appear quite straightforward but if viewed more closely, what are the individual factors that enable the assessment of speaking to take place at a national level? They include a curriculum that supports the learning of speaking, the right materials to support the curriculum, and trained teachers who can both operationalise the curriculum effectively and have the skills to assess effectively. In turn being able to assess effectively involves having the appropriate materials to assess with, having useful and relevant rating scales to work with, and being able to understand, interpret and communicate the scores in a meaningful way to the different stakeholders involved, such as test-takers themselves, parents, school management, etc. This panel will explore what it means to assess speaking at a national level. The Panellists will share regional and global experiences, and insights from their own unique perspectives.

## Parallel Sessions

9:05 - 9:35 A.M

### ► Language assessment literacy 1

## Classroom observation instruments: lessons in design, evaluators training, and application

Julián Mariño | Yadira Gómez | Adriana Molina

In 2019, the Evaluation Center of the School of Education at the Universidad de Los Andes redesigned and applied a standardized instrument of observation of English classes to assess some teaching training programs meant to improve teachers' performance. These programs were financed by the Ministry of Education of Colombia and the British Council and implemented in 95 cities. During the development of the instrument, four main dimensions of teaching were initially defined to register class observation: i) teaching and learning dynamics, ii) learning environment, iii) evaluation and monitoring, and the iv) planning and preparation of classes.





The new instrument requires observers to assess how different issues corresponding to these four dimensions evolve during a class and to codify periodically what teachers and students do. For the specific purpose of this evaluation effort, a theoretical and practical training was given to 19 coders who then observed a total of 515 teachers in 113 municipalities in the country. To determine the quality of the information produced, 53 teachers were observed by two coders and 94 teachers had two different classes observed and generalizability theory was used to analyze the reliability of the observational measurement. Results from the confirmatory analysis led to reorganizing some of the scales in the dimensions. Overall, the results of this project exemplify the difficulties of threading program design and program assessment. The lessons learned from the experience provide valuable recommendations to those interested in evaluation based on class observation instruments.

#### ► Language assessment literacy 2

### Exploring Foreign Language Novice Language Teachers' Assessment Practices and Challenges

Gabriel Cote Parra | Alexis López Mendoza

This presentation reports on one part of a larger mixed-method study of language assessment literacy (LAL), which "...refers to language instructors' familiarity with testing definitions and the application of this knowledge to classroom practices in general and specifically to issues related to assessing language." (Malone, 2016, p. 329). The goal of this session is to examine the assessment practices of novice language teachers, the role they play and the challenges they face. We recruited 11 participants who had graduated recently from a foreign language program at a public university in Colombia. Each novice teacher participated in an online semi-structured interview. We identified three assessment practice patterns: 1) The use of teacher-made assessments: teachers who autonomously design and administer their own assessments; 2) The use of adapted assessments: teachers who partially modify and administer their own assessments, and 3) The use of in-house assessments: teachers who administer assessments provided by their institutions. We also found that novice teachers faced different challenges, based on the role they played in the assessment process.

In this presentation we will provide a brief description of the context of the study, followed by a description of the participants' teaching contexts and their assessment practices. After, we summarize the challenges the participants faced in each of their contexts and finally, we discuss the implications for teacher education and teacher training, and provide recommendations for how to better support novice teachers so they can cope with their new realities of their teaching contexts.

#### ► Professionalising English assessment in learning systems 1

### Customer service development in global education systems

Navil Chowdhury | Simon Higginson

A customer-centric philosophy, while a central pillar in the world of business, has not always permeated the world of education (Boyd, 2012). This is more so as the traditional attitude towards those benefiting from these services has been that of a 'service taker' peripheral to the process, as opposed to being at the center of the customer service experience. With increasing economic pressures and enhanced competition from rivals for more customers, organizations and institutions engaged in providing services are engaged in an effort to increase their market share. One area of improvement that most organizations have focused on is improving customer service with differing approaches. One approach that has seen some success is the adoption and implementation of a national or organisational action plan. The British Council in China has adopted this strategy for their IELTS examiner cohort with specific measures for creating specific customer service deliverables, a robust complaints management system, a greater awareness of the need for better customer service as well as a year-round system to recognize and award staff who provide the best customer service. This is the first time specific measures of customer service have been taken in what was a previously an unexplored facet of test delivery. The Chinese experience in this area, amounting to over a million test takers delivered by over 400 examiners, is thus unique and something Latin American organizations engaged in education can learn from.

