Accessibility Reviews to Improve Test Score Validity

Accessibility is defined as the degree to which a test and its constituent item set permit the test-taker to demonstrate his or her knowledge of the target construct of the test. Accessibility is conceptualized as the sum of interactions between features of the test and individual test-taker characteristics.

The validity of test score inferences is dependent on the accessibility of the test for the entirety of the target test-taker population. To the extent a test contains access barriers for a portion of the tested population, inferences made from test scores of those individuals likely are invalid; as well, the validity of subsequent norming procedures or comparisons across the population likely is reduced.

The Test Accessibility and Modification Inventory (TAMI; Beddow, Kettler, & Elliott, 2008) and TAMI Accessibility Rating Matrix (ARM; Beddow, Elliott, & Kettler, 2009) are a set of tools for evaluating and modifying tests and test items with a focus on reducing the influence of ancillary interactions during the test event due to unnecessary complexity in text and visuals, poor organization and/or item layout, and other item and test features that may limit access for some test-takers. The ARM consists of a set of rating rubrics to guide the analysis of test items to yield an accessibility rating that reflects the degree to which the item is likely to be accessible for the entirety of the test-taker population.