

Can-Do Guide Executive Summary

TOEIC BRIDGE™ TEST



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Executive Summary of the *TOEIC Bridge™* Can-Do Study



In order to facilitate the interpretation of test scores from the *TOEIC Bridge™* as a measure of English-language proficiency, we performed a “Can-Do Study” to establish the relationship between scores on the *TOEIC Bridge* and test taker reports of their ability to perform selected, everyday language tasks in English. In the study, a form of the *TOEIC Bridge* test was administered to several thousand test takers in Chile and Ecuador along with a self-assessment questionnaire to gather examinees’ perceptions of their ability to perform a variety of everyday English-language tasks. Several of the tasks were academic-related¹ and some were linked to the various levels of the Common European Framework (CEF; Tannenbaum & Wiley, 2005).²

Results revealed that *TOEIC Bridge* scores were moderately related to test takers’ self-assessments both for listening and for reading. The correlations that were observed compare very favorably with those typically observed in validity studies using other kinds of validation criteria, such as course grades and supervisor ratings. Moreover, for each of the individual tasks that we asked about, *TOEIC Bridge* scores were predictive of examinees’ perceptions of their ability to perform the task. This was true also for the tasks that were included to represent each level of the CEF. The difficulty of the CEF-related tasks was ranked perfectly, according to expectations for the CEF levels. Further evidence of the trustworthiness of examinee reports was apparent from the moderately strong retest correlations between ratings of selected task statements that were re-administered.

Thus, the Can-Do Study provided evidence of the validity of *TOEIC Bridge* scores by linking them to test takers’ assessments of their ability to perform a variety of everyday English language activities. The relationships that were detected are practical and meaningful ones. Although examinee self-reports cannot be accepted uncritically as a validity criterion, they do have characteristics that seem to suggest their trustworthiness, especially as examinees in this low-stakes research study had no incentive to intentionally distort their reports. In addition, the results of the study reported here are consistent with previous meta-analytic summaries (e.g., Ross, 1998) that have documented substantial correlations between the self-ratings of learners of English as a second language and a variety of criterion measures.

References

- Ross, S. (1998). Self-assessment in Second Language Testing: A Meta-analysis and Analysis of Experiential Factors. *Language Testing*, 15, 1-20.
- Tannenbaum, R. J., & Wylie, E. C. (2004). *Mapping test scores onto the Common European Framework* (ETS RR-05-18). Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- Upshur, J. (1975). Objective Evaluation of Oral Proficiency in the ESOL Classroom. In L. Palmer & B. Spolsky (Eds.), *Papers on language testing 1967-1974* (pp. 53-65). Washington, DC: TESOL.

¹For example, one of the tasks was about understanding a complex presentation or demonstration given in a classroom.

²For example, the task related to CEF reading level A1 is about recognizing familiar words and simple phrases when people speak slowly and clearly.

Table 1. Correlations Among Can-Do Self-Assessments and TOEIC Bridge™ Scores

No	Measure	M (SD)	1	2	3	4
TOEIC						
1	<i>Listening</i>	57.4 (15.1)	1.00			
2	<i>Reading</i>	58.0 (14.1)	.84*	1.00		
Can-Do						
3	<i>Listening</i>	81.9 (23.5)	.46*	.45*	1.00	
4	<i>Reading</i>	80.6 (26.0)	.43*	.44*	.83*	1.00

Note: Ns range from 3,524 to 3,660.

* $p < .001$

Table 2:

Percentages of *TOEIC Bridge™* Test Takers, by Listening Score Level, Who Indicated That They Could Perform Various English–Language Listening Tasks Either Easily or With Little Difficulty

