# Book Review

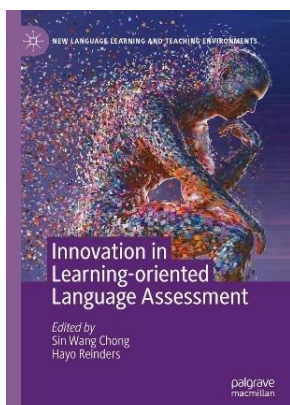**Book Title:** Innovation in Learning-Oriented Language Assessment

**Publishing House:** Palgrave Macmillan Cham

**Editors:** Sin Wang Chong and Hayo Reinders

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## Introduction

The world of English language assessment is much more complicated than is generally anticipated, as it hosts thousands of newly coined terms and acronyms. If you are a novice ELT teacher seeking an appropriate assessment technique, you will likely be lost amid thousands of homogeneous terms and abbreviated acronyms. As an ELT instructor with a decade of experience, you may feel perplexed by the lengthy explanations. As busy educators, we need straightforward, functional, practical explanations and guidelines for our daily practices.

Amid thousands of ELT volumes with various themes, those oriented towards language assessment are among the less frequent. Palgrave Macmillan Cham has recently released a series of books for teachers, researchers, and language assessment educators. '*Innovation in Learning-Oriented Language Assessment,*' edited by Sin Wong Chong and Hayo Reinders, is an enlightenment for ELT teachers and assessment educators, for both the novice and the more experienced.

"Practicality"' is the key takeaway of this book, as each section equips the reader with a set of straightforward "Practice Briefs."

The book consists of 18 sections, each with intertwining insights into ELT assessment. The book's principal theme is learning-oriented assessment (LOA), about which many educators may desire more knowledge. Readers can dive into each chapter and dig deeper into the unexplored world of LOA with empirical evidence and valuable guidelines for best practices. Chong and Reinders (2023), prolific author-editors of the series of books, have declared that the aim of the

series is to provide practical insights and innovative ideas for the benefit of teachers and researchers for their language assessment practices.

The author-editors remark, "This edited volume sheds practical light on 'learning-oriented language assessment' as an emergent approach to language assessment" (p. 10).

Beginning with the introductory rhetorical question, "What is language assessment?" in Chapter 1, the two editors have clarified the controversies between assessment of/for/as learning with clear explanations and comparisons for a clear-cut picture of assessment literacy. The author-editors also provide ten insightful principles of learning-oriented language assessment in this chapter, which is a strong motive to read on to the following chapters.

The contributors in all chapters are well-experienced, on-the-ground ELT practitioners such as teachers, professors, and assessment educators from ten countries worldwide, including Thailand.

Chapters 1 through 10 discuss what is the core theme of this book - Learning-Oriented Assessment - in different EFL contexts. One informative piece to read is "Developing Learning Oriented Language Assessment Literacy in Pre-service Language Teachers" by Coney (2023), which investigates the language assessment literacy of the CELTA tutors in Chapter 10.

Another focal point of this book is 'innovation,' which comprises chapters 11 through 18, featuring the integration of cutting-edge technology in language assessment, providing empirical and experimental evidence. Reading these chapters can give readers a sense of forwardness in language assessment as they have much insight to offer on the most renovated technology-integrated assessment methods; these chapters contain a thorough analysis of incorporating tech tools in assessment, from classroom-based to large-scale standardized tests.

For instance, in Chapter 11, Albarqi (2023) shares insightful action research on using Padlet as a formative assessment tool, which is valuable and practical to teachers such as myself, who use it for online English classes.

Chapter 12 shows how virtual reality (VR) technology can be integrated into speaking assessment. Heydari and Marefat (2023) provide practical experience of their experiment with VR in language assessment - an innovative experiment that can retain the reader's interest throughout the chapter.

Chapters 13, 15, and 18 are concerned with the employment of e-portfolios for language assessment; each informs on the building, the using, and the innovating of e-portfolios. For teachers currently running English classes in virtual mode, these chapters will help motivate building systematic e-portfolios for classes - logically, at least. Standing out, Chapter 15 provides an unusual

experiment with the "Pro-Gamer Inspired Speaking Assessment." York (2023) demonstrates a form of experimental assessment in Japan using a montage video game as a kind of portfolio assessment tool. The author explains why "Pro-Gamer Inspired" is named for the experiment. For those who have pro gamers in their class, the authors' "Practice Brief" is extremely helpful.

In Chapter 14, readers can browse how mobile-assisted language assessment can be implemented for various assessment purposes (Chen & Lin, 2023). Additionally, those who are teaching languages other than English can learn about experimental research with key Stage 3 English students from Finlayson and Marsden (2023) in Chapter 9 for assessing the depth of word knowledge of French, German, and Spanish as foreign languages.

## Empirical studies, Evidence, and Experiment

The book is a treasure trove for researchers. The book provides a sense of completeness as it guides the reader through the empirical research and experiments conducted in ten different countries across the globe. The empirical studies of Chong (2023), O'Neill and Petchko (2023), Zhao and Zhao (2023), Yang (2023), and Burner (2023) share a more comprehensive view of learning-oriented assessment research and its contextual implications. These chapters can satisfy the reader's hunger for evidential practices as a series of discoveries about LOA are provided.

## Final Thought

The book is well worth the effort to read it. It offers the reader a profound look at learning-oriented/ learner-centered assessment best practices, which is timely and a need-fit for those who are experienced language teachers and assessment educators who are seriously interested in ELT assessment.

On a slightly critical note, the book provides information on research experiments in only ten countries, which appears to be something of a limitation for research explorers. To maximize the benefits, readers can link to "*Learning-oriented Language Assessment: Putting Theory into Practice*" by Gebril (2021) and "*Language Assessment Literacy in a Learning-oriented Assessment Framework*" by Fulcher (2021).

Innovation, on the other hand, may be an incomplete message for readers interested in unexplored facets of assessment amid rising AI technology concerns. Nevertheless, the contributions of each chapter in the book deliver a clear grasp of language assessment literacy and practicality as

each contains empirical and experimental evidence and practical guidelines for learning-oriented assessment in both physical and virtual settings.

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