

Criterion-referenced Language Testing

Review by Hyeong-Jong Lee

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CRITERION-REFERENCED LANGUAGE TESTING. James Dean Brown and Thom Hudson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2002), xvi + 320 pp. \$29.95 (pbk), ISBN 0521000831.

Criterion-referenced Language Testing, authored by James Dean and Thom Hudson, focuses on how criterion-referenced testing (CRT) can provide realistic and useful test development tools to assist language teachers and language curriculum developers. This book addresses the wide variety of CRT and decision-making needs that language-teaching professionals must consider in actual testing situations. Each of the seven chapters of this volume contains a discussion of the theoretical and practical parameters involved in language testing situations.

The underlying logic of CRT is based on assessing how much of the content in a course or program is being learned by the students. Such assessment depends on comparing performance to well-defined criteria rather than assessing students' performance in relationship to the performance of other students in a norm group. The authors of *Criterion-reference Language Testing* take a focused approach to the issues involved in developing, implementing, and improving language tests with relation to the criterion-referenced approach. In so doing, they explore what kinds of alternate paradigms are possible in language testing situations, what curriculum-related language testing is, how CRT items should be constructed, how basic descriptive and item statistics for CRT can be conducted and interpreted, how reliability, dependability, and unidimensionality in CRT should be addressed, how the validity of CRT can be viewed, how CRT can be administered, how criterion-referenced feedback should be given, and how the results of CRT can be reported.

Providing a readable introduction to the issues surrounding CRT, this book guides readers in constructing systematic curriculum-related testing using the criterion-referenced approach to analyze language testing data. Symbols and equations in *Criterion-referenced Language Testing* are both graphically and verbally explained, and detailed examples and illustrations are presented throughout the volume. With its clear examples, *Criterion-referenced Language Testing* not only provides an applied introduction to any language testing course, but is also a valuable

reference for graduate students and language testing professionals who are preparing to develop new perspectives, maintain language programs, or conduct research in the field of language testing.

About the Reviewer

Hyeong-Jong Lee is a Ph.D student with the specialization of Second Language Acquisition and Teacher Education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Background and research interests include quantitative research methodology in studies of second-language acquisition, language testing, and the teaching of English to the speakers of other languages.