



The language test development process:

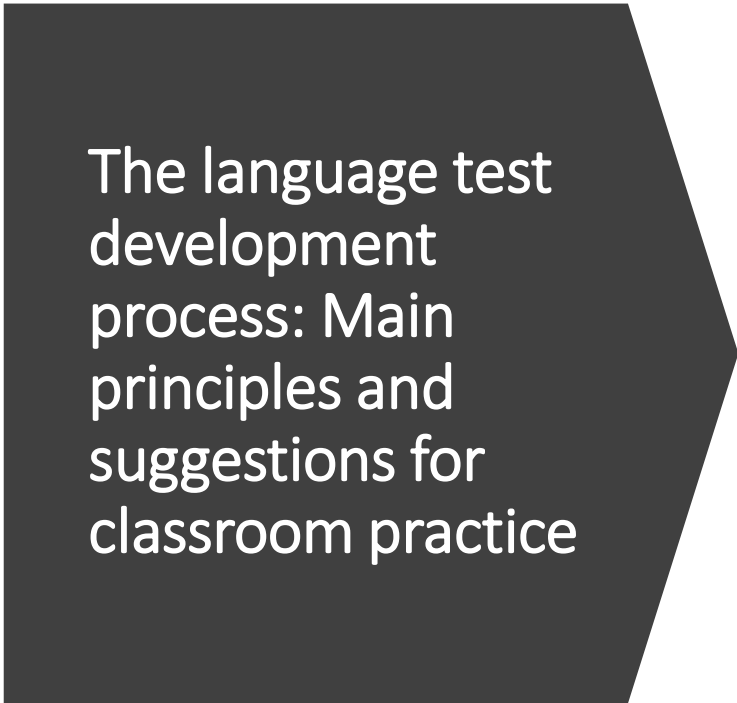
main principles
and

suggestions for classroom
practice

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The language test development process: Main principles and suggestions for classroom practice

Item development and test validity

Test-writing documentation

Item development for large testing organisations

Suggestions for classroom practice:

- improving teachers' knowledge of language assessment
- producing test specifications
- writing test items in teams
- peer-reviewing items
- analysing student responses

Test validity

"...a test is said to be valid if it measures accurately what it is intended to measure"

(Hughes, 2003, p.26)



Reliable and valid



Reliable, but not valid



Neither reliable,
nor valid

Validity evidence:

- statistical relationships of test scores with other information
- experts' judgments of the extent to which the content of the test matches a curriculum or the requirements of a job
- the qualifications of the test designers, question writers and reviewers
- the process used to develop the test

(ETS testing terms glossary)

Construct underrepresentation -

the test fails to include important dimensions of the construct

A2 item : Wh-questions in the past

Stem	_____ did you do on holiday last month?
Option 1	* What
Option 2	Where
Option 3	Why

Construct-irrelevant variance -

test scores are affected with factors unrelated to the skill or ability being measured

A2 item : Wh-questions in the past

Stem	What ____you expect to achieve by disturbing my sleep at dawn?
Option 1	*did
Option 2	are
Option 3	were

Construct-irrelevant variance in tests of writing ability

General English, B1 level, YL (13-16 y. o.)

‘Write the conversation you have with a friend about the holiday you plan to have together.’

General English, B2 level, adults

‘Envy is the sin which most harms the sinner.’ Discuss.

(from Hughes, 2003)

Large-scale test development:

Test-writing documentation

Test development process



Test-writing documentation



Test framework



Test specifications

construct
expected responses

format
sample items



Item writer guidelines

Commissioning

Pre-editing

Editing

Pretesting

Standard fixing

Test construction

Test data analysis



<https://www.ielts.org/about-the-test/how-we-develop-the-test>

Item writing

Item review

- Content review
- Fairness review
- Editorial review

Item trialling

- Pretesting of reading/listening tasks
- Tryouts of speaking/writing tasks

Assembly of new test forms

Post-administration review



https://www.ets.org/s/toefl/pdf/toefl_ibt_research_insight.pdf

Test development process

1

Deciding on the test purpose and construct

2

Writing test specifications

3

Producing test items

4

Moderating test items

5

Trialling test items

6

Analysing test results after administration

Test development: Suggestions for classroom practice



teachers' language assessment literacy

test specifications

test development process

post-test analysis



Teachers' language assessment literacy

- Why to test?

