

# JLTA Newsletter

外国語教育評価学会

The Japan Language Testing Association

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発行所：外国語教育評価学会 (JLTA) 事務局  
〒389-0813 長野県埴科郡戸倉町芝原 758 TEL 026-275-1964 FAX 026-275-1970  
e-mail: youichi@avis.ne.jp URL: <http://www.avis.ne.jp/~youichi/JLTA.html>



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## LTRC 2000

Randy Thrasher (*International Christian University*)

LTRC 2000 was held in Vancouver from March 8 to 11. There were two workshops held before the conference itself. On Monday March 6, Dr. George Marcoulides presented a workshop titled 'Advances and New Developments in G-Theory: Applications of Structural Equation Modeling'. After hearing Marcoulides present the theory and the rationale behind it, the participants were given a hands-on introduction to LISTREL so that we could see how data are imputed and what the output looks like. The Tuesday workshop, 'Applications of Multidimensional Item Response Theory', was led by Dr. Terry Ackerman. Ackerman's graphic presentation approach made the topic understandable to even those without a strong statistical background. I found both workshops useful but gained the most from Ackerman's presentation.

The conference opened with a reception Tuesday evening. The following morning Merrill Swain delivered the keynote address, 'Examining Dialogue: Another Approach to Validating Inferences Drawn from Test Scores'. During the colloquium there were three symposia. In the first, we heard again about the Chinese National College English Test. The second symposium was entitled 'Putting Tasks to the Test' and used the presentation/respondents format effectively. The response by Peter Skehan was particularly useful. I felt the presentations in the third symposium were only loosely connected to the title, 'Context and Method in Washback Studies'. The question and answer period that followed focused on the contention that tests are distorting curriculum. I didn't feel that any new light was shed on this old issue.

The papers were generally of a high quality and, for me at least, contained a lot of useful information. I was particularly impressed by the quality of the student papers. The poster and works in progress sessions also gave me a lot to think about.

LTRC 2000 included two new sessions. On Thursday evening the graduate programs in language testing at six universities were introduced by allowing one professor and one of his advisees to speak. The final session of this year's LTRC was a joint session with AAAL focusing on the theme of LTRC 2000, 'Interdisciplinary Interfaces with Language Testing'.

My overall impression is that interest in computer adaptive or computer delivered tests is growing. There is also a greater interest in the practical difficulties of developing valid tests in the real world. What I most missed in this LTRC was the opportunity for informal discussion with colleagues from other parts of the world over meals. The hotel was being renovated and the 140 participants had to look elsewhere for suitable places to eat. This usually meant that Melbourne people ate with others from Melbourne, UCLA ate with UCLA, and I must admit, the small group from Japan often had lunch together.

This was particularly sad because LTRC 2000 may well be my last LTRC before retirement. LTRC 2001 will be held in St. Louis in the middle of February and in 2002 it will be in Hong Kong in mid-December. Both times will make attendance by academics in Japan very difficult.

## 外国語教育評価学会 (JLTA) 言語テストワークショップについて

本学会では Educational Testing Service (ETS) のご協力により下記のとおり「言語テストワークショップ」を開催いたします。

本ワークショップは5月20日より6月10日の毎週土曜日に全国の主要都市で開催し、内容はセッション I (外国語教育評価学会発表者による古典的テスト理論と項目応答理論のわかりやすい説明) 及びセッション II (Educational Testing Service の発表者による項目応答理論の応用とコンピュータ版 TOEFL の説明) の二つに分かれています。

受講料は無料で、受講者の資格は特にありません。語学教育者の方はもとより、広く言語テストに興味をお持ちの方はどなたでも参加できます。会員の皆様、どうぞ奮ってご参加ください。また、ご同僚、学生諸君等、関心のありそうな方々にご案内いただければ幸いです。

詳細につきましては、外国語教育評価学会のホームページをご覧ください。または学会事務局にお問い合わせくださいますようお願いいたします。ホームページでは、英語による情報もご覧になれます。

English version of the flyer for the JLTA Language Testing Workshop is available at the JLTA web site (URL: <http://www.avis.ne.jp/~youichi/JLTA.html>).

