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## Cambridge/ILTA 2019 Distinguished Achievement Award Announced

Dear colleagues,



It is with great pleasure that we announce that the winner of the 2019 Cambridge English Language Assessment /ILTA Distinguished Achievement Award is Dr. Dan Douglas.

Dan Douglas completed his PhD in Applied Linguistics at Edinburgh University in Scotland in 1977. His dissertation was entitled: *A Study of Reading Among Secondary School Pupils in a Developing Nation*. He went on to work at several universities including the English Language Institute at the University of Michigan until 1985 when he began as Assistant Professor in the English Department at Iowa State University. He remained there and in 1990 was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure, in 1997 promoted to Professor, and is presently Professor Emeritus after retiring in 2009. Besides his national and international work in language testing, he served his own institution in several ways: teaching a variety of courses from composition for foreign graduate students to testing language for specific purposes; supervising not only local graduate students, but also generously working with visiting scholars; serving as coordinator of the TESL/Applied Linguistics area, and volunteering for a

variety of other committees.

Since his retirement Dan Douglas continues to be active and among other work, conducts research on the assessment of language ability in specific academic and professional contexts, the effect of context on second language acquisition and use, language for specific purposes and assessing language through computer technology.

Dan has had diverse research interests in the field of language testing, but one of his most valuable academic contributions is his extensive research on the assessment of language ability in academic and professional contexts. This is reflected in several of his numerous peer-reviewed publications including books, book chapters and journal articles. His book entitled *Assessing Languages for Specific Purposes* (Douglas, 2000) has had a major influence. This important work stimulated language testers' thinking on the interplay between language constructs and contexts of language use and provided detailed guidelines for constructing contextualized language tests for specific purposes. Some examples of the impact of this work can be seen in Weir's (2005) notion of "context validity" in his socio-cognitive validation framework; and in the theoretical basis for tests such as Cambridge Assessment's revision of the Business English Certificates (BEC), the Occupational English Test (OET) for health professionals (Hoekje, 2015), and in aviation English tests for pilots and air traffic controllers (Kim & Elder, 2015).

The influence of Dan's expertise can also be seen in his extensive professional service to the language testing community. He served as President of ILTA at two different times (2005 and 2013-2014), with connecting roles of Vice-President and Past President. He also was Member and Chair of the ILTA Awards Committee (1994-1997). Other service can be seen in his positions as Chair and Member of the TOEFL Award Committee for Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation, Secretary of MwALT, Co-Editor of *Language Testing* with John Read, Co-Chair with Micheline Chalhoub-Deville, Craig Deville and Felicity Douglas of LTRC St. Louis 2001, Chair

of the 2005 MwALT conference and Member of the TOEFL Grants and Awards Committee. In addition, Dan has served on the Editorial Board of several academic journals for over a decade, including *Language Testing*, *English for Specific Purposes*, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, and *ESP Malaysia*. In 2015, Dan, together with his wife Felicity, conducted a two-day ILTA workshop on Classroom Language Assessment in Ghana and paved the way for creating the Ghana Association of Language Testing, the first ILTA-affiliated organization in Africa.

Another aspect of Dan's service was his active engagement in the development of operational language tests. He was a consultant for the TOEFL 2000 Development Project, Chair of the Test of Spoken English Committee, and Member of the TOEFL Committee of Examiners at the Educational Testing Service. He also played a leading role in revising the English Language Placement Test at Iowa State University (2006) and was Principal Investigator for the Pearson Education Online Business Test Development Project (2001).

Finally, in the words of those who put forth Dan's nomination, he has been "a kind and inspiring mentor who introduced many young scholars into the field of language testing." Some of these young scholars are now working as language testing professionals, while others have become academics.

Given the extent and impact of Dan Douglas's contributions to the field of language testing, and his scholarship, mentorship and diverse service, the Award Committee has reached a unanimous decision in granting him the 2019 Distinguished Achievement Award.

Carolyn Turner (Chair), Micheline Chalhoub-Deville, Yong-Won Lee and Nick Saville  
(DAA Award Committee)

