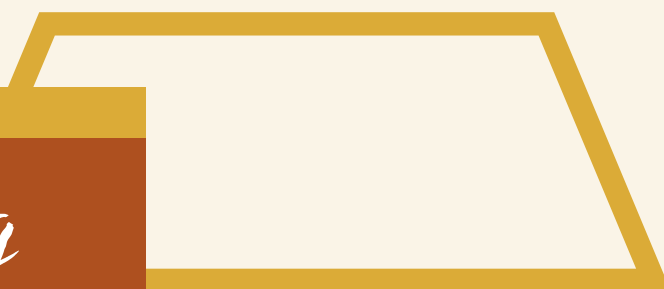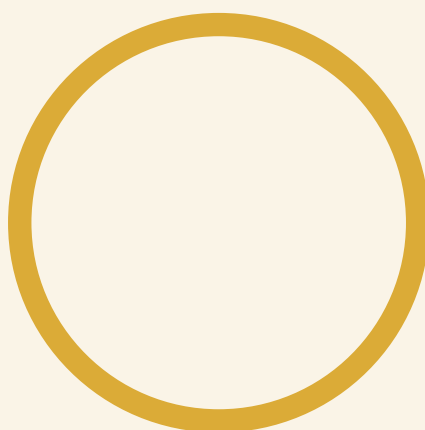# *toeic bridge®

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The Redesigned TOEIC Bridge® Tests: Relations to Test-Taker Perceptions of Proficiency in English

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The redesigned four-skills TOEIC Bridge® tests were designed to measure the listening, reading, speaking, and writing proficiency of beginning to low – intermediate English learners in the context of everyday life. In this paper, I describe two studies that were conducted to investigate claims about the meaningfulness of redesigned TOEIC Bridge test scores by comparing them to self-assessments of listening, reading, speaking, and writing proficiency. In Study 1, test takers who participated in the redesigned TOEIC Bridge field test in Japan and Taiwan completed an online self-assessment survey of their speaking and writing proficiency. In Study 2, test takers who participated in pretesting for the redesigned TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading test in Japan and Taiwan completed a paper-based self-assessment survey of their listening and reading proficiency. Both studies were designed with the same research questions in mind in order to evaluate claims about the meaning of redesigned TOEIC Bridge test scores and to enhance the interpretation of test scores by relating them to test takers' self-assessed ability to perform a variety of related tasks. The results indicated that self-assessments had medium correlations with redesigned TOEIC Bridge Listening test scores ($r = .55$), Reading test scores ($r = .54$), Speaking test scores ($r = .51$), and Writing test scores ($r = .46$). These results compare favorably with the results of similar studies of the relationship between test scores and self-assessments of language proficiency and provide evidence to support claims about the meaningfulness of TOEIC Bridge test scores. In addition, the pattern of results across TOEIC Bridge test proficiency levels and can-do statements taken from language proficiency standards suggests that the tests meaningfully differentiate test-takers' proficiency levels, an important consideration of test design.

One of the most critical activities in assessment is establishing the meaning of test scores and communicating it in terms that test takers and score users can understand. The meaning of test scores is elaborated in the definition of the ability to be assessed (i.e., the construct), established by validity research, and may be expanded by research that relates scores to practical information about test takers' abilities. The construct definition elaborates the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be evaluated by the test and is often based on theory and an analysis of the knowledge, skills, abilities, and tasks that commonly occur in real-world language use (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). The construct definition, once articulated and justified by theory and domain analysis, essentially becomes a claim about the meaning of test scores (Mislevy, 2013).

The redesigned *TOEIC Bridge®* tests aim to assess the listening, reading, speaking, and writing proficiency of beginning to lower – intermediate English language learners in the context of everyday life (Schmidgall et al., 2019). For each of the four testing components (listening, reading, speaking, and writing), a construct definition was developed based on a review of theory and influential language proficiency standards. For each test component (language skill), the construct definition elaborates the communication goals to be measured by the test and the linguistic knowledge and subcompetencies that are needed to achieve these goals. For example, in the construct definition of the Listening test section, test takers are expected to understand commonly occurring spoken texts as well as simple descriptions of people, places, objects, and actions (a communication goal). This requires using knowledge of common vocabulary and formulaic phrases (lexical knowledge, a component of linguistic knowledge). According to the construct definition, the ability to achieve each communication goal requires the use of multiple components of linguistic knowledge (e.g., lexical, grammatical, discourse, phonological).

The role of validity research is to investigate the extent to which claims about the meaning and use of test scores are supported by evidence (Schmidgall & Xi, 2020). One common approach in validity research is to examine the strength of the relationship between test scores and other measures of the same construct, or a criterion measure (American Educational Research Association et al., 2014). As Powers and Powers (2015) have pointed out, learner self-assessments provide useful information in a variety of contexts, including general education (Falchikov & Boud, 1989; Ross, 2006), personality research (Ackerman et al., 2002), occupational psychology (Mabe & West, 1982), and language learning (Bachman & Palmer, 1989; Ross, 1998). One of the potential advantages of self-assessment as a method for evaluating proficiency is that learners may have more complete knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses (Shrauger & Osberg, 1981; Upshur, 1975). However, self-assessments may have important limitations as well. Studies that have compared student self-assessments of language abilities with teacher or peer assessments have generally found that students rated themselves more severely than peers (Matsuno, 2009) and teachers (Iwamoto, 2015), and teacher judgments were more strongly correlated with language test performance (Johansson, 2013). Thus, as Ross (1998) argued in his meta-analysis of self-assessments of language proficiency, self-assessments have been shown to be useful as criterion measures of proficiency, but the accuracy of self-assessments may be influenced by learners' experience with the specific task(s) described in the self-assessment instrument. Essentially, learners are more likely to provide accurate and useful self-assessments for tasks with which they have prior experience. Consequently, self-assessment ratings are likely to be influenced by both the sample of learners (their background and experiences) and the self-assessment instrument itself (its relevance to learners).

To further elaborate the meaning of test scores, research may also be conducted to map test scores to language proficiency standards or external measures of language proficiency (Papageorgiou et al., 2015). In the case of the redesigned TOEIC Bridge tests, influential language proficiency standards were carefully examined during the construct definition and task development phases of test design (see Everson et al., 2019; Schmidgall et al., 2019). This included the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages (Council of Europe, 2018), Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB; Centre for CLB, 2012), and American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency guide- lines (ACTFL, 2012). These language proficiency standards include descriptors of the types of language knowledge and use that may be expected at different levels of proficiency, and TOEIC Bridge test tasks were designed to target different levels of proficiency (beginner, high beginner, low intermediate) based on a review of relevant descriptors in the CEFR, CLB, and ACTFL proficiency guidelines (Schmidgall et al., 2019). Consequently, the proposed alignment between levels of language proficiency standards and test scores may also inform expectations about additional types of activities that test takers should be able to perform at different score levels. Typically, each level of a language proficiency standard is associated with a wide range of descriptions of both expected language use and specific communicative activities. Although the ability to perform some of these communicative activities may be directly measured by a test, many are not. A mapping study can provide convincing evidence of correspondence between test scores and specific levels of a language proficiency standard (one that is presumably sufficiently backed by research). In such cases, it may be reasonable to expect that test takers at a particular level are able to perform tasks associated with that level even if the tasks are not directly measured by the test. Regardless, one may expect that tasks associated with higher levels of language proficiency based on language proficiency standards would be perceived as increasingly more difficult to perform by TOEIC Bridge test takers.

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The Current Studies

The studies described in this paper investigated the meaningfulness of redesigned TOEIC Bridge test scores by comparing performance on the test to self-assessments of language ability. This investigation examined claims about meaningfulness in several ways.

Research Question 1: What Is the Relationship Between Redesigned TOEIC Bridge Test Scores and Self-assessments?

First, the strength of the relationship between scores on each TOEIC Bridge test component (listening, reading, speaking, and writing) and self-assessments of these abilities was examined in order to determine the extent to which test scores are related to an external measure of the same ability.

Research Question 2: What Activities Do Test Takers at Different Proficiency Levels Report Being able to Perform?

Second, the meaningfulness of scores may be expanded by elaborating the types of activities that test takers at different levels of proficiency report being able to perform. This information may supplement score-based interpretations by elaborating the types of real-world activities that test takers at each proficiency level report being able to perform with a specified degree of confidence.

Research Question 3: To What Extent Do Test Takers Report Being able to Perform Activities as Expected on the Basis of Their Redesigned TOEIC Bridge Test Scores (Proficiency Levels)?

Finally, the relative difficulty of different communicative activities for test takers at different levels of proficiency, as indicated in self-assessments, can be examined to determine the extent to which it aligns with theoretical expectations based on test design. The redesigned TOEIC Bridge tests were designed with the expectation that learners at some levels of proficiency should be more (or less) able than test takers at other levels to accomplish particular tasks. Therefore, this analysis may provide evidence to support assumptions about the meaning of test scores based on construct definition and the test design process. Consequently, one might expect that a reasonable percentage of test takers at beginning levels of proficiency, as measured by the test, should report mainly being able to perform tasks associated with only beginner levels of proficiency based on language proficiency standards (i.e., CEFR Levels A1 to A2; CLB Level 1 – 4; ACTFL Novice High), and a higher percentage of test takers at intermediate levels of proficiency as measured by the test should report being able to perform tasks associated with intermediate levels of proficiency based on language proficiency standards.

