Linguaskill ▶▶

Adaptive Testing

For New Linguaskill and New Linguaskill Business

Version 1.0

CAMBRIDGE
English

Delivery

The Reading and Listening components of the Linguaskill suite are two separate tests, both of which are adaptive and delivered online. The Writing and Speaking components are also delivered online. For these two components a fixed-form test approach is retained because this is still the most efficient and fair means to elicit productive language samples from candidates[1]. Tasks used in these components are carefully designed to be accessible to candidates of different proficiency levels. As an online test, New Linguaskill can be delivered on demand, at any time, in any venue. This flexibility, and the enhanced security measures, make Linguaskill a good test option for institutions and employers.

What is adaptive testing?

Online adaptive tests tailor each candidate journey by selecting tasks based on a continually updated ability estimate. This is an iterative process that is repeated until a score can be accurately determined. Being adaptive means that each test can assess individual ability across a wider range of cohort abilities more accurately than fixed-form tests which target a narrow Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) range, and more efficiently than fixed-form tests which target a wide CEFR range.

Adaptive testing: how it works

The test starts with B2-level tasks and, depending on the candidate's performance, the difficulty of tasks goes up or down. That is, with each task completed, the candidate's ability is estimated. The ability estimate can move up or down after each task completed or at different stages of the test.

In the first stage of the test, candidates receive a number of short, single-item tasks, with the algorithm recalibrating the ability estimate and selecting a new task after each candidate answer. The aim here is to efficiently establish an approximation of the candidate's ability. Once this has been achieved, the candidate will be given a range of different multi-item tasks that more thoroughly examine the reading or listening construct and subskills appropriate to the target language use domain. Naturally, these

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[1] While technological advances may well one day allow for real-time, automated grading of speaking which can then be leveraged to provide suitable follow-up prompting such conversational AI technologies are still in developmental stages and would require extensive comparability testing.
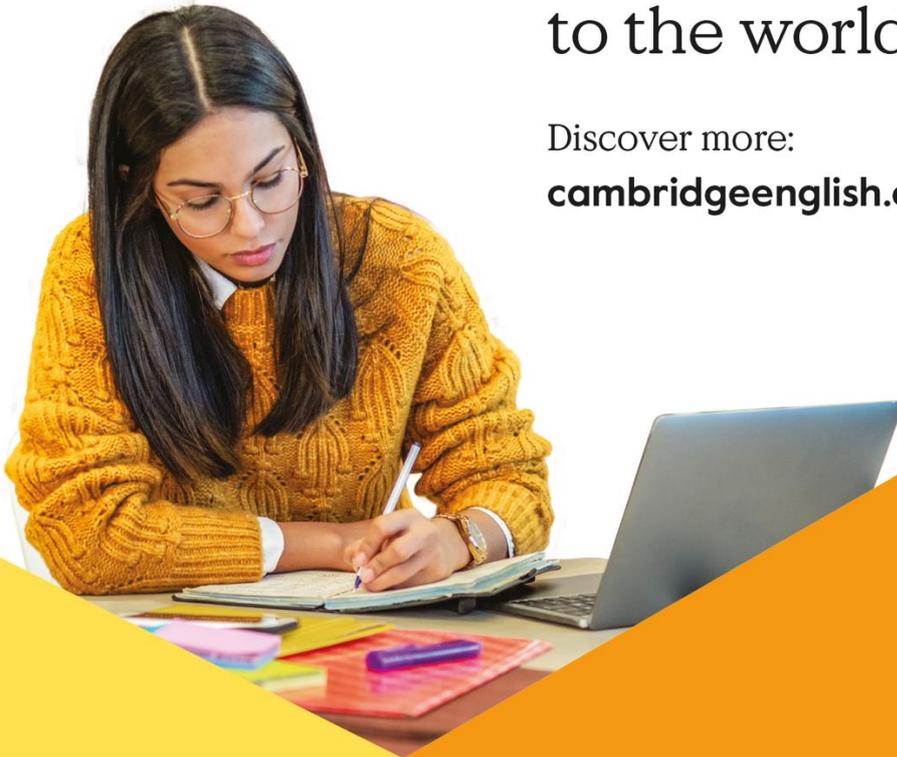
tasks take longer to complete so it is important that they are selected to target the candidate's ability.

Constant monitoring of the bank of available tasks identifies points along the journey where a particular task type may not be available at a particular difficulty. Where this is the case, the algorithm will choose from amongst the nearest available tasks from more than one task type. Following this stage of the test all candidates will have completed the minimum number of tasks and if they have reached one of the stopping rules their test will end. Where a stopping rule has not been reached candidates will receive a series of short tasks with the aim of fine tuning the ability estimate as efficiently as possible in order to achieve an accurate result. The most important stopping rule we have is the Standard Error of Measurement (SEM). This statistic gives us an indication of the confidence we can have in a candidate's score no matter their location on the ability scale.

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