Listening	10-30	32-40	42-50	52-60	62-70	72-90	MEAN	SD
Understand simple questions in social situations such as “How are you?” and “Where do you live?”	40	65	82	90	94	99	4.47	0.90
Understand the days of the week and the months of the year	60	77	83	89	90	97	4.48	0.82
Understand a person’s name when he or she gives it over the telephone	52	70	81	86	88	96	4.37	0.86
Recognize familiar words and simple phrases when people speak slowly and clearly (CEF level A1)	43	60	76	84	91	99	4.29	0.89
Understand some memorized words and phrases	47	63	75	81	88	96	4.25	0.89
R. Understand the main point of simple messages and short, clear announcements (CEF level A2)	35	60	69	79	89	98	4.19	0.93
R. Understand the main points of standard speech on familiar matters when people speak slowly and clearly (CEF level B1)	40	54	67	78	88	98	4.15	0.93
Understand someone who is speaking slowly and deliberately about his or her hobbies and interests	33	46	63	78	88	98	4.10	0.96
Understand directions about what time to come to a class and where it will be held	34	47	62	77	87	96	4.08	0.95
Understand a salesperson when he or she tells me prices of various items	21	37	49	63	79	92	3.84	1.00
Understand someone speaking slowly and deliberately, who is giving directions on how to walk to a nearby location	27	35	46	61	79	91	3.81	1.03
Understand a classmate discussing a simple problem that arose in class	30	29	41	54	75	91	3.70	1.04
Understand the main ideas in news reports broadcast on the radio or TV	23	25	35	47	64	82	3.53	1.02
Understand explanations about how to perform a routine task related to my class	21	29	35	47	67	87	3.56	1.03
Understand headline news broadcasts on the radio	28	23	31	44	60	79	3.44	0.98
Understand public announcements that are broadcast	21	29	35	43	58	77	3.47	1.01
Understand a person in social situations talking about his or her background, family, or interests	10	16	27	40	61	84	3.38	1.06
R. Understand extended speech and lectures, and follow complex arguments on familiar topics (CEF level B2)	18	15	20	27	44	63	3.05	1.04
Understand a discussion of current events taking place among a group of persons speaking English	12	14	16	25	39	62	3.03	1.02
Understand a complex presentation or demonstration given in a classroom	21	18	20	24	34	56	3.00	0.97

Table 2: Continued

Listening	10-30	32-40	42-50	52-60	62-70	72-90	MEAN	SD
Understand an explanation of why a road has been temporarily closed given over the radio	19	16	18	22	39	60	3.02	1.01
Understand play-by-play descriptions on the radio of sports events (e.g., soccer)	18	23	24	28	34	46	3.00	1.04
Understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured (CEF level C1)	16	10	11	14	22	37	2.62	1.00
Understand an extended debate on a complex topic such as public health	13	12	11	10	16	32	2.57	0.97
Understand any kind of spoken language, even when people speak quickly (CEF level C2)	15	11	11	11	17	30	2.42	1.07
N. For score interval	109	460	681	952	702	756		
Note: Table entries (percentages) have been shaded in various colors to indicate their magnitude according to the key at the right.	[0-29]	[30-50]	[50-70]	[70-80]	[80-90]	[90-100]		

Note: Number of responses for each statement range from 2,951 to 3,583. Responses were on a 5-point scale from 5 = Can do easily, to 1 = Cannot do at all. “R” signifies a statement that was re-administered. Common European Framework – related statements are shown in bold.

Table 3:

Percentages of *TOEIC Bridge™* Test Takers, by Reading Score Level, Who Indicated That They Could Perform Various English–Language Reading Tasks Either Easily or With Little Difficulty

