

SHOW ME: EVIDENCE CENTERED DESIGN  
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DISCUSSANT  
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1. Is this a useful model?

It is highly analytical and very thorough. It would be especially useful for cutting-edge test development where we are trying to assess more complex proficiencies not assessed before.

If contemplating something more open ended than an MCQ, need to identify the important outcomes that separate the skilled from the unskilled, and ignore distracting information that makes no difference and takes up test time. The model is useful in thinking this through.

There is no example yet of a licensure or certification test completely designed with this model, so I wasn't able to ask anyone how user-friendly the model was in this environment.

I think dedicated and analytical subject matter experts would be required. This would work in some fields, but maybe not as well in others.

2. Is this a new approach?

There are new elements to be sure, but the model adheres to traditional testing principles.

E.g., You could fit a traditional essay test into this model. When designing essay tests, we know it is important to anticipate what the answers will be and how you will score them. Often, the original question that you write will not elicit the information you are seeking.

What is newer may be the influence of computer programming methodology. When done going through this model, you will practically have instructions to the programmer and maybe even a way to automatically generate test questions with certain characteristics.

3. What is the value added?

More lines of evidence

More organized approach

Updated and broader way of looking at testing

Lends itself to CBT

4. What are the limitations?

High initial cost: Perhaps there will be a high initial cost of going through the process of setting up the assessment using the modeling method.

Subject matter experts will be strained to go through this thought process. It is intriguing, but difficult – what does it mean to be proficient? What do we need to actually see?

But once the test model is set up, new assessments might be generated at reduced cost.

Could lead to less efficient testing if not controlled: The model leads the test developers to consider more task based testing rather than MC testing. This opens the door of possibility, but the problems of non-MC testing still exist and still need to be addressed.

Testing using performance tasks tends to be less efficient than MC. For example, a two hour IT test designed using this model generated only 61 pieces of data per person, and there was considerable effort to provide a number of fairly simple tasks for the sake of reliability. By contrast, a multiple choice test could produce twice as much data in the same time.

So a decision point should still be: “Is this the most efficient way to find out whether someone is competent?”

Keeping costs down still should be a priority for licensing tests. They have been escalating with CBT even when it is MC.

Overall, it is exciting to see the field of testing maturing into the computer age, and addressing the issues of the future. This is something to watch in the years to come.