#### ► Professionalising English assessment in learning systems 2

### Teacher activity group on remote teaching

Sirin Soyoz Yilmaz

The unexpected curriculum change caused by the Coronavirus pandemic has had an impact on the design and implementation of online lessons for teachers all around the world. There have been emerging educational needs and implementation challenges. The purpose of this research is to provide teachers at the British Council's Online Support for Schools (OSS) Hub a professional development opportunity on 'remote teaching' through Teacher Activity Groups (TAGs) which would have the potential to widen their online teaching competencies. The idea is based on the following recommendations from the British Council Partner Schools.



TAGs are peer-led support groups which teachers can join as part of their professional development. In these sessions, teachers will meet online to discuss different ideas and techniques on a variety of topics related to remote teaching. Teachers will then try out ideas from the TAGs in their day-to-day work/practice and/or reflect on their learning. The content of the TAG sessions will be based on real data from the classroom, therefore teachers who participate in the TAGs are expected to conduct a survey with their students. The survey is to investigate students' self-regulation, internal motivation, and their perceptions of online learning within the framework of the Community of Inquiry Framework. The results will inform teachers about the actions that they need to take to be able to design and facilitate online teaching that fosters deep learning. They will also have a chance to connect with a small group of teachers, learn from each-others' practice on remote teaching, share and co-construct knowledge and seek resolutions to the challenges and issues that you experience. These sessions will also enable them to set up their own TAGs within their schools.

#### ► Assessing productive skills 1

### **Rater perceptions of on-topic versus off-topic performance in a B2 level speaking task**

Judith Fairbam

Task-based language assessment often includes criteria in rating scales under headings such as task achievement, fulfilment or completion. In a narrow sense, the criteria might ask the rater to decide if a response is on-topic or off-topic. In a broader sense, this decision would include the linguistic quality of the response (McNamara, 1996; Pallotti, 2009). It is often unclear how raters make these decisions and how the task prompts and rating scales interact and impact on this decision-making process.

This study collected and analysed rater perceptions on whether spoken responses are on-topic, off-topic or ambiguously/ borderline on-topic. Thirty raters marked 45 speaking responses and provided explanations for their 135 on/ off-topic decisions (three decisions per response). The raters then participated in email exchanges to clarify and explore their on/off-topic decisions. The data provides insight into rater decision-making processes and the beliefs and values raters use to make on/off-topic decisions.

This ongoing study may identify how raters define and measure the on/off-topic construct and if there is a relationship between these decisions and rater severity, inconsistency, halo or bias effects (Myford & Wolfe, 2003). There is also scope to better understand how task design, task prompts and rating scale criteria interact and impact on these decisions. This talk will focus on how the findings of this study can be incorporated by test developers and teachers into the development of more professional speaking assessments in learning systems.

#### ► Assessing productive skills 2

### **Investigating scale length and inter-rater reliability in auto-rated assessment**

William Bayliss

In early 2020 an app was released that supports spoken English learning through formative assessment. It provides scores for a range of spoken features for diagnostic purposes. These scores are generated from recordings of spontaneous speech by an auto-rater trained on human rated samples. Due to the wide range of features given scores, the researchers had human raters use a twelve-band analytic scale. There is a great deal of debate about the optimum number of bands in scales for spoken language assessment. It is difficult to strike a balance between a scale being too coarse and too fine-grained (Issacs, 2013). This paper will outline the research undertaken to assess levels of inter-rater reliability in this twelve-band scale. Two main research questions are posed: 1. Are there acceptable levels of inter-rater reliability for low-stakes auto-rated assessment? 2. How does inter-rater reliability in a twelve-band scale compare to a six-band scale? To address Question 1, the paper will present the data collected from eighteen raters and its analysis using the Rasch scale. To address Question 2, the paper will present data collected from the same raters using a reduced six-band scale. This paper will conclude by using the above comparison to demonstrate the difficulty involved in achieving high levels of inter-rater reliability when using scales with a large number of bands. Reference: Isaacs, T., & Thomson, R. I. (2013). Rater experience, rating scale length, and judgments of L2 pronunciation: Revisiting research conventions. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 10, 135–159.



