

## CAREFUL VERSUS EXPEDITIOUS READING: THE CASE OF THE IELTS READING TEST

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### ABSTRACT

*There has been growing concerns over the validity in the testing of reading. This issue is of utmost importance as valid test instruments with proper administration will produce results which reflect students' true reading abilities. What more, in Britain and many other countries in the world, international English Language tests such as the IELTS have been used as a gateway for university entrance for international students before they are admitted to a university course. If these tests are not valid, this could have a serious impact on students' performance on a course at the university. This study aims to investigate the item types in the IELTS Reading tests based on Urquhart and Weir's (1998) four-cell matrix on reading types and Khalifa and Weir's (2009) model of reading. An item analysis was conducted on 14 recent IELTS reading tests by two informed test-takers. The findings show that the items are imbalanced in terms of the types of reading tested. This raises the issue of whether the IELTS reading test is a valid reading test for testing academic reading. The findings of this study have implications for test designers involved in writing university entrance tests, as well as on the teaching and testing of reading. Key words: Art, artist, society, social reality*

*Keywords: Reading, Testing of Reading, Reading Ability, Valid Reading Test*

