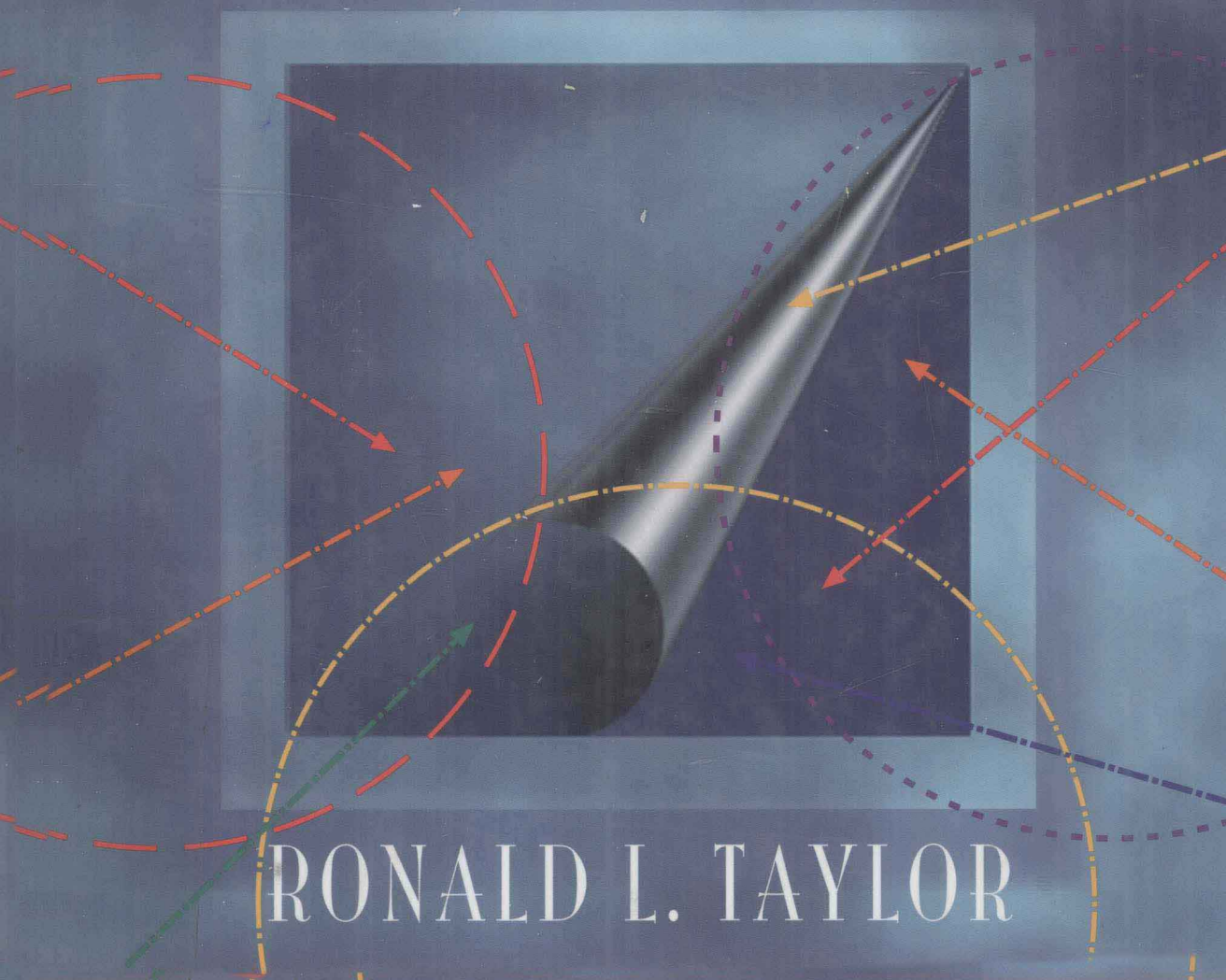


ASSESSMENT OF

FOURTH
EDITION

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

Educational and Psychological Procedures



RONALD L. TAYLOR

Fourth Edition



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ASSESSMENT OF EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS

**Educational and
Psychological Procedures**

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Florida Atlantic University

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PREFACE

Assessment is an area that is constantly changing. New laws, philosophies, and assessment instruments and techniques quickly make information in this field obsolete. A tremendous amount of change has occurred in the four years since publication of the third edition of this book. This fourth edition includes information that reflects those changes. Specifically, this edition includes:

1. A separate chapter on portfolio assessment and other alternative assessment procedures.
2. A separate chapter on the assessment of written expression.
3. Information related to assessing students with Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.
4. Information related to assessing children with autism.
5. An update of legislation affecting assessment.
6. Expanded coverage of curriculum-based assessment and other teacher-oriented assessment procedures.
7. An update of philosophical movements that affect assessment practices (e.g., inclusion).
8. Descriptions and discussions of more than thirty new or revised tests.
9. An updated review of the literature that includes approximately 150 new references.

