

The *All-Round Level B* Version of the Minimal English Test (MET ARB)*

Hideki MAKI,^{*1} Megumi HASEBE,^{*2} and Yuka MORITA

^{*1}Gifu University and ^{*2}Yokohama National University

(Received October 7, 2011)

1. Introduction

Maki, Wasada, and Hashimoto (2003) developed the original version of the Minimal English Test (MET), which requires the test taker to write a correct English word with 4 letters or fewer into each of the 72 blank spaces of the given sentences, while listening to the CD. Since then, the Maki Group has found statistically significant correlations between the scores on the MET, a 5-minute English test, and the scores on the English Section of the University Entrance Examinations in Japan from 2002 to 2009 ($.59 \leq r \leq .72$). See Maki (2010) and Goto, Maki, and Kasai (2010) for the details of the MET.

Maki, Wasada, and Hashimoto's (2003) MET is based on a specific textbook written by Kawana and Walker (2002). The question immediately arises as to whether other textbooks can be used for a MET type test. In this paper, in order to examine whether textbooks other than Kawana and Walker's (2002) are appropriate to make a MET, we chose the textbook entitled *All-Round Level B* written by Ishiguro (2000) with the permission from the publisher Biseisha, and made an *All-Round Level B* Version of the Minimal English Test. We call the *All-Round Level B* Version of the Minimal English Test MET ARB hereafter. We then investigated whether there would be a correlation between the scores on the original MET and the scores on the MET ARB.

The organization of this paper is as follows. Section 2 presents the materials (the Minimal English Test (MET) and the *All-Round Level B* Version of the Minimal English Test (MET ARB)) to be employed in this research. Section 3 reports the results, and Section 4 concludes the paper.

2. Materials

2.1. The Minimal English Test (MET)

The Minimal English Test (MET) is a simple test which requires the test taker to write a correct English word with 4 letters or fewer into each of the 72 blank spaces of the given sentences, written on one piece of A4 paper, while listening to the CD on which the sentences are recorded. The MET is based on Lessons 1 and 2 of the textbook for 1st year university students written by Kawana and Walker (2002) and the CD that accompanies it. The contents of the textbook are essays on the modern society of the United States. The CD lasts about 5 minutes with a speed of 125 words per minute. The MET is shown in (1).

(1) The Minimal English Test (MET)

Name: _____ Date: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

Please fill an English word with 4 letters or fewer into each blank space, while listening to the CD.

1. The majority of people have at least one pet at () time in their ().
2. Sometimes the relationship between a pet () or cat and its owner is () close
3. that () begin to resemble () other in their appearance and behavior.
4. On the other (), owners of unusual pets () as tigers or snakes
5. sometimes () to protect themselves () their own pets.
6. Thirty years () the idea of an inanimate () first arose.
7. This was the pet (), which became a craze () the United States and
8. spread () other countries as ().
9. People () large sums of money for ordinary rocks and assigned () names.
10. They tied a leash around the rock and pulled () down the street just () a dog.
11. The rock owners () talked () their pet rocks.
12. Now () we have entered the computer age, () have virtual pets.
13. The Japanese Tamagotchi---() imaginary chicken ()---
14. () the precursor of () virtual pets.
15. Now there () an ever-increasing number of such virtual ()
16. which mostly young people are adopting () their ().
17. And () your virtual pet (),
18. you () reserve a permanent resting place () the Internet in a virtual pet cemetery.
19. Sports are big business. Whereas Babe Ruth, the () famous athlete of () day,
20. was well-known () earning as () as the President of the United States, the average
21. salary () today's professional baseball players is () times that of the President.
22. () a handful of sports superstars earn 100 times () through their contracts
23. () manufacturers of clothing, (), and sports equipment.
24. But every generation produces () or two legendary athletes () rewrite
25. the record books, and whose ability and achievements () remembered () generations.
26. () the current generation Tiger Woods and Michael Jordan are two () legendary
27. figures, () of whom () achieved almost mythical status.
28. The () that a large number of professional athletes () huge incomes
29. has () to increased competition throughout () sports world.
30. Parents () their children to sports training camps () an early age.
31. Such () typically practice three to () hours a day,
32. () weekend () during their school vacations
33. in order () better their chances of eventually obtaining () well-paid position
34. on a professional () when they grow ().
35. As for the () young aspirants who do () succeed,
36. one wonders if they () regret having () their childhood.

2.2. The All-Round Level B Version of the Minimal English Test (MET ARB)

The *All-Round Level B* Version of the Minimal English Test (MET ARB) is also a simple test which requires the test taker to write a correct English word with 4 letters or fewer into each of the 72 blank spaces of the given sentences, written on one piece A4 paper, while listening to the CD on which the sentences are recorded. The MET ARB is based on Lessons 1 and 2 of the textbook for high school students/1st year university students written by Ishiguro (2000) and the CD that accompanies it. The contents of the textbook contain a variety of stories and essays. The CD lasts about 3 minutes with a speed of 137 words per minute. The MET ARB is shown in (2).

