> Among the most common errors that these [deaf] individuals make is the recurrent use of patterns that do not correspond with the inflectional morphology (e.g., in verb tense and agreement), the misuse of function words (e.g., articles and prepositions), and various other errors (e.g., incorrect subcategorizations, inappropriate use of coordinating and subordinating conjunctions, and/or anomalies in constitutent structure). (p. 6)

The fact that similar linguistic deviations commonly occur in these three distinctly different types of learners suggests that genetic coding of the human mind may exert a powerful control over this set of learning behaviors. Some would use this evidence to argue that linguistic universals play an intrinsic role in the development of language acquisition in humans.

The "natural order" of learning as outlined by Krashen (1981) and discussed in depth by Chomsky in his Managua Lectures (1988) is very much to the point here. Krashen, of course, holds that acquisition of language is a manifestation of an internalized syllabus "without substantial interruption or contribution from the conscious grammar" (1981, p. 52). Chomsky also supports this view:

> In the case of language there is a special faculty that is a central element of the human mind. It operates quickly, in a deterministic fashion, unconsciously and beyond the limits of awareness and in a manner that is common to the species, yielding a rich and complex system of knowledge, a particular language. (1988, p. 157)

This discussion seems to have taken us very far from language learning and deafness, yet the theoretical implications noted above are as relevant to those with hearing loss as they are for other populations of language learners—including the mentally handicapped (Berry, 1976), ESL students (Collier, 1987; Kellerman & Smith, 1986; Pica, 1984), and children within pidgin or creole cultures (Lehiste, 1988; Romaine, 1988).

The lesson to be learned here is that in spite of limited input and other types of interference, human beings acquire language simply because language acquisition is an intrinsic feature of our genetic programming.

Even though language acquisition is largely a problem-solving activity using heuristic principles, this process is not an easy one for some humans. The "natural order" relies on comprehensible input (cf. Pica et al. 1987) as well as healthy auditory-vocal equipment, and undamaged brain structures. Therefore, as learners' handicaps increase in severity, the less likely it is that their four language skills will meet the linguistic norms set by the general speech community. The internal syllabus cannot process information it never receives and may process inaccurately information that is only partially received or distorted. These, then, are the hurdles which the prelingually deaf must overcome.

In a study reported by Strong (1988), deaf children with hearing parents are compared with deaf children with deaf parents. Children in the latter group regularly enjoyed a much higher rate of linguistic and academic success than those in the former category. Strong hypothesizes that the nurturing of learning through comprehensible input contributed greatly to their overall linguistic maturation.

Reviewed by David Wardell
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TESTING ENGLISH FOR UNIVERSITY STUDY. Arthur Hughes (Ed.). [Hong Kong]: Modern English Publications and the British Council, 1988. 154 pp.

Testing English for University Study is a collection of papers that presents, in the words of the editors, "something of the current thinking and practice of British language testing." As this quotation suggests, it is not aimed at beginners in the testing field. The authors quite freely use the terms and concepts needed by professional test developers. Readers also need some knowledge of statistics. Furthermore, the tests in question are not for classroom use, but are used to determine whether people can study at university. Nevertheless, provided that one has at least a nodding acquaintance with basic testing terminology (e.g., the various kinds of validity and reliability) and the process of basic test construction, one can gain quite a lot from reading this book.

Overview

The focus of the book is the development of two tests intended to help determine whether the test takers have enough English ability to study in an English-language university. One test was developed for universities in England, and the other for English-medium Bogazici University in Turkey. Test development took as its starting point current thinking about the structure of language ability. Consequently, *communicative competence* and *language testing for specific purposes* serve as the main testing constructs.

The book is divided into two parts. Part one deals with theoretical issues. What is communicative language testing (CLT), that is, what kinds of tests are needed to measure communicative ability? How specific does one need to become in testing for specific purposes? How does one go about establishing the validity of a test? The final issue is closely connected with validity: In communicative language teaching/testing, does one really need to make a distinction between testing for achievement and testing for proficiency?

Part two deals with the actual development of the two tests. The three papers show how one applies the theory of testing to a specific situation and how practical considerations force one to make compromises with theory. For example, before administering any

important test, one usually needs to pre-test it to find any faulty design features. However, in the case of Bogazici University in Turkey, test security considerations made pre-testing impossible.

Both parts illustrate very well that the writing of tests is a balancing act. One has to balance validity against reliability, theory against operationalization of theory, scholarly restraint against need for action, and strict test construction methods against practicality.

