
T.A.T. Card 1 Scoring Guide

Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation Study

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Introduction to the T.A.T Scoring Guide

This scoring manual was especially developed for the Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation Study for the purposes of this study. It focuses on themes of achievement and relationships, which were derived inductively after reading stories narrated by participants from all the countries of origin involved in this project. It is intended both as training tool for scorers and a reference guide for sorting through ambiguous narratives or resolving disagreements in how scorers assessed a particular item for a specific narrative.

We suggest you begin by reading through the explanations below with the T.A.T. score sheet in hand. Make sure you understand what each scale measures as well as how each item on the particular scale differs from the others.

Continue to use the guide as you work through each narrative until you have internalized the scoring system. At this point refer back to it only when necessary.

The Ten Scales

Introduction

The first three scales, namely *Definition of Success*, *Attribution of Success* and *Resolution*, are geared towards projective narratives that tell an achievement story – regardless of whether the story is a classic McClelland story of achievement motivation or another kind of personal achievement such as harmonious relations with friends or family. Whether it attributes the success or failure or not, or if there is a resolution to the story or not, it can still be an achievement story. If the story is not as story about any kind of achievement then score as “NRC” - no related content.

As you work, you must remember to choose scale items according to *evidence supplied by the storyteller*. Be diligent about not projecting your thoughts onto the narrative. If the storyteller didn't say it, it isn't so! The scales for *Definition of Success*, *Resolution*, *Concerns with Adequacy*, *Engaged in Task*, *Source of External Pressure*, and *Response to External Pressure*, require that you choose one item that *best* represents the story. For the *Attribution of Success*, *Expressed Affect* and *Impediment* scales you may choose as many items for which there is explicit evidence in the narrative. In the *Interpersonal Relationships Scale* you can choose one description of the nature of the relationship for each type of relationship described.

Definition of Success

The “definition of success” scale assesses how the storyteller conceptualizes success (or failure). SCORE ONLY ONE ITEM FROM THIS SCALE. If there are two themes score the dominant one. If that is not obvious, then score the one that ends with a resolution.

Fame/High Level of Success	When a student tells a story in which the outcome is career fame (or loss of career fame) such as being a concert violinist or a star in the NBA, the definition of success is “fame.” This includes publicity around a specific event, such as being put in the newspaper for performing well. Score this item when the story tells about achieving high levels of success and mastery in career, talent, community, etc., even if fame is not mentioned.
Mastering Task	When the story is mainly about learning to do something, such as learning to play the violin, learning a language, learning a subject at school. Again, this is scored independently of whether the task is actually mastered or not -- the important thing is whether they conceive of success in this way.
Situational Success	Stories that describe being successful in a particular situation, usually a one-time event. Examples are performing at a concert, doing a test at school, fixing a broken violin, doing a homework problem, etc.
Relational Harmony	When the story is primarily about relational tensions - whether they successfully resolved or not, or if the story is about the evolution of a relationship.
Not Failing	If the protagonist is 1) preoccupied with the possibility or inevitability of failure, or 2) defines the success in terms of not having failed such as “she didn’t forget the notes, therefore they applauded”.
Satisfaction	When the protagonist in the story attains a goal for the sake of having the skill, taking pleasure in the sense of accomplishment. Satisfaction is also scored when the story tells about following one's calling or heart, including in the face of pressure to do something else.
NRC	NRC - No Related Content -- indicates that the story is not a story about achievement. If the story has a score of NRC in this scale, it will also have NRC for the following two scales

Attribution of Success

To what does the storyteller attribute the success (or failure), assuming the story is an achievement story? **YOU CAN SCORE MORE THAN ONE ITEM FROM THIS SCALE**, but only if they are present in pretty much equal strength. If one of them clearly dominates, use just that item.

