Abstract

This article presents a full diagnostic of the design phase of a reading comprehension test designed as part of the admissions process to postgraduate studies in the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México. The diagnostic is couched in terms of Bachman y Palmer’s model of test usefulness (1996) and the extent to which the test achieves the dimensions of usefulness - reliability, construct validity, authenticity, interactivity, impact and practicability - is evaluated. Since the assessment of usefulness is not possible without reference to the testing situation an analysis of the context of the test is also presented. The main conclusions of the analysis are that, while the test is appropriately designed with regard to context, its operation would benefit from the development of additional materials such as user guides and candidate practice materials.

Keywords

Design tests, reading comprehension, foreign language, utility, reliability, validity.