Two studies were conducted to investigate each of these research questions in relation to the redesigned TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing tests (Study 1) and the TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading test (Study 2). Due to practical constraints, the studies were performed 6 months apart using different samples of test takers.

Study 1: Speaking and Writing

Test takers who participated in the redesigned TOEIC Bridge tests field study (see Lin et al., 2019) were invited to complete an online self-assessment survey approximately 2 months after the field test. In total, 1,659 test takers from Japan and Taiwan were invited, and 1,056 participated, a response rate of 64%. The response rate was higher in Japan (n = 935, response rate of 70%) and lower in Taiwan (n = 121, response rate of 30%). The distribution of TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing test scores of respondents from each country was similar to the field study, although Taiwanese respondents were slightly more proficient than the overall sample of Taiwanese participants in the field study. As shown in Table 1, the subgroups varied somewhat in terms of their demographic characteristics: The Taiwanese sample had relatively more female respondents and was relatively younger in terms of average age. The samples also differed in terms of the proportion identifying as employed (full- or part-time) or students: A majority of Japanese respondents indicated they were employed (72% employed, 24% students), whereas a majority of Taiwanese respondents indicated they were students (58% students, 41% employed).

The online self-assessment survey consisted of a series of *can-do statements* that described various communicative tasks that involved speaking or writing skills. The speaking section included 24 statements. Seven statements were included based on their relevance to the TOEIC Bridge Speaking test construct definition, which elaborates the communication goals and linguistic skills the test measures (see Schmidgall et al., 2019). For example, one of the communication goals assessed is the ability to ask for and provide basic information; this was included as the can-do statement, "ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics." The remaining 17 statements were based on descriptors drawn from proficiency levels from three different language proficiency standards (ACTFL Novice High to Intermediate High, CEFR A1 to B2, CLB 1 – 6). The writing section also included 24 statements, five based on their relevance to the TOEIC Bridge Writing test construct definition and the remaining 19 based on their relevance to language proficiency standards. The statements were selected from standards in order to represent a range of tasks across proficiency levels (stratified by proficiency level) and distinct activities (to avoid too much overlap between descriptors within each section). In the online survey, items were randomly ordered within each section (speaking and writing), and the order in which each section was presented was counterbalanced.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants in the Speaking and Writing Can-Do Survey

TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing can-do survey sample	n	TOEIC Bridge Speaking, *M (SD)*	TOEIC Bridge Writing, *M (SD)*	% Female	Age in years, *M (SD)*
Japan	935	36.60 (8.35)	41.63 (7.96)	48	34.1 (11.4)
Taiwan	121	37.89 (10.12)	40.99 (9.16)	67	25.0 (9.1)

The survey was originally drafted in English and then translated into participants' first languages (Japanese and Taiwanese Mandarin) prior to administration. After reading each statement (e.g., "When speaking in English, I can ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics"), participants selected a response to indicate their ability to perform the communicative task (1 = *Cannot do at all*; 2 = *Can do with great difficulty*; 3 = *Can do with some difficulty*; 4 = *Can do with little difficulty*; 5 = *Can do easily*). For each language skill, can-do statements were identified and coded to correspond to (a) the communication goals targeted by the relevant TOEIC Bridge test construct definition, and/or (b) communicative activities described in various language proficiency standards, including CEFR, CLB, and ACTFL.

Analysis

After data were collected for the surveys, a validity check was conducted to identify and screen out unmotivated responses from the analysis. The validity check identified participants whose response times suggested they did not read a substantial portion of the items (*speeders*) and participants whose responses across items were unreasonably invariant (*invariant responders*). Speeders ($n = 47$) were identified by comparing response times in the online survey to benchmarks established by research assistants who were instructed to complete the survey as quickly as possible. Invariant responders ($n = 25$) were identified by examining the distribution of standard deviations of participants' mean response to items in the survey. After excluding participants whose mean response was at extreme ends of the scale — potentially valid response patterns whose standard deviations would necessarily be small — a cutoff point was identified to indicate unreasonably invariant respondents. In total, 72 participants in the survey were screened out in the validity check, reducing the overall sample to 984 participants for the analysis (Japan = 873; Taiwan = 111).

For each can-do scale (speaking and writing), a scale analysis was conducted for each subgroup (Japan and Taiwan) and the overall sample. Research has shown that self-assessment of language abilities can vary based on background factors (Iwamoto, 2015), and differences between the subgroups potentially include proficiency level, age, and cultural background. The scale analysis included estimates of item difficulty, item – total correlations, and estimates of reliability using Cronbach's alpha. Self-assessment scores for each skill were estimated by calculating the average of responses to individual self-assessment items. To answer the first research question, the relationship between TOEIC Bridge test scaled scores and self-assessment scores for each subpopulation and the overall sample was quantified using Pearson correlations. Correlations may range from −1.00 (perfect negative relationship) to +1.00 (perfect positive relationship) and can be interpreted as the strength of the relationship between two measures. A conventional standard in social science research is to interpret correlations of .50 and above as "large," and correlations between .30 and .50 as "medium" (Cohen, 1988), but this recommendation was updated by Plonsky and Oswald (2014) to .60 and above as large and .40 – .59 as medium based on their broad review of studies in second language research.

To answer the second research question, tables were prepared for each self-assessment scale that displayed, for each TOEIC Bridge test proficiency level (1 – 4), the percentage of participants who indicated they were able to perform each communicative task. Because participants rated the degree of effort needed to perform each task, the ordinal scale of ratings (1 – 5) needed to be transformed to dichotomous ratings (not able to do, able to do). In previous research, different standards have been applied to rescale can-do ratings (Ito et al., 2005; Powers et al., 2009). In line with previous research, we considered two standards for rescaling ratings: defining "likely able to do" by ratings of "with some difficulty," "with little difficulty," and "easily" (less stringent standard) and by ratings of "with little difficulty" and "easily" (more stringent standard). Ultimately, we used the less stringent standard based on two reasons. First, we considered the interpretability of results when using each standard. Second, lower proficiency learners in the Japan and Taiwan testing populations have been historically more likely to focus on listening and reading than on speaking and writing skills. As a result, they may be expected to have comparatively less experience and confidence in their ability to perform speaking and writing tasks, and this is likely to be reflected in their self-assessments. Thus, the tables for speaking and writing still indicate the speaking and writing tasks that participants think they can do, but the results also reflect the comparatively lower degree of confidence that participants may have in these abilities. In other words, when participants reported being able to perform a task (but only with some difficulty), we gave them the benefit of the doubt, classifying them as likely able to do.

Table 2 Correlations Among Speaking and Writing Can-Do Self-Assessments and TOEIC Bridge Scores for the Overall Sample (*N* = 984)

Measure	*M (SD)*	TOEIC Bridge Speaking score	TOEIC Bridge Writing score	Can-do speaking score
TOEIC Bridge score				
Speaking	36.74 (8.48)			
Writing	41.58 (8.06)	.64		
Can-do score				
Speaking	2.85 (0.78)	.51	.40	
Writing	3.12 (0.80)	.49	.46	.82

Note. All correlations are significant at the *p* < .001 level.

After the tables were prepared, the pattern of results was analyzed to determine the extent to which they conformed to expectations in order to answer the third research question. Based on the design of the test and an initial CEFR map- ping study (Schmidgall, in press), test takers at TOEIC Bridge proficiency Level 1 should be able to perform some tasks associated with CEFR Level Pre-A1. Test takers at proficiency Level 2 should be able to perform tasks associated with CEFR Level Pre-A1 and some tasks associated with CEFR Level A1. Test takers at proficiency Level 3 should be able to perform tasks associated with CEFR Levels Pre-A1 and A1, and some tasks associated with CEFR Level A2. Test takers at proficiency Level 4 should be able to perform tasks associated with CEFR Levels Pre-A1 to A2, and some tasks associated with CEFR Levels B1 and above.

Results of Study 1

Table 2 shows the correlations between TOEIC Speaking and Writing scores and test takers' assessments of their ability to perform the can-do tasks, as defined by the average of their responses to each can-do scale. All the measures had adequate reliability (internal consistency): The reliability of TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing scores using stratified alpha ranged from alpha = .78 to .87 (see Lin et al., 2019), and the reliability of the can-do speaking and writing scales using coefficient alpha ranged from alpha = .97 to .99.

As shown in Table 2, TOEIC Bridge Speaking test scores had a medium correlation with self-assessed speaking skills ($r = .51$), and TOEIC Bridge Writing test scores had a medium correlation with self-assessed writing skills ($r = .46$). This relationship was similar for Japanese and Taiwanese participants. Generally, TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing test scores had medium correlations with self-assessed speaking and writing skills for the Japanese ($r = .51$ and 44, respectively) and Taiwanese ($r = .54$ and .58) participants.