Obviously, other changes have also been made, and many of the procedures or instruments that are outdated have been eliminated (or greatly reduced if they are outdated but still used). The fourth edition has, however, kept most of the general features of previous editions.

The text is divided into six major parts. Part I, Introduction to Assessment: Issues and Concerns, begins with a chapter that traces the historical, philosophical, and legal foundations of assessment. The second chapter serves as a general

introduction to educational and psychological assessment. It poses several questions that must be answered prior to assessing any student, and it also proposes an assessment model. Chapter 3 addresses practical considerations that should be taken into account during the assessment process, whereas Chapter 4 focuses on the controversial area of labeling and classification. Part II, *Informal Procedures: Basic Tools for Teachers*, includes chapters related to observation (Chapter 5), criterion-referenced testing and error analysis (Chapter 6), curriculum-based assessment and measurement (Chapter 7), and portfolio and other alternative assessment procedures (Chapter 8).

Part III, consisting of Chapters 9 through 12, provides a discussion and overview of the instruments and procedures most widely used to assess an individual's underlying *abilities*. This includes chapters on the assessment of intelligence (Chapter 9), adaptive behavior (Chapter 10), behavioral/emotional status (Chapter 11), and language (Chapter 12). Part IV focuses on the assessment of *achievement*, including general academic areas (Chapter 13), reading (Chapter 14), mathematics (Chapter 15), and written expression (Chapter 16). The following format is used to describe the instruments in these two parts: A general description is followed by a more specific description of subtests or other components of each test; a discussion about how the scores are interpreted; a subsection focusing on technical characteristics, including standardization, reliability, and validity, and a review of the relevant research (discussed later). Finally, for each test described, an overview box summarizes the information and suggests uses for the test.

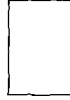
The Review of Relevant Research section for each test is a feature unique to this textbook, and it describes the literature that practitioners will find useful for test selection, administration, and interpretation. Specifically, these reviews highlight studies dealing with the reliability and validity of the instruments, as well as their use with special education students. The research studies were located by a computer search. The information yielded by the search was cross-checked against the following periodicals: *Diagnostic*, *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *Remedial and Special Education*, *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *Journal of Special Education*, *Exceptional Children*, *Psychology in the Schools*, *Journal of School Psychology*, *Education and Training in Mental Retardation*, *Mental Retardation*, *American Journal of Mental Retardation*, *Gifted Child Quarterly*, and *Educational and Psychological Measurement*. For the fourth edition, literature from 1991 through 1995 was updated.

Part V, *Special Assessment Considerations*, includes a description of assessment procedures and instruments relevant for early childhood (Chapter 17), and older students with vocational/transitional needs (Chapter 18). The book concludes with two case studies in which the assessment process is followed from initial identification through the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

A number of unique features have been retained in the fourth edition:

1. A pragmatic approach to assessment is emphasized.
2. A summary matrix is provided for most chapters. This matrix presents information about specific instruments and techniques in a format that allows easy comparison of the instruments for suggested use and target population. The matrix also includes a statement of any special considerations of which a user should be aware. Finally, for each instrument or technique, the matrix gives the educational relevance for exceptional students. The matrices are directly related to the assessment model proposed in Chapter 2.
3. Both informal and formal assessment procedures are included, with emphasis on how each kind of procedure fits into the assessment process.
4. A thorough review of relevant research is provided for each norm-referenced instrument. The review emphasizes the use of the test with exceptional students.
5. An overview box is provided for each test. The overview summarizes the age range, technical adequacy, and suggested use for the test. This feature adds to the value of this book as a reference text.
6. The book examines instruments and techniques both for students with mild disabilities and for students with severe disabilities. The two case studies in Chapter 19 reflect this emphasis.
7. An instructor's manual that includes test questions and activities is available.

Needless to say, many individuals deserve my sincere appreciation and thanks. Although many provided feedback and suggestions, several deserve specific acknowledgment. Thanks to reviewers Lamoine J. Miller, Northeast Louisiana University; Tim Heron, The Ohio State University; and Nancy Halhuber, Eastern Michigan University. My thanks go to Steve Richards and Rod Van Dyke for their contributions to Chapter 18; to graduate students Geny Lima and Andrea Presberg for their assistance in compiling information; to Barbara Truzzolino and Cindy Carson for their secretarial and technical assistance; and to my wife and sons for their perseverance, patience, and support.