Part 1

Alan Davies in the first paper, "Communicative Language Testing," tries to pin down the subject matter. To show the diversity of work done under the rubric of communicative language testing, he delineates what he sees as five approaches to CLT: 1) the integrative approach (e.g., FSI Oral Interviews); 2) the authentic approach (e.g., the Royal Society of Arts communicative Test of English as a Foreign Language); 3) the needs analysis approach (e.g., testing English for specific purposes); 4) the return to system (linguistic) approach (e.g., Council of Europe Unit Credit Scheme); and finally 5) the return to system (pragmatic) approach (e.g., dictation or cloze). After further discussion, he concludes,

> [A]ny test that presents the learner with a problem which is not itself a language problem but which requires language to work out a solution is a communicative language test. (p. 14)

Davies concludes that the first four of the above approaches rightly deserve the label of communicative language testing. However, he does not consider dictation and cloze tests to be communicative, in line with his earlier repudiation of Oller's justification for these two tests types (see Davies, 1984). However, as Klein-Braley (1985) points out, the reduced redundancy justification developed by Spolsky in 1973 works just as well as justification for dictation and cloze (as well as the C-tests she and her colleagues are developing). Furthermore, one could justify dictation or cloze if one wishes to test not the product of communciation, but rather the process of communication. Spolsky (1989) makes a similar point.

In the second paper, "Testing English for Specific Puproses: How Specific Can We Get?," J. Charles Alderson takes up an issue that Davies touches on. If one is giving a test to see if someone has the English ability to study at university, then the contents of the test should reflect the subject the person will be studying. A test for engineers should include material relevant to them, such as engineering texts for reading. As Alderson and Davies both point out, the argument could be taken a step further. Should a test for civil engineers have the same texts as one for electronic engineers? At what point does further specification become impractical?

The interesting point is that Alderson reports on studies that his group has conducted to test the hypothesis that "students reading texts in familiar areas would find tests based on such texts . . . easier than tests based on texts in unfamiliar areas" (p. 22). Their results generally support the hypothesis. Consequently, Alderson asserts moderate support for general ESP testing.

Alan Davies in the third paper, "Procedures in Language Test Validation," claims that the primary issue in validation is sampling. Does the test give an adequate representation of the language? Does it have the power of generalizability? Answers to these questions are very important, because of the relation they bear on the issue of reliability. It must be recognized that these two issues, validity and reliability, stand oftentimes in opposition to one another. Some tests that are highly valid (e.g., contextualized essays) are difficult to make reliable. On the other hand, a test claiming communicative competence as the rationale for its validity may need to use discrete point items to increase reliability (see Hart, Lapkin, & Swain, 1987, for an example). Achieving an acceptable balance along these lines is essential when writing a test that meets communicative language testing criteria.

The second task in validating a test is to specify the purpose of the test and thus determine the type of validity one needs to show: content, predictive/concurrent, or construct.

In the last paper in this first part, "Achievement and Proficiency: The Missing Link?," Arthur Hughes discusses the approach to content validity. Achievement tests (testing progress in some course of study) take the course textbook as the basis for content validity while proficiency tests (testing overall ability) take a theoretical construct as the basis for the same thing. However,

Hughes argues that the objectives of a course are what should determine content validity.

Part 2

Part 2 takes all of the theory of test making discussed in Part 1 and actually puts it to work. The first two essays deal with the British example and the third with the Turkish. Cyril Weir in the first paper, "The Specifications, Realizations and Validation of an English Language Proficiency Test," details how his group went about developing a new English proficiency test for those wanting to enter British universities. Gregory James in the second, "Development of an Oral Proficiency Component in a Test in English for Academic Purposes," deals with the oral component of the same test.

The interesting point about these two tests is that the development teams relied not so much on "armchair" needs analysis as on empirical needs analysis. They observed classes and conducted surveys first among faculty and then among foreign students. Therefore, they tried to overcome the deficiency of needs analysis that Alderson points out. He claims that a needs analysis is only partly successful if it merely looks at what abilities are needed. The analysis must also look at what students are actually having difficulty doing.

After collecting empirical evidence to guide test specification, the writers piloted the test (not only on non-native speakers, but also on native speakers) and then did traditional item analysis on the results.

Weir sums up his paper by listing the difficulties that CLT has for test making. A greater need exists for explicitly stating what it is that one is trying to test, particularly with more traditional types of tests. Then, having drawn up specifications, it is difficult to realize these specifications in test form and devise suitable assessment procedures. Lastly, CLT tests are "complex to take, difficult to mark and difficult to report results on" (p. 75).

