

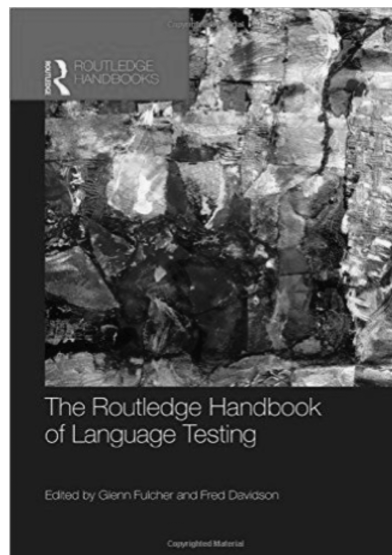
The Routledge Handbook of Language Testing. Glenn Fulcher and Fred Davidson (eds.), 2012. New York: Routledge. 551 pp., ISBN: 978-0-203-18128-7.

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The Rutledge Handbook of Language Testing consists of nine parts, each containing multiple chapters. Theoretical and philosophical foundations of test validity constitute the first three chapters in the first part, which do justice to the philosophical controversies surrounding test validation, the argument-based approach to validity, and the validity of test accommodations, respectively. The main issues pertaining to classroom assessment are examined in the second part. Starting with a general introduction to core issues in classroom assessment, the second part gives ample space to test washback, the tailoring of assessments to learners' age, dynamic assessment, and diagnostic assessment in the classroom. Part three addresses social, political and cultural considerations in language assessment. Language assessments for communication disorders, for migration and citizenship and for other socio-political matters that inform and are informed by language tests are each given a chapter of their own.

The next three parts, each containing three chapters, address practical steps involved in test specification, item and task writing, as well as prototyping and piloting. In part seven, various theories of language testing including classical test theory, generalizability theory, and item response theory are discussed in separate chapters. Additionally, reliability and dependability as well as the scoring of performance tests are covered. The penultimate part addresses test administration, as well as interlocutor and rater training. Moreover, the applications and uses of technology in language testing are discussed in a couple of chapters. The final part covers the principles of language testing. This is followed by three additional chapters on test fairness, standard-based testing, and the mutual relationships of language testing and language policy.

The handbook enjoys a good number of unique features. In the first place, it strikes a healthy balance between theory and practice, rendering it beneficial to a diverse range of audiences of language assessment. Secondly, care has been exercised to keep the statistics and technicalities, which usually give a daunting face to language testing textbooks, to a minimum. Thus, even the chapter on item response theory has little trace of the language testing parlance, making it accessible to the lay readership with less than expert background in the field. Perhaps the main strength of the volume lies in the coverage it has given to



classroom-based assessment, which has traditionally been given a Cinderella role in language testing course books. The fact that the handbook accommodates both theoretical and philosophical ideas around test validity makes it further indispensable to the field. Its coverage of issues involved in test construction such as item and task design, item writers, item prototyping and piloting is also unprecedented. Finally, the companion reflects a collective understanding of the field as chapter authors represent all the four corners of the globe. From an instructional vantage point, the handbook is an ideal source to be used in advanced language assessment courses in TEFL and applied linguistics graduate programs, thanks largely to its comprehensive coverage of most cutting-edge issues in language testing and assessment.