

MSc Audiology: AUDL 4007 Auditory Perception

Course work I: Adaptive tracks and psychometric functions

The purpose of this assignment is familiarise you with the notion of psychometric functions and adaptive tracks from psychoacoustic testing, plus give you some experience in manipulating data in Excel and/or SPSS. You should not need more than 500-1000 words to deal with the questions raised.

From *one* of the following conditions, use Glimpse, and the Triples 3AFC or Triples 2AFC format, to run yourself through 3-5 adaptive tests, until you get 3 tests with thresholds reasonably similar to one another (within 5 steps):

- gap detection
- notched-noise masking, for example, *TriplesNotch2*
- pitch discrimination
- TMTFs

Ensure you collect together the 6 results files generated from these tests, and email them to yourself, or save them on to a USB memory stick. The .csv files can be opened in Excel, and they contain the trial-by-trial results from the task, with the following information:

TrialNumber

FixedStimulus number on the continuum

ComparisonStimulus number on the continuum

Correct 1 if correct and 0 if incorrect for that particular trial

TrackDirection

LevittCount

Reversals reversal number

StepSize

Latency

TrialType

Time

Order of different (comparison) stimulus; Z=1, B=2, M=3

Response given by listener

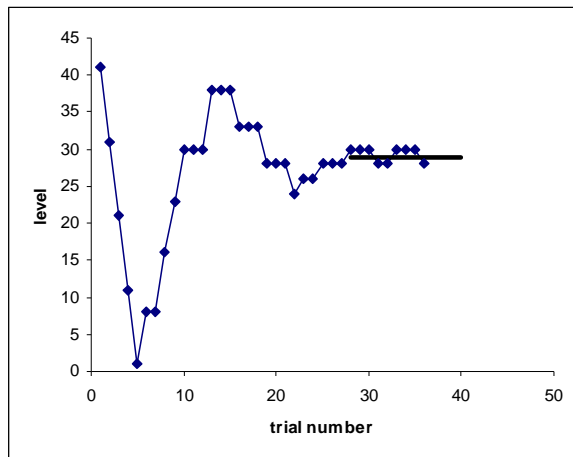
Once you start manipulating these files, save them as Excel files (.xls) so you can preserve the work you do in them. You will submit to me by email, as part of the course work, a single Excel file containing, among other things, the 6 individual files that Glimpse provides.

Looking at individual adaptive tracks

Look at your adaptive tracks and write a description of the rules followed by the tracking algorithm. You will find it useful to read Levitt (1971) as Glimpse uses a modification of the 3-down 1-up rule. You may also find the Glimpse documentation useful:

http://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/courses/spsci/audper/Help_Glimpse.htm

Ensure you make clear how step-size changes throughout the track. You can also look at the corresponding text files for each track for hints. Find the threshold in your text file and show how that and the standard deviation are derived from the track.



Using Excel, plot the comparison level as a function of trial number. Draw in the threshold calculated from the track reversals and comment on how well the calculated threshold seems to relate to the track. Here's an example, at left.

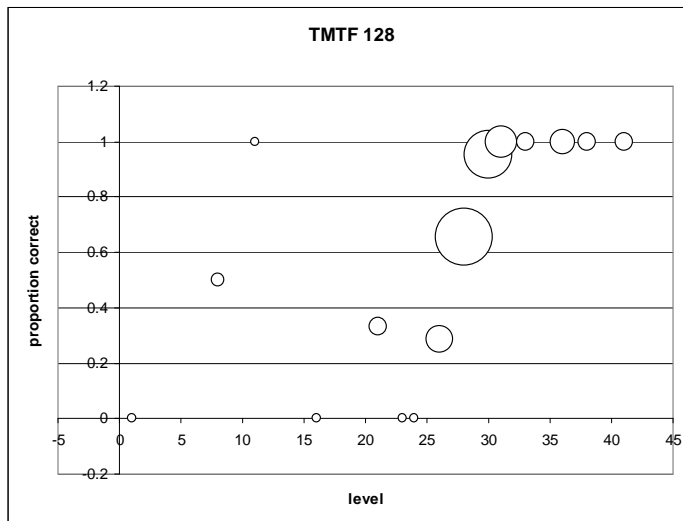
Creating a psychometric function

Collect together all the trials from all three tracks on a single worksheet, labelling each column appropriately. SPSS is very fussy about the length of the labels used, so use labels like: session,trial,std,comp,correct,dir,L,rev,step,latency,test,time,order,resp

