> **Classroom Format**: Every class session will consist of interactive lectures, student presentations, discussions, and other group activities.

Second Language Assessment 「第二言語評価論」

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Course overview

This course aims to provide classroom teachers with formal and informal assessment knowledge, tools, and practices that support the English language learning at Japanese secondary schools. Classroom teachers will be introduced to the basic theoretical concepts and issues in language assessment (i.e., assessment literacy) in order to design their own assessment tools. They'll also learn how to interpret the assessment outcomes so as to use the information to provide useful feedback to the stakeholders including learners and their parents whenever necessary. Throughout the course, classroom teachers are strongly encouraged to participate in class discussions and activities so that they can share their experiences in learning, teaching, and especially assessment.

Course objectives

Upon completion of the course, the participants should be able to:
- Demonstrate good understanding of main concepts in language assessment (e.g., reliability, validity, etc.)
- Evaluate existing as well as own assessment materials
- Design appropriate assessments for their learners
- Correctly interpret test results, and prepare assessment reports for the stakeholders

Textbooks and readings

Required:
- Coombe, C., Davidson, P., O'Sullivan, B., & Stoynoff, S. (Eds.). (2012). *The Cambridge guide to second language assessment*. Cambridge University Press.
- Selected readings in a course packet

Recommended:
- Blaz, D. (2001). *A collection of performance tasks and rubrics: Foreign languages*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
- Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2010). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education
- Brown, J. D. (2005). *Testing in language programs: a comprehensive guide to English language assessment*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Brown, J. D. (Ed.) (2013). *New ways of classroom assessment* (Revised ed.). Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

Assignments and evaluation

- Class participation (=contributions)   25%
- Test critique   15%
- Test writing practice   15%
- Test analysis   10%
- Assessment (design) project   35%

Requirements	Description
Class preparation and	Complete homework assignments and actively participate in class

participation	discussions and group activities
Test critique	Choose a published English test and critique the test
Assessment (design) project	Design an assessment for a lesson unit, administer, analyze the results, and prepare a report

Tentative course schedule

Presentation assignments

Date	Topics	assignments due	Readings
Day 1	- Introductions and review of syllabus - History of language testing - Assessment literacy - Basic concepts of testing and evaluation - Principles of language assessment - Test impact and washback	**Height assignment**	Coombe et al. (Chapter 1) Coombe et al. (Chapter 2) Coombe et al. (Chapter 3) Coombe et al. (Chapter 4) Coombe et al. (Chapter 10)
Day 2	- Linking assessment with instructional aims - Choosing the right type of assessment - Assessment development process - Developing test specifications for language assessment	**Test critique**	Coombe et al. (Chapter 7) Coombe et al. (Chapter 15) Coombe et al. (Chapter 5) Coombe et al. (Chapter 6) Brown & Abeywickrama (Chapter 3)
Day 3	- Assessing reading - Assessing listening (Assessing grammar) - Test writing practice (Test analysis practice) - Topics for personal interests: - Assessing young learners - Assessing vocabulary - etc.	**Test writing**	Coombe et al. (Chapter 12) Coombe et al. (Chapter 24) Coombe et al. (Chapter 26) Coombe et al. (Chapter 28) additional readings
Day 4	- Assessing writing - Assessing speaking - Making assessments: rating scales and rubrics - Rubric writing practice		Coombe et al. (Chapter 25) Coombe et al. (Chapter 27) Coombe et al. (Chapter 34) Blaz (2001)
Day 5	- CEFR and can-do lists - Alternative assessment **Project report**	**Assessment (design) project**	*Tono & Negish (2012) Coombe et al. (Chapter 17) Brown & Abeywickrama (Chapter 6)

* Tono, Y. and Negishi, M. (2012). The CEFR-J: Adapting the CEFR for English Language Teaching in Japan. *The JALT FLP SIG Newsletter, 8*, 5-12.
（http://www.tufs.ac.jp/ts/personal/tonolab/cefr-j/Tono&Negishi2012forJALT_FLPSIG.pdf）

Scoring guidelines for the assignments

The following scoring guidelines will be used to maintain the instructor's objectivity of rating his class participants' assignments.

