IRT item parameter calibration

Min
S-B Odd-
La postura

In A. Salerni (1989, 138) the rational cloze-test (as well as the gap-filling task, as also
determines a higher proportion of words whose completion depends only on the immediate co-text
theses as to which skills are measured by the two types of cloze (review in Oller, Jonz, 1994).

predetermined and not the distances. In the literature are evidence in support of different hypo-
theses occur at regular intervals) and the “rational” cloze test, in which the categories of items are
only that much of the speech must be constructed with well defined terms (De Mauro, 1998).

Research questions

• is the multiple-choice rational cloze-test a suitable kind of test for measuring the lexical abilities
of university students with relation to authentic academic texts?

• is it possible to define a deletion procedure guided by the analysis of the textual data?

Certain premises. Vocabulary and comprehension

1. The frequency of use of words has been shown since the earliest studies in the 1800s to be an
important and useful quantitative criteria for predicting the readability of written texts for a
determined group of readers. The approach that is used most commonly is the study of vocabulary use is considered influential both on the receptive performance (decoding and comp-
prehension) and productive performance (Colombo, 1993), in as much as it has an effect on the
strength of skills acquisition (Gandolfo, 1989, 1993). The aspect of the vocabulary is considered to be
the use of the cloze as a lexical test. Precisely because an evaluation linked to the context is obtained
through the cloze test, it is difficult to discern what the specific contribution of the vocabulary is
in the execution of the tests (Read, 2000).

Test analysis

For each test are observed in particular the difficulty (average scores) and internal consistency
reliability, measured by indices of homogeneity of the items (Alfa) and correlation between two
tests, that is the internal consistency reliability of this type of cloze-test is in relation:

1. Comparing the cloze-tests of Education (Test a) with those of Kinesiology, it may cautiously
be assumed that the internal consistency reliability of this type of cloze-test is in relation:
a) positive to the degree of formalization of the language of the text;
b) negative with the choice of high-frequency words in the reference lexicon.

2. In Test b, the cloze passage named “La prescrizione” (Grasp), in which the words to hide were
in a field of speech that includes words that are included in the reference lexicon, was
both more consistent and difficult and discriminative than the one named “La postura ettera”
(The upright posture), where, instead, most of the words belonging to the low-frequency band
had been excluded by the choice.

3. Observations on the criteria of words’ peculiarity (Test c).
a) the “banal” words, which have a frequency of occurrence equivalent in RMC and POLIF (a re-
ference lexicon of standard Italian), they normally have a less determined meaning and are
less significant in context.

b) the kinesiology tests presuppose the knowledge of notions and terms from anatomy
and physiology which are extraneous to standard Italian vocabulary but are accessible to
whoever has already received, as is the case here, the relative teaching.

As a consequence:
a) the exclusion of banal words (in addition to fuction words) is beneficial;
b) the exclusion of the original vocabulary of rehabilitative medicine reduces informative power
of the test.

4. Examining the relationship (Spearman’s rho) between the scores obtained by the same subjects
across the two tests, it is noticed that the correlation is significant in context.

Conclusions

The relationship found with concurrent measurements of the extent of readers’ knowledge of
terminology, which mainly implies the prior learning of concepts, explains in part the nature of
these cloze-tests, built on texts with a high information content, as knowledge tests. Further
research will deepen the questions of the nature of each of the text.

The test offers the possibility of being used both as an evaluation tool and as an exercise. The
administration in e-learning does not require that the reading is interrupted, and may be
continuous with the study of the text.