Reading	10-30	32-40	42-50	52-60	62-70	72-90	MEAN	SD
Recognize memorized words and phrases (for example, “Exit,” “Entrance,” and “Stop”)	60	75	81	87	94	99	4.50	0.81
R. Understand familiar words and very simple sentences (CEF level A1)	35	61	73	86	93	98	4.36	0.88
Read and understand traffic signs	46	57	65	80	88	97	4.24	0.92
R. Understand short, simple texts (e.g., personal letters) (CEF level A2)	31	50	62	78	89	98	4.17	0.93
Read, on storefronts, the type of store or services provided (e.g., “dry cleaning,” “book store”)	19	36	59	77	91	97	4.11	1.01
Read and understand a simple e-mail from a friend	26	46	59	75	85	96	4.08	0.97
Read and understand a train or bus schedule	33	47	57	74	85	96	4.09	0.98
Read and understand simple, step-by-step instructions (for example, how to operate an electronic machine, like a CD player)	37	52	58	70	82	93	4.00	0.97
Understand texts that consist mainly of everyday words or vocabulary (CEF level B1)	27	43	52	68	80	93	3.92	0.98
Read and understand a restaurant menu	22	36	48	66	80	92	3.87	1.00
Find information that I need in a telephone directory	25	39	48	62	79	90	3.84	1.01
Read and understand a letter of thanks from a friend or a relative	17	38	43	56	75	93	3.76	1.01
Read information about products (for example, advertisements)	22	35	45	61	75	89	3.76	0.98
Read and understand the main points of an article on a familiar academic topic	16	33	35	52	68	86	3.58	0.99
Read and understand directions and explanations presented in manuals written for beginning users	11	30	35	48	68	88	3.62	1.05
Read entertainment-related information (for example, tourist guides)	17	26	35	49	67	86	3.57	1.00
Read highly technical material related to my classes with little use of a dictionary	22	29	33	38	49	67	3.30	1.05
Read English to translate text into my own language (for example, letters and technical documents)	13	24	25	32	47	70	3.23	1.03
Read and understand magazine articles without using a dictionary	10	19	24	32	46	73	3.23	1.01
Read a newspaper editorial and understand its meaning as well as the writer’s intent	11	19	23	32	44	67	3.17	1.01
R. Understand the viewpoints expressed in articles and reports about contemporary issues or problems (CEF level B2)	11	20	25	30	43	68	3.17	0.99

Table 3: Continued

Reading	10-30	32-40	42-50	52-60	62-70	72-90	MEAN	SD
Read and understand a popular novel	9	13	18	22	34	61	2.95	1.07
Identify inconsistencies or differences in points of view in two newspaper interviews with politicians of opposing parties	5	16	14	15	25	44	2.75	1.00
R. Understand long, complex texts, even technical ones that do not relate to my classes (CEF level C1)	7	15	14	16	23	37	2.68	1.03
Understand virtually all forms of written language, including abstract and linguistically complex texts (CEF level C2)	7	15	13	13	18	28	2.46	1.07
N. For score interval	79	307	763	1107	666	738		
Note: Table entries (percentages) have been shaded in various colors to indicate their magnitude according to the key at the right.	[0-29]	[30-50]	[50-70]	[70-80]	[80-90]	[90-100]		

Note: Ns range from 2,888 to 3,564.

Responses were on a 5-point scale from 5 = Can do easily to 1 = Cannot do at all.

“R” signifies a statement that was re-administered.

Common European Framework – related statements are shown in bold.

Using the Can-Do Tables



The tables on the following pages allow users of the *TOEIC Bridge*[™] test to determine which English-language activities a test taker can be expected to perform given a certain *TOEIC Bridge* Score. This is generally how decision-makers in organizations use *TOEIC Bridge* test scores: Test scores help them make decisions about such things as employee selection, placement, and training.

The can-do statements are arranged in three categories: Can Do, Can Do With Difficulty, and Cannot Do. Each task is placed into one of three category bands on the average ratings of a group of examinees in a certain score band.

These levels correspond to the type of information needed for placement and training decisions. A rating of “Cannot Do” indicates that test takers can only perform can-do statements with a great deal of difficulty or not at all (in practical terms, this means that they are unable to perform the task). Ratings of “Can Do With Difficulty” indicate that the task can be performed with some difficulty. This level of proficiency may be acceptable in most situations, but a higher level of English language proficiency is often needed. A rating of “Can Do” reflects an ability to perform the can-do statement with no difficulty.