Tables 3 and 4 show, for each task in the survey, the percentages of test takers at each TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing score level who thought they could perform the task easily or with little difficulty. The list of tasks is arranged by easiest to most difficult, as indicated by the mean response on the original rating scale (1 – 5) for each task. The correlation between TOEIC Bridge test scores and ratings for each task is also shown in the table. Correlations ranged from $r = .37$ to .46 (median $r = .425$) for speaking tasks, and from $r = .31$ to .43 (median $r = .38$) for writing tasks. The tables also employ a highlighting convention used in previous research in order to more clearly indicate patterns in overall percentages of test takers who believed they could perform each task across proficiency levels (e.g., Powers, Bravo et al., 2008; Powers, Kim, & Weng, et al., 2008; Powers et al., 2009). For the convenience of score users, these results may also be summarized to indicate the tasks that test takers report being able to perform (or not perform) at each TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing test proficiency level. Following the convention and rationale of previous research, for each TOEIC Bridge Speaking or Writing proficiency level we indicated the tasks that test takers indicated they (a) probably can do, (b) probably can do with difficulty, and (c) probably cannot do (Powers et al., 2009). These can-do table summaries are provided in Appendices A (speaking) and B (writing).

Table 3 Percentages of TOEIC Bridge Test Takers, by Speaking Proficiency Level, Who Indicated They Could Perform Various English Speaking Tasks Easily, With Little Difficulty, or With Some Difficulty

ID#	Descriptor ("I can...")	TOEIC Bridge Speaking proficiency level						Correlation with TOEIC Bridge Speaking	Corresponding standard(s)
		1	2	3	4				
		TOEIC Bridge Speaking scaled score							
		15–22	23–36	37–42	43–50	M	SD		
S15	Ask a few simple, formulaic questions in social situations (for example: "How are you?," "Where are you from?," "What do you do for fun?")	71	89	97	99	3.82	0.94	.43	ACTFL Nov-H
S19	Give basic personal information in response to a direct question from a supportive listener (for example: your name, where you are from)	58	84	92	99	3.56	0.96	.44	CLB1
S08	Read aloud a very short, rehearsed statement	52	82	91	95	3.53	1.00	.40	CEFR A1
S04	Give simple directions	49	72	85	93	3.20	0.93	.42	CEFR A2; CLB3; ACTFL Int-M
S09	Give a short, rehearsed basic presentation on a familiar subject	43	72	80	88	3.17	1.00	.37	CEFR A2
S20	Open a short conversation with someone who is familiar and supportive	44	61	78	94	3.17	1.05	.45	CLB2
S07	Use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know	42	66	81	92	3.13	0.96	.46	CEFR A1
S17	Ask a variety of questions to obtain simple information about everyday things (for example: directions, prices, and services)	38	65	78	93	3.13	0.98	.46	ACTFL Int-M
S06	Make simple requests, offers, and suggestions	36	61	80	92	3.03	0.94	.43	CEFR A2+; CLB5; ACTFL Int-M-H
S01	Ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics	31	57	74	91	2.97	0.96	.45	CEFR A1; CLB1-2; ACTFL Nov-H
S11	Can explain what I like or dislike about something	31	58	72	89	2.93	0.96	.43	CEFR A2+
S21	Give simple, common, routine instructions and directions to a familiar person	31	49	66	84	2.83	0.97	.43	CLB3
S22	Participate in a very short, simple phone call with a familiar person	22	44	65	84	2.81	1.08	.43	CLB4
S02	Describe people, objects, places, and activities	29	51	67	85	2.81	0.92	.39	CEFR A2; CLB2; ACTFL Int-L
S05	Narrate and sequence simple events	25	46	65	87	2.80	0.93	.46	CEFR A2+; CLB4
S10	Handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself	32	39	56	76	2.64	1.02	.37	CEFR A2
S03	Express an opinion on plan and give a reason for it	21	36	57	78	2.62	0.94	.45	CEFR B1; CLB506; ACTFL Int-M-H
S13	Give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions	18	31	47	72	2.48	0.97	.42	CEFR B1
S16	Use simple words and phrases fluently and <u>accurately</u> in social situations	13	25	44	64	2.37	1.01	.37	ACTFL Int-L
S12	Narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions	18	22	43	65	2.34	0.92	.39	CEFR B1
S18	Converse with ease and confidence when dealing with everyday tasks and social situations	13	24	40	64	2.33	0.94	.40	ACTFL Int-H
S23	Agree, disagree, and give opinions in small group discussions or meetings	10	22	43	62	2.29	0.96	.40	CLB5
S14	Explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options	9	22	37	57	2.22	0.92	.37	CEFR B2
S24	Give a detailed presentation (~7 min long) about a familiar topic	6	19	33	56	2.14	0.98	.37	CLB6
	Sample size for score interval	77	318	300	289				

Note. ACTFL = American Council on the Teaching Foreign Languages; CEFR = Common European Framework of Reference; CLB = Canadian Language Benchmarks.

| [0–29] | [30–49] | [50–69] | [70–79] | [80–89] | [90–100] |

In Tables 3 and 4, as the percentage of test takers who report being able to perform the task increases, the color shading get darker. Thus, when viewed from left to right, the pattern of color shading is a rough visual indicator of the percentages of test takers who report being able to perform each task (i.e., with no, little, or some difficulty), ordered by TOEIC Bridge test proficiency level. When viewed from top to bottom, the pattern of color shading is a rough indicator of the percentages of test takers who can perform each task at each proficiency level, ordered from easiest to most difficult task.

The percentage of participants who indicated they could perform each of the tasks in Tables 3 and 4 increased across each TOEIC Bridge test proficiency level. For example, the first task in Table 4 is "write basic personal identification information, words, simple phrases, and a few sentences about highly familiar information related to everyday life" (ID# W20). As the TOEIC Bridge Writing test proficiency level increased from 1 to 4, the percentage of participants who indicated they could perform the task increased from 62% to 74% (Level 1 – 2), from 74% to 88% (Level 2 – 3), and from 88% to 97% (Level 3 – 4). If TOEIC Bridge test proficiency levels were poor indicators of test takers' speaking and writing proficiency at beginning to low intermediate levels, we would expect to observe a less consistent pattern of results. Across both surveys, all 48 tasks conformed to this pattern.

Table 4 Percentages of TOEIC Bridge Test Takers, by Writing Proficiency Level, Who Indicated They Could Perform Various English Writing Tasks Easily, With Little Difficulty, or With Some Difficulty

		TOEIC Bridge Writing proficiency level						Correlation with TOEIC Bridge Speaking	
		1	2	3	4				
		TOEIC Bridge Writing scaled score							
ID#	Descriptor ("I can…")	15–19	20–36	32–42	43–50	M	SD		Corresponding standard(s)
S15	Ask a few simple, formulaic questions in social situations (for example: "How are you?," "Where are you from?," "What do you do for fun?"	71	89	97	99	3.82	0.94	.43	ACTFL Nov-H
S19	Give basic personal information in response to a direct question from a supportive listener (for example: your name, where you are from)	58	84	92	99	3.56	0.96	.44	CLB1
S08	Read aloud a very short, rehearsed statement	52	82	91	95	3.53	1.00	.40	CEFR A1
S04	Give simple directions	49	72	85	93	3.20	0.93	.42	CEFR A2; CLB3; ACTFL Int-M
S09	Give a short, rehearsed basic presentation on a familiar subject	43	72	80	88	3.17	1.00	.37	CEFR A2
S20	Open a short conversation with someone who is familiar and supportive	44	61	78	94	3.17	1.05	.45	CLB2
S07	Use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know	42	66	81	92	3.13	0.96	.46	CEFR A1
S17	Ask a variety of questions to obtain simple information about everyday things (for example: directions, prices, and services)	38	65	78	93	3.13	0.98	.46	ACTFL Int-M
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S01	Ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics	31	57	74	91	2.97	0.96	.45	CEFR A1; CLB1-2; ACTFL Nov-H
S11	Can explain what I like or dislike about something	31	58	72	89	2.93	0.96	.43	CEFR A2+
S21	Give simple, common, routine instructions and directions to a familiar person	31	49	66	84	2.83	0.97	.43	CLB3
S22	Participate in a very short, simple phone call with a familiar person	22	44	65	84	2.81	1.08	.43	CLB4
S02	Describe people, objects, places, and activities	29	51	67	85	2.81	0.92	.39	CEFR A2; CLB2; ACTFL Int-L
S05	Narrate and sequence simple events	25	46	65	87	2.80	0.93	.46	CEFR A2+; CLB4
S10	Handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself	32	39	56	76	2.64	1.02	.37	CEFR A2
S03	Express an opinion on plan and give a reason for it	21	36	57	78	2.62	0.94	.45	CEFR B1; CLB506; ACTFL Int-M-H
S13	Give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions	18	31	47	72	2.48	0.97	.42	CEFR B1
S16	Use simple words and phrases fluently and accurately in social situations	13	25	44	64	2.37	1.01	.37	ACTFL Int-L
S12	Narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions	18	22	43	65	2.34	0.92	.39	CEFR B1
S18	Converse with ease and confidence when dealing with everyday tasks and social situations	13	24	40	64	2.33	0.94	.40	ACTFL Int-H
S23	Agree, disagree, and give opinions in small group discussions or meetings	10	22	43	62	2.29	0.96	.40	CLB5
S14	Explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options	9	22	37	57	2.22	0.92	.37	CEFR B2
S24	Give a detailed presentation (~7 min long) about a familiar topic	6	19	33	56	2.14	0.98	.37	CLB6
	Sample size for score interval	77	318	300	289				

Note. ACTFL = American Council on the Teaching Foreign Languages; CEFR = Common European Framework of Reference; CLB = Canadian Language Benchmarks.

