

Exploring Language Assessment and Testing

Language in Action

Anthony Green



Routledge Introductions to Applied Linguistics

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Exploring Language Assessment and Testing

Routledge Introductions to Applied Linguistics is a series of introductory level textbooks covering the core topics in Applied Linguistics, primarily designed for those beginning postgraduate studies, or taking an introductory MA course as well as advanced undergraduates. Titles in the series are also ideal for language professionals returning to academic study.

The books take an innovative 'practice to theory' approach, with a 'back-to-front' structure. This leads the reader from real-world problems and issues, through a discussion of intervention and how to engage with these concerns, before finally relating these practical issues to theoretical foundations. Additional features include tasks with commentaries, a glossary of key terms, and an annotated further reading section.

Exploring Language Assessment and Testing is a straightforward introduction to the field that provides an inclusive and impartial survey of both classroom-based assessment by teachers and larger-scale testing, using concrete examples to guide students into the relevant literature.

Ranging from theory to classroom-based scenarios, the author provides practical guidance on designing, developing and using assessments, with flexible step-by-step processes for improving the quality of tests and assessment systems to make them fairer and more accurate.

This book is an indispensable introduction to the areas of language assessment and testing, and will be of interest to language teachers as well as postgraduate and advanced undergraduate students studying Language Education, Applied Linguistics and Language Assessment.

Anthony Green is Reader in Language Assessment at the University of Bedfordshire, UK. His other publications include *IELTS Washback in Context* (2007) and *Language Functions Revisited* (2012). He has taught courses in Language Assessment around the world and has extensive practical experience of testing and assessment – including working as a test researcher, developer, item writer and as a language teacher.

Routledge Introductions to Applied Linguistics

Series editors:

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University of Nottingham, UK*

Guy Cook, *Chair of Language in Education,
King's College London, UK*

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The Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe for the scale for 'Qualitative aspects of spoken language use' from the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (2001).

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Series editors' introduction

The Introductions to Applied Linguistics series

This series provides clear, authoritative, up-to-date overviews of the major areas of applied linguistics. The books are designed particularly for students embarking on Masters level or teacher-education courses, as well as students in the closing stages of undergraduate study. The practical focus will make the books particularly useful and relevant to those returning to academic study after a period of professional practice, and also to those about to leave the academic world for the challenges of language-related work. For students who have not previously studied applied linguistics, including those who are unfamiliar with current academic study in English-speaking universities, the books can act as one-step introductions. For those with more academic experience, they can also provide a way of surveying, updating and organising existing knowledge.

The view of applied linguistics in this series follows a famous definition of the field by Christopher Brumfit (1995: 27) as:

The theoretical and empirical investigation of real-world problems in which language is a central issue.

In keeping with this broad problem-oriented view, the series will cover a range of topics of relevance to a variety of language-related professions. While language teaching and learning rightly remain prominent and will be the central preoccupation of many readers, our conception of the discipline is by no means limited to these areas. Our view is that while each reader of the series will have their own needs, specialities and interests, there is also much to be gained from a broader view of the discipline as a whole. We believe there is much in common between all enquiries into language-related problems in the real world, and much to be gained from a comparison of the insights from one area of applied linguistics with another. Our hope therefore is that readers and course designers will not choose only those volumes relating to their own particular interests, but use this series to construct a wider knowledge and understanding of the field, and the many

crossovers and resonances between its various areas. Thus, the topics to be covered are wide in range, embracing an exciting mixture of established and new areas of applied linguistic enquiry.

The perspective on applied linguistics in this series

In line with this problem-oriented definition of the field, and to address the concerns of readers who are interested in how academic study can inform their own professional practice, each book follows a structure in marked contrast to the usual movement *from* theory *to* practice. In this series, this usual progression is presented back to front. The argument moves *from* Problems, *through* Intervention, and *only* finally to Theory. Thus each topic begins with a survey of everyday professional problems in the area under consideration, ones which the reader is likely to have encountered. From there it proceeds to a discussion of intervention and engagement with these problems. Only in a final section (either of the chapter or the book as a whole) does the author reflect upon the implications of this engagement for a general understanding of language, drawing out the theoretical implications. We believe this to be a truly *applied* linguistics perspective, in line with the definition given above, and one in which engagement with real-world problems is the distinctive feature, and in which professional practice can both inform and draw upon academic understanding.

Support to the reader

Although it is not the intention that the text should be in any way activity driven, the pedagogic process is supported by measured guidance to the reader in the form of suggested activities and tasks that raise questions, prompt reflection and seek to integrate theory and practice. Each book also contains a helpful glossary of key terms.

The series complements and reflects the *Routledge Handbook of Applied Linguistics*, edited by James Simpson, which conceives and categorises the scope of applied linguistics in a broadly similar way.

Ronald Carter
Guy Cook

Reference

- Brumfit, C. J. (1995) 'Teacher professionalism and research', in G. Cook and B. Seidlhofer (eds) *Principle and Practice in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 27–42.

Note

There is a section of commentaries on a number of the tasks at the back of the book. The **TC** symbol in the margin indicates that there is a commentary on that task.

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