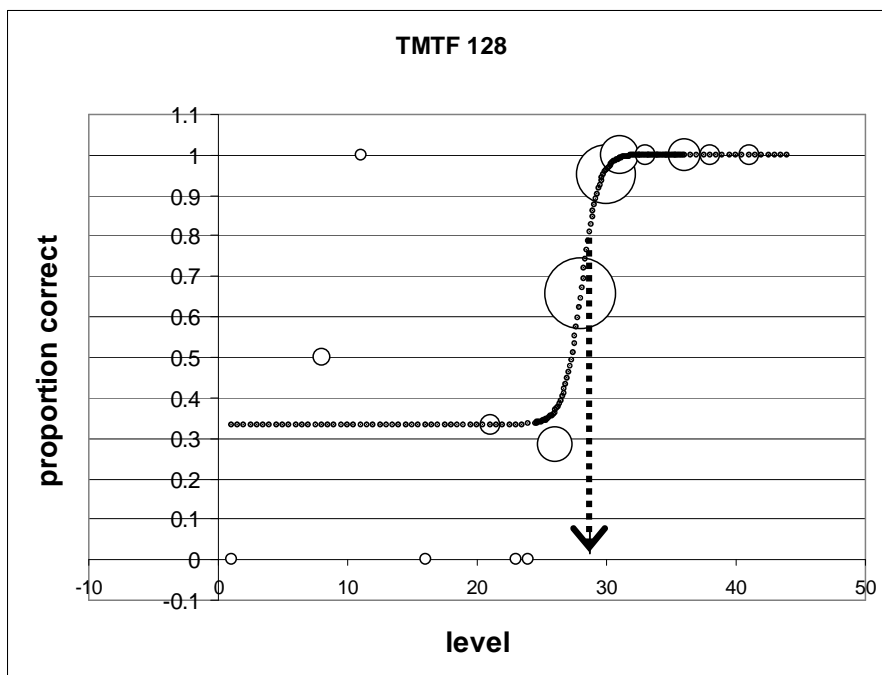
Open your Excel file in SPSS, telling it to read the variable names from the top row. Save away this SPSS file with an appropriate name. You can then get SPSS to tally up your psychometric function using Analyze → Tables → Basic Tables. You should be able to generate a table that looks like the following, which should be included in your report:

comp	r	n
1	0	1
8	1	2
11	1	1
16	0	1
21	1	3
23	0	1
24	0	1
26	2	7
28	19	29
30	20	21
31	9	9
33	3	3
36	6	6
38	3	3
41	3	3

Here **comp** is the level of the comparison stimulus, **r** is the total number correct, and **n** is the total number of trials. Copy this table into your Excel file on another worksheet. You can then calculate the probability of being correct at each comparison level (**p**), and plot your psychometric function using a bubble plot so the size of the points you plot is related to the number of trials at that particular level.



In this particular instance, you would see a plot something like this at left:



Sketch a sigmoid (S-shaped) curve by eye to the data points, weighting larger symbols more. Towards the left-hand side, your function should flatten out at chance level, either $\frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$, depending upon whether you used Triples 3AFC or Triples 2AFC format. Here's an example for Triples 3AFC, at left, with a threshold of about 28:

From your fitted psychometric function, determine the stimulus level that leads to 79% correct (the level tracked by the 3-down 1-up rule. How does this compare to the median threshold of your 3 tracks?

Up until now, you can express all your results in terms of stimulus number on the continuum. Now take your best estimate of the threshold (perhaps an average of the median of the 3 tracks and your estimate from the psychometric function). Convert it to genuine physical values, and compare it to the value you might expect from a paper you find in the literature.

Summary of what the final report should contain

- A short (one-paragraph) summary of the stimuli in the particular test you used, and a description of what physical variable that is being manipulated.
- A description of the adaptive psychophysical procedure
- A plot of one adaptive track with the calculated threshold drawn in, and a sentence or two about the correspondence
- Your psychometric function in a table
- Your psychometric function as a bubble chart with an appropriate sigmoid function drawn in (by hand is fine), and a threshold indicated.
- A few sentences about the threshold derived from the adaptive tracks, and from the psychometric function
- A calculation of what the threshold represent in physical terms, and a comparison of this value to one obtained in a previous study

Extra points will be awarded for brevity!

Reference List

Levitt, H. (1971). Transformed up-down methods in psychoacoustics. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 49, 467-477.