[0–29]	[30–49]	[50–69]	[70–79]	[80–89]	[90–100]

In addition, Tables 3 and 4 show the language proficiency standards and levels that correspond to each task in the survey. Overall, the percentages of test takers at different TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing proficiency levels who reported being able to perform different speaking tasks corresponds to what one might expect based on language proficiency standards. In the case of CEFR descriptors, tasks corresponding to CEFR Levels Pre-A1, A1, A2, A2+, B1, and B2 have been included in the survey. As tasks are rated increasingly difficult to perform by participants, CEFR levels associated with tasks generally increase. For example, in Table 3, the speaking task "read aloud a very short, rehearsed statement" (ID# S08) is associated with CEFR Level A1. TOEIC Bridge proficiency Level 2 is associated with this CEFR level (see Schmidgall, in press), and 82% of participants at this level reported being able to perform this task with some degree of confidence. Also in Table 3, the task "narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions" (ID# S12) is associated with CEFR Level B1. Only 22% of participants at TOEIC Bridge Speaking proficiency Level 2 reported being able to perform this task, whereas 65% of participants at proficiency Level 4, associated with CEFR Level B1, reported being able to perform the task. In general, a similar pattern can be observed for tasks associated with CLB proficiency levels (from 1 to 6) and ACTFL proficiency levels (from Novice High to Intermediate High).

Summary of the Results of Study 1

TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing test scores had medium correlations with self-assessments of speaking ($r = .51$) and writing ($r = .46$). Although these are not large correlations, they compare favorably to the results of similar validity studies that have used self-assessments as a criterion measure of speaking and writing skills. In a study of the relationship between TOEIC Speaking and Writing test scores and self-assessments of speaking and writing ability, Powers et al. (2009) estimated similar correlations for speaking ($r = .54$) and writing ($r = .52$). Li (2015) examined the relationship between the Michigan English Placement Test (MEPT; www.michiganassessment.org/blog/category/mept) Writing scores and self- assessments of writing ability ($r = .37$), and between *TOEFL iBT®* Speaking and Writing scores and self-assessments of speaking ($r = .37$) and writing ($r = .22$) ability. In an earlier study, Powers et al. (2003) investigated the relationship between LanguEdge Speaking and Writing scores and self-assessments of speaking ($r = .43$) and writing ($r = .26$) ability. With this context in mind, the results of this study provide support for the claim that TOEIC Bridge Speaking and Writing test scores are meaningful indicators of speaking and writing ability. In addition, the pattern of results is largely consistent with expectations based on the design of the test and its consideration of relevant language proficiency standards.

Study 2: Listening and Reading

Test takers who participated in pretesting of redesigned TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading test forms in Japan (*n* = 2,063) and Taiwan (*n* = 3,109) also completed a paper-based self-assessment survey. As shown in Table 5, the mean TOEIC Bridge Reading and Listening scores were higher for the Taiwanese sample compared to the Japanese sample of participants. Among the Japanese participants who reported demographic information, approximately 33% were female, and the average age was 16 (ages ranged from 10 to 20). Among the Taiwanese participants who reported demographic information, approximately 58% were female, and the average age was also 16 (ages ranged from 11 to 24). The majority of Japanese participants were enrolled in high school (55%), and most Taiwanese participants were enrolled in vocational high schools (81%).

The development of the listening and reading survey mirrored the approach used for the speaking and writing survey in Study 1. The survey was developed in English and then translated for administration to participants in local languages. Unlike the speaking and writing survey, however, the reading and listening survey largely emphasized tasks from one set of language proficiency standards, the CEFR. This was done in order to make the listening and reading survey more comparable to self-assessments administered for the legacy version of the TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading tests, which only utilized descriptors from the CEFR (e.g., Powers, Bravo, et al., 2008; Powers, Kim, & Weng, et al., 2008; Powers et al., 2013; Powers & Simpson, 2008; Powers & Yan, 2013).

The paper-based survey consisted of can-do statements that described communicative tasks that involved listening or reading skills. The listening section included 20 statements, seven based on their relevance to the TOEIC Bridge Listening test construct definition, and the remaining 13 based on their relevance to the CEFR. The reading section included 19 statements, six based on their relevance to the TOEIC Bridge Reading test construct definition and the remaining 13 based on their relevance to the CEFR. Similar to Study 1, the statements were selected from the CEFR in order to represent a range of tasks across proficiency levels (stratified by proficiency level) and distinct activities (to avoid too much overlap between descriptors within each section).

Table 5 Demographic Characteristics of Participants in the Speaking and Writing Can-Do Survey

TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading can-do survey sample	*n*	TOEIC Bridge Listening, *M (SD)*	TOEIC Bridge Reading, *M (SD)*	% Female	Age in years, *M (SD)*
Japan	2,063	27.21 (7.25)	31.38 (7.56)	33	16.9 (0.8)
Taiwan	3,109	34.73 (9.00)	38.15 (8.32)	58	16.7 (2.8)

Analysis

Because the listening and reading survey was paper-based, the initial validity check was only able to include an analysis of invariant responses; it was unable incorporate an analysis of response times. Using the same procedure to identify invariant responders as described for the speaking and writing survey in Study 1, 587 participants were screened out in the validity check, reducing the overall sample of participants in the listening and reading survey to 4,585 for the analysis (Japan = 1,918; Taiwan = 2,667).

Using the same approach as Study 1, scale analysis was conducted for the can-do scale (listening and reading) and included estimates of item difficulty, item – total correlations, and estimates of reliability using Cronbach's alpha. Self- assessment scores for each skill were estimated by calculating the average of responses to individual self-assessment items. The relationship between TOEIC Bridge scaled scores and self-assessment scores for each subpopulation and the overall sample was calculated via Pearson correlations. Finally, tables were prepared for each self-assessment scale that estimated the percentage of participants at each TOEIC Bridge test score level (1 – 4) that indicated they were likely to be able to perform each communicative task. As in Study 1, two different standards were considered for rescaling the results for the purpose of these tables. Ultimately, the more stringent standard was used after considering the interpretability of results and the expectation that learners in this population have been historically more likely to focus (and be assessed) on their listening and reading skills. This approach is also consistent with similar research that has been conducted with this learner population (e.g., Powers, Bravo et al., 2008; Powers & Simpson, 2008; Powers & Yan, 2013). After the tables were prepared, the pattern of results was analyzed to determine the extent to which it conformed to expectations in order to answer the third research question.

Results of Study 2

Table 6 shows the correlations between TOEIC Listening and Reading scores and test takers' self-assessments of their ability to perform reading and listening tasks. Again, all measures had adequate reliability: The reliability of TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading scores using coefficient alpha has ranged from alpha = .88 to .93 (see Lin et al., 2019), and the reliability of the can-do listening and reading scales using coefficient alpha ranged from alpha = .96 to .98.

As shown in Table 6, TOEIC Bridge Listening test scores had a medium correlation with self-assessed listening skills (r = .55), and TOEIC Bridge Reading test scores had a medium correlation with self-assessed reading skills (r = .54). Again, this relationship differed slightly by subgroups. TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading test scores had a large correlation with self-assessed listening and reading skills for the Taiwanese (r = .61 and .59, respectively) participants as compared to small correlations for the Japanese (r = .28 and .28) participants. This difference does not appear to be attributable to a difference in the reliability (internal consistency) of can-do scores across subpopulations, as the measures of internal consistency of the listening and reading can-do scales for Japanese participants (alpha = .96, .97) and Taiwanese participants (alpha = .98, .98) were high.

Tables 7 and 8 indicate the percentages of test takers at each TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading score level that we defined (according to their reports) as likely to be able to perform each of the tasks in the survey. Again, the list of tasks is arranged by easiest to most difficult based on the mean response on the original rating scale (1 – 5) for each task. The correlations between TOEIC Bridge test scores and ratings for each task ranged from r = .38 to .51 (median r = .46) for listening tasks and from r = .36 to .49 (median r = .43) for reading tasks. The tables use the same highlighting convention introduced earlier, and results are summarized by proficiency levels in Appendices C (listening) and D (reading) using the same method described in Study 1.

