

EALTA Symposium on Validity

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Practitioner's perspective

How can teachers in classroom contexts develop valid assessment tasks that reflect the learning outcomes and teaching goals, as well as the target language uses?

Validity as concept

- Are instruments measuring what they *are supposed to* measure?
- Are test scores interpreted and used in the *proposed* way?
- Do test results indicate that test takers can use the language in the *intended* way (TLU)?

Implications

supposed to, proposed, intended:

- we have a plan, a design, a clear idea about what instruments are to measure (construct),
- we have an idea about how scores are to be interpreted and used (purpose, use)
- we have an idea about what the scores are to indicate (consequences)

Teachers in classrooms – we need to develop understanding of these implications

- clear understanding, definition of the *construct*
 - learning outcomes, goals from curricula, reflect what is taught in classroom
- clear idea about *intended interpretation and use*
 - purpose – diagnosis, achievement, proficiency, placement?
- good grasp of what scores *should indicate*
 - are students well prepared for the intended course aims, e.g. can survive in target language, can interpret literature, can work in academic context...

Focus and research in classroom

- tasks need to elicit TLU and learning goals
 - examine cognitive processes and **language output**
- valid scoring, rating
 - **examine behaviour, perceptions of test takers, interlocutors, raters**
- appropriate cut-score setting for the purposes in mind
 - **examine benchmarking, exam demands and student work**
- look at consequences, e.g. preparatory / predictive validity
 - **examine whether set scores are justified for the intended purpose, examine the consequences, e.g. placement tests – are students put into the right level or do cut-scores need to be adjusted?**