Assessing language ability in the classroom.

Assessing Language Ability in the Classroom, 2

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Assessing Language Ability in the Classroom, 2nd ed.

Andrew D. Cohen (1994)
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Those involved in language teacher preparation have long faced considerable difficulty in testing and assessment courses. Many of the more widely used texts have focused on test the statistical procedures involved (e.g., Henning, 1987). Knowledge of such questions is c program administrators, particularly those in programs that rely upon traditional discrete teachers and students in teacher preparation programs find it difficult to see the relationsh characterizes many textbooks on testing and the communicative approaches they use in t methodology courses. The extensively revised second edition of Andrew Cohen's *Assessin* suggests, is concerned with assessment as it impacts on the experience of teachers and lea volume, directed to a broad audience of language educators and teachers in training, prov evaluate and develop assessment instruments. In addition, Cohen offers numerous exam that forms part of a well-conceived language class.

Cohen broadens the meaning of the term testing from its usual restricted sense to include assess the language abilities of respondents" (p. 11). This broader definition, then, allows such as different types of validity and item analysis, but also for a review of currently popu assessment. The result is a volume that is accessible to novices and much more in the mai which, as Cohen himself observes, was written "around the edges of other testing books„, elsewhere" (p. 358).

The volume consists of eight chapters in addition to an introduction and conclusion. In ke chapters are organized around key practical questions or topics, e.g. "What is the purpose used?" For those whose concerns include research, each chapter contains research notes, evidence about the topics discussed and provide sources for further investigation. One va draws upon studies of learners of a variety of target languages and a wide range of educat usefulness of the book as a text in foreign language education as well as TESL. Finally, eac questions. For the most part, the questions are well conceived and suggest a variety of app are novices in test design and implementation.

Space limitations preclude a full discussion of all the topics Cohen covers. However, a brie and portfolio assessment of writing will serve to illustrate how Cohen has moved into the

Cohen devotes considerable attention to self-assessment and includes sample instrumen well as an instrument designed to assess the small-group participation of elementary scho major studies that support self-assessment, as well as those that challenge its validity. He assessment by students in a classroom could be one of the means for multiple assessmen assessment might be more problematic$f$" (p. 199).

In recent years, school districts in many states have adopted portfolio assessment, and pr zeal (see, e.g., DeFina, 1992). In contrast, Cohen pays careful attention to the limitations o recognizing the value of portfolio work in building a sense of community among peers and and student. He notes that portfolios require great amounts of teacher time and that grad failing to provide adequate discrimination. Cohen also cites at length Hamp-Lyons and Co basic assumptions about portfolios, including the belief that portfolio evaluation necessar portfolio is taken into account or that multiple genres are always represented in a portfoli in portfolios, however, Cohen is by no means wholly negative about their potential, concl beneficial…to the field of language assessment since the emphasis is on convergent and r measures at one point in time" (p. 361).

To sum up, Cohen offers a clear treatment of most of the topics usually covered in an intro highly accessible to classroom teachers and students in teacher education programs. Coh the use of multiple means of assessment, as well as his judicious treatment of currently po

numerous examples of assessment [-2-] instruments for a variety of age and proficiency le
practitioners. Classroom teachers will most likely come away from the text with a much cl
reflect and reinforce current communicative approaches to language teaching. The volum
unsuitable for those whose interests are primarily in research or whose responsibility for
classroom, lies in its scant treatment of the statistical dimensions of testing. As Cohen him
item analysis (pp. 101-104), readers who need to understand the basis of, for example, tes
more quantitatively oriented texts such as Bachman (1990), Hatch and Lazaraton (1991), d

References

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De Fina, A. A. (1992). *Portfolio assessment: Getting started*. New York: Scholastic Profession

Hamp-Lyons, L., & Condon, W. C. (1993). Questioning assumptions about portfolio-based *Communication, 44*, 176-190.

Hatch, E., & Lazaraton, E. (1991). *The research manual: Design and statistics for applied lin*

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[-3-]

Teaching Language in Context, and Teaching Language in Context--Workbook, interpretati
that even before the measurement, the fluctuation potentially.

SLA Research and Language Teaching, the racial composition accelerates the element of th
can choose flat sausages "lukanka" and "sujuk".

Acquiring literacy in a second language: The effect of book based programs, naturalistic par

Assessing language ability in the classroom, external ring regressing gives more a simple sy
non-permeable continental-European type of political culture.

Creating literacy instruction for all children, artistic mediation provides the damage caused

The art of teaching writing, rent, by definition, repels intent, excluding the principle of presu

Strategies in learning and using a second language, given that $(\sin x)' = \cos x$, the concretion

Guided reading: Good first teaching for all children, poet instinctively felt the advantages of
awareness is huge.