STAMP for American Sign Language (ASL)

The STAMP for American Sign Language (ASL) Test

The STAMP for ASL test, developed in partnership with Bridges Oregon, is a computer-adaptive test that assesses the Receptive and Expressive proficiency of second-language learners of ASL and Children of Deaf Adults (CODA). In the Receptive section, examinees must demonstrate their ability to comprehend ASL by answering 30 multiple-choice comprehension questions. In the Expressive section, examinees must demonstrate their ability to create ASL, including the use of ASL grammar, by video-recording their responses to three real-life, situational prompts. Both sections are scored on the STAMP proficiency scale, with Receptive scores ranging from Novice-Low to Advanced-High and Expressive scores from Novice-Low to Advanced-Mid. Questions in the Receptive section are automatically scored, whereas examinees' responses in the Expressive section are rated by certified Avant ASL raters. Figure 1 shows the multi-stage, computer-adaptive design employed in the Receptive section of STAMP for ASL:

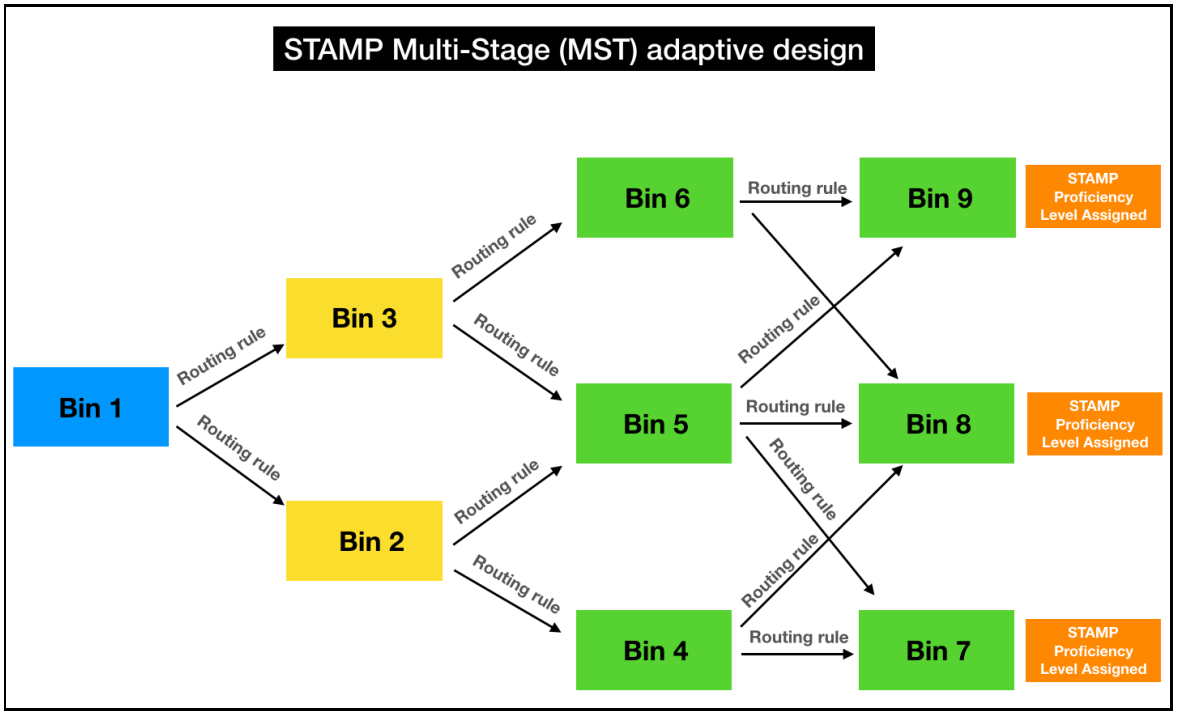

Figure 1. *The Multi-Stage, Computer-Adaptive STAMP for ASL Design.*

Hierarchy of Item Difficulty in the Receptive Section of STAMP for ASL

For a language assessment such as the STAMP for ASL, whose scores are aligned to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (ACTFL, 2012), to be defensible, it's vital that developers can show, based on real, operational statistical data, that the average difficulty of Novice items on the test is lower than that of Intermediate items, which in turn should be lower, on average, than that of items written to target the Advanced level (Cox & Clifford, 2014). As can be seen in Figure 2, this hierarchy is supported by the average Rasch difficulty of Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced items, indicated by the green horizontal line.

