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**FAIR ASSESSMENT FOR IMPAIRED TEST-
TAKERS –
PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS**

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Overview

- Context: accessibility and fairness
- Accommodation practise
- Research
 - Overview
 - Challenges
 - Issue of time extension
- Prospects: research and practical implications

Context: accessibility and fairness

Growing awareness and discussion

- Ethical and social dimension of language testing
 - General rights and individual characteristics of test takers
- Equal access and appropriate and fair assessment for Second Language Learners with disabilities

ALTE
1994

APA/AERA/
NCME
1999

ILTA
2000

EALTA
2006

Accommodations

Definition:

- departure from established testing protocol
- required by an individual's disability

(APA/AERA/NCME, p. 101)

Goal:

- Demonstrate language skills to the best of ability
- Permit fair and objective assessment

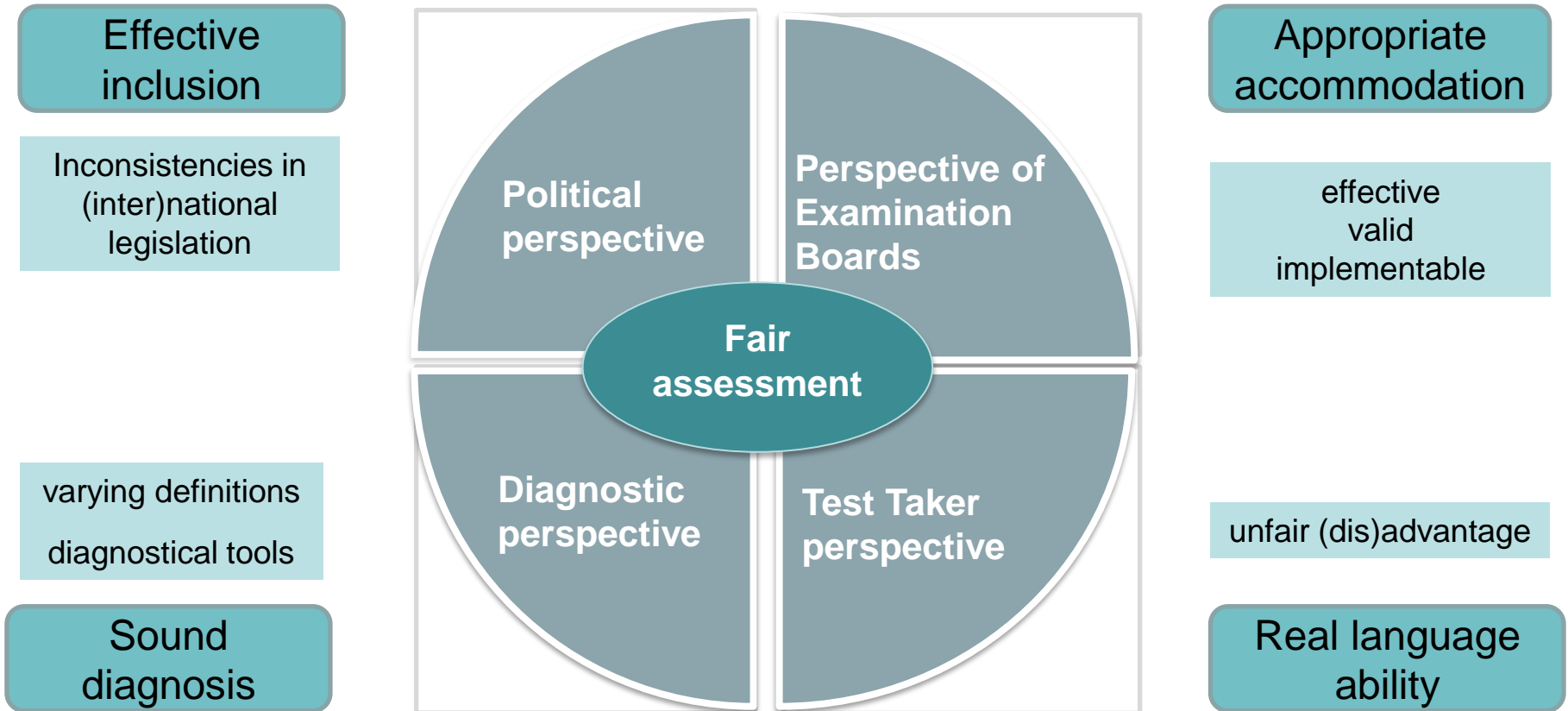
(Shaw & Weir, 2007, p. 20)

Accommodations: categorisation scheme

Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Large print▪ Braille papers▪ Human reader, screen reader, ...
Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Response in test booklet▪ Amanuensis, ...
Timing and Scheduling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Extended time,▪ Multiple or frequent breaks, ...
Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Change of location, ...
Linguistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ simplifying language of test tasks

Thurlow, Thompson & Lazarus, 2006

Squaring the circle?



