CONTENTS

Acknowledgments xi

PART I: INTRODUCTION 1
1 A new approach to classroom-based language assessments 2
   Where does our approach come from? 3
   Why did we write this book? 4
   Who is this book for? 5
   What is in this book? 6
   What will you learn from this book? 7
   References 7

2 Using classroom-based language assessments 8
   Language teaching and classroom-based language assessment 8
      Language teaching 8
      Language assessment 9
      Similarities and differences between language teaching and language assessment 10
   Decisions made on the basis of classroom-based assessments 10
      Decisions you need to make in the classroom 11
      Relative importance of decisions 13
   Modes of classroom-based assessments 15
      Continuous and cyclical 17
   Using classroom-based language assessments 18
      Links in using classroom-based language assessments 19
   Test developers and test users 24
   Practicality of assessment use 25
      Resources for assessment use 25
PART II: A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO CLASSROOM-BASED ASSESSMENT

3 Overview of our approach to assessment development
   Fairness and accountability
   Assessment justification
     Specifying an assessment use argument (AUA)
   Assessment development
   Providing backing to support the AUA

4 Consequences: Why do we need to assess our students?
   Assessment development questions for Claim 1
     Intended consequences
     Who will be affected by the consequences?
     Quality of the intended consequences
     Summary: Intended consequences and stakeholders in classroom-based assessments
   Stating Claim 1
   Providing backing for Claim 1

5 Decisions: When do we need to assess our students?
   Assessment development questions for Claim 2
     What decisions need to be made?
     Who will be affected by the intended decisions?
     Who will make the intended decisions?
     When do the intended decisions need to be made?
     The qualities of the intended decisions
     Summary: Relating intended consequences to decisions in classroom-based assessments
   Stating Claim 2
   Providing backing for Claim 2

6 Interpretations: What and how should we assess?
   Assessment development questions for Claim 3
   What do we need to assess? Intended interpretations
     Identifying the interpretations we need for making decisions: Relevance and sufficiency
7 Assessment records: How can we record our students’ assessment performance? 73
   Assessment development questions for Claim 4 74
   Assessment records 74
      Identifying the types of assessment records we need 75
      Quality of the assessment records 75
   Stating Claim 4 78
   Providing backing for Claim 4 84

PART III: APPLYING THIS APPROACH IN YOUR CLASSROOM 87
8 Developing assessment task templates 88
   Using TLU tasks to develop assessment task templates 90
      Step 1: Selecting a TLU task 90
      Step 2: Describing TLU tasks 91
      Step 3: Modifying a TLU task to develop an assessment task template 97
      Step 4: Developing a method for recording/scoring students’ performance 106
      Step 5: Evaluating the modified task/assessment task template in terms of assessment qualities 108
9 Creating language assessment tasks 111
Creating multiple assessment tasks from templates 111
Examples of developing multiple assessment tasks of the same ability 112
Example 9.1: Writing a descriptive paragraph 113
Example 9.2: Discussing an environmental issue 117
Example 9.3: Listening for specific details 123
Example 9.4: Reading for cohesion 127

10 Combining assessment tasks to make classroom-based assessments 132
What is a blueprint? 133
How can you use a blueprint to guide assessment development? 138
How can you use a blueprint to maintain quality control? 139
    Comparing assessment tasks with instructional tasks 139
    Comparing tasks across different assessments 140

11 Administrative procedures and instructions 141
Why do we need to specify administrative procedures? 141
Administrative procedures 142
    Preparing the test setting 142
    Providing a supportive testing environment 143
    Communicating the instructions 143
    When do you give instructions? 144
    How do you make instructions understandable? 146
    How extensive do instructions need to be? 147

12 Scoring students’ test performance and reporting the results 148
Scoring individual test tasks or items 149
    Considerations in deciding on a scoring method 149
Different types of scoring methods 150
    Number of tasks successfully completed 150
    Scoring as levels of language ability 153
Combining scores and reporting the results 155
    Total score for a single test 156
    Score based on multiple tests 160
    Arriving at a way to report students’ achievement 161
Reference 163
PART IV: EXAMPLES OF CLASSROOM-BASED LANGUAGE ASSESSMENTS

Example assessments
1 Speaking, describing animals (young learners, beginning level) 166
2 Reading, Greenwich Village, filling gapped sentences (teens or adults, advanced level) 169
3 Speaking, describing my favorite place (teens, intermediate level) 181
4 Listening, answering questions about free-time activities (teens, intermediate level) 190
5 Listening, answering questions about best moment of life (teens, beginning level) 200
6 Writing, describing a musical instrument (teens, intermediate level) 210
7 Speaking, discussing an environmental issue (teens or adults, advanced level) 222
8 Writing a letter of application for a job (teens or adults, advanced level) 232
9 Reading, matching headings, street art (teens, intermediate level) 242

Appendix 1: Checklist of things to think about before using a language assessment 253
Appendix 2: Parts of an assessment task template 263
Appendix 3: Answers to activities in Chapters 2 and 3 266
Glossary 272
Suggestions for further reading 277
Index 284