test use

- What to test?

test construct

- How to test?

task/item types

Teachers' language assessment literacy

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The ABCs of Assessment

Assessing reading skills

Assessing writing skills

Assessing listening skills

Assessing speaking skills

Providing feedback

Alternatives in assessment

Test impact

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The TALE

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Teachers' language assessment literacy



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Language Assessment in the Classroom



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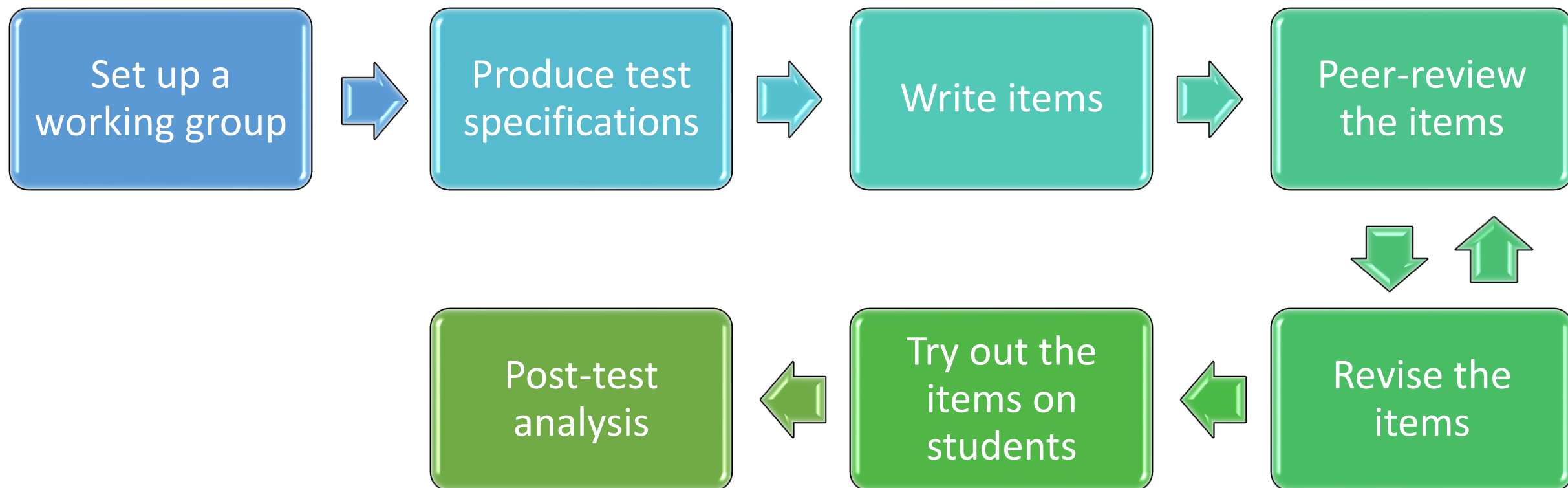
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Good test specifications ...

- are presented in a systematic way
- describe the test purpose
- define the test level
- describe the test construct
- describe the item/task types used
- describe the number, sequence, instructions for the tasks/items
- describe the text types used
- describe the content/topics to be included and to be avoided
- describe the scoring methods and assessment criteria
- provide sample tasks/items
- describe how students with special needs are accommodated
- explain whether reference tools can be used during the test

(cited from *Lancaster MA in Language Testing by Distance* teaching materials)

Test development process for classroom assessment



Post-test analysis

- student feedback on items
- review of student responses



A2 item : Requests

Stem	Could you ____ me the sugar, please?
Option 1	* pass
Option 2	take
Option 3	kiss
Option 4	have