## ► IELTS Strand

### When decision-makers lack the necessary language assessment literacy

Misty Wilson

In response to declining international student enrolment, many US universities are expanding the ways in which international student applicants can provide proof of English proficiency. Increasingly in the United States, the decision regarding which English tests to accept and what score to set for international student applicants is falling to admission professionals. However, the limited research that has been conducted in the area of language assessment literacy (LAL) among university staff suggests they may lack the LAL needed to make informed decisions (Baker, 2016; O'Loughlin, 2013).

This session presents findings from a qualitative dissertation study that sought to understand how US admission professionals made sense of their decision to accept a short online test and cutoff scores as proof of English proficiency for undergraduate international student applicants. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven admission professionals who work at private and public universities of various sizes

in the United States. Transcripts were analysed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis to identify themes, which were considered in the context of the extant literature and through the theoretical framework of heuristics.

The findings of this study indicate that because admission professionals have very little university oversight or guidance in these decisions, their decision-making process is influenced by their professional roles and concerns about meeting enrolment targets. They further highlight the extreme importance of LAL, not only for admission professionals, but high-level academic leaders, so that informed policies can be implemented about how English tests and test scores should be chosen.

## ► Meet our partners

9:05 - 9:20 A.M

9:20 - 9:35 A.M

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## Parallel Sessions

9:40 - 10:10 A.M

### ► Language assessment literacy 1

#### **Mediation: translating theory into meaningful classroom and assessment practice**

Victoria Clark | Mark O'Sullivan

There is a shift from the traditional view of the four skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) to a more comprehensive and real-life use of language, which underlines the relationship between four modes of communication: reception, interaction, production and mediation. In the new Companion Volume to the CEFR (2018), the previously underdefined concept of mediation has been developed and is now beginning to influence teaching practices and assessment. Mediation is not a new phenomenon and despite its recent attention, several challenges still exist for teachers who wish to make sense of mediation in everyday practice and translate the theory into meaningful classroom and assessment tasks. In this presentation, the contexts of mediation will be discussed, focusing on the role of the 'social agent' played by learners as they try to find a common ground to produce and convey meaning. Then the scales for mediation that are grouped under the headings of mediating a text, mediating concepts and mediating communication will be presented, followed by some examples of activities for classroom and assessment purposes. Finally, the challenges of teaching and assessing mediation will be discussed. This presentation hopes to empower teachers to better understand and be able to incorporate the language competence of mediation into their classroom and assessment activities.

### ► Language assessment literacy 2

#### **Practicality, flexibility and creativity in formative assessment: a case study from the British Council's Teaching Centre Network**

Aidan Holland

These centres offer English language courses to primary and secondary age learners using a set of in-house materials, based on principles of both task-based and project-based learning. It was envisaged from the outset that teachers across the organisation would use a formative approach to assessment when teaching

these courses. However, we have encountered two main challenges to the successful implementation of this. Firstly, there are a range of approaches to assessment across the teaching centre network, with each teaching centre using an approach developed in response to localised assessment practices and parent/student expectations, which can differ from country to country. Secondly, the level of assessment expertise varies considerably across the organisation.

This session will discuss a proof-of-concept project to pilot a standardised approach to formative assessment. It will focus on the work done on the lower secondary courses and include the development of a series of formative assessment task shells that target the CEFR can-do descriptors. The tasks are peer reviewed and used to create a bank of quality resources, including teacher evaluation criteria and student self-assessment tools. It has also acknowledged the importance of training and development in order to ensure that teaching staff have enough expertise to be able to work independently and creatively while at the same time ensuring reliability and creating a strong sense of progress on the part of the learners. This session will introduce the rationale for the project and discuss the development process for task shells and assessment criteria—teacher and self-assessment—with examples of tasks produced by the working group.

### ► Professionalising English assessment in learning systems 1

#### **The role of specifications and sample items in item-writing**

Olena Rossi

The role of specifications and sample items in test production is an area of much debate. On the one hand, including sample items in specifications enables the production of highly comparable parallel test versions, thus increasing test validity. On the other hand, sample items might suppress item-writer creativity, resulting in multiple clones of the sample.