Table 6 Correlations Among Listening and Reading Can-Do Self-Assessments and TOEIC Bridge Scores for the Overall Sample (*N* = 4,585)

Measure	M (SD)	TOEIC Bridge Listening score	TOEIC Bridge Reading score	Can-do listening score
TOEIC Bridge score				
Listening	31.56 (9.01)			
Reading	35.24 (8.54)	.79		
Can-do score				
Listening	3.78 (0.74)	.55	.52	
Reading	3.65 (0.77)	.54	.54	.87

Note. All correlations are significant at the *p* < .001 level.

For almost all of the tasks in Tables 7 and 8, the percentage of participants who indicated they could perform the task increased across each redesigned TOEIC Bridge test proficiency level. For example, the first task in Table 8 is "understand simple everyday signs such as 'Parking,' 'Station,' 'Stop'" (ID# R07). As the TOEIC Bridge Reading test proficiency level increased from 1 to 4, the percentage of participants who indicated they could perform the task increased from 47% to 67% (Level 1 – 2), from 67% to 84% (Level 2 – 3), and from 84% to 94% (Level 3 – 4). If TOEIC Bridge test proficiency levels are poor indicators of test takers' listening and reading proficiency at beginning to low intermediate levels, we would expect to observe a less consistent pattern of results. Across both surveys, only three of 39 tasks violated this pattern (ID# L06, R05, R19), and for these tasks, the discrepancy was between estimates at the lowest levels of proficiency with respect to their ability to perform more difficult tasks.

Table 7 Percentages of TOEIC Bridge Test Takers, by Listening Proficiency Level, Who Indicated They Could Perform Various English Listening Tasks Easily or With Little Difficulty

ID#	Descriptor ("I can…")	TOEIC Bridge Listening proficiency level						Correlation with TOEIC Bridge Speaking	Corresponding standard(s)
		1	2	3	4				
		TOEIC Bridge Listening scaled score							
		15	16–25	26–38	39–50	M	SD		
L08	Understand simple questions in social situations such as "How are you?" and "Where do you live?"	56	76	88	97	4.30	0.77	.38	CEFR Pre-A1
L09	Identify a few common key words and expressions (for example, "Help!" and "Watch out!")	49	71	83	96	4.21	0.83	.38	CEFR Pre-A1
L10	Recognize familiar words and simple phrases when people speak slowly and clearly	42	65	80	94	4.10	0.83	.41	CEFR A1
L11	Understand short, simple instructions addressed carefully and slowly	39	60	77	94	4.04	0.85	.43	CEFR A1
L05	Understand simple greetings and introductions	46	63	77	94	4.03	0.83	.43	CEFR Pre-A1 to A2
L03	Understand short announcements when they are spoken slowly and clearly	37	59	76	94	4.03	0.85	.44	CEFR A1 to A2
L12	Understand questions addressed carefully and slowly	38	55	73	93	3.97	0.87	.44	CEFR A1
L13	Understand simple, everyday conversations if conducted slowly and clearly	38	52	72	93	3.95	0.87	.45	CEFR A2
L01	Understand simple descriptions of people,places, objects, and actions	35	48	69	92	3.92	0.89	.46	CEFR A1 to A2
L02	Understand short conversations related to everyday life (for example, making a purchase)	31	42	65	91	3.83	0.90	.49	CEFR A1 to A2
L04	Understand words and phrases that are commonly used in everyday life, relating to people, places, things, and basic activities	33	44	63	88	3.79	0.88	.45	CEFR Pre-A1 to A2
L18	Understand someone who is speaking slowly and deliberately about his or her hobbies and interests	27	39	62	88	3.75	0.91	.47	CEFR B1
L14	Understand when speakers agree and disagree in a conversation conducted slowly and clearly	31	38	59	87	3.72	0.95	.47	CEFR A2+
L15	Understand the main point of simple messages and shot, clear announcements	29	36	56	85	3.6	0.93	.46	CEFR A2
L16	Generally identify the topic of a conversation around me if the speakers are talking slowly and clearly	27	34	57	85	3.65	0.96	.46	CEFR A2+
L17	Understand the main points and important details in stories (for example, a description of a vacation), provided the speaker talks slowly and clearly	19	32	51	82	3.58	0.95	.46	CEFR B1
L07	Understand the main idea in short announcements or talks	19	29	50	84	3.56	0.93	.51	CEFR A2 to B1
L19	Understand a person in social situations talking about his or her background, family, or interests	17	25	43	76	3.42	0.98	.47	CEFR B1+
L06	Understand a request that is indirect or implied	16	16	30	70	3.19	1.01	.48	CEFR B1
L20	Understand extended speech and lectures and follow complex arguments on familiar topics	11	13	25	61	2.99	1.106739	.46	CEFR B2
	Sample size for score interval	167	1,112	2,180	1,126				

Note. CEFR = Common European Framework of Reference.

[0–29]	[30–49]	[50–69]	[70–79]	[80–89]	[90–100]

Table 8 Percentages of TOEIC Bridge Test Takers, by Reading Proficiency Level, Who Indicated They Could Perform Various English Listening Tasks Easily or With Little Difficulty

ID#	Descriptor ("I can...")	1	2	3	4	M	SD	Correlation with TOEIC Bridge Speaking	Corresponding standard(s)
		15–18	19–33	34–44	45–50				
R07	Understand simple everyday signs such as "Parking," "Station," "Stop"	46	67	84	94	4.10	0.83	.36	CEFR Pre-A1
R08	Recognize familiar words if they are accompanied by pictures, such as in a menu	47	63	81	94	4.03	0.83	.40	CEFR Pre-A1
R10	Understand familiar words and very simple sentences	38	56	80	94	3.97	0.86	.44	CEFR A1
R02	Understand short informational and descriptive texts about people, places, objects, and actions	40	55	78	92	3.92	0.86	.43	CEFR A2
R01	Understand short, simple correspondence	41	52	74	90	3.88	0.89	.41	CEFR A2
R09	Find and understand simple, important information such as costs, dates, and locations in reading material that has visuals such as brochures or advertisements)	35	50	72	91	3.83	0.89	.43	CEFR A1
R04	Understand nonlinear written texts (for example, signs, schedules)	34	47	70	91	3.79	0.89	.42	CEFR A2
R13	Understand a train or bus schedule	36	44	69	90	3.74	0.94	.42	CEFR A2
R11	Understand short, simple messages in texts, emails, or on social networks	32	42	68	89	3.71	0.95	.44	CEFR A2
R03	Understand written instructions and directions (for example, a basic recipe, simple travel directions)	29	40	66	89	3.8	0.95	.46	CEFR A2
R15	Identify specific information in short text or articles that are written in simple language	31	37	65	89	3.66	0.94	.47	CEFR A2+
R14	Understand simple, step-by-step instructions	30	35	64	88	3.63	0.98	.47	CEFR A2
R12	Understand a simple email from a friend	30	34	63	87	3.61	0.997	.47	CEFR A2
R06	Understand the main idea and stated details in short, written texts	26	33	61	88	3.60	0.92	.49	CEFR B1 to B1+
R17	Understand the main points of an article on a familiar topic	23	30	58	84	3.51	1.01	.48	CEFR B1
R16	Read information about products (for example, advertisements)	27	29	52	9	3.45	0.97	.42	CEFR B1
R05	Infer the meaning of unknown written words through context clues	27	25	46	77	3.34	1.00	.43	CEFR A2+ to B1+
R18	Understand the viewpoints expressed in articles and reports about contemporary issues or problems	15	17	38	68	3.08	1.09	.42	CEFR B2
R19	Understand a popular novel	15	11	30	62	2.88	1.12	.43	CEFR B2
	Sample size for score interval	167	1,112	2,180	1,126				

Note. CEFR = Common European Framework of Reference.

[0–29] [30–49] [50–69] [70–79] [80–89] [90–100]

Tables 7 and 8 also show the CEFR levels that correspond to relevant tasks in the survey. Some of the tasks are directly related to the construct definition of the TOEIC Bridge Listening or Reading test and may be relevant to multiple CEFR levels; consequently, these tasks are not directly relevant to a specific CEFR level. Overall, the pattern of results conforms to the expectations that (a) participants indicated they were increasingly less able to perform tasks as associated CEFR proficiency levels increased from Pre-A1 to B2, and (b) the percentage of participants at each TOEIC Bridge proficiency level who indicated they were likely to perform each task was largely consistent with the task's classification in terms of its CEFR proficiency level. For example, in Table 7, the listening task "understand simple questions in social situations" (ID# L08) is associated with CEFR Level Pre-A1. TOEIC Bridge proficiency Level 1 is associated with this CEFR level, and 56% of participants at this level reported being able to perform this task. In comparison, the listening task "understand the main points of simple messages and short, clear announcements" (ID# L15) is associated with CEFR Level A2. Only 29% of participants at TOEIC Bridge proficiency Level 1 indicated they could perform this task, whereas 56% of participants at TOEIC Bridge proficiency Level 3, associated with CEFR Level A2, indicated they could perform the task. Although the degree of correspondence varied somewhat across items, the overall pattern was consistent with expectations.