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INTRODUCTION TO ASSESSMENT: ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Assessment is a critical component of the educational process. It allows educators and other professionals to make relevant educational decisions. Some individuals downplay the importance of assessment, believing that time spent assessing would better be spent teaching. If, however, appropriate assessment procedures are conducted, the information obtained can be used to enhance the teaching process.

In this section, several issues important to the establishment of appropriate assessment procedures will be discussed. The potential uses as well as the limitations of assessment will be considered. Assessment does not occur in a vacuum; neither is it left totally to the discretion of the assessor. Many important historical events and philosophical movements have shaped the assessment procedures found in today's schools. Similarly, there have been significant court cases and legislation that mandate certain assessment practices. These areas, discussed in Chapter 1, will provide the reader with the *historical framework* for developing assessment procedures.

Assessment should also be practical and efficient. One important issue is knowing when to apply what assessment procedure. This requires, among other things, understanding the types and purposes of various assessment sources. Such information will be provided and an assessment model will be presented in Chapter 2. This will give the reader a *conceptual framework* for developing assessment procedures.

Assessment certainly is more than the simple administration of a test. Nonetheless, testing is an integral part of the assessment process. Because tests supply only a *sample* of a student's behavior, it is important to understand all the variables that can affect test performance. More importantly, these variables must be considered when making decisions based on that test performance. These practical considerations related to the testing process and tests themselves are dis-

cussed in Chapter 3. One of the most controversial uses of assessment information is to make labeling and classification decisions. Chapter 4 is devoted to a critical discussion of this important area.

AFTER READING PART I YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- Identify historical events, philosophical movements, litigation, and legislation that have had an effect on assessment procedures in today's schools.
 - Identify important questions that should be asked before initiating any assessment, resulting in a more efficient and practical process.
 - Identify factors that can affect assessment results, including those related to the examiner, the examinee, and the test itself.
 - Identify the important issues and problems related to the use of assessment information for labeling and classification purposes.
-

1

ASSESSMENT: HISTORICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Areas Included

Historical Events

Philosophical Movements

Relevant Assessment Litigation

Bias in Testing

Appropriateness of Assessment Procedures

Relevant Legislation

P.L. 94-142

P.L. 99-457

P.L. 101-476

P.L. 101-336

Assessment refers to the gathering of relevant information to help an individual make decisions. The educational and psychological assessment of exceptional students, specifically, involves the collection of information that is relevant in making decisions regarding appropriate goals and objectives, teaching strategies, and program placement. The assessment process should include the general education teacher, special education teacher, school psychologist, specialists, therapists, and any other individuals involved in a student's educational program. Assessment should be an active, ongoing process that has a clearly specified purpose. Further, it can and should be an individualized process, as individualized as

instructional strategies are. Not only is it inappropriate, but it is also practically impossible to use the same group of tests with all exceptional students; by definition, this population has unique characteristics and concerns that require an individualized approach.

Although educational and psychological assessment has been considered synonymous with testing, it involves much more than the simple acts of administering and scoring tests and reporting test scores. It includes the careful analysis of the information provided by various instruments and techniques (including tests), which should result in functional, relevant, appropriate decisions. The choice of which instrument or technique to use and the decision about which method of analysis or interpretation is best largely depends on the goal or purpose for the assessment. This textbook focuses on this pragmatic issue that emphasizes the appropriate use of various instruments and techniques, depending on the specific purpose for the assessment.

Before addressing these pragmatic issues that will shape the assessment process, it is important to discuss other factors that have had, and will continue to have, an effect on assessment policies and procedures used in the schools. These include historical events and philosophical movements, court cases (litigation), and legislation that directly or indirectly affect assessment practices. In this chapter, a chronology of the historical, philosophical, and legal events that have influenced assessment practices is presented, followed by a summary of the legislation that has led to, or has been a result of, those events.

HISTORICAL EVENTS AND PHILOSOPHICAL MOVEMENTS

Early Twentieth Century

Before special education became a formal field, most assessment issues were related to the measurement of the areas of intelligence and personality. This reflected the beginnings of the special education field with its roots in medicine and psychology. Alfred Binet had perhaps the first major influence on the use of assessment instruments with exceptional individuals. He and Theodore Simon were asked by the Ministry of Education in France to develop an intelligence test that could be used to differentiate individuals with and without mental retardation. Their test was translated into English in 1908 and was revised by Terman in 1916 and called the Stanford-Binet. This marked the first formal attempt to provide an objective measure of intelligence.