The presentation reports on an empirical study that explored the role of specifications and sample items in developing item-writing skills during an online item-writer training. The item-writing skill development followed several stages during the training. Initially, the trainees attempted to closely replicate the sample items while paying secondary attention to the specifications; they also expressed the need for more item examples. As the trainees' item-writing awareness increased, their attention



shifted from sample items to item specifications. The rate of development varied among the trainees. Some of them demonstrated a better understanding of specification requirements and developed a range of strategies to ensure that the requirements were met. They also started to explore specification constraints by producing items that deliberately deviated from the samples. However, the trainees whose item quality did not improve post-course, continued to pay exclusive attention to sample items and did not demonstrate an improved understanding of the specifications. The findings suggest that, while sample items are an invaluable resource for novice item-writers and at initial stages of item-writing training, they might become a straitjacket as the item-writing skill develops. The study has practical implications for item-writer training and can help inform test specifications design.

#### ► Professionalising English assessment in learning systems 2

### Pursuing fair testing practices at a Colombian university

Elsa Adriana Restrepo | Edgar Picón-Jácome

The fact of being part of the department in charge of administering testing at a local university in Colombia prompted the presenters of this talk to lead a study group with the aim of applying fairer testing practices. Pursuing fairness (McNamara & Roever, 2006) as the paramount principle that oriented the design process, we expected to reduce the detrimental effects that the policy was having on many test takers' lives. As a result, we have gained valuable knowledge about the matter and achieved some important goals in our struggle to engage in the crafting of the language policy through fairer testing practices. This presentation describes the process we have followed in the test design, while we share data we gathered to evaluate their usefulness (Bachman & Palmer, 1996) and consequential validity (Shohamy, 2001). The concept of fairness in testing will be the central topic of discussion, while we will present reflections arising from two key studies that have influenced our critical stance towards testing practices. Efforts will be made to establish connections with the attendees in order to raise consciousness about the impact of testing and our responsibility to encourage research into fair testing practices.

#### ► Assessing productive skills 1

### Language assessment literacy and professional development of pre-service language teachers

Frank Giraldo | Daniel Murcia Quintero

This session presents an insight into how computers in Colombia and discussions about professionalising

teachers through Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) have recently emerged (Giraldo & Murcia, 2018; Herrera & Macias, 2015; Restrepo & Jaramillo, 2017). However, there are few published studies of such initiatives that report on the interface between professional development and LAL. The presentation reports on one example of an LAL initiative and its impact on pre-service English language teachers' professional development. We conducted an action research study in which we planned, designed, implemented and evaluated a language assessment course for a higher education language teaching program in a Colombian state university. We used questionnaires, interviews, researchers' journals and class observations for data collection. In the diagnostic stage of our study, the findings suggested that stakeholders at this university expected a primarily design-based course framed within Colombian assessment policy. During course implementation, we identified a radical change in the conception of language assessment; an emerging theoretical framework; and its use for the conscientious design of assessment instruments. The implications of our study are, on the one hand, the need to hear stakeholders' voices loud and clear (Inbar-Lourie, 2017); and on the other hand, the need to prioritise the practice of language assessment to foster professional development. These are two possible new directions for stimulating local LAL discussions that could be useful in other contexts.

#### ► Assessing productive skills 2

### Argumentation skills: a peer assessment approach to classroom discussions

Diego F. Ubaque

This session will present an exploratory action study carried out by two English as a foreign language teachers in a private, non-profit institution in Bogota, Colombia, with a group of 12 learners in a B1 English course. These students had difficulties in articulating their ideas when discussing issues in class. The study placed emphasis on the use of argumentation outlines and peer assessment to boost learners' argumentative abilities. Audio-taped conversations and open-ended interviews were used to understand the impact on the pedagogical intervention. The findings revealed that argumentation outlines and peer assessment can promote learners' awareness and ability to engage in argumentation processes. Moreover, peer assessment appears to be an essential tool for enhancing personal and collaborative learning, as well as for promoting learner reflection and agency.



