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REVIEW

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT FOR STUDENT LEARNING:
DOING IT RIGHT – USING IT WELL

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***Classroom Assessment for Student Learning: Doing It Right – Using It Well* (2nd Edition). Boston: Pearson Education.**

Over the years, the first edition of *Classroom Assessment for Student Learning*, which went to press in 2004, has served as a valuable resource and guide for teachers interested in using classroom assessment as a means to increase their students' motivation in learning. Like its first edition, the second edition of this book places emphasis on two central concepts: how to create accurate classroom assessments and how to effectively integrate assessment with day-to-day classroom teaching. It continues to build on the success of the first edition by offering not only theoretical but also practical applications of classroom assessment for teachers, with more updated, real-world examples of classroom assessment practices. These examples are taken primarily from a number of teachers who graciously shared their –stories of implementing classroom assessment practices as suggested by the first edition of this book.

The book consists of fourteen chapters, with the first chapter introducing the coming ones. Serving as an overview of the whole book, the first chapter succinctly identifies five key concepts of quality classroom assessment, each of which is insightfully elaborated on regarding both theoretical and practical issues in the following chapters. The first key concept is described in detail in Chapter 2 which critically discusses the key users of classroom assessment information as well as the differences between formative assessment (assessment *for* learning) and summative assessment (assessment *of* learning). Chapter 3, dealing with the second key concept, raises classroom teachers' awareness of having a clear sense of the learning to be assessed or the achievement expectations that the teachers hold for their students. From Chapters 4 through 8, different assessment methods are described and potential challenges in designing and delivering each assessment method are extensively discussed. Chapters 9 through 12 focus on the fourth key to quality classroom assessment; that is, the importance of communicating the results of the assessment to the intended users in a timely and understandable way. The final key concept deals with different pedagogical techniques employed to promote student involvement in the assessment process. These useful techniques are carefully woven throughout the 12 chapters. Of particular interest are practical techniques for involving students in self-assessment and goal setting, as recommended in Chapters 5 through 8. Since subsequent chapters elaborate on practical issues presented in earlier chapters, readers should follow the order of the chapters from Chapter 1.

Looking at the component of each chapter, we cannot agree more with the authors that this new edition of the book is -designed to help the book function as a teacher.¶ Each chapter starts with its learning objectives, informing readers of what they will learn and are expected to achieve after completing the chapter. The chapter also provides ample activities designed to deepen readers' understanding of the chapter, ranging from encouraging teachers to write a personal reflective journal and guiding implementation of the practices

presented in the chapter to posting challenging but practical discussion topics to encourage readers to share their ideas with colleagues. With the companion CD, readers are given chapter-by-chapter forms and guidance necessary for completing the activities.

Another interesting and practical aspect of the book is that it has been created to accommodate three different learning contexts. That is, readers may use the book as an individual, with a partner, or as part of a team. The strength of this book is that it encourages teachers to work collaboratively with their colleagues as a team, an aspect less emphasised in other books in the field of language testing and assessment. The companion CD includes all useful suggestions on how to set up a learning team, to plan and pace the work, and to facilitate team meetings. By approaching the study of classroom assessment as a team, teachers will have an opportunity to share their ideas as well as any challenges that they may encounter while implementing assessment practices. This kind of social engagement helps in establishing -a community of practice,^{ll} which caters to the appropriate context for effective learning to take place (Wenger, 1998; Barton & Tusting, 2005).

Overall, the book equips readers with both theory and practicality in classroom assessment. It addresses not only interrelated theoretical issues in assessments and teaching, but also a wide range of practical strategies to handle assessments and teaching in different situations. The book can be useful for both pre-service and in-service teachers, and students. For pre-service teachers, it is akin to a torch which lights the way in their educational path as it provides them with pedagogically insightful information. Regarding in-service teachers, they should keep up with changing teaching situations, and with this book, they can update, re-learn, re-invent, and re-evaluate their classroom practices in order to improve their teaching. The students are primary stakeholders who will receive direct benefits when teachers know what and how they should teach their students in their classes, and how they should assess them. We also agree that students should be involved in

tracking, reflecting on, and sharing their own learning progress, as suggested in this book. Through these processes along with —the feedback conference,|| informing the students of their strengths and weaknesses, teachers can encourage their students to become more autonomous in their learning.

It is important to note that this book provides a foundation of classroom assessment for all subject teachers teaching in Anglophone contexts. Although it is not directly geared towards teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL or EFL), we believe that the five keys to quality classroom assessment, as postulated by the authors, can also be applied by teachers responsible for teaching ESL or EFL. We feel that *Classroom Assessment for Student Learning*, when used along with other books on language testing and assessment written particularly for ESL and EFL teachers, will provide ESL and EFL teachers with more comprehensive views of, and practical strategies in, implementing effective classroom assessment to meet the expectations of their respective contexts.

The Reviewers

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