1920s–1950s

Attempts at measuring personality characteristics and emotional status were popular over the next three decades, using a variety of instruments tied primarily to the fields of psychology and psychiatry. These included the development of projective tests such as the Rorschach Ink Blot Test (Rorschach, 1932), thematic

picture tests such as the Thematic Apperception Test (Murray, 1943), and personality inventories such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (Hathaway & Meehl, 1951). These tests are still used today, although their relevance in education has been questioned (see Chapter 11 for a discussion). Also during this period, there was increased interest in the measurement of achievement. Many group achievement tests such as the Metropolitan Achievement Tests were developed more than fifty years ago and continue to be revised as educational demands and curricula in the schools change.

1960s

In the 1960s, the role of assessment, particularly through standardized testing, became increasingly popular. This also mirrored the coming of age of the field of special education itself. When the term *learning disabilities* was coined in 1963, the door opened for the development of tests that went beyond the measurement of intelligence, personality, and achievement. During this period, primarily as a result of the application of the medical/neurological model, “process testing” became very popular. This included perceptual-motor tests and other instruments designed to measure how a student processed information. Examples of such tests are the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Ability (Kirk, McCarthy, & Kirk, 1968) and the Developmental Test of Visual Perception (Frostig, Lefever, & Whittlesey, 1966). The Developmental Test of Visual Perception was recently revised (Hammill, Pearson, & Voress, 1993). Appendix A provides a brief description of several instruments that have been used as process tests. The overemphasis on perceptual-motor testing, in particular, had quite an influence on the field of assessment.

Misuses of Perceptual-Motor Tests

Perceptual-motor theorists such as Kephart, Cratty, and Frostig were partially responsible for the movement toward perceptual-motor testing during the 1960s. These theorists emphasized the importance—in fact, the necessity—of perceptual-motor skills in the acquisition of academic skills. The problem was that many professionals stressed perceptual-motor development to the exclusion of academic-skill development. In other words, people assumed that development of perceptual-motor skills would “generalize” to academic areas, because such skills were considered a crucial component of the academic skills. Historically, this movement led to (1) the use of perceptual-motor tests to predict achievement; (2) the use of perceptual-motor tests to help determine “modality strength and weaknesses” for teaching purposes; and (3) the development of remedial programs specifically designed for perceptual-motor skills. Each of these purported uses is discussed separately.

Use of Tests to Predict Achievement. In general, research on the use of perceptual-motor tests to predict achievement was disappointing. At best, most tests showed moderate correlations with achievement. Hammill and Larsen (1974) re-

viewed more than thirty research studies that investigated the relationship of auditory-visual integration with reading disability. They concluded that “apparently a large percentage of children who perform adequately on tests of auditory perception experience difficulty in learning to read; and an equally sizeable percentage who do poorly on these same tests have no problems in reading.” Similarly, Larsen and Hammill (1975) reviewed more than sixty studies of visual perception and school learning and found no support for the relationship between tested visual-perceptual problems and academic achievement.

Use of Tests to Determine Modality Preference. One of the least-understood issues in the area of special education is that of “modality teaching.” According to proponents of this model (for example, Johnson & Myklebust, 1967; Wepman, 1967), children should be classified as primarily auditory or primarily visual learners, according to their scores on certain tests. The children should then be taught through their strong modality (for example, phonics for auditory learners; sight-word for visual learners). Although this approach might have intuitive appeal, little empirical evidence has suggested that the model is a valid one. In a careful analysis of the existing literature on the subject, Arter and Jenkins (1977) found that only one of fourteen studies supported the modality-teaching model. That study (Bursuk, 1971) differed from the others in that secondary-level students were used and reading comprehension was the dependent measure (all other studies used elementary students and tested beginning-reading skills). Arter and Jenkins (1977) gave several possible explanations for the general lack of support for the modality-preference model:

1. Modality strength may be an irrelevant factor in teaching.
2. Other uncontrolled factors may conceal the effects of modality teaching.
3. The instruments used to determine modality preference are ineffective and technically inadequate.
4. The criterion measures used to determine learning might be insensitive.

Whatever the reason, little empirical evidence has supported this widely used model. It does stand to reason, however, that using an indirect measure, such as a perceptual-motor test, to determine modality preference for *academic learning* is not the best way to find out the desired information. Why not determine modality preference directly, by measuring the effects of various instructional procedures on learning rate?

Use of Perceptual-Motor Training Programs. Research in this area has been fairly straightforward. There is little or no evidence that perceptual-motor training improves academic ability (Hallahan & Cruickshank, 1973; Hallahan & Kauffman, 1976; Larsen & Hammill, 1975). In fact, Kavale and Mattson (1983), using a metaanalysis procedure, found that perceptual-motor training was not an effec-