## ► IELTS Strand

### Comparing Tests: Is My Mojito Your Mojito?

Barry O'Sullivan | Nick Saville

Establishing equivalence across different tests has been with us for many years. The traditional approach, like the validation theories that supported test use, tended to be quantitative in nature. Statistical comparisons tended to be simplistic, relying on basic correlation indices. The resultant claims of so-called 'comparability' were either naive or downright fraudulent. Increasingly with high-stakes testing, the similarities or differences between tests are becoming more important to test users like university admissions officers, employers, teachers, students, and the need for more transparent and systematic comparison has increased. One reason for this is that, as the language testing industry continues to fragment, there is an increasing choice for test users. It is therefore imperative that test developers undertake comparability/ equivalence studies that meet the requirements of test users in terms of transparency and accessibility. The COVID19 pandemic has highlighted this

situation dramatically as test users were forced to make increasingly desperate decisions about test selection and approval armed with little more than simplistic and not always honest marketing material presented to them by unscrupulous developers – though I would hasten to add that there were many developers who did not choose to go down this route.

In this presentation I will address such questions as how test developers might offer meaningful and transparent comparisons, using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. In doing this, I will suggest what features of tests and test scores should be compared, taking what I see as a principled construct perspective. Finally, I will consider the benefits and risks of comparative frameworks.

## ► Meet our partners

9:40 - 9:55 A.M

**University of  
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9:55 - 10:10 A.M

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10:10 - 10:30 A.M

## Break

### Parallel Sessions

10:35 - 11:05 A.M

#### ► Language assessment literacy 1

### Empowering educators: understanding and using English assessment scores

Heather Koons

As increasing numbers of learners study English and take assessments designed to monitor language growth and determine readiness for entrance into the next stages of education, it is important for educators to fully understand the assessments and results so they use them effectively and efficiently.

Several components of building assessment literacy are presented, using Aptis Teens Advanced (ATA) and Lexile measures. First, a description of the study to link The Lexile Framework reading scale to the ATA scale provides essential background on what the assessments measure and how they relate. This knowledge is a foundational piece of assessment literacy. Because of this study, scores on ATA may be reported as Lexile measures as well as CEFR levels. Next, several studies are presented to illustrate assessment utility. The average learner's reading ability in the ATA linking study was 1033L, within the B2 range on the CEFR scale. In a study of IGSE textbooks and exam papers administered in international schools, Lexile text complexity ranged from 780L to 1180L. When a learner's English reading ability (e.g. 1033L) is below the demands of a text/exam (e.g. 1180L), he/she will encounter reading comprehension challenges. Knowing the Lexile measure of a learner and text provides educators with insights into when a learner needs reading comprehension support.

Reading demands of graded readers, South Korean school textbooks, and university texts in the UK and USA are presented to provide an additional context for raising our awareness of how assessment results can be used to monitor progress toward reading goals.

#### ► Language assessment literacy 2

### Moving toward authentic assessment as part of a curricular renovation

Lawrence Berlin | Juan Felipe Zuluaga Molina

Engaging in curricular renovation is not a single activity; changes to the syllabi and the pedagogy do not exist in isolation and must be accompanied by concomitant and relevant assessment. Accordingly, it is necessary to consider the implications of this renovation for the stakeholders in a foreign language program for adults and teens at a private university in Colombia. The purpose of this presentation is to report on the initial findings of a pilot study aimed at identifying needs and challenges derived from the implementation of a new curriculum based on a participatory approach to language learning. The data included student surveys, teacher surveys, and open-ended interviews with academic coordinators. In addition, notes from participant observation during focus groups about beliefs and practices related to the assessment process were gathered from the design team involved in developing and implementing the new curriculum. The findings resulted in the restructuring of the evaluation system (student proficiency and teacher efficacy) and the identification of the steps needed to move toward an authentic assessment in the context of the participatory approach. Furthermore, the participant voices throughout the process added to the changes and made the classes more engaging and student-centered. They also connected assessment to the different educational practices in a more natural way.

#### ► Operationalising the ESP construct

### To trust or not to trust: avoiding fraud completely

Thomas Treutler

Falsified academic degrees and language certificates are rather the norm than the exception today. In a case that brought international attention to this issue in 2014, the former Minister of State for Immigration, James Brokenshire, told the House of Commons that an inquiry into the student visa system had found evidence of criminal activity. Of 48,000 English language certificates, 29,000 were invalid and 19,000 were "questionable".



Fraud in academic degrees and certificates seems to be on the rise and the UK student visa case is likely just the tip of the iceberg. Academic institutions worldwide employ a variety of strategies to avoid this kind of fraud, however, most of these strategies are either inefficient or raise the cost for certifications, and even more, spiral into a vicious circle. Beginning in 2018, solutions have been developed that can completely avoid fraud in academic degrees and certificates.