These papers are especially interesting because Weir and James have included the questions and some of the answers to their surveys. For example, James surveyed university tutors as to what skill areas are important. Combining the rankings of the skill areas

yields the following (p. 121):

Skill Area	Rank
Asking questions	1
Answering questions	2
Giving opinions	3
Explaining	4
Giving counter arguments	5
Giving extempore reports	6
Reading aloud	7

This type of information should prove quite useful to teachers in Japan preparing students to study in England.

In the final paper, "English for Study in an English Medium University in Turkey," Hughes reports on the development of the English test at a Turkish university. On the whole, the process parallels that for the test in England. However, he ran into problems due to the situation. For example, he had intended, as in England, to administer a questionnaire to all first year students. However, the university administration felt it inappropriate to have the questionnaire in Turkish. Even though Hughes prepared questions in as simple English as possible, they were still too difficult, and he finally had to drop the project. Also, as mentioned above, he was unable to pilot the test before its administration.

Conclusion

If one is developing one's own tests, it is very instructive to have the examples of others to follow, especially since test theory must often give way to reality. *Testing English for University Study* does quite a good job of presenting examples and illustrating the give and take that testing theorists go through.

Reviewed by Scott Peterson
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SECOND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT: CURRENT ISSUES. (Language in Education: Theory and Practice, 70.) Pardee Lowe, Jr., and Charles W. Stansfield, (Eds). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Regents, 1988. 201+v pp. Paperback. No index.

1. Introduction

Testing is at the heart of language teaching. The person who controls the tests controls the curriculum, so it is to any teacher's definite advantage to keep current with the latest testing issues. Two quite different recent publications can help meet that need. *Reviews of English Language Proficiency Tests* covers an amazing breadth of paper and oral tests. The other volume, *Second Language Proficiency Assessment*, actually relates wholly to the Interagency Language Roundtable Oral Proficiency Interview and its successors as developed through the Educational Testing Service and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. After a short discussion of each of the books, some comparisons can be made.

2. Reviews of English Language Proficiency Tests

The main purpose of *Reviews of English Language Proficiency Tests* is to make scholars and teachers aware of the options available in standardized testing. In all, 46 standardized English language tests are discussed. The editors have gathered test reviews from a large number of different reviewers and have gone to great lengths to insure that the reviews were independently

validated and that the author or publisher had an opportunity to respond to the review. The aim was to present a collection comparable to *Mental Measurement Yearbook*. The user of this volume can feel confident of getting an accurate introduction to the full range of testing options available.

However, this breadth may not be particularly useful for test givers in Japan. Here the most familiar tests (e.g., TOEFL, TOEIC) hold sway. These tests offer the most well-accepted credentials; and because they have been widely distributed, they have the greatest range and depth of related research. The typical Japanese student will be eager to know his rating on the basis of a "famous" standardized test. Therefore, a number of the tests reviewed will prove of little use for teachers in Japan.

A further note should be added. *Reviews of English Language Proficiency Tests* includes a large number of English as a Second Language tests for use in American public education. The "Bilingual Syntax Measure I and II," for example, are designed primarily to establish language preference among bilingual American public school students. The inclusion of these tests as English Language Proficiency Tests seems questionable.

Another frustration for the would-be test giver is that "secure tests" are clearly of higher quality than non-secure tests, yet only non-secure tests will be available for private administration at most schools. However, in every case the book offers contact addresses from which either tests to administer or test preparatory materials are available. This may be the book's most useful feature for the average teacher.

By coincidence, the discussion of the Oral Proficiency Interview in *Reviews of English Language Proficiency Tests* is written by Pardee Lowe, Jr., the co-editor of the other volume under review. This discussion is essential preliminary reading for any newcomer launching into *Second Language Proficiency Assessment*. As Lowe explains in his article, the training before use of the Oral Proficiency Interview runs from three to five days and is, as a result, expensive. His article includes a useful bibliography of earlier introductions to the test.