Table 4: TOEIC Bridge™ Listening & Reading Score of 10–50

	Listening	Reading
Can Do	NONE	NONE
Can Do with Difficulty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand simple questions in social situations such as “How are you?” and “Where do you live?” understand the days of the week and the months of the year understand a person’s name when she or he gives it to me over the telephone recognize familiar words and simple phrases when people speak slowly and clearly understand some memorized words and phrases understand the main point of simple messages and short, clear announcements understand the main points of standard speech on familiar matters when people speak slowly and clearly understand someone who is speaking slowly and deliberately about his or her hobbies and interests understand directions about what time to come to a class and where it will be held 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize memorized words and phrases (e.g., “Exit,” “Entrance,” and “Stop”) understand familiar words and very simple sentences read and understand traffic signs understand short, simple texts (e.g., personal letters) read, on storefronts, the type of store or services provided (e.g., “dry cleaning,” “book store”) read and understand a simple e-mail from a friend read and understand a train or bus schedule read and understand simple, step-by-step instructions (for example, how to operate an electronic machine, like a CD player)
Cannot Do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand a salesperson when she or he tells me prices of various items understand someone speaking slowly and deliberately, who is giving me directions on how to walk to a nearby location understand a classmate discussing a simple problem that arose in class understand the main ideas in news reports broadcast on the radio or TV understand explanations about how to perform a routine task related to my class understand headline news broadcasts on the radio understand public announcements that are broadcast understand a person in social situations talking about his/her background, family, or interests understand extended speech and lectures, and follow complex arguments on familiar topics understand a discussion of current events taking place among a group of persons speaking English understand a complex presentation or demonstration given in a classroom understand an explanation given over the radio of why a road has been temporarily closed understand play-by-play descriptions on the radio of sports events that I like (e.g., soccer) understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured understand an extended debate on a complex topic such as public health understand any kind of spoken language, even when people speak quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand texts that consist mainly of everyday words or vocabulary read and understand a restaurant menu find information that I need in a telephone directory read and understand a letter of thanks from a friend or a relative read information about products (e.g., advertisements) read and understand the main points of an article on a familiar academic topic read and understand directions and explanations presented in manuals written for beginning users read entertainment-related information (e.g., tourist guides) read highly technical material related to my classes with little use of a dictionary read English to translate text into my own language (e.g., letters and technical documents) read and understand magazine articles without using a dictionary read a newspaper editorial and understand its meaning as well as the writer’s intent understand the viewpoints expressed in articles and reports about contemporary issues or problems read and understand a popular novel identify inconsistencies or differences in points of view in two newspaper interviews with politicians of opposing parties understand long, complex texts, even technical ones that do not relate to my classes understand virtually all forms of written language, including abstract and linguistically complex texts

TOEIC Bridge™ Listening & Reading

Score of 51–70



	Listening	Reading
Can Do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand simple questions in social situations such as “How are you?” and “Where do you live?” understand the days of the week and the months of the year understand a person’s name when she or he gives it to me over the telephone recognize familiar words and simple phrases when people speak slowly and clearly understand some memorized words and phrases understand the main point of simple messages and short, clear announcements understand the main points of standard speech on familiar matters when people speak slowly and clearly understand someone who is speaking slowly and deliberately about his or her hobbies and interests understand directions about what time to come to a class and where it will be held 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize memorized words and phrases (e.g., “Exit,” “Entrance,” and “Stop”) understand familiar words and very simple sentences read and understand traffic signs understand short, simple texts (e.g., personal letters) read, on storefronts, the type of store or services provided (e.g., “dry cleaning,” “book store”)
Can Do with Difficulty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand a salesperson when she or he tells me prices of various items understand someone speaking slowly and deliberately, who is giving me directions on how to walk to a nearby location understand a classmate discussing a simple problem that arose in class understand the main ideas in news reports broadcast on the radio or TV understand explanations about how to perform a routine task related to my class understand headline news broadcasts on the radio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> read and understand a simple e-mail from a friend read and understand a train or bus schedule read and understand simple, step-by-step instructions (e.g., how to operate an electronic machine, like a CD player) understand texts that consist mainly of everyday words or vocabulary read and understand a restaurant menu find information that I need in a telephone directory read and understand a letter of thanks from a friend or a relative read information about products (e.g., advertisements) read and understand the main points of an article on a familiar academic topic read and understand directions and explanations presented in manuals written for beginning users read entertainment-related information (e.g., tourist guides)
Cannot Do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand public announcements that are broadcast understand a person in social situations talking about his/her background, family, or interests understand extended speech and lectures, and follow complex arguments on familiar topics understand a discussion of current events taking place among a group of persons speaking English understand a complex presentation or demonstration given in a classroom understand an explanation given over the radio of why a road has been temporarily closed understand play-by-play descriptions on the radio of sports events that I like (e.g., soccer) understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured understand an extended debate on a complex topic such as public health understand any kind of spoken language, even when people speak quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> read highly technical material related to my classes with little use of a dictionary read English to translate text into my own language (e.g., letters and technical documents) read and understand magazine articles without using a dictionary read a newspaper editorial and understand its meaning as well as the writer’s intent understand the viewpoints expressed in articles and reports about contemporary issues or problems read and understand a popular novel identify inconsistencies or differences in points of view in two newspaper interviews with politicians of opposing parties understand long, complex texts, even technical ones that do not relate to my classes understand virtually all forms of written language, including abstract and linguistically complex texts

