

BILC Shared Item Bank and Online Moderation

Nancy Powers, Canada

Merit Kompus, Estonia

Marju Laurits, Estonia

BILC Professional Seminar, October 2020

Mission

BILC's mission is to promote linguistic interoperability among nations and to help organizations in test development IAW STANAG 6001

How do they achieve this?

- LTS
- ALTS
- BILC Testing workshop
- BILC Professional seminar
- BILC conference

Just to name a few

History

- Since 2012, in the wrap-up sessions of the ALTS, candidates constantly asked for “relevant samples/level to use” and “learning about other nations best test development practices”
- At the BILC Testing workshop in Tours, France, 2019, the way ahead for the Shared Item Bank project was discussed.
- The initiative was launched in February 2020

Where to start?

- Roxanne Harrison, a strong proponent of the project, conducted a survey gave some guidance to the project
- Here are the highlights :
- 7 countries participated (Canada, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia)
- 7 questions were asked and 9 participants responded

Survey Questions/Results

- What do you see as the primary final product of a shared item bank project?
 - Almost 90% chose a restricted bank of reading items
- How many nations should participate in the project?
 - 78% thought that all national STANAG 6001 testing organizations should be invited.
- How many items should each participating nation produce to submit for moderation?
 - 67% opted for nations submitting 2 items per level (L1, L2, L3)

Survey Questions/Results cont'd

- Feedback on the reading item specifications. How many responses should there be?
 - 89% agreed that a 4-option MCQ format should be used
- Feedback on the reading item specifications. Which metadata table should become part of the specifications?
 - 45% liked Canada's metadata table, but 34% thought that a combination of the two would be beneficial
- Should there be a specific format for the submitted items?
 - 100% believe that there should be a specific format for the submitted items.

Survey Questions/Results cont'd

- Should the project include compiling a list of acceptable sources to get texts from?
 - 45% believed that there should be some kind of list of suggested sources but we still have to find someone to maintain the list.

Some Additional Comments

- We suggest a restricted access under certain terms and conditions with the main focus on item bank security on the national as well as the international level i.e. in order to eliminate the risk of item misuse, we suggest appointing one person in charge (a proctor) per each participating country.
- Although all the testing organizations should be invited to participate, active contribution of involved countries should be prerequisite for the access to the item bank
- It might be a good idea to invite nations whose BAT2 results aligned well with results on their national test to develop and contribute items to the project

Some Additional Comments cont'd

- If a nation does not test at L1, they should focus on Levels 2 and 3 that they are more familiar with
- The negotiated formatting requirements should be obligatory for all participating nations
- In order to be able to fully answer this question (list of acceptable sources), what exactly do you mean by acceptable sources? Will the list be edited regularly or how limited or flexible will we be?
- Sources should comply with BILC descriptors and subject areas; however, copyright restrictions should be observed
- Some believe that the cut off score should be included in the test specs

What have we done so far?

- The testing teams from Estonia and Latvia drew up test specifications which were vetted by the working group
- Members of the working group submitted items at different levels. These items were moderated nationally before being sent to the Shared Item Bank, and the combined metadata table was used.
- Luckily, today's technology has allowed us to move forward.
- Discussion on international moderation sessions

The future...

- Testing teams from different countries can join this initiative (the more the better outcome in terms of standardization among nations) by:
 - Submitting items at different levels
 - Arranging piloting of items in their countries (the more, the merrier; a number of 10 candidates/country ? to end up with a sufficient number of candidates to compile statistics).
- Will have to name a proctor responsible for gathering info after the piloting and statistical analysis (different person?)
- Final revision and setting up the item bank for Reading – control access and ensure confidentiality
- If successful, another ability should follow (probably Listening)

Item Moderation

The purpose of item moderation is to

- ensure that the text, task and level of each item are aligned,
- perform a quality control check and identify any flaws or errors in the items or prompts,
- determine if the items should be kept as is, revised or discarded.

BILC Best Practices in STANAG 6001 Testing, NATO BILC website

Multinational Item Moderation

2020 STANAG 6001 Testing Workshop

Six moderation panels led by

Canada, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

The goal was to

- try out different online moderation procedures
- draw up sound practices in conducting online multinational item moderation

Shared Item Bank WG Roundtable Discussions

Reports on moderation session findings:

- group size
- multinational composition
- checklists used
- item moderation process followed
- technical issues with online moderation and the BBB platform

Next Steps

The WG decided on the next steps:

- determine the final version of the item review checklist,
- devise a plan for conducting online moderation of the WG's donated items,
- draft best practices in online multinational item moderation procedures.

Lessons Learnt

Before online item moderation:

- expectations of participants
- panel size including leaders
- activities before multinational item moderation

Lessons Learnt, cont'd

During online item moderation:

- norming
- item checklist
- technical considerations
- ground rules for moderation
- aim of moderation
- feedback to item writers

Thank you