3. Second Language Proficienty Assessment: Current Issues

Second Language Proficiency Assessment will prove most popular among readers who are convinced that the ILR Oral Proficiency Interview is the best currently used language test. It is not an introductory volume. The book takes advantage of its narrow focus to give a very comprehensive discussion of some crucial issues in proficiency testing. The chief editor, Pardee Lowe, Jr., comes from the Office of Training and Education of the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States. His co-editor, Charles Stansfield, comes from the Educational Resources Information Center (and is an editor of the first volume reviewed). Both men have clearly had unique access to the discussions surrounding the development of the Oral Proficiency Interview. This volume contains forty-two pages detailing the history of the Oral Proficiency Interview, but it deals primarily with issues for the scholar: (a) a research agenda, (b) developments for less commonly taught languages, (c) reading proficiency, and (d) writing proficiency.

The Oral Proficiency Interview was developed as a occupational qualification test, and some of the occupational categories covered demand a high level of bilingualism. The discussion in the volume makes clear that the top half of the scale sets goals beyond what will generally be learned in second language education. Its use is therefore more appropriate in linguistic and evaluative roles than in teaching. Placement of students in levels in second language education programs might be better accomplished through a test designated without the post-language school level evaluations.

Careful readers of *Second Language Proficiency Assessment* will be amply rewarded, however. Although issues in testing are always discussed in reference to the Oral Proficiency Interview, issues that are current in all language testing are given insightful treatment in the volume.

Some of these issues are

1. Should college language education stress introduction of culturally authentic materials at the introductory level?
2. Should testing emphasize the transfer of real world knowl-

edge to a difficult language problem, or should the role of real world knowledge be minimized?
3. In teaching reading of Chinese and related written languages should authentic novice level tests examine the taker's ability to read ideograms, or are simplified phonetic systems a useful preliminary reading step?
4. At the top end of the scale, should language tests expect the taker's written work to exhibit creative and artistic skills?

Second Language Proficiency Assessment addresses all these issues in a thought-provoking and original manner. The book will prove stimulating for the reader who is interested in these questions.

4. Conclusion

Both books claim to be focused on "proficiency assessment." In their four page introduction to *Reviews of English Language Proficiency Tests*, Alderson, Krahnke, and Stansfield define proficiency tests as measures of "the test taker's overall ability in English along a broad scale" (iv). Since this might seem like the purpose for any type of test, they offer by contrast the categories of placement, achievement, and diagnostic tests, which they consider to be limited tests designed for specialized purposes. To them, the most useful and widespread form of testing is "proficiency testing."

There is a real danger if one carries that definition of "proficiency testing" into Lowe and Stansfield's volume, however. Although the same Charles W. Stansfield co-edits both volumes, when he writes in conjunction with Lowe, he understands "proficiency testing" to refer to a specific movement (the oral Proficiency Interview), developed in a non-academic framework and providing a counterpoint and emphasis for current linguistic research. In their introduction they note:

> The history of today's proficiency testing movement can be traced from its foundations in one government agency (FSI) through its development with cooperating agencies (the ILR) to its expansion into academia through the work of ACTFL and ETS. (pp. 2-3)

It is not necessary in the context of a book review to decide which definition is more valid or more useful. However, this distinction must be understood as part of the divergent emphases of the two volumes. For Alderson, Krahnke, and Stansfield, proficiency testing is a very wide and general field. However, Lowe and Stansfield discuss a much narrower movement.

The second-language testing field is still a very small and new field, as can be observed from the overlap in authors and editors in these two books. The field has an excitement and vigor today, however, that it has not had in the past. It is unfortunate that many scholars have overlooked the testing field as too pragmatic for detailed attention. Piaget's amazing contributions to developmental psychology were based on research begun in the process of testing, and future contributions to the understanding of language are likely to develop from the same source.

Reviewed by Hugh Rutledge
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AN INTRODUCTION TO LANGUAGE, FOURTH EDITION. Victoria Fromkin and Robert Rodman. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1988. 474pp.

One element essential to a language teacher is an understanding of the nature of language itself. This text, *An Introduction to Language*, is designed to provide just such an understanding.

Written originally as an introductory linguistics core text, though not solely intended for linguistics majors, this fourth edition has continued to expand the aim of the authors to encompass both a broader range of topics and address an audience drawn from a greater number of disciplines. Those familiar with earlier editions may welcome new units on Hispanic English, neurolinguistic research, and an entire chapter devoted to human and machine language processing.

Given its nature as a core text, virtually every aspect of the study of language receives moderately thorough treatment, from articulatory and auditory phonetics to brain lateralization, the loss of plasticity, and the critical period hypothesis.