Essay prompt: *What are the advantages and disadvantages of having a blind date?*

teachers' language assessment literacy

test specifications

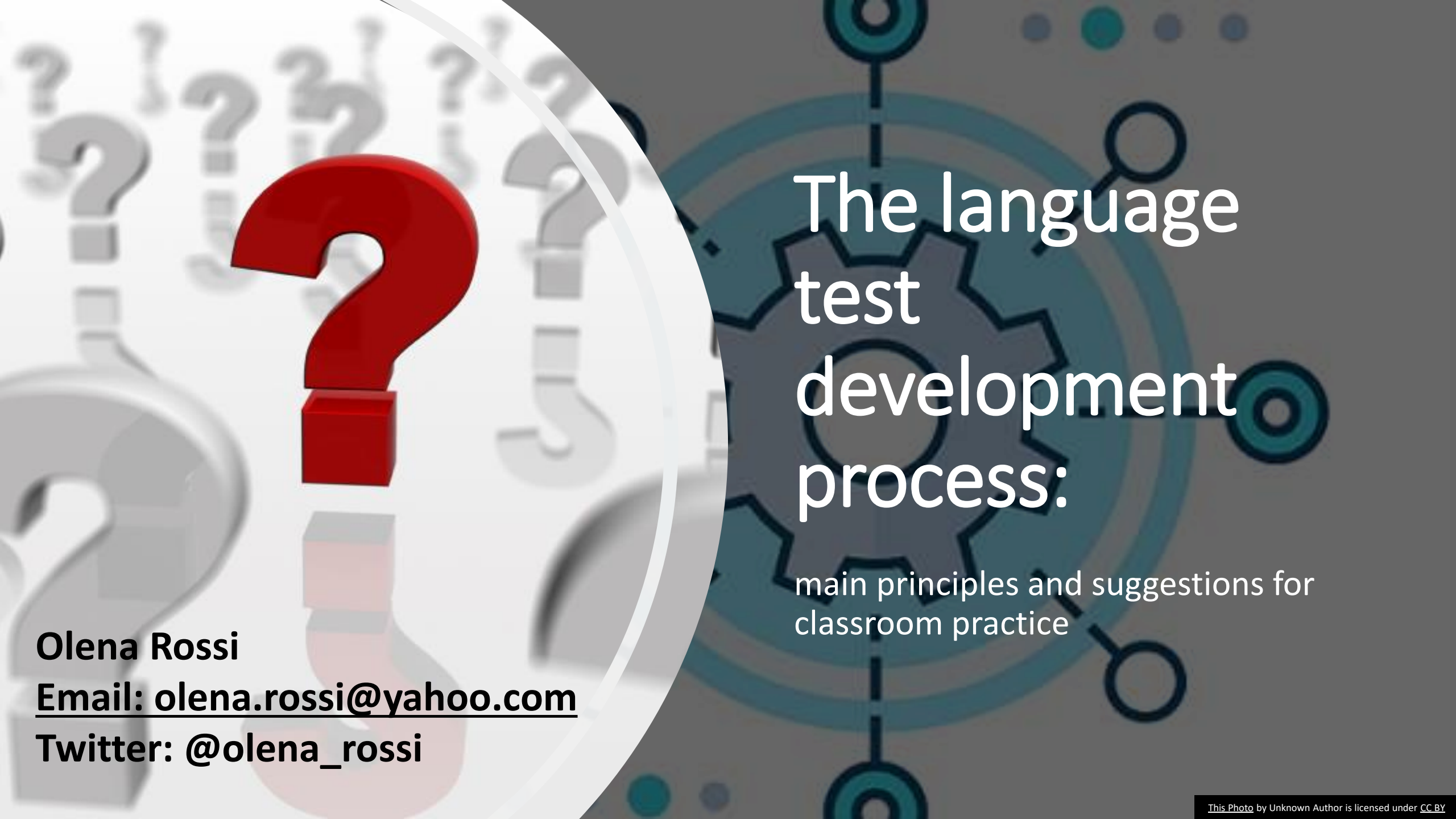
test development process

post-test analysis



References and useful reading

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