Summary of the Results of Study 2

Redesigned TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading test scores had medium correlations with self-assessments of listening ($r = .55$) and reading ($r = .54$). Again, these results compare favorably with previous research that examined the relation- ship between reading and listening test scores and self-assessments. Validity studies for the legacy version of the TOEIC Bridge test found correlations assessments ranging from $r = .35$ to $.51$ between listening test scores and self-assessments, and ranging from $r = .22$ to $.49$ between reading test scores and self-assessments (Powers, Bravo et al., 2008; Powers & Simpson, 2008; Powers & Yan, 2013). Thus, the results of this study provide empirical support for the claim that TOEIC Bridge Listening and Reading test scores are meaningful indicators of listening and reading ability. In addition, the pat- tern of results is generally consistent with expectations based on the design of the test and its consideration of relevant language proficiency standards.

Discussion

The results of Studies 1 and 2 provide evidence to support the claim that redesigned TOEIC Bridge test scores are meaningful indicators of test takers' beginning to intermediate English listening, reading, speaking, and writing proficiency in the context of everyday life. The studies found medium correlations between TOEIC Bridge test scores and self-assessments of test takers' ability to perform everyday listening ($r = .55$), reading ($r = .54$), speaking ($r = .51$), and writing ($r = .46$) tasks relevant to beginning to intermediate levels of English proficiency. The strength of these correlations compares favorably with the results of similar validity studies, as discussed in the summary of each study. In addition, the pattern of results across TOEIC Bridge proficiency levels for each task suggests that TOEIC Bridge tests are able to clearly differentiate test takers at beginning to intermediate levels of English proficiency. Put more simply, higher performing TOEIC Bridge test takers were much more likely to report that they could perform each task. Finally, the pattern of results across tasks for each language skill suggests that TOEIC Bridge proficiency levels are reasonably well aligned with expectations regarding the kinds of tasks that test takers at each level should be able to perform based on how each proficiency level has been theorized.

The results of this study also provide information that may be referenced by score users to clarify the meaning of TOEIC Bridge test scores as they pertain to proficiency levels. The tables produced by the study (i.e., Tables 3, 4, 7, and 8) provide some indication of the extent to which test takers at different proficiency levels may be able to complete tasks of varying complexity, and the accompanying Appendices A– D summarize these tasks by language skill and proficiency level. This information can be used to get a broader sense of what learners at different proficiency levels can be expected to accomplish and provides additional evidence to support claims about TOEIC Bridge test score mapping with language proficiency standards such as the CEFR.

Several important limitations should be kept in mind when interpreting the results of this study, including the estimates provided for individual tasks in the can-do surveys (Tables 3, 4, 7, and 8, and Appendices A– D). First, the results are based on samples of test takers in Japan and Taiwan, and estimates may be expected to vary across different subpopulations of test takers. Second, our study included relatively small samples of test takers at some proficiency levels (e.g., proficiency Level 1 for reading and listening), and the overall sample used for Study 1 (speaking and writing) is relatively small; larger samples may be expected to produce more robust estimates. Third, self-assessments may be expected to be more accurate for tasks that learners have previously experienced (Ross, 1998). For example, it is unlikely that test takers at low English proficiency levels have attempted to read a popular novel in English (reading task ID# R19), so self-assessments at these levels involve a higher degree of inference on the part of learners. In comparing the results of Study 1 and Study 2, it is important to keep in mind that the studies involved slightly different populations of test takers. Although both studies involved samples of test takers in Japan and Taiwan who would be included in the target population of TOEIC Bridge test takers, participants in Study 1 were generally much older than participants in Study 2 (the average age in Japan was 34.1 for Study 1 and 16.9 for Study 2). In addition, self-assessments were collected at the same time as TOEIC Bridge test scores for Study 2, but self-assessments were collected approximately 2 months after TOEIC Bridge test scores were obtained in Study 1. Due to the potential interaction between learner characteristics (e.g., experience) and self-assessments, direct comparisons between the results of the studies should be made with caution. Finally, test takers classified at the highest proficiency level on the redesigned TOEIC Bridge (Level 4) may vary in terms of their proficiency level (from low intermediate to advanced) because the test is not designed to discriminate levels of more advanced proficiency. Consequently, inferences about what test takers at TOEIC Bridge proficiency Level4 are able to do should be made more cautiously.

The method used in this study builds on previous validity studies using self-assessments by including can-do descriptors that were more purposefully linked to expectations about what test takers should be able to do at different proficiency levels based on the design of the test and its relation to language proficiency standards. Language proficiency standards, such as the CEFR, typically use can-do descriptors to exemplify performance at different levels of proficiency. This design is a natural fit for self-assessment and establishes expectations that provide a basis for interpreting self-assessment ratings by test takers. It is important to note that descriptors in language proficiency standards are often conceptualized and ordered based on expert judgment and may evolve over time and that individual learner profiles with respect to descriptors may vary. Consequently, it is probably unreasonable to expect perfect alignment between proficiency levels and self-assessment ratings, even if proficiency levels were derived from an assessment built with a specific set of language proficiency standards in mind (see Summers et al., 2019). With this important caveat, this study shows how the use of standards-based descriptors may enhance the use of self-assessments in validity research by establishing clearer expectations regarding how test takers' responses to specific tasks may be evaluated.

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Appendix A

Can-Do Table for TOEIC Bridge Speaking

Tasks
Speaking Scaled Score 15 – 22 (Proficiency Level 1)

Probably can do	None
Probably can do with difficulty	Ask a few simple, formulaic questions in social situations (for example: "How are you?," "Where are you from?," "What do you do for fun?") Give basic personal information in response to a direct question from a supportive listener (for example: your name, where you are from) Read aloud a very short, rehearsed statement
Probably cannot do	Give simple directions Give a short, rehearsed, basic presentation on a familiar subject Open a short conversation with someone who is familiar and supportive Use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know Ask a variety of questions to obtain simple information about everyday things (for example: directions, prices, and services) Make simple requests, offers, and suggestions Ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics Can explain what I like or dislike about something Give simple, common, routine instructions and directions to a familiar person Describe people, objects, places, and activities Participate in a very short, simple phone call with a familiar person Narrate and sequence simple events Handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself Express an opinion or plan and give a reason for it Give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions Use simple words and phrases fluently and accurately in social situations Narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions Converse with ease and confidence when dealing with everyday tasks and social situations Agree, disagree, and give opinions in small group discussions or meetings Explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options Give a detailed presentation (~7 minutes long) about a familiar topic
Speaking Scaled Score 23 – 36 (Proficiency Level 2)	
Probably can do	None
Probably can do with difficulty	Ask a few simple, formulaic questions in social situations (for example: "How are you?," "Where are you from?," "What do you do for fun?") Give basic personal information in response to a direct question from a supportive listener (for example: your name, where you are from) Read aloud a very short, rehearsed statement Give simple directions Give a short, rehearsed, basic presentation on a familiar subject Open a short conversation with someone who is familiar and supportive Use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know Ask a variety of questions to obtain simple information about everyday things (for example: directions, prices, and services) Make simple requests, offers, and suggestions Ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics Can explain what I like or dislike about something Describe people, objects, places, and activities

Probably cannot do	Give simple, common, routine instructions and directions to a familiar person
	Participate in a very short, simple phone call with a familiar person
	Narrate and sequence simple events
	Handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself
	Express an opinion or plan and give a reason for it
	Give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions
	Use simple words and phrases fluently and accurately in social situations
	Narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions
	Converse with ease and confidence when dealing with everyday tasks and social situations
	Agree, disagree, and give opinions in small group discussions or meetings
	Explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options
	Give a detailed presentation (~7 minutes long) about a familiar topic

Speaking Scaled Score 37 – 42 (Proficiency Level 3)

Probably can do	Ask a few simple, formulaic questions in social situations (for example: "How are you?," "Where are you from?," "What do you do for fun?")
	Give basic personal information in response to a direct question from a supportive listener (for example: your name, where you are from)
	Read aloud a very short, rehearsed statement

Probably can do with difficulty	Give simple directions
	Give a short, rehearsed, basic presentation on a familiar subject
	Open a short conversation with someone who is familiar and supportive
	Use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know
	Ask a variety of questions to obtain simple information about everyday things (for example: directions, prices, and services)
	Make simple requests, offers, and suggestions
	Ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics
	Can explain what I like or dislike about something
	Give simple, common, routine instructions and directions to a familiar person
	Describe people, objects, places, and activities
	Participate in a very short, simple phone call with a familiar person
	Narrate and sequence simple events
	Handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself
	Express an opinion or plan and give a reason for it

Probably cannot do	Give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions
	Use simple words and phrases fluently and accurately in social situations
	Narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions
	Converse with ease and confidence when dealing with everyday tasks and social situations
	Agree, disagree, and give opinions in small group discussions or meetings
	Explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options
	Give a detailed presentation (~7 minutes long) about a familiar topic