In general, the style of presentation is objective, if conservative. In areas where no single theory dominates, several views are presented and their advantages and drawbacks enumerated. Where one theory seems predominant, it receives deeper coverage. Rather than attempting to give the reader an understanding of the precise state of the art, the authors have endeavored to provide only the most basic information on the theories presented. As the authors state, "the primary concern has been with basic ideas rather than a detailed exposition of formal theory or of the grammar of English or any other language" (p. vi).

Citations refer readers to the main proponents of the theory, but not necessarily to the most recent active researcher. One drawback of this approach is that not all of the sources are up-to-date. For example, in the chapter on language acquisition, only two references bear dates after 1982, and one of them is itself a review of the field. Sections not substantially revised for this edition show a similar paucity of current sources. In defense, however, the items in the chapter bibliographies include those often selected to provide background information for survey courses.

Considerable attention has been given to organization. The early chapters are devoted to the introduction of background information, such as basic terminology, and explanation of basic tools used in linguistic study, such as the international phonetic alphabet—tools relevant to understanding the transcripted examples provided later.

The text itself is divided into four parts, each of which focuses upon a different area of investigation: "The Nature of Human Language," "Grammatical Aspects of Language," "Social Aspects of Language," and "Biological Aspects of Language." Each part contains any number of chapters which address more specific topic headings.

Part one consists of a brief chapter introducing the field of linguistics along with a rather philosophical (Chomskian) consideration of the nature of language itself. A number of key terms are defined, and related subheadings are devoted to the question of linguistic knowledge versus performance, explanation of diverse grammars (descriptive, prescriptive, and teaching), discussion of language universals, and a preliminary consideration of animal languages.

Part two contains chapters devoted to phonetics and phonology (both recently expanded), along with morphology, syntax, and semantics. Concepts related to the description of sounds are dealt with in detail. Through examination of numerous transcribed speech samples drawn from a number of languages, the authors then discuss the essentials of phonology and morphology. Emphasis is given to generative grammars and acoustic phonology.

Part three details social aspects of language, containing chapters on language in society, language change, and writing. Topics such as dialects, creoles, slang, jargon, and artificial languages are also discussed. The authors finish with an overview of various writing systems and theories of how languages change. Here examples are drawn from a variety of languages, but considerable attention is given to varieties of English, with British and American regional dialects, Black English, and Hispanic English receiving detailed discussion.

Part four discusses the brain, brain lateralization, and the origin of language, and addresses issues related to language acquisition and the problems of machine language. Those familiar

with earlier editions may appreciate the inclusion of material on recent advances in neurolinguistics (lateralization, aphasia, and the critical period hypothesis), theories on the origin of human language, and a report on the advances in computer language processing and artificial intelligence. This brings the reader full-circle, in a sense, to the introductory discussion of the nature of language given in Chapter One.

The accompanying exercises at the end of each chapter are both well-balanced and engaging, though, without an answer key, not overly useful for self-study.

Although the materials may appear to be extremely dense, the text remains easily accessible to the uninitiated: explanations are thorough, yet concise; examples are vivid; and the judicious use of illustrations from such sources as B.C. and the Far Side provides a welcome breath of humor in a field which too often tends toward the overly dry or tediously pedantic. Nor is the text excessively Anglo-centric. Examples throughout are drawn from diverse languages, from Albanian to Zulu. It is difficult to find fault with the text. My only ground for criticism is the lack of up-to-date sources for certain chapters. For an experienced teacher, this text should serve well as a refresher course, giving a relatively current, though conservative, overview of every aspect of language.

Moreover, a reader would be hard pressed to find a better overall text. Upon completion of the text, the reader should have not only a good grasp of our present understanding of the field, but also the tools necessary to delve further into any of the topics reviewed.

A word of caution to readers not familiar with the formal study of language or language acquisition: pay attention to the sections dealing with the phonetic alphabet in order to assure easy understanding of the later transcribed examples.