### 5月20日(土) -東京- テンプル大学

東京都港区南麻布 2-8-12 麻布ビル、JR 田町駅徒歩 15 分 (三ノ橋交差点)  
セッション I (14:00-16:00) JLTA 発表者: Randy Thrasher (国際基督教大学)  
中村優治 (東京経済大学)  
司 会: 根岸雅史 (東京外国語大学)

休 憩 (16:00-16:30)

セッション II (16:30-19:00) ETS 発表者: Philip Everson (Assessment Division)  
Gena Netten (TOEFL プログラム)

### 5月20日(土) -福岡- 九州ビルホール

福岡県福岡市博多区博多駅南 1-8-31 九州ビル、JR 博多駅新幹線口下車徒歩 5 分  
セッション I (14:00-16:00) JLTA 発表者: 大友賢二 (常磐大学)  
中村洋一 (常磐大学)  
司 会: 木下正義 (福岡国際大学)

休 憩 (16:00-16:30)

セッション II (16:30-19:00) ETS 発表者: Annabelle Simpson (Assessment Division)  
Teresa Axe (TOEFL プログラム)

### 5月27日(土) -広島- 広島修道大学

広島県広島市安佐南区大塚東 1-1-1、アストラムライン広域公園前下車  
セッション I (14:00-16:00) JLTA 発表者: Randy Thrasher (国際基督教大学)  
中村優治 (東京経済大学)  
司 会: 峯石 緑 (広島国際大学)

休 憩 (16:00-16:30)

セッション II (16:30-19:00) ETS 発表者: Annabelle Simpson (Assessment Division)  
Teresa Axe (TOEFL プログラム)

5月27日(土) -仙台- 東北大学 青葉記念会館

宮城県仙台市青葉区荒巻字青葉、仙台駅前よりバス東北大工学部前下車

セッション I (14:00-16:00) JLTA 発表者: 大友賢二 (常磐大学)  
中村洋一 (常磐大学)

司 会: 佐久間康之 (福島大学)

休 憩 (16:00-16:30)

セッション II (16:30-19:00) ETS 発表者: Philip Everson (Assessment Division)  
Gena Netten (TOEFL プログラム)

6月3日(土) -大阪- 関西外国語大学

大阪府枚方市北片鉾町 16-1、京阪枚方市駅バス 15 分

セッション I (14:00-16:00) JLTA 発表者: Randy Thrasher (国際基督教大学)  
中村優治 (東京経済大学)

司 会: 智原哲郎 (大阪女学院短期大学)

休 憩 (16:00-16:30)

セッション II (16:30-19:00) ETS 発表者: Robert French (Assessment Division)  
Emily Eischen (TOEFL プログラム)

6月3日(土) -札幌- 北海学園大学

札幌市豊平区旭町 4-1-40、地下鉄東豊線学園前駅下車

セッション I (14:00-16:00) JLTA 発表者: 大友賢二 (常磐大学)  
中村洋一 (常磐大学)

司 会: 塩川春彦 (北海学園大学)

休 憩 (16:00-16:30)

セッション II (16:30-19:00) ETS 発表者: John Miles (Assessment Division)  
Terrie Mansmann (TOEFL プログラム)

6月10日(土) -神奈川- 慶應義塾大学 湘南藤沢キャンパス

神奈川県藤沢市遠藤 5322、小田急湘南台駅下車バス 15 分

セッション I (14:00-16:00) JLTA 発表者: 大友賢二 (常磐大学)  
中村洋一 (常磐大学)

司 会: 清川英男 (和洋女子大学)

休 憩 (16:00-16:30)

セッション II (16:30-19:00) ETS 発表者: Karin Steinhaus (Assessment Division)  
Terrie Mansmann (TOEFL プログラム)

6月10日(土) -名古屋- 中京大学

愛知県名古屋市昭和区八事 101-2、地下鉄鶴舞線下車徒歩 5 分

セッション I (14:00-16:00) JLTA 発表者: Randy Thrasher (国際基督教大学)  
中村優治 (東京経済大学)

司 会: 伊藤彰浩 (愛知学院大学)

休 憩 (16:00-16:30)

セッション II (16:30-19:00) ETS 発表者: Pamela Mollaun (Assessment Division)  
Emily Eischine (TOEFL プログラム)



## Book Review

Randy Thrasher (*International Christian University*)

Chalhoub-Deville, Micheline. (ed.) 1999. *Issues in Computer-Adaptive Testing of Reading Proficiency: Selected Papers*. Cambridge University Press.