(2) The *All-Round Level B* Version of the Minimal English Test (MET ARB)

Name: _____ Date: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

Please fill an English word with 4 letters or fewer into each blank space, while listening to the CD.

1. Adonis was the () handsome man () Greek mythology.
2. He was () from a tree, not () a woman. The older
3. he (), the more handsome he became. He had () skin,
4. long blond (), clear blue eyes, and a well-proportioned ().
5. Aphrodite, the goddess () beauty, fell in love () him. "What a
6. handsome () he is!" she cried. Her () for him was very passionate.
7. She () so much attracted to him not () because he was so
8. handsome, () because Eros, her son, pierced () breast
9. with his arrow () mistake. The legend () that Eros
10. had a golden arrow and () this arrow pierced () heart,
11. you would () captured by love. Eros accidentally () his own
12. mother with () golden arrow. This is () Aphrodite
13. fell () love with Adonis. However, her love was () fulfilled,
14. because Adonis was still () young to accept it. () interest
15. was only () hunting. Aphrodite () very
16. () worried about () danger Adonis might encounter
17. during hunting. () was always thinking, "() he should
18. () wounded in a flight () a fierce animal..."
19. "Don't be too brave. () you are in danger, please () my name.
20. I will be with you in () time," Aphrodite () to say to Adonis.
21. One (), he chased a boar () the bushes and shot at it.
22. Unfortunately, the arrow missed () heart and only injured () boar's body.
23. Nothing is () horrible and dangerous than an injured () beast.
24. It caught () and attacked him. The sharp tusks () the boar pierced
25. Adonis's body () and then twice. Aphrodite, () was on a trip
26. in a () carriage in the sky, was struck by a sensation () her
27. beloved was () danger. She looked () to earth and discovered
28. the boy's () covered with blood. () with her magical powers,
29. it () impossible to revive the () boy.
30. Aphrodite decided () she would () Adonis into a flower
31. which would bloom every () so that she could still () him.
32. The () that absorbed Adonis's blood brought () a beautiful
33. crimson flower, () the life of the flower was () short as
34. Adonis's (). This flower is () known as an anemone.
35. Aphrodite () her beloved forever and could not () crying.
36. The tears () Aphrodite () for this beloved boy turned into roses.

3. Results

The MET and the MET ARB were administered at one institution in 2005. 36 first year university students participated in this survey in January 2005, and 10 second year university students in July 2005. The total number of the participants was 46. We analyzed the data (the scores on the MET and the scores on the MET ARB) by a simple regression analysis (correlation analysis). The significance level was set at .05 for each analysis. The results are shown in (3-5).

(3) Correlation Between the Scores on the MET and the Scores on the MET ARB in January 2005

Regression Statistics	
Correlation Coefficient (R)	.67
R Square	.45
Adjusted R Square	.43
Standard Error	5.41
Observations	36
P-value	.00

The regression line is $y = .68x + 2.69$.

(4) Correlation Between the Scores on the MET and the Scores on the MET ARB in July 2005

Regression Statistics	
Correlation Coefficient (R)	.67
R Square	.44
Adjusted R Square	.37
Standard Error	7.67
Observations	10
P-value	.04

The regression line is $y = .45x + 11.71$.

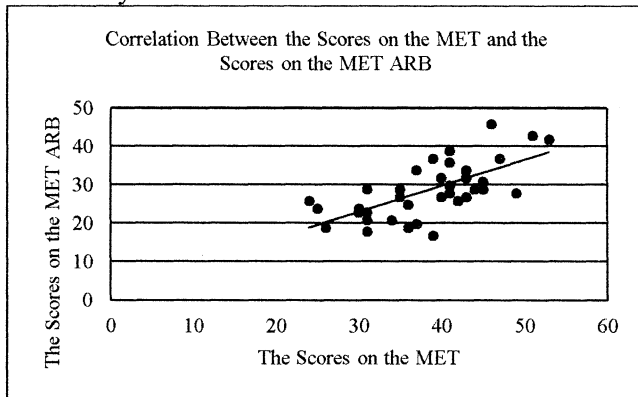
(5) Correlation Between the Scores on the MET and the Scores on the MET ARB in 2005

Regression Statistics	
Correlation Coefficient (R)	.67
R Square	.45
Adjusted R Square	.44
Standard Error	6.04
Observations	46
P-value	.00

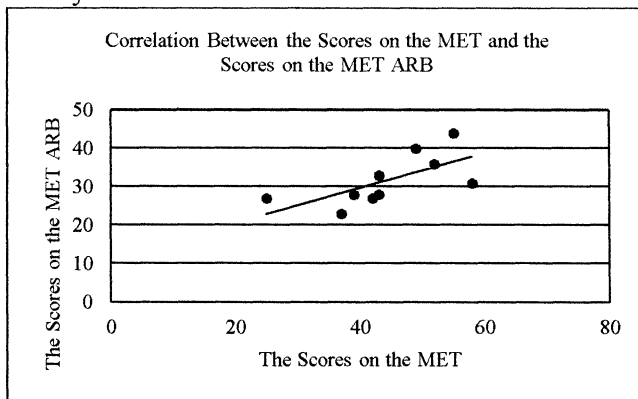
The regression line is $y = .60x + 5.68$.

