



ALTE course in Assessing Speaking in the Digital age Course outline

ALTE is running a week-long course in Lisbon, Portugal, in September 2019. The course will be ran by **Dr Fumiyo Nakatsuhara** and **Dr Nahal Khabbazzbashi** both from the Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment (CRELLA), University of Bedfordshire.

Dates: 9th – 13th September 2019

Location: [Universidade de Lisboa, Faculdade de Letras, Centro de Avaliação e Certificação de Português Língua Estrangeira \(CAPLE\), Alameda da Universidade, 1600-214 Lisboa, Portugal.](#)

Description

In this course, we start with a general introduction to the assessment of second language speaking ability within a broader theoretical framework for language test validation. We will consider key aspects of testing speaking such as test tasks, delivery modes, assessment criteria, and scoring procedures while contextualising our discussions with reference to the ever-changing digital landscape of language education and assessment. For example, in addressing the role of test delivery mode in speaking, we will look at the differences between face-to-face, computer-based, and video-conferencing tests and reflect on the implications of opting for each of these modalities in building a validity argument. Similarly, when covering the topic of scoring in speaking tests, we will consider the strengths and limitations of human marking and compare it to automated assessment solutions. Other topic areas include assessment of listening-into-speaking, CEFR mediation scales, individualised feedback to learners, and the potential opportunities for assessing interactional and pragmatic competence via technologies such as virtual environments. We will also discuss how technologies shape the ways in which languages are taught, learned, and assessed.

Throughout the course, participants will be encouraged to reflect on their own test development and validation activities, in relation to a useful validation framework and available technological resources. By the end of the course, participants will have developed an understanding of the main principles behind the assessment of speaking and will have a raised awareness of different technologies and how they affect diverse aspects of speaking test design and validation.

Participants are expected to have a professional interest in language testing in general and the assessment of speaking in particular though are not expected to have a profound knowledge of the subject area.

Bio

Dr Fumiyo Nakatsuhara

Fumiyo is a Reader in Language Assessment at the Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment (CRELLA), University of Bedfordshire. Her research interests include the nature of co-constructed interaction in speaking tests, task design and rating scale development. Fumiyo has recently published the book, 'The Discourse of the IELTS Speaking Test' (with P.Seedhouse, 2018, CUP) and articles in *Language Testing* (2011; 2014) and *Language Assessment Quarterly* (2017). She has carried out a number of international testing projects, working with ministries, universities and examination boards. They include the use of video-conferencing technologies to deliver the IELTS Speaking Test, the development of a learning-oriented test for mobile delivery, and the exploration of academic speaking construct in distance learning courses. She was also an instructor for the ALTE workshop in 2014, *New approaches in assessing speaking*.

Dr Nahal Khabbazzbashi

Nahal is a Senior Lecturer in Language Assessment at the Centre for Research in English Language Learning and Assessment (CRELLA), University of Bedfordshire. She holds a DPhil in Language Testing from the University of Oxford. Her work appears in *Language Testing* (2017), *Language Learning Journal* (2014), and in the *Studies in Language Testing* series (Moeller, Creswell, and Saville, eds. 2016). Before joining CRELLA, Nahal held the position of Senior Research Manager at Cambridge Assessment English where she carried out a number of high-profile international testing projects including research into a blended-learning initiative in Egypt and the design and implementation of evaluation studies for automated assessment of speaking. Nahal has delivered a number of workshops, seminars, and courses on a range of topics from foundation courses in language testing to specialised training in statistical analyses and Many-Facet Rasch Measurement on behalf of ALTE.