Innate Talent	If the storyteller attributes the outcome to talent or innate ability (or lack thereof) then assign an “innate talent” rating. For example, if a violinist is unable to perform well because he is tone deaf then the lack of success is due to a lack of innate talent.
Personal Effort	If the storyteller attributes a successful outcome to hard work, practice or effort, then assign the “personal effort” rating. This can include stories which state that one can depend only on self, that much practice is needed to learn a task. Sustained effort must be evident even if 'hard work' is not explicitly stated.
Help of Others	When the protagonist succeeds because a teacher, relative or other person assists or models a process, then success is due to the “help of others.” It is not necessary for someone to have actually helped – only that success or the possibility of it is attributed to that help. Talking to others about a problem is also coded “help of others”. This item does not contradict with the presence of "Personal Effort" and they can be scored together.
Faith	When success follows on the heels of prayer or an explicit appeal to a higher power, then that success is attributed to “faith.”
Fate or Chance	If the narrator tells a story of success (or failure) where the outcome is a matter of fate, inevitable or by chance, then a “fate or chance” rating is assigned.
No attribution of success	If the storyteller relates a success story but doesn't attribute the success (or failure) to anything, including fate or chance, then a no attribution rating is given.
NRC	No related content indicates that the story was not a story about success.

Resolution

The “resolution” item assesses the nature of the story’s resolution. Was the story a success or failure, or did it end in another way? SCORE ONLY ONE ITEM FROM THIS SCALE.

Success	When the teller relates a story with a successful outcome, then the resolution is “success.” Any task that is completed is a success.
Failure or Poor Performance	When the teller relates a story, which ends in failure or a poor performance, then the resolution is “failure or poor performance.” This usually , (but not necessarily) includes statements of “can’t”, “fail”, “can’t do it”.
Escape/Avoid	If the storyteller concludes with the protagonist escaping – by physically or psychologically removing him or herself – then the resolution is “escape.”
Giving Up	This is scored if the story contains explicit mention or suggestion of giving up, not being able to go on. It is different from the previous item in that the protagonist doesn't only distance oneself from the activity, but also cannot continue, gives up in general and usually expects not to come back to the task.
None	When the story structure begs a resolution but none is forthcoming then score “none.”
NRC	When the story is not an achievement story, then score “NRC” for no related content.

Concerns with Adequacy

Is the protagonist worried about abilities, skills, etc.?

Present	Concerns with adequacy are present if they are wondering if they can accomplish the task, worried about whether they have the necessary skills, talents, or ability to learn them. In some cases "can't do it" is explicitly stated, in others sign of low-self esteem are present.
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Not Present	Even if they lack the skills, but are not concerned or uncomfortable with that, score "Not present". For example, not-knowing to play the violin but learning pretty smoothly without worry is a situation which will have this score.
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Engagement

What is the protagonist's relationship to the task or activity which is described in the story?

Engaged	When the protagonist is active in the task, interested, doing it, even if s/he doesn't like it.
Disengaged	Not motivated, not trying, disinterested, bored, completely distanced.
NRC	Score NRC when there is no task or activity in the story with which to be engaged. Note the difference between NRC and "disengaged".

Source of External Pressure

The “external pressure” scale shows whether there is pressure from others -- to achieve, perform, or take a particular action -- and where it is coming from. The simple presence of these people or situations does not automatically mean that there is pressure from them -- there has to be a sense of tension, commands, authority, worry about how the presentation will go, etc. Usually the child doesn't want to do it and is being forced, or he is not positive about doing it, but the circumstances are such that s/he persists. For example, homework that is difficult is scored as “external pressure from school”.

Parents	Pressure from mother, father or other adult in that role.
Peers	Pressure from classmates, friends, gangs.
Schools/Work/ Performance	Pressure from teachers, testing situations, homework, jobs, or concert and other types of performance situations.
NRC	If there is no external pressure, then score as NRC.

Response to External Pressure

This scale assesses how the protagonist responds to the external pressure scored above, if it is present. Is the protagonist compliant with the pressure, or does s/he avoid compliance?

Avoidant	If the protagonist resists or avoids the external pressure, then score as avoidant.
Compliant	If the protagonist is compliant with the pressure, then score as compliant.
NRC	If there is no external pressure, then score as NRC.

