

TITLE: Pilot Test of the Written Words and Phrases Test

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AUTHOR(S): Robert Hagge & Karen Frincke

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PROTECT OBJECTIVE:

To evaluate the written Words and Phrases Test (DL-140) and provide test and item statistics.

SUMMARY:

This study evaluated a 12-item written test (DL-140) that assessed understanding of the English words and symbols on traffic signs, which was administered to driver license applicants taking non-English translations of the 36-item written knowledge test. There were five versions of the test, each translated into five languages (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese).

All test versions of each language translation were analyzed. This was the first time that any version of the Chinese and Japanese translations, and two versions each of the Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese translations, had been analyzed. Three versions of each of the Korean, Spanish, and Vietnamese translations had been piloted before and found to have unacceptably high and/or widely disparate fail rates. Subsequent revisions of these tests were analyzed in this study.

Test results from 3,379 first-attempt applicants were analyzed to determine test difficulty levels and to identify potentially faulty items. Results of the pilot showed that many test items had pass rates above 95% or below 60%, item-total correlations below .20, or non-functional distracters. Language groups differed on fail rate, with the Spanish group having the highest percentage of failures, and the Japanese group the lowest. Within only the Chinese and Korean languages were different test versions found to have significantly different fail rates.

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Study recommendations were to review certain test items, equalize form difficulty within the Chinese and Korean translations, improve item and test format, change the pass criteria, and repilot the revised tests. The Department implemented most of these recommendations.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

None.