

June 23, 2025

To: Dr. Yoshinori WATANABE, President, the Japan Language Testing Association

From: Dr. Kazuhiko KATAGIRI, Chair, the Best Book Award Selection Committee

2025 JLTA Best Book Award Selection Report

Based on the process outlined below and the rigorous review and deliberation by the Best Book Award Selection Committee, we hereby recommend the following book as a candidate for the 2025 JLTA Best Book Award.

Recommended Book for the Award:

Title: *Tesuto wa nani no tame ni aru no ka—kōmoku han'nō riron kara nyūshi seido o Kangaeru* [What Are Tests For?—Rethinking Entrance Exams Through Item Response Theory (English title here is translated by the chair.)]

Authors: Haruhiko MITSUNAGA (Editor and Author), Akiko NISHIDA (Author)

Publisher: Nakanishiya Publishing

Publication Date: September 30, 2022

Award Recipient:

Dr. Haruhiko MITSUNAGA (Nagoya University) – Editor and Author

Reasons for Recommendation:

This book is structured in three parts:

- Part 1: The Ideal Form of Common Entrance Exams
- Part 2: Realizing Standardized Testing
- Part 3: Applying IRT-Based Standardized Tests in Entrance Exams

It explores new approaches to university entrance examinations from the perspectives of educational sociology and educational measurement. This book offers a broad sociological analysis of university entrance exams, including foreign language (English) testing, and

explains the foundations of educational measurement, focusing on Item Response Theory (IRT), while minimizing the use of mathematical formulas to accommodate a wide readership.

Akiko Nishida authored Chapters 1–3, covering topics such as meritocracy and Japanese entrance exams, the nature of common tests, and the relationship between society and testing. Haruhiko MITSUNAGA authored the remaining chapters (e.g., Chapters 5–7, 11–13), discussing the feasibility and social significance of implementing multiple sessions of common entrance exams.

The book presents a compelling case for designing entrance exam systems that contribute to improving public education and emphasizes the importance of ongoing research in this area. It offers clear directions for improving test usage.

Given these strengths, the committee finds the book aligns with the purpose of the JLTA Best Book Award and recommends it as a deserving recipient.

Note:

Chapter 16, Why Did the Introduction of Four-Skill English Exams Fail?, includes suggestions for improvement. While the committee acknowledges the need for multiple detailed proposals from experts, it neither endorses nor rejects the book's specific proposals.

Selection Process:

- March 31, 2025: One recommendation was received from a member who met the eligibility criteria (membership of 3+ years).
- April 6, 2025: The JLTA Secretariat was requested the purchase of the recommended book.
- April 8, 2025: The book was delivered to committee members, and review began.
- June 21, 2025: A remote selection meeting was held, and the committee unanimously decided to recommend the book to the Board.