A summary of research on the effects of test accommodations (NCEO)

	2007-2008	2009-2010
Numbers of studies	40	48
Type of accommodation		
▪ Presentation	32	38
▪ Material / equipment	7	10
▪ Response	3	19
▪ Timing / scheduling	14	16
▪ Setting	3	9
▪ Other /multiple accommodations	8	15

Rogers et al., 2012: A summary of the research on the effects of test accommodations: 2009 – 2010.
Cormier et al., 2010: A summary of the research on the effects of test accommodations: 2007 – 2008.

A summary of research on the effects of test accommodations (NCEO)

	2007-2008	2009-2010
Research purpose(s)		
▪ Effect on scores	63%	31%
▪ Perceptions and preferences	13%	23%
▪ Implementation practices	20%	6%
▪ Test validity	3%	16%
Disability categories		
▪ Specific learning disabilities (SpLD)	38%	54%

Research challenges

Heterogeneous research findings

- Inconsistent results between studies
- Content and target group specific design

Reasons (Pitoniak & Royer, 2001)

- Small sample sizes, non-random student selection
- Diverse target group
- Combination of available accommodations almost limitless

Two fundamental research questions

1. *Does the accommodation alter the validity of inferences based on test scores?*
2. *Do non-disabled examinees also benefit from the accommodation?*

Time Extension

1. *Does time extension alter the validity of inferences based on test scores?*
 - Most frequently employed type of accommodation
 - Role of testing time
 - Example: study on predictive validity (Cahalan et al., 2002)

Time extension and predictive validity

Cahalan et al., 2002:

- 241 students with disabilities and control group
- Correlation of SAT scores with 1st year college grades

No validity proved, problem of applied research design

Time Extension

2. Do non-disabled examinees also benefit from time extension?

Method: Between-group design

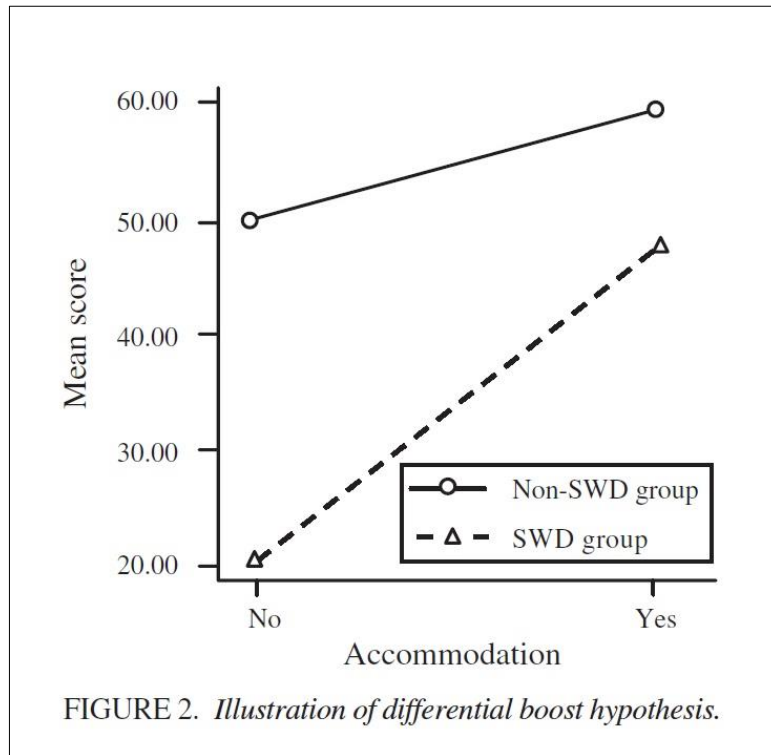
- Disabled vs. non-disabled test takers
- Accommodated vs. non-accommodated test versions

Several hypotheses, example:

- Differential boost hypothesis

Differential boost hypothesis (e.g. Sireci et al.)

Model



Sireci, Scarpata & Lee, 2005, p. 483

Research

- Disabled test takers do benefit significantly more than non-disabled (Lesaux et al., 2006)



- Promising theoretical basis

Prospects: research and practical implementation

- Generalisation studies
- Qualitative and mixed-method research, triangulation
 - Smaller samples, individual case studies
 - Impact studies (Taylor & Khalifa, 2013)
 - Stakeholders' perception of accommodations
 - Interpretation
 - Appropriateness
 - Implementation

Practical issues: Information policy, preparation material, training for examiners, resources of administrators

Prospects: research and practical implementation

- Refining instruments for decision-making process
- More research on specific learning difficulties
 - Diagnosing procedures / criteria
 - Impact on L2
- Using assistive technology
- Designing universally accessible tests (e.g. Ketterlin-Geller, 2008)

Interdisciplinarity

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Thank you!

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