Probably can do	Ask a few simple, formulaic questions in social situations (for example: "How are you?," "Where are you from?," "What do you do for fun?") Give basic personal information in response to a direct question from a supportive listener (for example: your name, where you are from) Read aloud a very short, rehearsed statement Give simple directions Give a short, rehearsed, basic presentation on a familiar subject Open a short conversation with someone who is familiar and supportive Use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know Ask a variety of questions to obtain simple information about everyday things (for example: directions, prices, and services)
Probably can do with difficulty	Make simple requests, offers, and suggestions Ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics Can explain what I like or dislike about something Give simple, common, routine instructions and directions to a familiar person Describe people, objects, places, and activities Participate in a very short, simple phone call with a familiar person Narrate and sequence simple events Handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself Express an opinion or plan and give a reason for it Give detailed accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions Use simple words and phrases fluently and accurately in social situations Narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions Converse with ease and confidence when dealing with everyday tasks and social situations Agree, disagree, and give opinions in small group discussions or meetings Explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options Give a detailed presentation (~7 minutes long) about a familiar topic
Probably cannot do	None

Appendix B

Can-Do Table for TOEIC Bridge Writing

Tasks	
Writing Scaled Score 15 – 19 (Proficiency Level 1)	
Probably can do	None
Probably can do with difficulty	Write basic personal identification information, words, simple phrases, and a few sentences about highly familiar information related to everyday life Write very simple messages and personal online postings as a series of very short sentences about hobbies, likes/dislikes, etc., relying on the aid of a translation tool
Probably cannot do	Write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like "and," "but," and "because" Write simple isolated phrases and sentences Post simple online greetings, using basic formulaic expressions and emoticons Write 3 – 5 sentences describing a familiar person Ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics Copy numbers, letters, words, short phrases, or sentences from simple lists or very short passages, for personal use or to complete short tasks Make simple requests, offers, and suggestions Write simple sentences on very familiar topics Complete simple forms that require basic personal information or familiar information and some responses to 15 – 20 simple questions Write basic emails or letters to request information Narrate and sequence simple events Write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities, and personal experiences Write short, simple communications, compositions, and requests for information about personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other personal topics Describe people, objects, places, and activities Engage in basic social communication online (e.g., writing a simple message on a virtual card for special occasions, sharing news, and making/confirming arrangements to meet) Write statements and formulate questions based on familiar topics Make personal online postings about experiences, feelings, and events and respond individually to the comments of others in some detail, though my vocabulary may be limited Express a simple opinion and give a reason for it Write compositions and simple summaries related to work or school experiences Write a paragraph to describe the sequence of an everyday routine Write 1 – 2 paragraphs about a familiar topic, expressing a main idea and supporting it with some detail Write a short essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view

Writing Scaled Score 20 – 31 (Proficiency Level 2)	
Probably can do	None
Probably can do with difficulty	Write basic personal identification information, words, simple phrases, and a few sentences about highly familiar information related to everyday life
	Write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like "and," "but," and "because"
	Write very simple messages and personal online postings as a series of very short sentences about hobbies, likes/dislikes, etc., relying on the aid of a translation tool
	Write simple isolated phrases and sentences
	Post simple online greetings, using basic formulaic expressions and emoticons
	Write 3 – 5 sentences describing a familiar person
	Copy numbers, letters, words, short phrases, or sentences from simple lists or very short passages, for personal use or to complete short tasks
	Make simple requests, offers, and suggestions
	Write simple sentences on very familiar topics
	Complete simple forms that require basic personal information or familiar information and some responses to 15 – 20 simple questions
	Write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities, and personal experiences
	Write short, simple communications, compositions, and requests for information about personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other personal topics
	Describe people, objects, places, and activities
	Engage in basic social communication online (e.g., writing a simple message on a virtual card for special occasions, sharing news, and making/confirming arrangements to meet)
Probably cannot do	Ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics
	Write basic emails or letters to request information
	Narrate and sequence simple events
	Write statements and formulate questions based on familiar topics
	Make personal online postings about experiences, feelings, and events and respond individually to the comments of others in some detail, though my vocabulary may be limited
	Express a simple opinion and give a reason for it
	Write compositions and simple summaries related to work or school experiences
	Write a paragraph to describe the sequence of an everyday routine
	Write 1 – 2 paragraphs about a familiar topic, expressing a main idea and supporting it with some detail
	Write a short essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view

Writing Scaled Score 32 – 42 (Proficiency Level 3)	
Probably can do	None
Probably can do with difficulty	Write basic personal identification information, words, simple phrases, and a few sentences about highly familiar information related to everyday life
	Write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like "and," "but," and "because"
	Write very simple messages and personal online postings as a series of very short sentences about hobbies, likes/dislikes, etc., relying on the aid of a translation tool
	Write simple isolated phrases and sentences
	Post simple online greetings, using basic formulaic expressions and emoticons
	Write 3 – 5 sentences describing a familiar person
	Ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics
	Copy numbers, letters, words, short phrases or sentences from simple lists or very short passages, for personal use or to complete short tasks
	Make simple requests, offers, and suggestions
	Write simple sentences on very familiar topics
	Complete simple forms that require basic personal information or familiar information and some responses to 15 – 20 simple questions
	Write basic emails or letters to request information
	Narrate and sequence simple events
	Write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities, and personal experiences
	Write short, simple communications, compositions, and requests for information about personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other personal topics
	Describe people, objects, places, and activities
	Engage in basic social communication online (e.g., writing a simple message on a virtual card for special occasions, sharing news, and making/confirming arrangements to meet)
	Write statements and formulate questions based on familiar topics
	Make personal online postings about experiences, feelings, and events and respond individually to the comments of others in some detail, though my vocabulary may be limited
	Express a simple opinion and give a reason for it
	Write compositions and simple summaries related to work or school experiences
Probably cannot do	Write a paragraph to describe the sequence of an everyday routine
	Write 1 – 2 paragraphs about a familiar topic, expressing a main idea and supporting it with some detail
	Write a short essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view
Writing Scaled Score 43 – 50 (Proficiency Level 4)	
Probably can do	Write basic personal identification information, words, simple phrases, and a few sentences about highly familiar information related to everyday life
	Write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like "and," "but," and "because"
	Write very simple messages and personal online postings as a series of very short sentences about hobbies, likes/dislikes, etc., relying on the aid of a translation tool
	Write simple isolated phrases and sentences

Probably can do with difficulty	Post simple online greetings, using basic formulaic expressions and emoticons
	Write 3 – 5 sentences describing a familiar person
	Ask for and provide basic information about everyday topics
	Copy numbers, letters, words, short phrases or sentences from simple lists or very short passages, for personal use or to complete short tasks
	Make simple requests, offers, and suggestions
	Write simple sentences on very familiar topics
	Complete simple forms that require basic personal information or familiar information and some responses to 15 – 20 simple questions
	Write basic emails or letters to request information
	Narrate and sequence simple events
	Write very short, basic descriptions of events, past activities, and personal experiences
	Write short, simple communications, compositions, and requests for information about personal preferences, daily routines, common events, and other personal topics
	Describe people, objects, places, and activities
	Engage in basic social communication online (e.g., writing a simple message on a virtual card for special occasions, sharing news, and making/confirming arrangements to meet)
	Write statements and formulate questions based on familiar topics
	Make personal online postings about experiences, feelings, and events and respond individually to the comments of others in some detail, though my vocabulary may be limited
	Express a simple opinion and give a reason for it
	Write compositions and simple summaries related to work or school experiences
	Write a paragraph to describe the sequence of an everyday routine
	Write 1 – 2 paragraphs about a familiar topic, expressing a main idea and supporting it with some detail
	Write a short essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view
Probably cannot do	None

Appendix C

Can-Do Table for Redesigned TOEIC Bridge Listening

Tasks	
Listening Scaled Score 15 (Proficiency Level 1)	
Probably can do	Understand simple questions in social situations such as "How are you?" and "Where do you live?"
Probably can do with difficulty	Recognize familiar words and simple phrases when people speak slowly and clearly
	Understand short, simple instructions addressed carefully and slowly
	Understand simple greetings and introductions
	Understand short announcements when they are spoken slowly and clearly
	Understand questions addressed carefully and slowly
	Understand simple, everyday conversations if conducted slowly and clearly
	Understand simple descriptions of people, places, objects, and actions
	Understand short conversations related to everyday life (for example, making a purchase)
	Understand words and phrases that are commonly used in everyday life, relating to people, places, things, and basic activities
	Understand someone who is speaking slowly and deliberately about his or her hobbies and interests
	Understand when speakers agree and disagree in a conversation conducted slowly and clearly
	Understand the main point of simple messages and short, clear announcements
	Generally identify the topic of a conversation around me if the speakers are talking slowly and clearly
	Understand the main points and important details in stories (for example, a description of a vacation), provided the speaker talks slowly and clearly
	Understand the main idea in short announcements or talks
	Understand a person in social situations talking about his or her background, family, or interests
Probably cannot do	Understand a request that is indirect or implied
	Understand extended speech and lectures, and follow complex arguments on familiar topics
Listening Scaled Score 16 – 25 (Proficiency Level 2)	
Probably can do	Understand simple questions in social situations such as "How are you?" and "Where do you live?"
	Identify a few common key words and expressions (for example, "Help!" "Watch out!")
	Recognize familiar words and simple phrases when people speak slowly and clearly
	Understand short, simple instructions addressed carefully and slowly
	Understand simple greetings and introductions
	Understand short announcements when they are spoken slowly and clearly
	Understand questions addressed carefully and slowly
	Understand simple, everyday conversations if conducted slowly and clearly

