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AL 8550
Second Language Evaluation and Assessment
Fall 2009

1. Course information

Instructor: YouJin Kim
Time: Thursday 1:00-3:30 pm
Room: Classroom South 506

Instructor's Office: #34 Peachtree, Room 1247
Office Hours: M & W 1:00-3:00 pm &
by appointment
Office Phone: 404-413-5188
E-mail: eslyjk@langate.gsu.edu

** The best way to get in touch with me is through email**

2. Course description

This course is an introduction to the theory and practice of language testing. You will study the theoretical foundations of language testing, investigate and critique various assessment formats and item types, practice writing and revising test specifications and tests, and analyze test results. Additionally, you will gain experience in methods of assessing test reliability and validity. The primary goal of the course is to provide the skills and practice needed to be critical test developers and users.

3. Course objectives

In successfully completing this course you will be able to:

- (1) extend your knowledge of the fundamental concepts, principles, and concerns of language testing;
- (2) become acquainted with language testing resources;
- (3) explain theories of communicative competence and how one might measure students' ability in the areas defined in these theories;
- (4) develop skill in writing and revising test specifications and items;
- (5) develop skill in analyzing and interpreting the results of language tests;
- (6) explain how test results can be used to describe student performance and/or improve the quality of tests
- (7) become an informed, critical user and developer of language tests.

4. Learning outcomes of particular relevance to this course

- (1) Demonstrates knowledge of the linguistic systems of English phonology, grammar, and discourse
Evidence: Readings and discussion of models of language ability and how it is measured through tests; test development project
- (2) Analyzes and critiques theory and practice of L2 teaching and learning
Evidence: group presentation, test review project



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- (3) Communicates effectively in both written and oral language in English
Evidence: group presentation, written assignments
- (4) Uses technology effectively in research and teaching
Evidence: readings and discussion of technology in assessment, using statistics to interpret test results

5. Texts

(1) Required textbook

Brown, H.D. (2004). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Education, Inc.

(2) Electronic readings available through uLearn (<https://gsu8.view.usg.edu/>).

- Alderson, J. (2000). *Assessing reading*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 7)
- Bachman, L. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Ch. 4)
- Bachman, L., & Palmer, A. (1996). *Language testing in practice*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Ch. 2; Ch. 3; Ch. 5)
- Brindley, G. (1998). Assessing listening abilities. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 18, 171-191.
- Brown, J.D., & Hudson, T. (2002). *Criterion-referenced language testing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 4)
- Buck, G. (1997). The testing of listening in a second language. In C. Clapham & D. Corson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 7. Language testing and assessment* (pp. 65-74). Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 5)
- Chapelle, C., Enright, M., & Jamieson, J. (2008). Test score interpretation and use. In C. A. Chapelle, M. K. Enright, & J. M. Jamieson (Eds.), *Building a validity argument for the Test of English as a Foreign Language* (pp. 1-25). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers.
- Coxhead, A. (2000). A new academic word list. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34, 213-238.
- Cumming, A. (1997). The testing of writing in a second language. In C. Clapham & D. Corson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 7. Language testing and assessment* (pp. 51-64). Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Douglas, D. (2000). *Assessing languages for specific purposes*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 2)
- Fulcher, G. (1997). The testing of speaking in a second language. In C. Clapham & D. Corson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 7. Language testing and assessment* (pp. 75-86). Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Luoma, S. (2004). *Assessing speaking*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 4; Ch. 7)
- McNamara, T. (1997). Performance testing. In C. Clapham & D. Corson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 7. Language testing and assessment* (pp. 131-139). Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Miller, M. D., Linn, R., & Gronlund, N. (10th ed.). (2009). *Measurement and evaluation in teaching*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill, Prentice Hall. (Ch. 5; Ch. 6; Ch. 14; Ch. 19)
- Nation, P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 10)

- Purpura, J. (2004). *Assessing grammar*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Ch.3; Ch. 5)
- Rea-Dickins, P. (1997). The testing of grammar in a second language. In C. Clapham & D. Corson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 7. Language testing and assessment* (pp. 87-98). Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Read, J. (1997). Assessing vocabulary in a second language. In C. Clapham & D. Corson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 7. Language testing and assessment* (pp. 99-107). Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Read, J. (2000). *Assessing vocabulary*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 6)
- Spolsky, B. (1978). Introduction: Linguists and language testers. In B. Spolsky (Ed.), *Approaches to language testing* (pp. v-x). Washington, D. C.: Center for Applied Linguistics.
- Stoyhoff, S., & Chapelle, C. (2005). *ESOL Tests and Testing*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL. (Ch. 1; Ch. 4)
- Weigle, S. (2002). *Assessing writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press. (Ch. 5; Ch. 6)
- Weir, C. J. (1997). The testing of reading in a second language. In C. Clapham & D. Corson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of language and education: Vol. 7. Language testing and assessment* (pp. 39-49). Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

(3) A number of books are placed on course reserve in the library for you to consult in preparing your course project.

