

Foreword

Jeffrey Stewart
TEVAL SIG Publications Chair,
Shiken Research Bulletin General Editor

Season's greetings to all of you from the editorial team of *Shiken Research Bulletin*! Our holiday gift to you is another great issue of *SRB*, packed with useful articles and columns. In this issue's feature article, Jonathan Harrison and Ruth Vanbaelen apply J. D. Brown's approach to curriculum design to English communication courses. Rasch columnist Jim Sick compares and contrasts Classical Test Theory and Rasch Measurement Theory approaches to the important issue of rater agreement in assessment, shedding further light on the utility of the program Facets. Statistics columnist J. D. Brown provides practical (and crucial) advice for classroom teachers developing their own tests. Finally, software columnist Aaron Batty introduces `ltm`, a package for R that provides the functionality of professional IRT software that normally costs thousands of dollars—for free. Those of you who attended our IRT workshop at the Japan Language Testing Association Symposium this year will find it of particular interest, as it documents how to perform the model-fit comparisons that we covered as a group step-by-step.

I'm happy to end this year on a high note, because due to the demands of writing my PhD thesis, 2013 marks the end of my term as editor. I'm looking forward to reading *Shiken* as a TEVAL member in the new year.