Probably can do with difficulty	Understand simple descriptions of people, places, objects, and actions
	Understand short conversations related to everyday life (for example, making a purchase)
	Understand words and phrases that are commonly used in everyday life, relating to people, places, things, and basic activities
	Understand someone who is speaking slowly and deliberately about his or her hobbies and interests
	Understand when speakers agree and disagree in a conversation conducted slowly and clearly
	Understand the main point of simple messages and short, clear announcements
	Generally identify the topic of a conversation around me if the speakers are talking slowly and clearly
	Understand the main points and important details in stories (for example, a description of a vacation), provided the speaker talks slowly and clearly
	Understand the main idea in short announcements or talks
	Understand a person in social situations talking about his or her background, family, or interests
	Understand a request that is indirect or implied
Probably cannot do	Understand extended speech and lectures, and follow complex arguments on familiar topics

Listening Scaled Score 26 – 38 (Proficiency Level 3)

Probably can do	Understand simple questions in social situations such as "How are you?" and "Where do you live?"
	Identify a few common key words and expressions (for example, "Help!" "Watch out!")
	Recognize familiar words and simple phrases when people speak slowly and clearly
	Understand short, simple instructions addressed carefully and slowly
	Understand simple greetings and introductions
	Understand short announcements when they are spoken slowly and clearly
	Understand questions addressed carefully and slowly
	Understand simple, everyday conversations if conducted slowly and clearly
	Understand simple descriptions of people, places, objects, and actions
	Understand short conversations related to everyday life (for example, making a purchase)
	Understand words and phrases that are commonly used in everyday life, relating to people, places, things, and basic activities
	Understand someone who is speaking slowly and deliberately about his or her hobbies and interests
	Understand when speakers agree and disagree in a conversation conducted slowly and clearly
	Understand the main point of simple messages and short, clear announcements
	Generally identify the topic of a conversation around me if the speakers are talking slowly and clearly
	Understand the main points and important details in stories (for example, a description of a vacation), provided the speaker talks slowly and clearly
	Understand the main idea in short announcements or talks
Probably can do with difficulty	Understand a person in social situations talking about his or her background, family, or interests
	Understand a request that is indirect or implied
	Understand extended speech and lectures, and follow complex arguments on familiar topics
Probably cannot do	None

Probably can do	Understand simple questions in social situations such as "How are you?" and "Where do you live?"
	Identify a few common key words and expressions (for example, "Help!" "Watch out!")
	Recognize familiar words and simple phrases when people speak slowly and clearly
	Understand short, simple instructions addressed carefully and slowly
	Understand simple greetings and introductions
	Understand short announcements when they are spoken slowly and clearly
	Understand questions addressed carefully and slowly
	Understand simple, everyday conversations if conducted slowly and clearly
	Understand simple descriptions of people, places, objects, and actions
	Understand short conversations related to everyday life (for example, making a purchase)
	Understand words and phrases that are commonly used in everyday life, relating to people, places, things, and basic activities
	Understand someone who is speaking slowly and deliberately about his or her hobbies and interests
	Understand when speakers agree and disagree in a conversation conducted slowly and clearly
	Understand the main point of simple messages and short, clear announcements
	Generally identify the topic of a conversation around me if the speakers are talking slowly and clearly
	Understand the main points and important details in stories (for example, a description of a vacation), provided the speaker talks slowly and clearly
	Understand the main idea in short announcements or talks
	Understand a person in social situations talking about his or her background, family, or interests
	Understand a request that is indirect or implied
	Understand extended speech and lectures, and follow complex arguments on familiar topics
Probably can do with difficulty	None
Probably cannot do	None

Appendix D

Can-Do Table for Redesigned TOEIC Bridge Reading

Tasks	
Reading Scaled Score 15 – 18 (Proficiency Level 1)	
Probably can do	None
Probably can do with difficulty	Understand simple everyday signs such as "Parking," "Station," "Stop"
	Recognize familiar words if they are accompanied by pictures, such as in a menu
	Understand familiar words and very simple sentences
	Understand short informational and descriptive texts about people, places, objects, and actions
	Understand short, simple correspondence
	Find and understand simple, important information such as costs, dates, and locations in reading material that has visuals such as brochures or advertisements
	Understand nonlinear written texts (for example, signs, schedules)
	Understand a train or bus schedule
	Understand short, simple messages in texts, emails, or on social networks
	Understand written instructions and directions (for example: a basic recipe, simple travel directions)
	Identify specific information in short text or articles that are written in simple language
	Understand simple, step-by-step instructions
	Understand a simple email from a friend
	Understand the main idea and stated details in short, written texts
	Understand the main points of an article on a familiar topic
	Read information about products (for example, advertisements)
	Infer the meaning of unknown written words through context clues
	Understand the viewpoints expressed in articles and reports about contemporary issues or problems
Probably cannot do	Understand a popular novel
Reading Scaled Score 19 – 33 (Proficiency Level 2)	
Probably can do	Understand simple everyday signs such as "Parking," "Station," "Stop"
	Recognize familiar words if they are accompanied by pictures, such as in a menu
	Understand familiar words and very simple sentences
	Understand short informational and descriptive texts about people, places, objects, and actions
	Understand short, simple correspondence
	Find and understand simple, important information such as costs, dates, and locations in reading material that has visuals such as brochures or advertisements
Probably can do with difficulty	Understand nonlinear written texts (for example, signs, schedules)
	Understand a train or bus schedule
	Understand short, simple messages in texts, emails, or on social networks
	Understand written instructions and directions (for example: a basic recipe, simple travel directions)
	Identify specific information in short text or articles that are written in simple language
	Understand simple, step-by-step instructions
	Understand a simple email from a friend
	Understand the main idea and stated details in short, written texts
	Understand the main points of an article on a familiar topic
	Read information about products (for example, advertisements)
	Infer the meaning of unknown written words through context clues
	Understand the viewpoints expressed in articles and reports about contemporary issues or problems
Probably cannot do	Understand a popular novel

Reading Scaled Score 34 – 44 (Proficiency Level 3)	
Probably can do	Understand simple everyday signs such as "Parking," "Station," "Stop"
	Recognize familiar words if they are accompanied by pictures, such as in a menu
	Understand familiar words and very simple sentences
	Understand short informational and descriptive texts about people, places, objects, and actions
	Understand short, simple correspondence
	Find and understand simple, important information such as costs, dates, and locations in reading material that has visuals such as brochures or advertisements
	Understand nonlinear written texts (for example, signs, schedules)
	Understand a train or bus schedule
	Understand short, simple messages in texts, emails, or on social networks
	Understand written instructions and directions (for example: a basic recipe, simple travel directions)
	Identify specific information in short text or articles that are written in simple language
	Understand simple, step-by-step instructions
	Understand a simple email from a friend
	Understand the main idea and stated details in short, written texts
	Understand the main points of an article on a familiar topic
	Read information about products (for example, advertisements)
Probably can do with difficulty	Infer the meaning of unknown written words through context clues
	Understand the viewpoints expressed in articles and reports about contemporary issues or problems
	Understand a popular novel
Probably cannot do	None
Reading Scaled Score 45 – 50 (Proficiency Level 4)	
Probably can do	Understand simple everyday signs such as "Parking," "Station," "Stop"
	Recognize familiar words if they are accompanied by pictures, such as in a menu
	Understand familiar words and very simple sentences
	Understand short informational and descriptive texts about people, places, objects, and actions
	Understand short, simple correspondence
	Find and understand simple, important information such as costs, dates, and locations in reading material that has visuals such as brochures or advertisements
	Understand nonlinear written texts (for example, signs, schedules)
	Understand a train or bus schedule
	Understand short, simple messages in texts, emails, or on social networks
	Understand written instructions and directions (for example: a basic recipe, simple travel directions)
	Identify specific information in short text or articles that are written in simple language
	Understand simple, step-by-step instructions
	Understand a simple email from a friend
	Understand the main idea and stated details in short, written texts
	Understand the main points of an article on a familiar topic
	Read information about products (for example, advertisements)
	Infer the meaning of unknown written words through context clues
	Understand the viewpoints expressed in articles and reports about contemporary issues or problems
	Understand a popular novel
Probably can do with difficulty	None
Probably cannot do	None

Suggested citation:

Action Editor: Heather Buzick

Reviewers: James Fife and Hui Jin

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