I will present recent statistics on fraud and share a strategy that can completely eradicate the alteration or falsification of academic degrees and certificates. Organizations can lower the cost of validity assurance considerably, thus completely avoiding misconduct, like the falsification. Of 48,000 English language certificates.

### ► Assessing productive skills 1

## 1, 2, 3 Valle Speaks. A placement test proposal

Rafael Hernandez | Adriana Valencia

According to the Bilingual Colombian macro-policy and, as different educational linguistic policy documents of the Ministry of Education have stated, students in Colombia in the 11th grade must graduate with a pre-intermediate level of Communicative competence in English (B1, according to the descriptions of the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Teaching (CoE, 2001a). However, the reality in Colombia and Valle del Cauca is different. The majority of students are located in levels A- and A1. The 34 uncertified municipalities of Valle del Cauca have 149 educational Institutions, which, in turn, are located in 1,145 places, of which 647 are rural. The 1, 2, 3 Valle Speaks Program aims at strengthening the communicative competence in English of children and adolescents who attend certain official educational establishments of the Department of Valle del Cauca. The Pontificia Universidad Javeriana Cali participated by designing and applying pre and post-tests, in order to measure the level of English of the participants. The design was adapted from the current institutional English Placement Test that has been applied since 2015. The tests were divided into two categories: KIDS, designed for students of 4th grade; and TEENS, designed for 9th and 10th graders. Both tests measured all the skills needed to place the candidates into one of the levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This lecture aims at sharing the above mentioned assessment experience and its impact on the public institutions chosen to be part of the project.

### ► IELTS Strand

## Crisis, collaboration, recovery: IELTS and COVID-19

Tony Clark | Richard Spiby | Reza Tasviri

The Implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic for assessment in 2020 were considerable, presenting testing companies with a range of numerous and sustained difficulties to overcome. This was particularly evident for major and established high-stakes tests such as IELTS, the focus of this presentation. The challenge of moving an existing test online for at-home use - and the implications of doing so - should not be underestimated (Isbell and Kremmel, 2020). The sheer scale of the IELTS testing infrastructure and its unique position in the world of international education dictated some of the particular challenges that the IELTS Partners (British Council, IDP Education and Cambridge Assessment English) faced after the closure of test centres during this period. The decisions taken would have an impact on millions of test-takers globally, and it was imperative that these decisions should address a range of international stakeholders' needs. Maintaining trust in IELTS, by involving key stakeholders at each stage of decision-making and remaining transparent, was central to this.

This presentation explores how decisions were made about such aspects as test construct, timelines, platforms, remote proctoring and the role of empirical research to support migration to an at-home test. Finally, we describe the dedication of the cross-partner teams working collaboratively under extreme pressure to construct and roll out an alternative test offering in highly unusual circumstances.



## ► Assessment in times of crisis

### Assessing undergraduate English teacher trainees in pandemic times. An experience from Cuba

Isora Enríquez O´Farrill

The English teacher education program in Cuba is a four/ five-year program of university training during which time trainees take a number of academic disciplines to develop their communicative competence to a B2 level or above (CEFR) along with their pedagogical skills, so as to prepare them to work in primary, secondary or tertiary education. The program assessment scheme considers formative and summative assessments. The end-of program assessment is designed so that the undergraduates demonstrate their communicative, pedagogical and research skills through a comprehensive assessment task with a strong practical component based on the practicum at school: a system of lessons from a selected unit of the k-12 syllabus or a small-scale research project to solve a teaching learning problem identified during practicum.

The sudden shift to distance settings and the prolonged school closures, obviously had major implications for

learning and assessments, with a greater effect for graduating trainees, since their access to the labor activity could be affected. Therefore, it was necessary to incorporate a variety of alternatives according to the local contexts, considering both the health conditions and the availability of resources, such as videotaping, voice recording, traditional telephoning, emailing, mobile texting and WhatsApp and Telegram groups as alternatives to ensure learners' assessment.

The pandemic demonstrated the best of the humankind among stakeholders, teachers, students and their families, who re-invented their routines to create positive, supportive and collaborative learning and assessing environments towards success, giving priority to the affective domain of the teaching learning process and assessment.

