

Second Language Assessment (REQ / 3 cr.)

Instructor: Prof. Hitoshi Nishizawa (Please call me Hitoshi /hi'toʊʃi/)

Email: hnishiza@reitaku-u.ac.jp

Office hours: By appointment

Course Dates

9/28 (Sun. 10:00-17:00)	11/9 (Sun. 10:00-17:00)	12/7 (Sun. 10:00-17:00)
1/11 (Sun. 10:00-17:00)	2/8 (Sun. 10:00-17:00)	

Note: Additional online work equivalent to **6 hours** will be provided.

Course Description

This course will provide an overview of language assessment concepts, techniques, and tools to facilitate valid and reliable assessment in the classroom. The course will also provide students with knowledge to evaluate and critique language tests, which include high-stakes tests (e.g., TOEIC). We will discuss how classroom assessment is (or should be) different from high-stakes tests. Students will have an opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills in class. Students will also develop familiarity with research articles on language assessment. The course will be student-centered. Thus, active participation is expected and highly encouraged.

Key Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the key concepts of language assessment **(DP 6)**
2. Critically evaluate language assessment methods **(DP 4, 6, 7)**
3. Create valid and reliable language assessments **(DP 4, 6, 7)**
4. Utilize technologies to create language tests **(DP 6, 7)**
5. Analyze and interpret test results **(DP 4, 6)**
6. Provide feedback to facilitate learning **(DP 4, 5, 6)**
7. Critically read academic papers in language assessment **(DP 7, 10)**

Tentative Course Schedule

Session	Topics	Readings	Assignments
1. (9/28)	Principles of language assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validity • Fairness • Justice • Types of test • Reliability • Washback • Practicality 	Required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brown & Abeywickrama (B&A) Ch. 1, 2 Optional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hughes & Hughes (H&H) Ch. 1-6 - Nishizawa (2024) - Min & Bishop (2024) - Allen (2016) 	Pre-class Reading Post-class Test critique
2. (11/9)	Test development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test purpose • Test specifications 	Required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jamieson (2011) - Davidson & Lynch (2002) Ch. 2 	Pre-class Test specifications

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test tasks 		(grammar and vocabulary)
	Skill assessment I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar • Vocabulary 	Optional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H&H Ch. 7, 8, 13 - Currie et al (2010) * - Mizumoto et al. (2019) * - McLean et al. (2015) * 	Post-class Test specifications (revision)
3. (12/7)	Skill assessment II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading • Listening 	Required B&A Ch. 6, 8, 10 Optional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H&H Ch. 11, 12 - Batty (2020) - Purpura (2013) - Beglar & Nation (2013) - Wagner et al. (2021) * - Nishizawa (2025) - Trace (2020) * - Holzkmnecht & Harding (2024) * - Hamada (2015) * 	Pre-class Test specifications (Reading and listening) Post-class Test specifications (revision)
4. (1/11)	Skill assessment III <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation • Speaking: presentation, interaction • Writing 	Required <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Levis (2005) - B&A Ch. 7, 9 Optional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H&H Ch. 9, 10 - Galaczi & Taylor (2021) - Fulcher (2003) Ch. 3 - Kawamura & Takeuchi (2023) * - Koizumi & In'nami (2022) * - Ohta et el. (2018) * 	Pre-class Test specifications (pronunciation, speaking and writing) Post-class Test specifications (revision)
5. (2/8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item analysis • Rubrics Alternative assessment and feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self- and peer-assessment • Portfolios • Checklist • Can-do lists • Project report 	Required B&A Ch. 12 Carr (2011) Ch. 15-16 B&A Ch. 11 Optional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Saito & Inoi (2017) * - H&H Ch. 16, 18, 19 	Pre-class Rubric development Post-class Final project

Required textbook:

Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2018). *Language assessment: Principles and classroom practices* (3rd ed.). ISBN-10: 0134860225

Recommended books:

Hughes, A., & Hughes, J. (2020). *Testing for Language Teachers* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 9781009024723

Assignments and Assessment

- Participation & Collaboration **(10%)**
- Pre-class assignments **(20%)**
- Post-class assignments **(20%)**
- Article summary **(10%)**
- Final project **(40%)**

Note: Points will be deducted for each day an assignment is late.

Evaluation

Letter grade

A+ 100–95

A 94–85

B 84–70

C 69–60

F 59–0

Instructor Bio

Hitoshi Nishizawa (Ph.D.) is Assistant Professor at Reitaku University. He has taught English to students of various levels and backgrounds. His current research interests are in language assessment and psycholinguistics. His work has appeared in prominent international journals including *Language Testing*, *TESOL Quarterly*, *Applied Psycholinguistics*, *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, and *Foreign Language Annals*.