

# **English language assessment in Taiwan: Where do we go from here?**

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## **Abstract**

Having been influenced by government policies, English learning and assessment in Taiwan is undergoing a critical change, particularly in relation to the establishment of a common standard of English proficiency through the adoption of the CEFR framework (Council of Europe, 2001) since 2005. Following that move, the government created a list of English proficiency tests that were mapped against the CEFR Levels to assist score users in choosing a test that they considered appropriate for themselves (Central Personnel Administration, 2006). Currently in Taiwan, a score for an external English test, an achievement in an internal test of English, or an achievement in classroom assessment is influential in qualifying one for school graduation or for job promotion. As consequences of this change, immediate problems have arisen in relation to test comparability and to the ethical responsibilities of language testers. This paper reviews how tests of English are being used in such a context and addresses the problems and issues that have arisen from both ethical and professional perspectives. Lastly, for the way forward for English language assessment in Taiwan, this paper recommends work be done in two directions: consolidation of the theoretical framework for language learning/assessment and the actual learning/assessment in a classroom; and improvement of teachers' professional understanding of and skills in language assessment.