The results of these analyses are more clearly represented by Graphs 1-3.

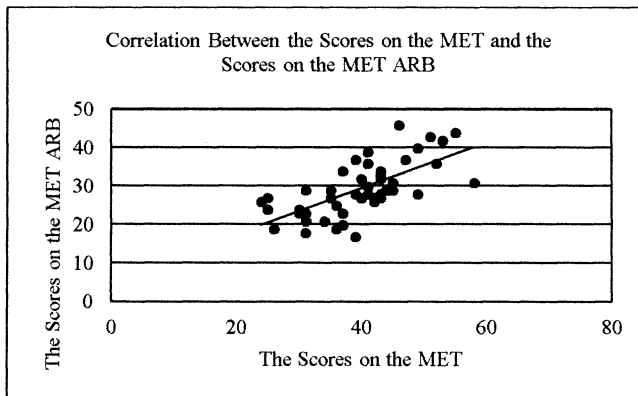
Graph 1: Correlation Between the Scores on the MET and the Scores on the MET ARB in January 2005



Graph 2: Correlation Between the Scores on the MET and the Scores on the MET ARB in July 2005



Graph 3: Correlation Between the Scores on the MET and the Scores on the MET ARB in 2005



The above analyses show (1) that the scores on the MET and the scores on the MET ARB by the 1st year students had a relatively strong correlation ($n=36$, $r=.67$, $p<.05$)¹; (2) that the scores on the MET and the scores on the MET ARB by the 2nd year students also had a relatively strong correlation ($n=10$, $r=.67$, $p<.05$); and (3) that the scores on the MET and the scores on the MET ARB by the entire participants also had a relatively strong correlation ($n=46$, $r=.67$, $p<.05$).

4. Conclusion

In this paper, we addressed the question as to whether textbooks other than Kawana and Walker (2002) could be used for a MET type test by making a MET based on Ishiguro's (2000) *All-Round Level B*. We found a relatively strong correlation between the scores on the original MET and the scores on the MET ARB ($n=46$, $r=.67$, $p<.05$). This indicates that the MET ARB can function as another version of the MET, and suggests that a version of the MET can be made based on textbooks other than Kawana and Walker (2002). In future research, we will examine whether the other passages in Ishiguro (2000) can be used to make other versions of the MET.

References

- Goto, Kenichi, Hideki Maki, and Chise Kasai (2010) "The Minimal English Test: A New Method to Measure English as a Second Language Proficiency." *Evaluation & Research in Education* 23, 91-104.
- Ishiguro, Akihiro (2000) *All-Round Level B*. Kyoto: Biseisha.
- Kawana, Norihito and Stuart Walker (2002) *This is Media.com*. Tokyo: Seibido.
- Maki, Hideki (2010) "Introduction to the Minimal English Test." In Morioka Daigaku Institute of Language (ed.) *Gengo Kyoiku Kenkyu (Language Education Research)* Volume 3, 15-26. Kanagawa: Seizansha.
- Maki, Hideki, Hiroaki Wasada, and Ekuko Hashimoto (2003) "Saishoo Ego Tesuto: Shoki Kenkyuu." (The Minimal English Test: A Preliminary Study) *Eego Kyooiku* (The English Teachers' Magazine) 53.10, 47-50.
- Yanai, Hisae (1998) *4 Steps Ekuseru Toukei (4 Steps Excel Statistics)*. Saitama: OMS.

Note

* We are grateful for Seiya Tanigaki of Biseisha, who kindly allowed us to use the textbook by Ishiguro (2000) for our purposes. We are also indebted to Jessica Dunton for invaluable comments on an earlier draft of this paper. All errors are our own.

¹ We follow Yanai (1998) in interpreting values of correlation coefficients. She assumes the correspondence between correlation coefficients and their characteristics in (i).

(i) The Correspondence Between Correlation Coefficients and Their Characteristics

Correlation Coefficients	Characteristics
$0 \leq r < .2$	almost no correlation
$.2 \leq r < .4$	weak correlation
$.4 \leq r < .7$	moderate correlation
$.7 \leq r < .9$	strong correlation
$.9 \leq r < 1$	extremely strong correlation