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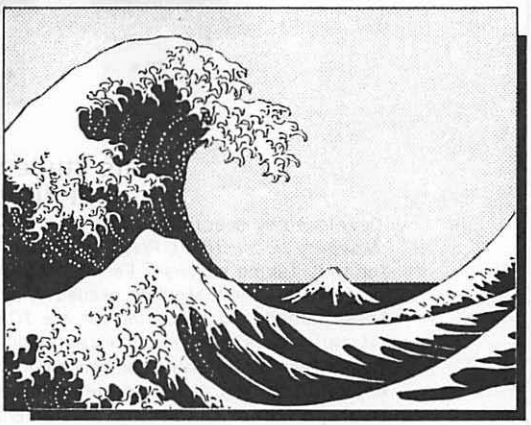

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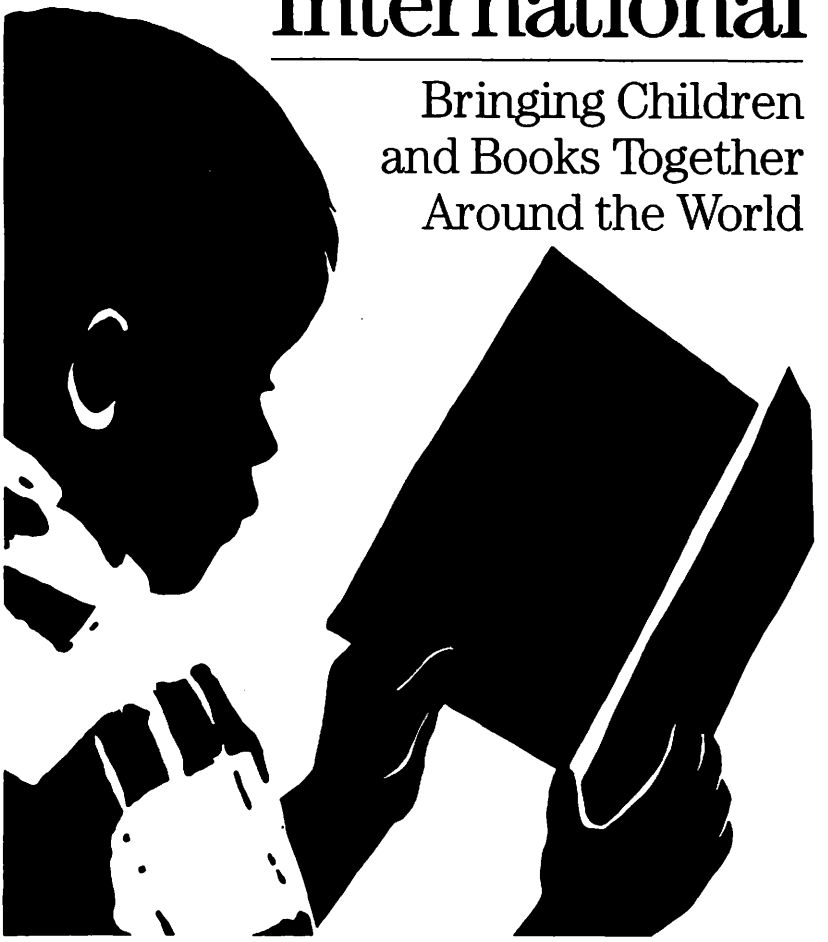

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The editors encourage submission of full-length articles, short articles and reports, reviews, and comments on earlier *JALT Journal* writings (for the "Point to Point" section). Articles should be written with a general audience of language educators in mind. Statistical techniques and unfamiliar terms should be explained or defined.

GUIDELINES

Style

JALT Journal uses the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (available from the Order Department, A.P.A., 1200 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C.). Consult recent copies of *JALT Journal* or *TESOL Quarterly* for examples of documentation and reference lists. **This is a strict requirement.** Also, remember to give precise page numbers of cited work in both the text and reference list.

Format

No longer than 20 pages, including reference list, typed on A4 or 8 1/2" X 11" paper, and double-spaced. Writers must supply camera-ready diagrams or figures (if any) before final publication.

Materials to be Submitted

- Two paper copies of the manuscript, plus one Mac, IBM PC, or NEC 9801 computer disk version (to be returned), or
- Three copies of the manuscript
- Abstract (less than 200 words)

- Japanese translation of title and abstract if possible
- Running head title (1 to 4 words)
- Biographical sketch(es) (no more than 50 words)

Evaluation Procedure

Manuscripts are subject to blind review by two readers. The author's name and references that identify the author should appear only on the cover sheet. Evaluation is usually completed within two months.

Restrictions

Papers sent to *JALT Journal* should not have been previously published, nor should they be under consideration for publication elsewhere. We regret that paper manuscripts cannot be returned.

Address for Manuscripts and Inquiries

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Reviews and Address for Reviews

We invite submissions of reviews of all books, tests, teaching systems, and other substantial publications in the field of language education. A list of publications which have been sent to JALT for review is published monthly in *The Language Teacher*. Contact the reviews editor for guidelines and send all review materials to her at the following address:

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