- Bachman, L., & Palmer, A. (1996). *Language testing in practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Miller, M. D., Linn, R., & Gronlund, N. (2009). *Measurement and evaluation in teaching*. (10th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill, Prentice Hall.
- Alderson, J. C. *Assessing reading*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Buck, G. (2001). *Assessing listening*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Douglas, D. (2000). *Assessing languages for specific purposes*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Luoma, S. (2004). *Assessing speaking*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Purpura, J. (2004). *Assessing grammar*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Read, J. (2000). *Assessing vocabulary*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Stoyhoff, S., & Chapelle, C. (2005). *ESOL Tests and Testing*. Alexandria, VA: TESOL.
- Weigle, S. (2002). *Assessing writing*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

6. Web resources

For this course we will be using uLearn. The uLearn site contains a copy of the syllabus, homework assignments, relevant links, and supplemental materials. An easy way to access uLearn is to go directly to <https://gsu8.view.usg.edu/> and log in. If you are using your own computer, you need to make sure you have the most recent versions of the necessary software. Once you have logged in, you will see a list of all the uLearn courses that you are enrolled in. Click on the "Second Language Evaluation and Assessment" link.

Web Materials to be Acquainted

- TOEFL: <http://www.ets.org/>
IELTS: <http://www.ielts.org/default.aspx>
ALTE: <http://www.alte.org>
ILTE: <http://www.iltaonline.com/>

ACT: <http://www.act.org/compass/index.html>

MLAT: <http://www.2lti.com/mlat.htm>

DIALANG: <http://www.dialang.org/intro.htm>

ACTFL proficiency guidelines: https://www.languagetesting.com/assessments_academic.cfm#

Language Testing: <http://ltj.sagepub.com/>

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. (1999). *ACTFL proficiency guidelines*.

Hastings-on-Hudson, NY: Author. Information available online at: <http://www.actfl.org>

National TESOL Standards Grades K-12: <http://www.gisd.k12.nm.us/standards/esl>

Mitchell, B. (1982). *A glossary of measurement terms*. (Test Service Notebook 13). NY:

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc. Language Testing: <http://ltj.sagepub.com>

7. Course expectations

- (1) Complete all assigned readings before each class meeting (Bring at least one question from assigned readings)
- (2) Participate in class discussions and assignments
- (3) Complete all graded assignments on time. If I decide to accept late work (unlikely), penalties will apply.
- (4) Follow APA guidelines when writing your research projects (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 2009, 6th edition). If you fail to follow APA style, points are likely to be deducted from your score. Links to sites with general information on APA style can be found at: <http://www.apastyle.org/>

8. Course assignments and assessments

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| (1) Attendance and Participation (class discussion, homework, etc.)..... | (10 points) |
| (2) Mid-term exam | (15 points) |
| (3) In-class book presentation | (15 points) |
| (4) Term papers | (15 points) |
| (5) Term project | |
| Proposal +preliminary test specification (3-5 pages)..... | (10 points) |
| Test | (15 points) |
| Project report 20 PP. MAXIMUM | (20 points) |

NOTHING LATE WILL BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT PENALTY

(1) Attendance and Participation (class discussion, homework, etc.) (10%)

Attendance at all class meetings is essential. You are expected to be on time, with the reading and homework completed, and to be prepared with questions and comments about the assigned readings. If you need to miss a class for some reason, please contact me beforehand (or immediately afterwards, if it's an emergency).

There will be several short assignments of a practical nature. These will involve tasks such as writing items for a given reading or listening text, analyzing test results, or drafting test specifications. Homework will be graded as follows:

- ✓+ Exceeds expectations
- ✓ Meets expectations

✓- Below expectations
For full credit you need a ✓ or better on all assignments.

(2) In-class exam (15%)

The in-class exam is designed to assess your knowledge of basic terms, fundamental concepts, principles, and concerns of language testing that were covered in the readings, lectures, and discussions. It is a timed exam administered in class.

(3) In-class book presentation (15%)

The purpose of these reports is to provide you with opportunities to learn more about the language area that each of you has chosen. They will inform and engage classmates about testing in each of the areas that they have not chosen as their area of specialization. Your classmates will score each presentation.

(4) Review of commercially available or widely used tests (15%)

In pairs (encouraged) or individually, you will review and critique two commercially available or widely used tests. You will write a 5-7 page written report, and a one-page fact sheet.

(5) Final project (45%)

The purpose of the final project is to help you develop skill in writing a table of test specifications and test items. It also provides opportunities to analyze the test results and interpret them. There are two options for this assignment.

Option A. In pairs (encouraged) or individually, you will design, administer, and analyze an original test. You **must** include both subjectively-scored and objectively-scored sections. In completing this project you will complete the following steps:

- a. Step 1: write a proposal (3-5 pages)
- b. Step 2: write a test specification that outlines the structure of the entire test and provides a blueprint for individual item types
- c. Step 3: write a test from the specification
- d. Step 4: administer the test to at least 10 subjects
- e. Step 5: write a final report including a revised test

You may design a test for the language of your choosing; however, if you write a test for a language other than English you must provide an English translation for all texts and items as well.

