Hi-LAB scoring rubric and aptitude profiles support language personnel selection and training

Scott R. Jackson, PhD
Medha Tare, PhD
Karen Vatz, PhD
Noah Silbert, PhD
Susan G. Campbell, PhD
Meredith A. Mislevy, MA
Benjamin K. Smith, ScB
Jared A. Linck, PhD
Catherine J. Doughty, PhD

Executive Summary

PURPOSE
The University of Maryland Center for Advanced Study of Language (CASL) is developing the High-Level Language Aptitude Battery (Hi-LAB) in order to measure the potential for high-level second language learning. In addition to validating the measures in this test, CASL is improving the precision of scoring.

CASL has also designed a language aptitude profile based on individuals’ performance on Hi-LAB. Researchers have been interpreting the language aptitude profiles and patterns of scores to provide clients with timely and useful mission-relevant information.

CONCLUSIONS
CASL’s Hi-LAB research supports the following conclusions:

1. Hi-LAB’s new scoring rubric allows for more precise interpretation of scores.
   CASL has standardized interpretations of the Hi-LAB measures. Score ranges now correspond to exceptional, good, average, and fair performance on each measure. Individuals’ scores are compared to a reference population of government language personnel with documented general professional proficiency (i.e., Interagency Language Roundtable [ILR] Level 3 or above).

2. CASL’s aptitude profile card allows managers, learners, and instructors to quickly view a learner’s potential for language learning success.
   The aptitude profile card (see Figure 1) represents individual performance on the Hi-LAB and demonstrated language learning, and presents both a concise summary intended for language managers and a detailed abilities chart that includes training recommendations for language learners and instructors.

RELEVANCE
Providing feedback on aptitude test performance to individuals and organizations is valuable, particularly when it is available quickly and in a readily interpretable format. The refinement of the Hi-LAB scoring rubric helps standardize its use beyond its original applications across research projects. The rubric also facilitates the generation of feedback for clients, such as the aptitude profile cards.
HI-LAB SCORING RUBRIC AND APTITUDE PROFILES

**Figure 1.** CASL’s language aptitude profile card describes learners’ foreign language experience and abilities and compares their test scores with other learners’.

CASL has already provided individual Hi-LAB feedback to many study participants. Further, by listening to client needs and incorporating them into the aptitude profile cards, CASL has designed a useful tool to support U.S. government language personnel selection and training.

---

**Corresponding Author and Reprints:** Scott Jackson, PhD, University of Maryland Center for Advanced Study of Language, (301) 226-8881, sjackson@casl.umd.edu, www.casl.umd.edu.

**Funding/Support:** This material is based upon work supported, in whole or in part, with funding from the United States Government. Any opinions, findings and conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Maryland, College Park and/or any agency or entity of the United States Government. Nothing in this report is intended to be and shall not be treated or construed as an endorsement or recommendation by the University of Maryland, United States Government, or the authors of the product, process, or service that is the subject of this report.

No one may use any information contained or based on this report in advertisements or promotional materials related to any company product, process, or service or in support of other commercial purposes. This report is not Releasable to the Defense Technical Information Center per DoD Directive 3000.52. The Contracting Officer’s Representative for this project is David Cox, (301) 226-8970, dcox@casl.umd.edu.