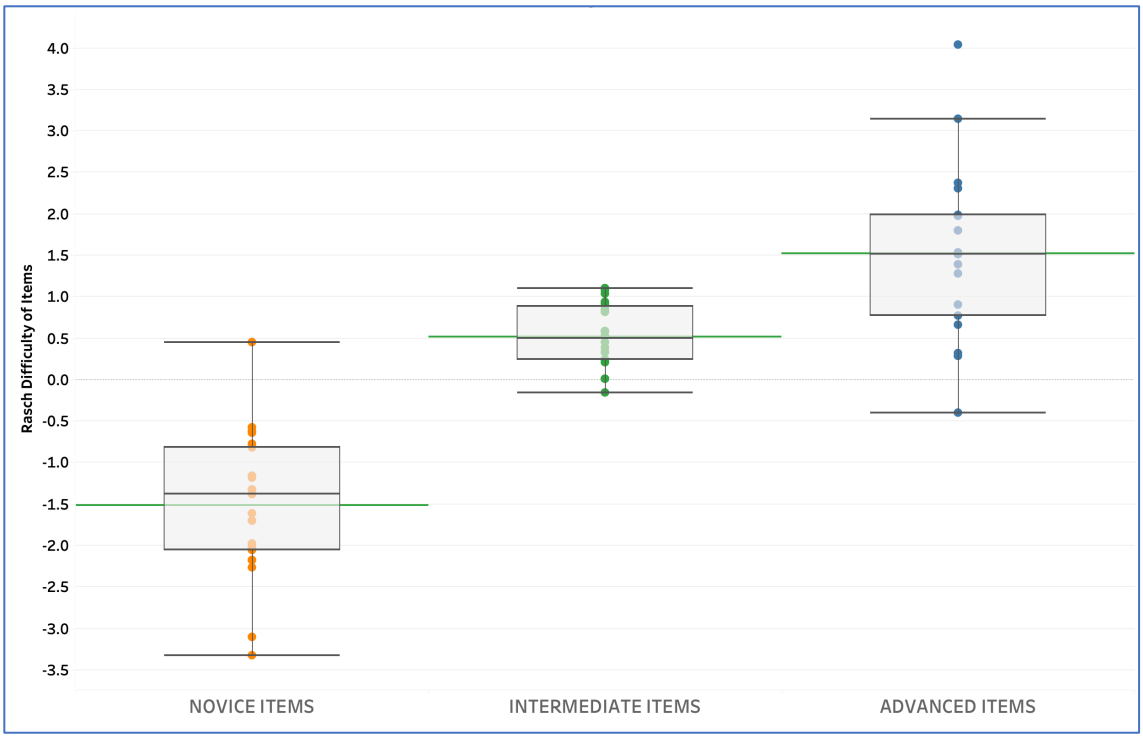

Figure 2. *Average Rasch difficulty of Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced Receptive Items on STAMP for ASL.*

Distribution of STAMP for ASL Awarded Scores in Receptive and Productive Sections

Another source of validity evidence for a test is that all score levels are being awarded to examinees. As seen in Figures 3 and 4, that is the case for STAMP for ASL.