Option B. In pairs (encouraged) or individually, you will write, pilot test, and revise as necessary a new form of one section of the GSTEP: listening, multiple-choice reading, or integrated reading/writing. Specifications and in some cases draft texts and items have been written but will need to be revised. If you choose this option you will need to pilot your test on at least 3 native speakers and at least 10 non-native speakers. In completing this project you will complete the following steps:

- a. Step 1: write a proposal (3-5 pages)
- b. Step 2: write a test specification that outlines the structure of a new form of one section of the GSTEP and provides a blueprint for individual item types
- c. Step 3: write a test from the specification
- d. Step 4: administer the test to at least 10 subjects
- e. Step 5: write a final report including a revised test

You will have opportunities in class to present your work in progress and get feedback from the instructor and your classmates. You will present your final test project on the last day of class.

9. Grading

		B+	87-89	C+	77-79		
A	95-100	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	60-69
A-	90-94	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	F	below 60

- A grades = Analytic, critical understanding of concepts and their creative application to testing problems
- B grades = Thorough understanding of concepts and their appropriate application to testing problems
- C grades = Inaccurate recall or recognition of concepts or the inability to apply them to testing problems
- D grades = Inaccurate or insufficient understanding of concepts and the inability to apply them to testing problems
- F grades = Lack of understanding of concepts and inability to apply them to readings, discourse, and testing problems; or evidence of academic dishonesty

9. Other course policies

- (1) I will use your official university e-mail address if I need to contact you between course meetings (please check your GSU e-mail regularly).
- (2) This course will adhere to the university's policy on academic honesty (see <http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwfthb/sec409.html> for a copy of this and other university policies).
- (3) It is expected that all assignments for AL 8550 reflect original work completed by the individual (or group) submitting it. Any form of plagiarism or cheating will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty or any sort on papers or assignments will be grounds for failure of the paper or assignment.

10. Students with special needs

Students who need special accommodations should arrange a meeting with me as soon as possible. Bring a copy of your Student Accommodation Form to the meeting. If you do not have this form, make an appointment with the university's Office of Disability Services, 230 New Student Center, 404-413-1560.

Course Schedule (subject to change)
***=optional readings**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading to be done before class</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
Week 1 8/20	Introduction to course Situating language testing in time and place	Spolsky, 1978	
Week 2 8/27	Basic concepts/defining language ability Test usefulness: qualities of language tests	LA Chs. 1 & 2 Bachman & Palmer, 1996 (Chs. 2 & 3) Stoyhoff & Chapelle, 2005 (Ch. 1)*	
Week 3 9/3	English language testing in the US and Europe Interpreting test scores: ability and/or performance	LA Ch. 4 McNamara, 1997 Douglas, 2000 (Ch. 2) Bachman, 1990 (Ch. 4)*	
Week 4 9/10	Testing development process Directions, input, responses, scoring	LA Ch. 3 Bachman & Palmer, 1996 (Ch. 5) Miller, Linn, & Gronlund, Ch. 14 (pp. 336-350)	
Week 5 9/17	In-Class Exam Planning and designing table of specifications	Miller, Linn, & Gronlund, 2009 (Ch. 6 & Appendices G, H)	
Week 6 9/24	Assessing grammar & pragmatics	Rea-Dickins, 1997; Purpura, 2004 (Chs. 3 & 5)	Submit names of two tests you will review
Week 7 10/1	Assessing vocabulary	Read, 2000 (Ch. 6); Coxhead, 2000; Nation, 2001 (Ch. 10)	
Week 8 10/8	Assessing reading	LA Ch. 8; Alderson, 2000 (Ch. 7)	Proposal + preliminary test specification due
Week 9 10/15	Assessing listening	LA Ch. 6; Brindley, 1998; Buck, 2001 (Ch. 5)	
Week 10 10/22	Assessing speaking	LA Ch. 7; Luoma, 2004 (Chs. 4 & 7)	

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading to be done before class</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
Week 11 10/29	Assessing writing	LA Ch. 9; Weigle, 2002 (Chs. 5 & 6)	Test due
Week 12 11/5	Distributional statistics; Interpreting test results	Miller, Linn, & Gronlund, 2009 (Ch. 19)	
Week 13 11/12	Classical item analysis, correlation, reliability	LA Ch. 2 (pp. 20-22); Miller, Linn, & Gronlund, 2005 (Chs. 5 & 14; pp. 351-366; Appendix A, Correlation)	
Week 14 11/19	Standard Error of Measurement; Reliability for criterion-referenced Tests Validity Test review	Brown & Hudson, 2002 LA Ch. 2 (pp. 22-26), Chappelle, Enright, & Jamieson, 2008	Test review due
Week 15 11/26	THANKSGIVING RECESS	NO CLASS	
Week 16 12/3	Course wrap-up Final project presentation	Stoynoff & Chappelle, Ch. 4	Final project due by 5:00 pm on 12/8

AL 8550, Second Language Evaluation and Assessment, Fall, 2009, p. 9

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