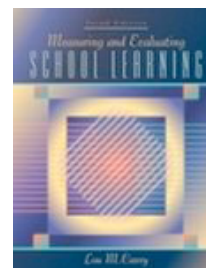**Book Review**

Measuring and evaluating school learning [3rd Edition]

by Lou M. Carey (2000) ISBN: 0-205-32388-X
Boston: Allyn & Bacon / Longman Group

This book was designed for American grade-school teachers, but it is of value to any teachers developing classroom tests. Though its 550 pages are difficult to read from cover to cover, it works well as a reference aid. Since this book features practice exercises and feedback, it could also be used as an in-service training course on test design.

Carey's work is divided into four sections. The first deals with designing learner-centred and curriculum-centred classroom assessment tools. The second considers different types of tests and test purposes, explaining how to write good test items and assess tests reliably. The third section deals with test statistic. The final section describes different ways in which student progress can be communicated.

At the start of each chapter a list of objectives appears with an outline of the content of the following chapter. Within each chapter, there are lots of clear examples, tables, and charts to illustrate the process being described. Each chapter also contains a section on how to make the best use of computers, and the types of software which are available. The advantages of using spreadsheets to record, calculate, and weigh test scores are mentioned. The value of creating test question item-banks is also highlighted. Though most of the software mentioned in this text is not relevant to EFL teachers, the basic information about computer literacy is. At the end of each chapter, there are practice exercises, feedback on these exercises, and a list of suggested readings. These consolidate the principles explained in the book. While some exercises are not relevant to EFL teachers, the enrichment tasks do offer readers an opportunity to apply the material from the chapter to their own context. At the end of each chapter a list of suggested readings is given. However, the range of books listed is very narrow and many references are not relevant to language testing.

The main strengths of this book are its thorough treatment of the topic, the detailed explanations and examples and the advice to teachers about how to put theories into practice. However, this book is so long and detailed that at times it feels like a hard slog to read. The book presents the ideal rather than the realistic, which may leave a teacher either trying to do more than is realistic and therefore overworking themselves or only doing what is realistic and then feeling that they are failing their students and consequently they are also failing to be good teachers (which presumably is the opposite of the desired effect).

At the end of the day, this book contains a wealth of information and the more the teacher refers back to the book with specific questions, as and when they arise, the more they will learn about good testing practice.

- Reviewed by Yvonne Ishida

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