## ► Meet our partners

10:35 - 10:50 A.M

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11:10 - 11:50 A.M

## Plenary: Developing a localised semi-direct speaking test for young learners in Uruguay: challenges and innovations

Dr. Gabriela Kaplan | Dr. Fumiyo Nakatsuhara

Most language educators would agree that testing spoken language is often challenging in educational settings due to its logistically-complex and resource-intensive nature. Uruguay was not an exception, despite the success of the Plan Ceibal one computer-tablet per child initiative in schools.

This presentation reports on a recent collaborative project that has developed and validated a localised semi-direct speaking test for young learners at the end of primary and beginning of secondary education in Uruguay, targeting CEFR levels pre-A1 to A2. In this talk, we provide an overview of the project and the results of (i) a pilot with 210 learners and 8 examiners and (ii) a CEFR-linking exercise with 14 expert panellists, while focusing on some of the challenges encountered as well as the technological innovations made in the project.

For example, to counter a lack of interlocutor scaffolding (e.g., Field, 2018; Hasselgreen & Caudwell, 2016) in an online environment, the test incorporated instructional videos in the learners' L1 with a young teacher-like figure, and allowed for the repetition of prompts. It also featured game-like tasks to enhance learners' motivation. Given the beginner-level language ability of the candidature, another challenge was to divide the CEFR A1 category into sub-levels for score-reporting purposes. The CEFR linking panel offered insights into how many granular levels can be reliably evaluated with the specific output language on the test.

11:55 - 12:35 P.M

## Closing Ceremony

Harriet Gardner | Russell Hammond | Mina Patel

12:40 - 13:10 P.M

## Networking activity and prize draw



# About IELTS

## About IELTS

IELTS is the world's most trusted English Language test for higher education, work, and global migration. It's recognised globally by over 10,000 organisations and is the only test that's accepted by all immigration authorities that ask for an English test. IELTS is delivered at over 1,600 locations in over 140 countries and offers choice to people to take the test either on paper or computer. The test covers four sections: Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking.

## How the test is developed

The British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia and Cambridge Assessment English jointly own IELTS and the test is developed to provide a fair and accurate assessment of English language proficiency. Test questions are developed by language specialists from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the USA. The test content reflects everyday situations. It is unbiased and fair to all test takers from all backgrounds.

## IELTS for study, migration, and work

There is a choice of two tests, to serve both academic and non-academic purposes. IELTS Academic measures English language proficiency needed for an academic, higher learning environment. The tasks and texts are accessible to all test takers, irrespective of their subject focus. IELTS General Training measures English language proficiency in a practical, everyday context. The tasks and texts reflect both workplace and social situations. IELTS General Training is suitable for immigration purposes to Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom and Ireland.

## Taking IELTS with British Council

Test takers who choose to take IELTS with British Council get access to a wide range of free practice materials and support. This includes a mobile app with full practice tests and answers, access to the Road to IELTS online course, and preparation webinars with highly experienced IELTS teachers. Test takers can also attend a live "Ask the IELTS Expert" session on our Facebook page and get their questions about the test answered.

Research support

IELTS is proud to offer transparent statistics on our testing system. Data that has been compiled from the scores achieved by various groups of test takers helps researchers and teachers understand the performance of the test and how test takers perform in particular countries or regions. For more information, please visit [ielts.org/for-researchers/test-statistics](https://ielts.org/for-researchers/test-statistics).

## Grants and awards

The IELTS Partners offer grants for research on English language learning and assessment, and awards for best practice in language education. Since 1995, the IELTS research programme has provided financial support for more than 110 external studies carried out by over 242 researchers around the world. Applications for research grants are open from April to June each year. For more information, go to [ielts.org/for-researchers/grants-and-awards](https://ielts.org/for-researchers/grants-and-awards).





# About Aptis

Aptis is a modern and flexible English proficiency test, designed to meet the diverse needs of organisations around the world. It is developed by British Council experts and is based on the latest research in assessment.

It tests grammar, vocabulary and all four language skills (speaking, writing, reading and listening), delivering fast, reliable results in just 48 hours.

All scores are mapped to the CEFR to demonstrate how each candidate's English compares with international standards.

It is fully modular and customisable and is suitable for all candidates, regardless of their level. You choose which skills you want to test depending on your needs. Aptis is delivered on a computer at a time and location of your choice.

