# COMPUTERIZING A TEST USING A LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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English Language Program

# ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST

- Administered to all incoming International Students at KSU
- Scores place students into one of three options:
    - Full Time University
    - Part Time University / Part Time English Language Program
    - Full Time English Language Program
- The test has four parts or skills
    - Reading
    - Writing (essay)
    - Structure (grammar)
    - Listening

# ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TEST

- Is a paper and pencil test
  - Essay is written and evaluated by two raters
  - Reading and structure are multiple choice tests with prompts on page
  - Listening is a multiple choice test with an oral prompt
    - Reading, Structure, and Listening are completed on Scantron sheets and computer scored
- Each skills raw score is converted to a T-score
- Based on their total and part scores they were placed into their levels
  - Levels 136-150 are based on a total number
  - Levels 152 and 154 require all skills have a minimum score

# GO TEACHER

- Partnership with Ecuador to teach English Teachers both English and Teaching skills
- KSU is the lead institution working with three partner programs
  - All programs are required to have the same pre-/post- test
- The pre-test is used for placement decisions
- The post-test is used to evaluate student growth and program effectiveness
- The EPT was selected due to its availability and use at KSU
- The students are here for a 7 month program
  - 1 spring/fall semester and 1 summer session
  - Around 300 students come with each cohort

# WHY COMPUTERIZE

- We were looking for a secure and efficient way to test at all the schools
- According to Dolan and Burling in the Handbook on Measurement, Assessment, and Evaluation in Higher Education one of the key features of a Computer Based Test (CBT) is, "increasing the efficiency of the assessment process".
- By using a Learning Management System (LMS) we can enhance the security and have a convenient delivery mechanism
- We decided to use Kansas State Online (KSOL) to build and deliver the test
- We had support from Scott Finkeldei at Mediated Education on campus
- We were able to use the original EPT questions from an existing test form

# HOW WE COMPUTERIZED

- The first step was to decide what we wanted and why
  - A computerized test to make remote testing efficient and secure
  - For the Go Teacher program primarily but once we have it…
- We then discussed logistics with Mediated Education
  - How we would import the questions
  - Formatting for the questions and background
  - How to design the Listening section (integrate audio or not)
  - How to design the Reading section (multiple questions based on same passage)
  - Computerize the Essay portion or not?
  - Could we do the score conversion on KSOL?

# HOW WE COMPUTERIZED

- Once the logistics questions were worked out…
- We created a simple three question sample test for each skill
  - We used this to test how it worked
  - We could manipulate the scores to see if we could do a conversion
  - Trouble shoot what we might not have thought of
- We decided not to computerize the Essay at this point
- We learned we would need to export the scores for conversion in Excel
  - We did it once to make sure it would work to export a CSV to Excel
- Then the test design was ready and construction began
- The process of importing questions, formatting, checking, and testing

# BENEFITS OF A CBT

- The biggest benefits for a CBT for our uses are:
  - Security-
    - Easier to control than paper and pencil
    - Allowed KSU to maintain control of access to the test at the partners
  - Efficiency-
    - Easier than paper copies
    - Allows for remote testing with only equipment requirements
  - Scoring
    - Faster and more efficient because computer scored
    - Exported in a usable and convertible file
  - Information Control
    - Again allowed KSU to maintain control of the materials

# TEST PREPARATION MATERIALS

- We planned some basic training materials and ended up making:
  - Tutorials for those proctoring the test
    - Tutorials on the tests and on KSOL (since they are not from KSU)
  - Short pre-test practice (only 5-7 questions)
  - Full length practice test
  - Visits to partner labs to confirm tech situation
- We also created the final computerized test
  - We piloted it once with faculty and made revisions
  - Then we piloted it a second time with a smaller number of faculty and revised
  - We will be looking at the actual scores and make adjustments as needed
    - Especially looking at item discrimination at this point
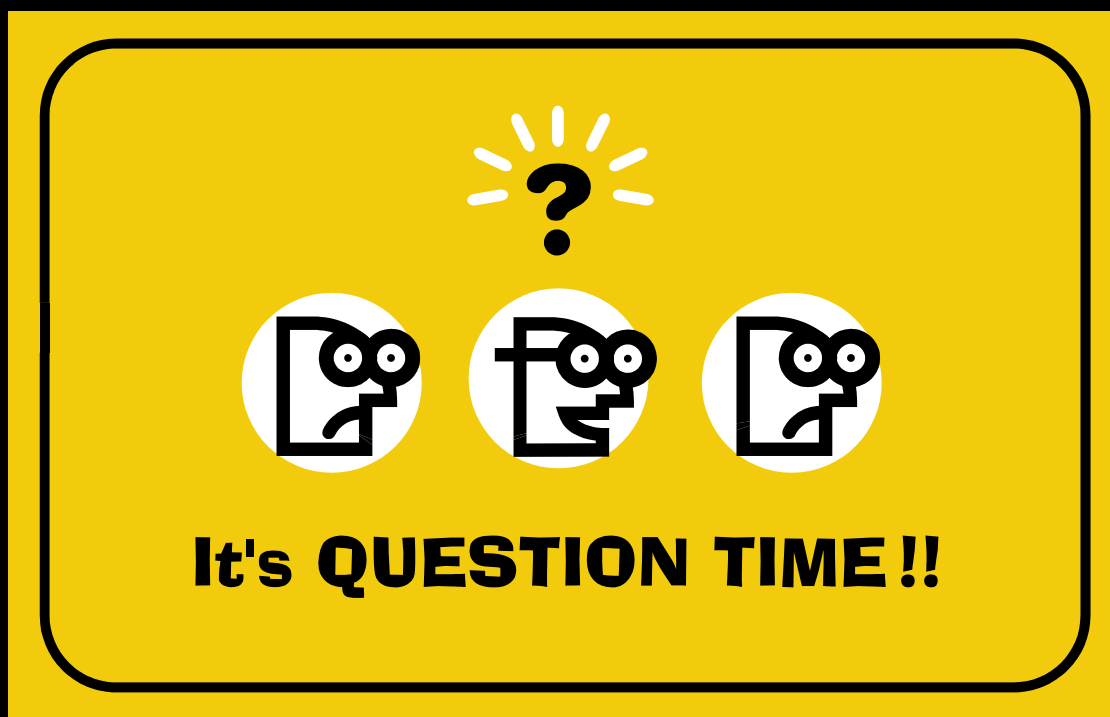
# HOW TO MANAGE

- Know why you want to make a CBT- What need does it serve?
  - Think about how you will deliver it
  - Think about how you will construct it
- Have a point person- ONE person running the project
- BE FLEXIBLE
- Have a plan
  - Make a detailed calendar of steps and plan a timeline
    - It can be changed
    - Always allow about twice the time you think you need
- Know who you can work with to get where you want to go
  - Keep a list of all people involved in the process (with contact information)

# FUTURE PLANS

- Having a CBT for Placement testing is an advantage
  - We can use it on campus for late testing
  - We can use it for special programs (like the Go Teacher program)
  - We can use it in other remote testing situations
    - This could involve testing in other countries
- We are looking into testing software that would allow us more flexibility
  - This would allow us to design the test differently
  - Move to an Item Bank rather than a test Form
  - Would be easier to access remotely (rather than having to log in through KSOL)

It's QUESTION TIME !!