



## Looking Back and Looking Ahead: *LAQ* 10 Years on

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## EDITORIAL

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### Looking Back and Looking Ahead: *LAQ* 10 Years on

I

Looking back, in the inaugural issue in 2004, two invited articles by Alister Cumming and Constant Leung encouraged us at the helm of the journal to focus on two ideas. Cumming's (2004, p. 5) article "Broadening, Deepening, and Consolidating" encouraged us to take the journal into three specific areas:

1. Broaden the scope of inquiry and contexts that inform knowledge about language assessment,
2. Deepen the theoretical premises and philosophies of language assessment, and
3. Consolidate through systematic critical reviews the information base about research on language assessment.

Leung's (2004, p. 20) article urged us to focus on "classroom-based formative assessment of teachers" by mainly asking two questions:

1. Are there unexplored and underdeveloped issues in formative teacher assessment?
2. What kinds of research approach would be useful to help us "see" this kind of assessment in the classroom?

In the 10 years of publication, the journal has attempted to meet these goals through a variety of ways. Publishing special issues devoted to a single topic area has been the most focused way. There have been nine special issues in all.

Three were in emerging areas:

1. *Ethical Issues in Language Assessment*, guest edited by Alan Davies, Vol. 1, 2&3 (2004);
2. *Language Assessment for Immigration, Citizenship, and Asylum*, guest edited by Elana Shohamy and Tim McNamara, Vol. 6, 1 (2009); and
3. *Integrated Writing Assessment*, guest edited by Guoxing Yu, Vol. 10, 1 (2013).

Two were in traditional areas:

1. *Language Assessment-Language Acquisition Interface*, edited by Antony John Kunnan and Usha Laskhmanan, Vol. 3, 2 (2006); and

2. *Differential Item Functioning and Language Assessment*, edited by Antony John Kunnan, Vol. 4, 2 (2007).

Two were related to classroom assessment:

1. *Classroom Assessment*, guest edited by Geoff Brindley, Vol. 4, 1 (2007); and
2. *Cognitive and Q-matrices in Language Assessment*, guest edited by Yong-Won Lee and Yasuyo Sawaki, Vol. 6, 3 (2009).

Two were focused on geographical areas:

1. *Current Issues and Trends in Language Assessment in Australia and New Zealand*, guest edited by Aek Phakiti and Carsten Roever, Vol. 8, 2 (2011); and
2. *English as a Foreign Language Assessment in Taiwan*, guest edited by Viphavee Vongpumivitch, Vol. 9, 1 (2012).

The five most cited articles and five most read articles (as of December 2013) also contributed to the aspirations articulated by Cumming and Leung.

The most cited articles are:

1. "Building and Supporting a Case for Test Use." Lyle F. Bachman, Vol. 2, 1 (2005)
2. "Changing Communicative Needs, Revised Assessment Objectives: Testing English as an International Language." Suresh Canagarajah, Vol. 3, 3 (2006)
3. "Three Generations of DIF Analyses: Considering Where It Has Been, Where It Is Now, and Where It Is Going." Bruno D. Zumbo, Vol. 4, 2 (2007)
4. "Deluded by Artifices? The Common European Framework and Harmonization." Glenn Fulcher, Vol. 1, 4 (2004)
5. "Analyzing Tests of Reading and Listening in Relation to the Common European Framework of Reference: The Experience of The Dutch CEFR Construct Project." J. Charles Alderson et al., Vol. 3, 1 (2006)

The most read articles are:

1. "Language Proficiency in Native and Nonnative Speakers: An Agenda for Research and Suggestions for Second-Language Assessment." Jan H. Hulstijn, Vol. 8, 3 (2011)
2. "Comparing Direct and Semi-Direct Modes for Speaking Assessment: Affective Effects on Test Takers." David D. Qian, Vol. 6, 2 (2009)
3. "Designing and Scaling Level-Specific Writing Tasks in Alignment with the CEFR: A Test-Centered Approach." Claudia Harsch et al., Vol. 8, 1 (2011)
4. "Current Issues and Trends in Language Assessment Current Issues and Trends in Language Assessment in Australia and New Zealand." Aek Phakiti et al., Vol. 8, 2 (2011)
5. "Language Assessment: Its Development and Future—An Interview with Lyle F. Bachman." Jing Chen, Vol. 8, 3 (2011)

Along with articles, interviews with leading language assessment experts brought additional insights into various aspects of language assessment. Ten interviews have already been published; two will be published in 2014.

