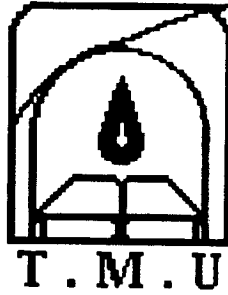


بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

IN THE NAME OF GOD
THE COMPASSIONATE,
THE MERCIFUL

10202



**VARIETIES OF C-TEST AS MEASURES
OF GENERAL LANGUAGE
PROFICIENCY**

A thesis presented for the degree of Master of
Arts (M.A.) in the Teaching of English as a
Foreign Language (TEFL)

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NOTE

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Dedication:

TO

MY

DEAR

PARENTS

&

BROTHERS

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigated varieties of C-test as measures of general language proficiency. C-test, an operationalization of the theory of reduced redundancy, was first introduced into the realm of language testing by Klein-Braley and Raatz (1981) as a modification of cloze procedure. The original C-test was developed by mutilating the second half of every other word, beginning from word two in sentence two of a passage. Through various studies, C-test proved to be an integrative and a highly reliable and valid measure of general language proficiency. The present study was also aimed at further verifying such findings by investigating not only the original C-test but other varieties as well. In fact, the focus of the study was on finding out whether or not different varieties of C-test could be appropriate measures of general language proficiency. To this end, ten versions of C-test were developed, by applying different deletion techniques and deletion rates, and were labelled SH2, SH3, SH4, SH5, SH6, FH2, FH3, FH4, FH5, and FH6, with the letters SH and FH standing for 'First Half' and 'Second Half', and the numbers for deletion rate. The C-tests were administered among nearly 500 senior EFL students, in the way that almost 50 subjects took each form. All the subjects had already taken TOEFL and a cloze test prior to the administration of the C-tests. The gathered data were, then, subjected to statistical procedures: through the One-way ANOVA, the observed F-ratio came out to be 16.18 which was considerably

higher than the critical F-ratio at $P=.05$ and D.F.(9, 471), i.e., 1.90. This meant that the subjects had performed differently on the C-tests. To find out, then, which C-test(s) showed a better picture of general language proficiency, the reliability and validity of all the C-tests was calculated. The results of these two calculations together with that of the factor analysis led to the selection of FH4 as the C-test best suited to demonstrate the level of general language proficiency. The factor analysis, it should be noted, resulted in two separate factors with the cloze and TOEFL loading on one factor and the C-tests on another. This type of loading distribution means that C-tests may in fact measure different things and not necessarily only the level of GLP.

key words: C-test, General language proficiency

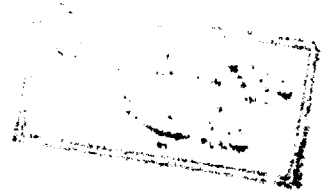
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

“There is no blessing to be found in something that has been weighed, or in something that has been measured, or in something that has been counted.” This statement has been remarked by the Babylonian Talmud and quoted in Spolsky (1995:3). “Nonetheless”, Spolsky continues, “the last century has seen a determined effort to weigh, gauge, and count not just obvious and visible physical objects but also unseen forces and conjectured abstract concepts.” One facet of the effort to measure an

aspect of human ability has been the flourishing of modern scientific language testing.

1.1 Language Testing

Language testing is central to language teaching and cannot be defined without considering its relation to language teaching. Not only does it provide goals for language teaching, but it monitors success in reaching those goals for both teachers and learners. "Its influence on teaching is strong --the notorious 'backwash' or 'washback' effect which is usually felt to be wholly negative"(Davies, 1990:1). Furthermore, language testing supplies a methodology for experiment and investigation in both language teaching and language learning/acquisition. So, it appears that it belongs most appropriately within the discipline of Applied Linguistics. In fact, as Davies (1990) puts it, language testing has become the major cutting edge of applied linguistics and an applied linguistics without language testing is now inconceivable. According to Davies (ibid), what language testing offers applied linguistics is:

1. an operationalization of its theoretical constructs;
2. a means of establishing goals for teaching courses and syllabuses;
3. a methodology for carrying out empirical research in applied linguistics whether that research is language testing research; investigations in language acquisition, judgements, intelligibility studies, comprehension and use; or comparative experiments in language teaching methodologies and materials.

Generally speaking, Davies (1990:2) sets forth, what language testing does is: