Foreword

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As a long-time reader, there were three things in particular that I liked about *Shiken Research Bulletin* before joining the editorial board. One was the ability of its contributors to use modern test theory and other statistical approaches to shed new light on issues that we commonly face as language testers. Second was the ability of its contributors, particularly long-time columnists JD Brown and James Sick, to explain how to use these same statistical approaches in a manner that is accessible to readers. Third were the interviews with luminaries in our profession, which shed light not only into the important issues of today, but also into the lives and careers of the people that make our field so vibrant.

These fine attributes are in full display in our most recent issue. In regards to examining issues in our field with modern methods, Judith Runnels employs a polytomous Rasch model to examine the rank order of the developmental scale implied by the CEFR-J, an increasingly widespread version of the CEFR intended for Japanese learning contexts. Our Editor-at-Large Aaron Batty carefully details how a model by Paek et al. can allow us to detect and compare important discrepancies between learners' subjective judgments of their own knowledge and the objective outcomes revealed under testing. In regards to education, our statistics columnist JD Brown explains not only how readers can easily conduct chi-square tests with free online software, but also explains common situations in which the analysis is *not* appropriate, and guides readers towards alternative, but equally simple, approaches. In turn, our Rasch columnist Jim Sick addresses the issue of disjoint subsets in FACETS which leads to discussion of judging plans, a matter of critical concern to any language tester organizing a speaking test with multiple judges. Finally, part II of our interview with Alistair Van Moere, which focuses on the Versant Spoken Language Test developer's career history, will be of particular interest to young researchers who have also began their careers in language testing in Japan, and are interested in beginning PhDs and embracing the full range of exciting possibilities in language testing. I hope you will enjoy this issue as much as I have.