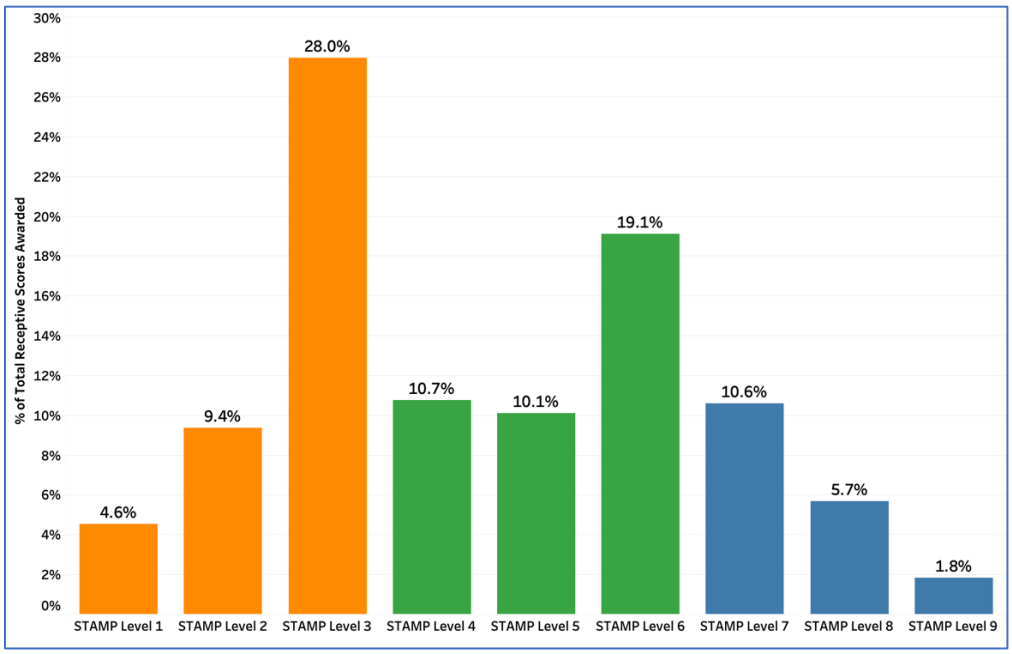

Figure 3. *Score Distribution for the Receptive Section of STAMP for ASL.*

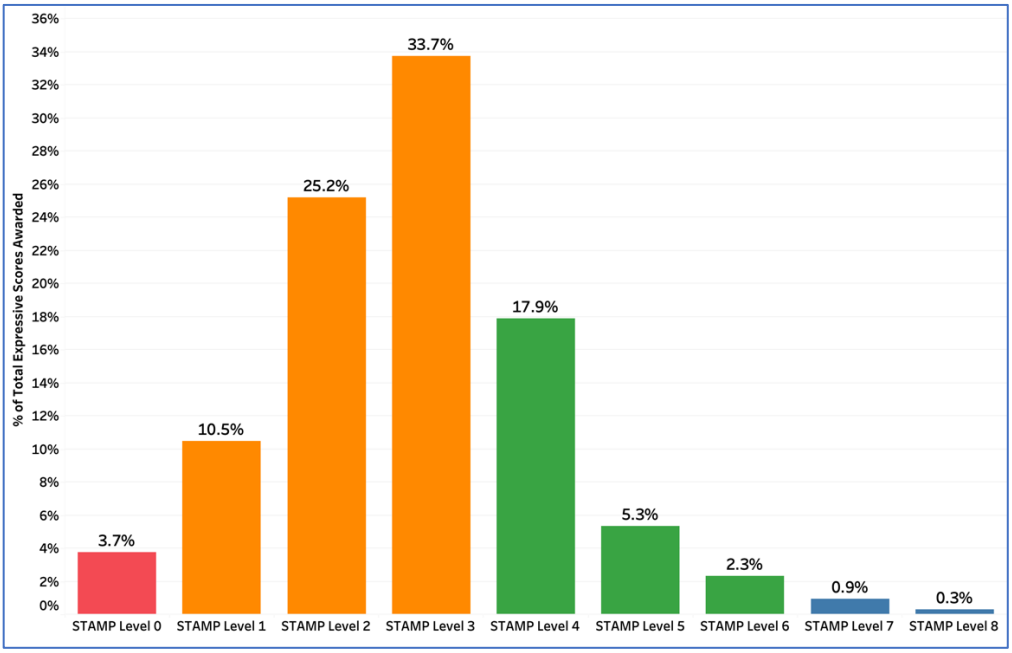

Figure 4. *Score Distribution for the Expressive Section of STAMP for ASL.*

Receptive STAMP for ASL Scores and Proficiency

At the foundation of any good test is the idea that an increase in scores is a reflection of actual increase in the ability (*e.g.* construct) measured by the test. In Figure 5, we can see that the

average score in the Receptive section of STAMP for ASL increases as examinees move up levels in formal ASL instruction:

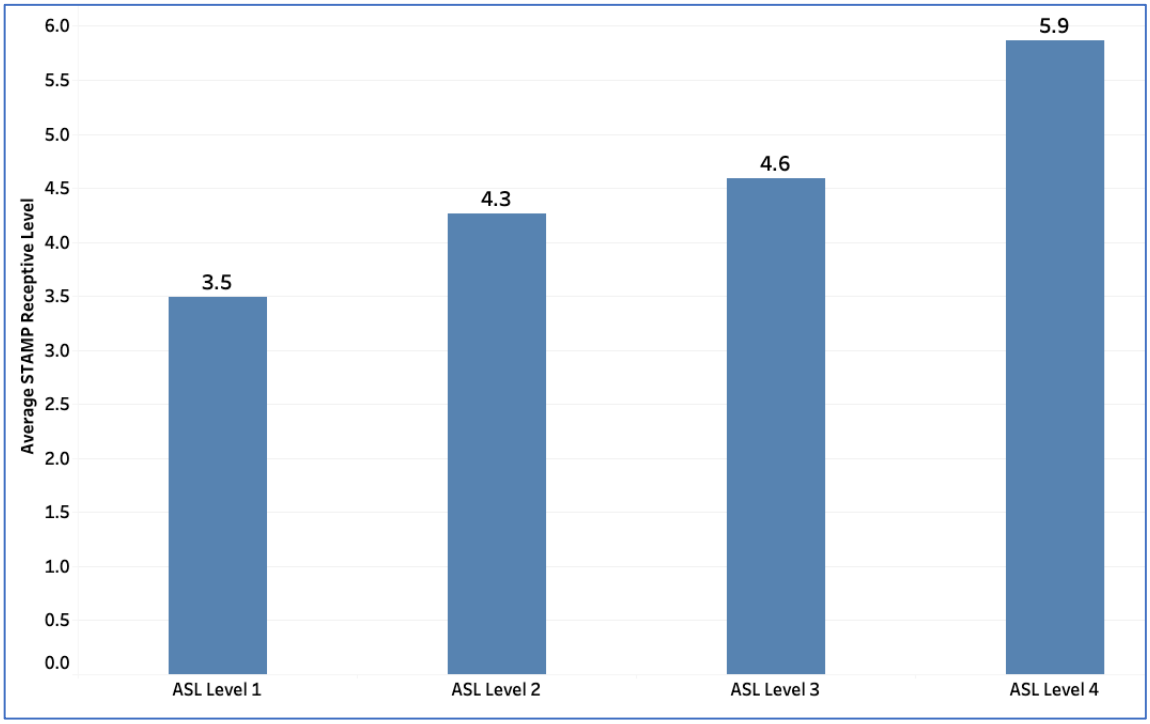

Figure 5. *Average STAMP Receptive Level for Examinees at Different Levels of Formal ASL Instruction.*

Relationship Between STAMP Expressive level and STAMP Receptive Proficiency

Figure 6 shows the average Receptive STAMP level for examinees who scored between STAMP 0 – STAMP 6 on the Expressive section of STAMP for ASL[1]. As can be noted, as examinees' scores in Expressive ASL increase, so does their average Receptive STAMP score, providing support for the idea that an increase in Expressive scores is indeed correlated with an increase in proficiency.

