

Evaluating Cut-off Scores for Test of Chinese as a Foreign Language in Alignment with CEFR

Abstract

The Test of Chinese as a Foreign Language (TOCFL) is a language proficiency test of large scale developed for the non-native speakers of Chinese. It included three bands (Band A, B, and C) and resulted in a total of six levels (Level 1 to 6). The cut-off scores of the TOCFL were set to align with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR); hence, the TOCFL has well communication with those tests which were developed in alignment with the CEFR.

The purpose of this study was that to evaluate the quality of the cut-off scores obtained by the Yes/No Angoff standard setting procedure on the TOCFL Listening and Reading Tests. Three validity evidences, internal, external, and procedural evidences (Kane, 1994), were adopted.

The results showed that the validity of the cut-off scores for the TOCFL Listening and Reading tests was examined via the procedural, internal and external evidences. Furthermore, the results of the TOCFL Listening and Reading tests could be communicated with tests which were also built connected with the CEFR.

Keywords: cut-off scores, standard setting, TOCFL, CEFR

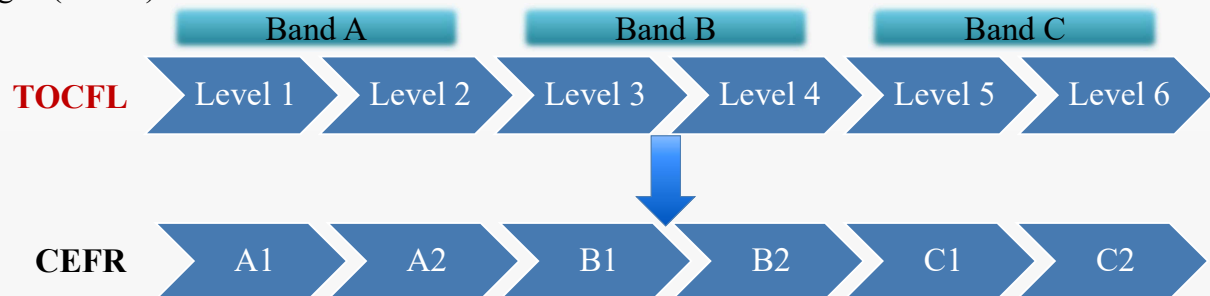
Poster Presentation

Evaluating Cut-off Scores for Test of Chinese as a Foreign Language in Alignment with CEFR



Introduction

- ◆ **T**est **o**f **C**hinese as a **F**oreign **L**anguage (**TOCFL**) is a language proficiency test of large scale developed for the non-native speakers of Chinese.
- ◆ It includes three bands (Band A, B, and C) and resulted in a total of six levels (Level 1 to 6).
- ◆ The cut-off scores of the TOCFL were set to align with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)

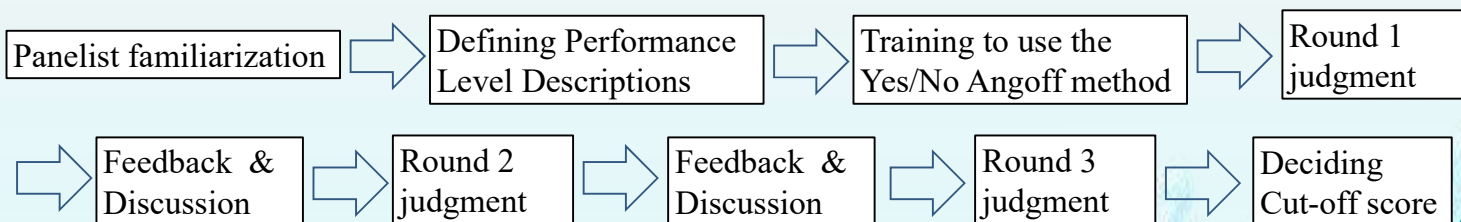


Purpose

To evaluate the quality of the cut-off scores obtained by the Yes/No Angoff standard setting procedure on the TOCFL Listening and Reading Tests.