1. Overall task fulfillment will be judged.

       Completely satisfactory -----⑤-----④-----③-----②-----①-----⓪----- Unsatisfactory

2. The answers should be correct. (Depending on the type of the task, either dichotomous scoring or partial credit scoring methods will be used.)

       When, dichotomous   5: correct   or   0: incorrect

       When, partial credit   Correct -----⑤-----④-----③-----②-----①-----⓪----- Incorrect
       (In the partial credit scoring, although the answer is not correct, if creativity in answering, which demonstrates deep thinking processes, is observable, additional points – either 2 or 1 point – will be added.)

3. The answers should be relevant to the questions. (This is to observe the degree of your comprehension of the stimulus.)

       Completely relevant -----⑤-----④-----③-----②-----①-----⓪----- Irrelevant

NOTE: Depending on the types of tasks, all or one or more of the criteria will be adopted to rate the answers.

NOTE: What the instructor in the course is mostly concerned with regarding the class participants' performance is not the quantity of work, but the quality of it. Quantity will NOT be appreciated! Although brief, if the answers are complete and well-organized, demonstrating complete understanding of the task required, the instructor will assign full points.

      Again, it is QUALITY, not quantity that your instructor will appreciate from you!!!

Class participation:
Class <u>contributions</u> that count

Participating in discussion-based classes is an unfamiliar expectation for [many of us]. Some students have already developed strategies for effectively speaking up in class, asserting their ideas and opinions, and taking center stage, whereas others are acquiring them now. But if <u>the aim of class discussion is to learn from others and allow them to learn from you</u>, there are lots of contributions that count, including questioning, listening, and responding. And, there are lots of ways to make these contributions, such as those described below. Your instructor will value these, too.

- **Prepare to contribute** by carefully reviewing the syllabus and locating the current readings and topics in relation to the course as a whole. Know why you are discussing this particular topic at this juncture in the course. Use the syllabus and lecture material to generate questions and comments in advance.

- **Explicitly relate or link** your observations and comments to course objectives, central themes and main topics.

- **Ask a question** that encourages someone to clarify or elaborate on a comment.

- Make a comment to **link two people's contributions.**

- **Explain that you found another person's ideas interesting** or useful, and describe why.

- **Build on what someone else has said.** Be explicit about the way you are extending the other person's thought.

- **Paraphrase a point** someone has already made and build on it.
  Summarize several people's contributions, taking into account a recurring theme in the discussion.
  "It seems we have heard variations on two main points of view; on the one hand…"

- **Ask a question that relates to that week's course topic**--for example, "Can you explain how this example illustrates the concept (course topic) of …?"

- Find a way to **express appreciation for the insights you have gained** from the discussion. Be specific about what it was that helped you understand something better.

- **Disagree with someone in a respectful and constructive way.** You might reflect the comment back to the speaker to indicate that you have listened well. If possible, point out what is interesting or compelling in someone's comment before explaining why and how you disagree.

(source: https://www.princeton.edu/mcgraw/library/for-students/Participating-in-Class-10-22-14.pdf)

Information on Assignments 1, 2, & 3

Homework Assignment 1
Height assignment (Due Day 1)
A homework guide will be provided by the instructor before the course begins.

Homework Assignment 2
Test Critique: (Due Day 2)

Step 1: Find a test to critique for your paper. I suggest you select a test that is commonly in use. If you select a test that is not commonly used, there may not be many articles and/or books about the test so you will have difficulty finding references for your paper.

Step 2: Locate articles that review your test. Use the Internet/journals/books to find information about your test.

Step 3: Find at least 2 resources that discuss your test. Make sure you save information concerning the resource as you will need to list it in the reference section of your paper.

Step 4: Use the list of questions below to write your paper. Each section of the paper should be numbered and titled with the question you are answering. For example, section 1 of your paper would be labeled just like question 1 below. Your paper should be typed and 3-5 pages in length; don't forget to include a reference section.

1) What test did you select and why did this test interest you?
2) What is the purpose of the test, in other words, what is it intended to measure?
3) Who would benefit from using this test?
4) How is the test administered?
5) Does the test have adequate reliability (according to reviewers who have critiqued this instrument)?
6) Does the test have adequate validity (according to reviewers who have critiqued this instrument?)
7) What are the other pros and cons of this test according to the reviewers and in your opinion?
8) A summary to include some of the following possible topics: Would you use this test and if so, in what context? Do you think it is appropriate for general or specific use? Is the test practical to use given its length, cost, scoring protocol, etc.?