The interviews are:

1. "The Story Behind the Modern Language Aptitude Test: An Interview with John B. Carroll" by Charles W. Stansfield & Daniel J. Reed. Vol. 1, 1 (2004)
2. "Biasing for the Best in Language Testing and Learning: An Interview with Merrill Swain" by Janna Fox. Vol. 1, 4 (2004)
3. "40 Years in Applied Linguistics: An Interview with Alan Davies" by Antony John Kunnan. Vol. 2, 1 (2005)
4. "An Interview with John Trim at 80" by Nick Saville. Vol. 2, 4 (2005)
5. "People and Events in Language Testing: A Sort of Memoir. An Interview with Bernard Spolsky" by Nick Saville and Antony John Kunnan. Vol. 3, 3 (2006)
6. "An Interview with Professor Kenji Ohtomo: The Founding Father of Language Testing in Japan" by Miyoko Kobayashi and Masashi Negishi. Vol. 5, 3 (2008)
7. "A Life in Language Testing: An Interview with Charles Stansfield" by Daniel J. Reed and Melissa Bowles. Vol. 5, 4 (2008)
8. "From Cloze to Consequences and Beyond: An Interview with Elana Shohamy" by Anne Lazaraton. Vol. 7, 3 (2010)
9. "Gui Shichuan: Founding Father of Language Testing in China. An Interview" by He Lianzhen and Qi Luxia. Vol. 7, 4 (2010)
10. "Language Assessment: Its Development and Future—An Interview with Lyle F. Bachman" by Jing Chen. Vol. 8, 3 (2011)
11. "A Lifetime of Language Testing: An Interview With J. Charles Alderson" by Tineke Brunfaut. Vol. 11, 1 (2014)
12. "Liz Hamp-Lyons: An Interview" by Jin Yan. Vol. 11, 3 (2014)

The other articles and features such as commentaries and book and test reviews round out issues in the journal. In summary, we hope that the journal through all these features collectively has met most, if not all, the aspirations articulated by Cumming and Leung.

In terms of overall impact, as measured by Thompson Scientific, the journal has done remarkably well in the last assessment: The Journal Citation Reports shows *LAQ* to have a 2012 Impact Factor of 1.065, ranked 29 out of 51 journals in Psychology and Education and 35 out 160 journals in Linguistics.

## II

Looking ahead now, two invited articles appear in this issue: The first is by James Dean Brown, on a persistent and long-term challenge, titled "The Future of World Englishes in Language Testing." The second article by Kwanghyun Park addresses an emerging area of interest regarding "Corpora and Language Assessment."

Special issues that are in the works include geographically specific ones on Canada, Japan, China, the Middle East, and North Africa, and on communicative language assessment and dynamic assessment. Other journal features such as interviews, commentaries, and test and book reviews that will follow in subsequent issues of the journal will no doubt address other emerging issues.

This is my last issue as editor of *LAQ*. I am stepping down 10 years after I founded the journal in 2003. It was founded as one of Lawrence Erlbaum's journals starting with a modest 256 pages a year, but it is now one of Routledge's journals with a comfortable 480 pages. I want to thank Naomi Silverman for believing that the journal had a place in Lawrence Erlbaum's list. I want to thank my first associate editors Carolyn Turner, Fred Davidson, and Nick Saville from 2003, and Constant Leung and James (Jim) Purpura later from 2006; all of them helped create a vision for the journal. I also want to thank the guest editors of the special issues, the Editorial Advisory Board members, the other reviewers who worked on various journal matters for the last 10 years, and the readers and libraries that helped launch the journal.

Jim Purpura will be taking over as editor of the journal from January 2014. I wish Jim and his team all the best as they plan to continue to "broaden, deepen and consolidate" theory, research, and practice in language assessment. I also want to say to Jim and his team, in the words of Walt Whitman, "Now, voyager, sail thou forth, to seek and find."

Antony John Kunnan  
San Gabriel, December 2013