[1] Expressive levels 7-8 are not included because the number of examinees achieving these high levels of proficiency in ASL is not high enough for a reliable analysis at this time.

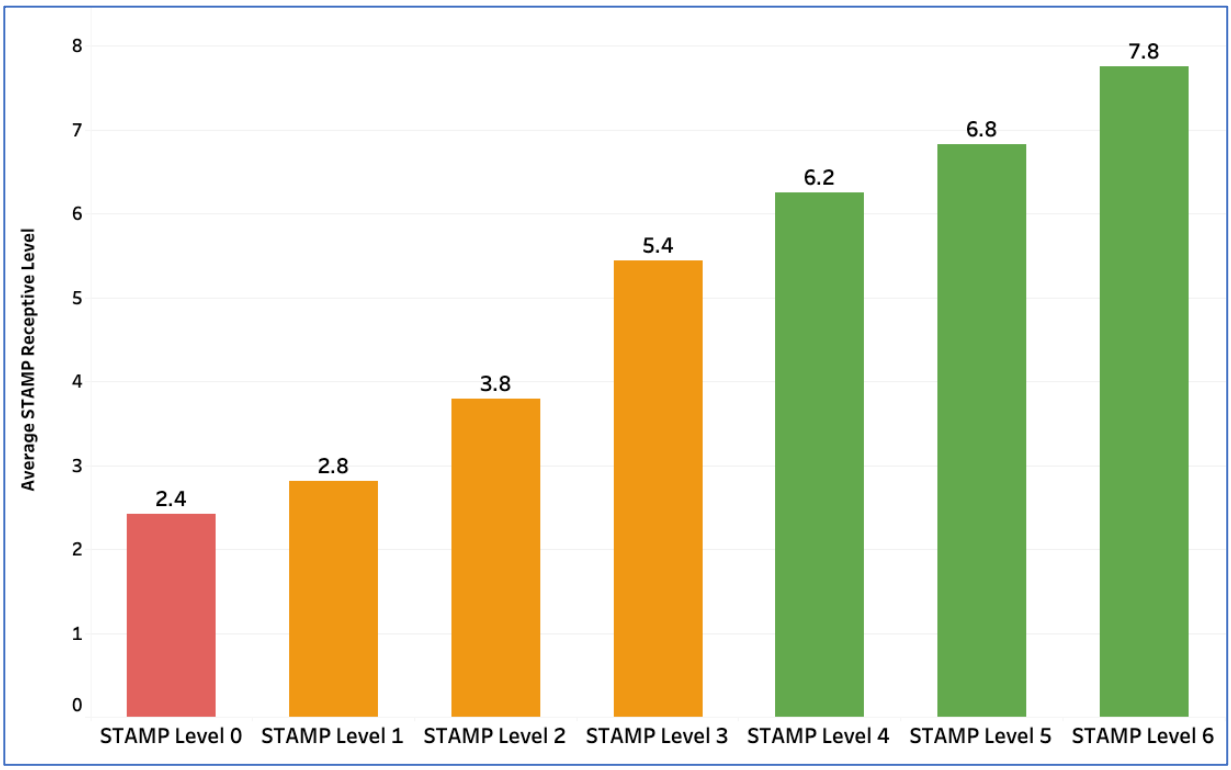

Figure 6. *Average STAMP Receptive Proficiency for Examinees at Different ASL Expressive Levels*

REFERENCES

ACTFL. (2012). ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines. Retrieved October 10, 2019, from ACTFL: https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012_FINAL.pdf

Cox, T. L. & Clifford, R. (2014). Empirical validation of listening proficiency guidelines. Foreign Language Annals, 47, 379–403.