English Teaching and Learning Study (ETLS)

Presentation to the General Assembly

8 October, 2013
Lisbon, Portugal

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Educational Testing Service
Overview of Presentation

• ETS staff introductions
• Study background
• Current status of proposal
• Country recruitment
• Reasons to participate in ETLS
• Key study features
ETS Staff Introductions

- Mary Pitoniak
  Project Director

- Gary Ockey
  English-language Assessment Advisor
Study Background

• In 2011, preliminary discussions were held

• In 2012, several activities took place
  – An exploratory committee of experts in English language learning and assessment met
  – A country survey was conducted
  – An overview of the preliminary design was provided at the General Assembly in Phuket
Development of Proposal

• In 2013:
  – ETS developed a full proposal and budget for the study
  – ETS and the IEA agreed to move forward with country recruitment
Country Recruitment

- A brochure has been developed and distributed to countries
- The full proposal has also been sent to countries
- Cost per country is $25,000 and €25,000 per year for 5 years
Reasons to Participate in ETLS

• Communicating in English is becoming increasingly important
  – Population mobility
  – Economic globalization
  – Common language in modern communication

• English-language instruction is now mandatory in many countries

• ETLS will provide countries with important information about the abilities of a country’s students to learn and work using the English language
Key Study Features

• Population
• Research Questions
• Skills Assessed by Cognitive Items
• Background Questionnaires
• Assessment Design
• Reporting
• Differences Between ETLS and European Survey on Language Competences (ESLC) 2011
• Schedule
Population

- Students in 10th year of schooling
  - Results of country survey indicate that completion of mandatory instruction in English is after the 11th year of formal schooling
  - However, tracking often takes place after 10th year, so administration in 11th year is problematic; thus the decision to test in 10th year
  - Given administration at fixed point in time, comparisons can be informed by contextual variables (curriculum, etc.)

- Administered to all students, not just those who have received formal instruction in English
  - Facilitates trend comparisons
  - Shows how effective instruction was for those who received it
Research Questions

Six themes will be studied through cognitive items and background variables:

1. English Language Test Performance
2. Noncognitive Outcomes and Predictors
3. The Role of Gender, Socio-Economic and Cultural Status and Family Background
4. English Language Policy/Curriculum/Teacher Training
5. Exposure to/Experiences with English Language (Opportunities to Learn) at School
6. Exposure to/Experiences with English Language (Opportunities to Learn) Outside of School
Skills Assessed by Cognitive Items

• 4 skills will be assessed:
  – Listening
  – Reading
  – Writing
  – Speaking
    • Proposal listed as Speaking as optional
    • However, it is now included in total study costs and will be administered in every country

• Items for each skill will cover CEFR levels of A1-C1
Skill Descriptions

- **Listening (MC; 5 types)**: Understand conversations related to daily lives and school and spoken texts on accessible topics for entertainment, academic, and informational purposes.

- **Reading (MC; 5 types)**: Read written English occurring in target language contexts that are similar to familiar first language contexts (e.g., school, home, popular media) for entertainment, academic, and informational purposes.

- **Writing (CR; 3 types)**: Communicate by writing information, ideas, and opinions related to daily lives and school.

- **Speaking (CR; 4 types)**: Communicate orally in routine social situations related to daily lives and school, requiring the use of oral English language.
Background Questionnaires

• Four questionnaires
  – Student
  – Teacher
  – School
  – Country

• Methodology
  – Question indices rather than stand-alone items
  – Use of computer-based administration to increase data quality
Assessment Design Overview

• Completely computer-based
  – No paper-and-pencil administration, thus removing mode effects
  – Computer interface will be very simple

• Administration by computer allows for
  – Adaptive testing
  – Reduced data entry through use of machine scoring

• Computer delivery will be flexible
  – May use school computers via memory sticks or Internet connection, or laptops, or tablets/hybrids
Assessment Design Overview (continued)

- Multi-stage adaptive design for Listening & Reading
  - Better match of item difficulty to student ability
  - Routing using 1 skill (listening or reading) in order to maximize targeted assessment time
    - Half of the students take listening first; half take reading
  - 3 targeted levels (easy, medium, hard)
    - Overlap of targeted levels
• Current design for Writing and Speaking is not adaptive, based on assumptions that:
  – the prompts will allow students to provide responses demonstrating widely varying skill levels
  – rubrics used to score the responses will evaluate these varying levels of ability

• However, we are considering making these skills targeted as well based on feedback from the TEG
## Multi-Stage Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order</th>
<th>Module 1</th>
<th>Module 2</th>
<th>Module 3</th>
<th>Module 4</th>
<th>Module 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Routing: 10 minutes</td>
<td>Targeted: 25 minutes</td>
<td>25 minutes</td>
<td>25 minutes</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Listening Routing</td>
<td>Listening Targeted</td>
<td>Reading Targeted</td>
<td>Writing (Untargeted*)</td>
<td>Speaking (Untargeted*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Reading Routing</td>
<td>Reading Targeted</td>
<td>Listening Targeted</td>
<td>Writing (Untargeted*)</td>
<td>Speaking (Untargeted*)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*We are considering making Writing and Speaking targeted as well*
Module Design

- For Listening and Reading, task types overlap across targeted levels in the following ways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Type</th>
<th>Routing</th>
<th>Targeted—Low</th>
<th>Targeted—Medium</th>
<th>Targeted—High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reporting

• Average scale scores
• Scale anchoring
• Mapping to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) through standard setting
Differences Between ETLS and ESLC/2011

- Just English, not multiple languages
- Wider range of countries
- Population (fixed grade, all students)
- Computer-based routing test, with scores included in proficiency estimation
- Use of only computer-based administration, eliminating mode effects
- Inclusion of Speaking, allowing for the assessment of all 4 skills
- Distributed marking by a trained pool of native-speaker scorers, minimizing possible local-scorer bias
## Schedule—Key Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal sent to countries</td>
<td>September 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country recruitment completed</td>
<td>January 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework and specifications development</td>
<td>February–August 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop systems and operations</td>
<td>February 2014–July 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item development</td>
<td>July 2014–June 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field trial</td>
<td>August–December 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main study (southern hemisphere)</td>
<td>October–December 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main study (northern hemisphere)</td>
<td>February–May 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reporting</td>
<td>November 2017–May 2019</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Thank you!

Are there any questions?

For additional information, please contact Mary Pitoniak at mpitoniak@ets.org