Method

- ◆ Standard setting procedure: Yes/No Angoff Method (Impara & Plake, 1997)
- ◆ Number of panelist: 9-13 persons
- ◆ Rounds of judgments: 3
- ◆ Evaluation indices: procedural evidence, internal evidence, and external evidence
- ◆ Set up a cut-off score procedure



Results – *procedural evidence*

- ◆ The cut-off scores on TOCFL Listening and Reading Tests have been set in accordance with the standard and fixed procedure.
- ◆ The feedback from panelists showed that:
 - ◆ they understand the purpose, procedure, and contents related to set the cut-off scores.
 - ◆ the performance level description and the steps of feedback and discussion have improved efficacy in setting the cut-off scores.
 - ◆ they have confidence in setting the cut-off scores.

Results – *internal evidence*

- ◆ The mean and variance of the cut-off scores decreased with the rounds of judgment increased despite the level of the test.
- ◆ The correlation between judgments and empirical item difficulties increased with the round increased in spite of the level of the test.

TOCFL	Round		1	2	3	4	5	6	TOCFL	Level	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
Listening Test	1	M	22.0	39.4	25.2	42.9	25.9	38.4	Listening Test	1	0.297*	0.564**	0.557**
		Var	27.0	31.4	31.4	12.3	88.4	36.0		2	0.290*	0.590**	0.593**
	2	M	20.7	40.7	23.9	40.8	21.6	36.0		3	0.665**	0.756**	0.763**
		Var	11.6	15.2	8.4	4.0	9.6	18.5		4	0.635**	0.715**	0.738**
	3	M	19.6	36.9	23.3	40.3	21.3	35.3		5	0.396**	0.688**	0.675**
		Var	9.0	14.4	6.3	3.2	6.3	10.9		6	0.391**	0.607**	0.650**
Reading Tests	1	M	22.8	42.6	27.9	45.9	35.8	46.6	Reading Tests	1	0.549**	0.704**	0.696**
		Var	50.4	27.0	7.3	7.3	50.4	17.6		2	0.515**	0.681**	0.675**
	2	M	20.3	40.5	27.0	44.1	28.8	42.8		3	0.792**	0.817**	0.816**
		Var	15.2	10.2	1.7	3.2	44.9	6.3		4	0.625**	0.642**	0.694**
	3	M	19.8	40.2	26.6	42.7	28.0	42.5		5	0.340*	0.524**	0.589**
		Var	13.0	10.9	2.0	3.6	31.4	6.8		6	0.247	0.499**	0.492**

Results – *external evidence*

- ◆ The percentage of the fail-pass decisions agreement of TOCFL Listening and Reading Tests is 76.5%, 59.0%, and 63.0% for Band A, B, and C, respectively.
- ◆ The Kappa coefficient for the fail-pass decisions agreement of TOCFL Listening and Reading Tests is .45, .30, and .38 for Band A, B, and C, respectively.

Conclusions

- ◆ The validity of the cut-off scores for the TOCFL Listening and Reading tests is examined via the procedural, internal, and external evidence.
 - ◆ A standard setting procedure of setting the cut-off scores and the feedback from panelists provided the procedural evidence.
 - ◆ The mean and variance of judgments decreased with the rounds of judgment increased and the negative correlation between judgments and empirical item difficulties supplied the internal evidence.
 - ◆ The consistency of the classification between the TOCFL Listening and Reading tests for Band A, B, and C reached to “moderate”, “fair”, and “fair”, respectively (Landis & Koch, 1977).
- ◆ The results of the TOCFL Listening and Reading tests could be communicated with tests which were also built connected with the CEFR.

Chia-Ling HSU, Research Assistant, clhsu@sc-top.org.tw

Po-Hsi Chen, Executive Director, chenph@sc-top.org.tw

Pei-Jiun Lan, Research Assistant, martinalan@sc-top.org.tw

Steering Committee for the Test Of Proficiency-Huayu (SC-TOP)