Interpersonal Relations

The “interpersonal relations” scale assesses the protagonist’s relations with family, peers, teachers, an audience (such as in performance situations) and a generalized “other” people along a positive (+), negative (-), neutral axis. Look for explicit mention of these types of interpersonal relationships in the narrative. Once you locate them, assess whether the tenor of the relationship is positive, negative or neutral. Make sure you have identified explicit evidence in the text for labeling a relationship positive or negative. If there is none, then assess the relationship as neutral. If the relationship changes and there is both conflict and connection, this does not add up to a neutral score -- score "both". If there is no mention of this type of relationship – a peer relationship for example – then rate the item as NRC.

Family	Mention of anyone in a kinship or fictive kinship relationship -- parents, siblings, uncles, cousins.
Peers	Friends, schoolmates, competitors in musical competitions.
Audience	People listening to or watching a protagonist perform, either in school or other concerts situations.
Teachers	Anyone specified as a teacher or anyone that is not a relative or peer acting as a teacher.
Other	Anyone else mentioned that does not fit into the first four categories. For example, the protagonist is upset and does not want to be around “anyone.” “Anyone” explicitly mentions an interpersonal relationship but does not specify with whom. In other cases the story refers to "a man".

Expressed Affect

The “Expressed Affect” scale assesses the range of emotions *explicitly expressed* in the narrative. SCORE AS MANY FOR WHICH THERE IS TEXTUAL EVIDENCE. Be mindful of not projecting your affect onto the story. Score a '99' if another affect that is not included in this scale appears in the story.

Anxiety	Nervousness, worry, fear or concern.
Anger	Anger, rage, being mad at someone or about something.
Positive/ Happy	Happiness, joy, pride, etc.
Sad/ Depressed	Sadness, unhappiness, depression, crying, etc.
Flat/ Numb	Score when the storyteller fails to mention affect in a situation that evokes feelings in the average reader. For example, the narrator relates a story of surviving a rape, but expresses no affect in the telling.
Shame	Shame, humiliation, embarrassment, guilt, etc.
Upset/ Bad	Score this when they say "... felt bad" or when there is general discomfort or unease, yet it is not as strong as sad/ depressed.
Frustrated	When frustration, disappointment, discouragement are mentioned.
Bored	Disinterest in task or activity.
Tired/ Sick	Tiredness, illness or hunger.
NRC	No feelings conveyed. Note the difference between NRC and Flat/Numb. With NRC, the protagonist does not express affect, but the situation doesn't beg such expression. With Flat/Numb, the protagonist does not express affect, but the nature of the narrative begs such expression.

Impediment

This scale describes the tensions, barriers, and problems faced by the protagonist in the story. They are scored if they are mentioned, independent of whether they are overcome or not. SCORE AS MANY FOR WHICH THERE IS TEXTUAL EVIDENCE. Score a '99' if another impediment that is not included in this scale appears in the story.

Lack of Knowledge	Not having the skills, not knowing a language, how to play the violin, to do the homework, etc.
Discrimination/ Hostility	Includes more covert and more overt negative attitudes of others, including violence, beatings, punishment, scolding, making fun, etc.
Poverty	Explicit mention of poverty, being poor, or having to save money, to make ends meet.
Illness/Tired	An illness or lack of energy is getting in the way.
Broken Violin	When the story mentions a broken violin, whether accidentally or purposefully broken.
Unfocused/ Bored	When what is getting in the way is lack of focus, distraction, dislike of task or situation, boredom.
"Problems"	Score this when unspecified problems, difficulties or troubles are mentioned.
Substance Abuse	When drugs, cigarettes, alcohol are mentioned -- independent of whether the protagonist or someone else is using, including when there is pressure by others to use.
Confusion	When the protagonist can't decide what to do, is confused, disoriented, uncertain, undecided, "I don't know.
Parent disapproves of child playing violin	Situations in which the child wants to play the violin, but the parents are forbidding or have another idea of what the child should be doing / playing.
Loneliness/ No One to Help.	When the protagonist is lonely, alone and disliking it, when there is no one to help when help is needed.
NRC	No impediment.