TOEIC Bridge™ Listening & Reading Score of 71–90

	Listening	Reading
Can Do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand simple questions in social situations such as “How are you?” and “Where do you live?” understand the days of the week and the months of the year understand a person’s name when she or he gives it to me over the telephone recognize familiar words and simple phrases when people speak slowly and clearly understand some memorized words and phrases understand the main point of simple messages and short, clear announcements understand the main points of standard speech on familiar matters when people speak slowly and clearly understand someone who is speaking slowly and deliberately about his or her hobbies and interests understand directions about what time to come to a class and where it will be held understand a salesperson when she or he tells me prices of various items understand someone speaking slowly and deliberately, who is giving me directions on how to walk to a nearby location understand a classmate discussing a simple problem that arose in class understand the main ideas in news reports broadcast on the radio or TV understand explanations about how to perform a routine task related to my class understand a person in social situations talking about his/her background, family, or interests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognize memorized words and phrases (e.g., “Exit,” “Entrance,” and “Stop”) understand familiar words and very simple sentences read and understand traffic signs understand short, simple texts (e.g., personal letters) read, on storefronts, the type of store or services provided (e.g., “dry cleaning,” “book store”) read and understand a simple e-mail from a friend read and understand a train or bus schedule read and understand simple, step-by-step instructions (e.g., how to operate an electronic machine, like a CD player) understand texts that consist mainly of everyday words or vocabulary read and understand a restaurant menu find information that I need in a telephone directory read and understand a letter of thanks from a friend or a relative read information about products (e.g., advertisements) read and understand the main points of an article on a familiar academic topic read and understand directions and explanations presented in manuals written for beginning users read entertainment-related information (e.g., tourist guides)
Can Do with Difficulty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand headline news broadcasts on the radio understand public announcements that are broadcast understand extended speech and lectures, and follow complex arguments on familiar topics understand a discussion of current events taking place among a group of persons speaking English understand a complex presentation or demonstration given in a classroom understand an explanation given over the radio of why a road has been temporarily closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> read highly technical material related to my classes with little use of a dictionary read English to translate text into my own language (e.g., letters and technical documents) read and understand magazine articles without using a dictionary read a newspaper editorial and understand its meaning as well as the writer’s intent understand the viewpoints expressed in articles and reports about contemporary issues or problems read and understand a popular novel
Cannot Do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> understand play-by-play descriptions on the radio of sports events that I like (e.g., soccer) understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured understand an extended debate on a complex topic such as public health understand any kind of spoken language, even when people speak quickly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify inconsistencies or differences in points of view in two newspaper interviews with politicians of opposing parties understand long, complex texts, even technical ones that do not relate to my classes understand virtually all forms of written language including abstract and linguistically complex texts

We declare that the examinees in any score range cannot do a task if less than 50% of them indicated that they can do it easily or with little difficulty. We declare that the examinees in any score range can do a task with difficulty if between 50% and 80% of them indicated that they can do it easily or with little difficulty.

We declare that the examinees in any score range can do a task if more than 80% of them indicated that they can do it easily or with little difficulty. Table 4 was created using the information contained in Tables 2 and 3.

Common European Framework-related statements are shown in bold.

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