## **With Aptis you can:**

- assess English language skills of employees, teachers and students and benchmark them to an international standard (CEFR)
- get an accurate assessment of individuals' that need to meet a certain English language level requirement.
- identify language training needs
- recruit and promote the right talent
- ensure readiness of students to study in English-taught programmes
- ensure reliable admissions and exit processes
- identify strengths and weaknesses to inform training programmes and measure their success

## **Flexible, secure and efficient testing**

With Aptis you decide when, where and which skills to test. It can be used to test large groups of candidates in

multiple locations regardless of their skill level. You can run the whole process independently in your organisation or you can leave this to our expert team.

With Aptis we can offer secure testing – either face-to-face or remotely by using AI-powered remote supervision.

## **Accurate and reliable results**

Aptis tests candidates' skills to communicate in English in real-life situations, giving you a reliable measure of their language abilities.

The Aptis speaking and writing parts are marked objectively within 48 hours by our team of trained examiners under strict standards.

The reading, listening, grammar and vocabulary components are marked automatically within the system.

## **A trusted assessment solution**

Designed by British Council assessment experts and backed by extensive research, Aptis is based on more than 80 years' experience in teaching and testing English around the world.

We have a comprehensive research agenda and ongoing control and monitoring standards to ensure the reliability and accuracy of the Aptis scores. All questions in the test are extensively trialed and only those which meet the requirements are included in live tests.

The Aptis test is also validated in studies by independent researchers.





# Thankyou to our partners



## PREFERENTIAL PARTNERS



## PREMIUM PARTNERS



## SUPPORTED BY



## PARTICIPANT





# Thankyou to our team

A big thank you to the team that made New Directions Colombia 2021 possible, demonstrating an amazing ability to coordinate with remote team members, speakers, presenters and everyone involved in this event. Thank you for the late hours, the weekends, and all the extra time you gave to achieving our goals.

## Project Team

### Harriet Gardner

Regional Exams Director, Americas

### Mina Patel

Conference Chair New Directions LATAM & Assessment Research Manager

### Russell Hammond

Head of Exams Business Development, Andes Cluster

### Carolyn Westbrook

Test Development Researcher (Productive skills)

### Jamie Dunlea

Senior Researcher & Manager of ARG

### Liliana Silva

New Directions Event Manager

### Liliana Fory

New Directions Project Coordinator

## Marketing and Communications

### Lucia Vega

Regional Marketing Director

### Natalia DeMares

Head of Marketing and Communications

### Johanna Bermudez

Programmes and Exams Marketing Manager



# About the British Council

The British Council builds connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language.

We work in two ways – directly with individuals to transform their lives, and with governments and partners to make a bigger difference for the longer term, creating benefit for millions of people all over the world.

We help young people to gain the skills, confidence and connections they are looking for to realise their potential and to participate in strong and inclusive communities. We support them to learn English, to get a high-quality education and to gain internationally recognised qualifications. Our work in arts and culture stimulates creative expression and exchange and nurtures creative enterprise.

We connect the best of the UK with the world and the best of the world with the UK. These connections lead to an understanding of each other's strengths and of the challenges and values that we share. This builds trust between people in the UK and other nations which endures even when official relations may be strained.

We work on the ground in more than 100 countries. In 2019-20 we connected with 80 million people directly and with 791 million overall, including online and through our broadcasts and publications.

We are:

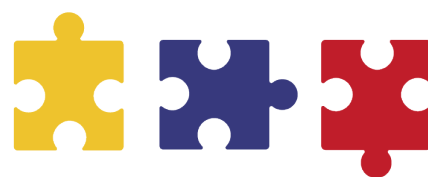
- registered charity no 209131 (England and Wales) and SC037733 (Scotland)
- an executive non-departmental public body. The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office is our sponsoring department
- a public corporation.

Our Patron is HM Queen Elizabeth II and HRH The Prince of Wales is our Vice-Patron.





# New Directions



# Colombia

**Online | 1-3 July, 2021**

**Contact Us**

Email: [newdirectionslatam@britishcouncil.org](mailto:newdirectionslatam@britishcouncil.org)  
Website: [americas.britishcouncil.org/new-directions](https://americas.britishcouncil.org/new-directions)