Homework Assignment 3
Test writing (Due Day 3)
A homework guide will be provided by the instructor.

Assessment (Design) Project
(Due Day 5)

The purpose of this project is to provide you with an opportunity to apply the concepts that have been presented and discussed in class to write and evaluate your own language test for a specific context. There are two phases to this project. The first is the construction of the test and the second is the reporting on the test and its development process. The test should not be a practice test for other tests (e.g., TOEFL, TOEIC, etc.). The project may be done in pairs (probably should be. The project will involve planning and writing the test, administering the test to one or two students, as well as formally reporting on the testing project. The test should have at least two sections and be minimally 10 items long. The project should be 5-10 pages plus appendices. The stages are described below. The headings that are underlined below can serve as headings for the different sections of your project discussion.

Planning, Developing and Reporting the Language Test

I.   Describe the <u>purpose of the language test</u>. Before you begin, you need to have a clear idea of the purpose of the test. You need to be explicit about what you want to test, why you want to test it, and what you will do with the results of the test. You will need to briefly discuss why the test is needed. You will also need to discuss the projected audience for the test. Is this an achievement test, proficiency test, midterm, final exam, etc? What is the nature of the decisions that will be made with the test?

II.   Define the <u>context of language use</u>. It is important to specify the type of language that you are going to test, the domain of content to be included in the test, the characteristics of the language users that are to be tested, and the characteristics of the language that are reflective of the domain and examinees. For example, a test of English for university students will have different language focus than an English test for marketing executives and both will be different from a test in middle school. This stage will require you to determine whether there are particular genres associated with the context or what specific language characteristics are of importance to the specified language users. You will need to situate the test in the context of language use. In a sense, this will be a mini-needs analysis. You will need to explain how you did this analysis.

III.   Define your <u>construct</u> theoretically. This will be the literature review of your paper. Here you will need to be explicit about the theoretical definition of the language ability that you want to measure. You will need to find source articles that discuss the ability that you want to measure in theoretical terms (e.g. articles about the nature of listening comprehension). This will require you to address issues regarding how direct or indirect your language test may be. You will also need to address any possible test method effects.

IV.   <u>Operationalization of the construct</u>. This will be the methods section of your paper. Use the "characteristics of the context" and "theoretical definition of language ability" to choose the tasks that you want examinees to perform on your test. Your test tasks should be relevant to and representative of the characteristics of context and language abilities. Your test methods should reflect your assumptions. Discuss how particular test items correspond to your views of language ability.

V.   <u>Quantification of the observations.</u> Define how you will assign numerical scores to the performance of the examinees. Relate your rationale for scoring to your definition of language ability. What kind of scale will you use for your test?

VI. Write <u>test and item specifications</u> for your test. These should follow the format that has been discussed in class. And should be attached as an appendix.

VII. <u>Evaluation of the test for validity</u>. Ideally, you would need to perform three types of evaluation for determining the validity of your tests: content analysis, task analysis, and data analysis. For this project, you will need to do the first two and then write plans for carrying out the third type.

    A. <u>Content analysis</u>. This is a logical analysis. You ask yourself the following questions: How relevant are your test tasks to the definition of the ability that you want to measure? In other words, how direct is your test?   How well do your test tasks represent all of the aspects of the definition of the language ability that you want to measure? In other words, how complete is your test?

    B. <u>Task analysis</u>. You will study this by observing one or two students take your test. These examinees should be similar to the target audience. To what extent do the students appear to use the language knowledge and strategies that you had intended when you designed the test? What does this task analysis tell you about the validity of your test? Discuss authenticity here. What can you say about the effect of your test based on your observation of the student(s)?

    C. <u>Data analysis</u>. If you were to pursue development of this test by giving it to a group of students, what kind of validity study would you propose? What kind of data would you collect? What data analysis would you perform? What would your results tell you? What other kind of validity studies would you propose concerning the effects of your test?

VIII. <u>Reflections on the test writing process</u>. This will include your conclusions about the test and the test writing project. Think about your process of developing the test. What was difficult? What was unexpected?

IX Append the test to the end of your paper. Turn in two copies of your project.

X. Append your test and item specifications.