This is a collection of 12 papers which is number 10 in the series edited by Michael Milanovic, *Studies in Language Testing*. The first two papers, one by Elizabeth Bernhardt, 'If Reading is Reader-Based, Can There be a Computer Adaptive Test of Reading' and another by William Grabe, 'Developments in Reading Research and Their Implications for Computer-Adaptive Reading Assessment' are critically reviewed by Charles Alderson in the third article, 'Reading Constructs and Reading Assessment'. The second section of the book opens with a general article on practical consideration, Jerry Larson's 'Considerations for Testing Reading Proficiency Via Computer-Adaptive Testing', and continues with two application papers. In the first, Patricia Dunkel describes the development of a computer adaptive test of listening comprehension for the African language Hausa. In the second, Michael Laurier discusses the development of a computer adaptive French placement test. The next paper is one by Tim McNamara which attempts to give an overview of computer-adaptive testing generally. Carol Chapelle's paper, 'From Reading Theory to Testing Practice', is intended as a bridge between theory and testing of reading. The next three articles, by Dan Eignor, John Linacre, and Richard Luecht all deal with different aspects of Item Response Theory, the group of mathematical models which makes computer adaptive testing possible.

As should be obvious from my description of the papers, the purpose of this collection is not very clear. One would assume from the title of the volume that the papers would all deal with some aspect of computer adaptive testing of reading but this is not

the case. Dunkel's paper deals with listening comprehension. And the focus of the last two articles is primarily on comparing IRT models. This is not to say that the book is not worth reading. Many will find Grabe's survey of the literature in reading comprehension very useful and Alderson's comments on Bernhardt's and Grabe's papers are particularly insightful. Anyone thinking of developing a computer adaptive test would profit from reading Laurier's account of his experience in developing a computer adaptive French placement test. And Eignor's article is useful reading for those with more ambitious plans for computer adaptive tests and need to know more about selection algorithms. Those interested in the debate between Rasch IRT analysis and 2 or 3 parameter IRT models may find the articles by Linacre, Luecht, and Zumbo and MacMillan enlightening.

However, it is discouraging that the volume did not make clear the issues that should be considered in the computer-adaptive testing of reading. What I believe is the most crucial question is what can we base our measurement of reading on. After reading the whole book we are still left wondering to what extent we can base our measurement of reading on the theory that Grabe surveys. Or is Alderson right in claiming that language testers are left to find what works and use that because we don't yet have a theory of reading that is well enough defined that we can base our measurement on?

The issue of which IRT model is best is not resolved in this volume and probably will never be. As Terry Ackerman said in the Multidimensional IRT Workshop before LTRC 2000, selection of IRT

models is more a matter of faith than reason. But it would have been fairer, I believe, to have at least one paper by a 2 or 3 parameter model advocate to balance those of the Rasch model defenders Linacre and Luecht.

It is embarrassingly obvious that the volume could have been better edited and proofread. There is no excuse for listing Charles Alderson as Charles Anderson in the table of contents or in dropping the content of one figure from Carol Chapelle's article. In fact, one gets the impression that the editor/proofreader dozed off and failed to read pages 150 and 151.

But the most disappointing thing is that the sort of

book that this volume purports to be is very much needed. It would be good if those faced with the task of developing a computer based test or converting an existing pencil and paper test to a computer adaptive one could go to one source to find a clear presentation of the theoretical and practical issues they will be facing. Consulting the Grabe and Alderson papers in this volume may give some help in defining the construct of reading but Alderson's new book, *Assessing Reading* may be the better place to start. Laurier's paper provides a lot of practical information and tips that will be of general interest but the experience of Dunkel developing a test for an infrequently taught African language seems of limited interest.



## 学 会 短 信

### 1. 会費の納入について

2000年度の会費の納入を6月1日までにお願いいたします。郵便振込みをご利用の方は、今回 Newsletter No. 6 に同封した用紙にて払い込み下さい。また、銀行口座からの引き落としをご利用の方は6月1日に引き落としの予定ですので、ご確認下さい。

### 2. 住所・所属・銀行等の訂正・変更について

名簿の訂正、あるいは住所・所属などの変更が必要となった会員は、正しい、あるいは新しい住所・所属を、事務局までご連絡下さい。

また、銀行振込で会費を納入している会員の中で、合併・吸収等により、銀行名あるいは口座番号等の変更がある場合には、至急、事務局までご連絡下さい。

### 3. homepage の更新について

JLTA の homepage を更新いたしました。今後随時、情報を提示していきたいと考えております。掲載希望の情報、あるいは、homepage の内容についてのご意見等、お寄せ下さい。

### 4. その他

JLTA の活動に対するご意見やご要望、Newsletter 等への掲載希望記事などがありましたら、事務局までお申し付け下さい。

より充実した活動ができるよう、皆様のご協力をよろしくお願いいたします。

