

## ***HOLISTIC ESL ORAL DESCRIPTORS***

The proficiency indicators described below are designed to provide a quick, effective and holistic scoring of oral proficiency. It is intended for instructor and tutor use as a general indicator of student verbal communication skills and as a feedback tool. "Basic language structures" refer to subject-verb agreement, verb tense usage, pronoun usage, noun-adjective agreement, sentence negation, word order, question formation, article usage, and noun usage. In evaluating student speaking ability, please take into consideration the amount that a listener must intervene in the conversation in order to elicit responses from the speaker.

Pre-Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responses barely comprehensible. Contains long pauses or incomplete utterances.</li> <li>▪ Pronunciation interferes with communication.</li> <li>▪ Extremely limited vocabulary. Requires nonverbal cues to support communication.</li> <li>▪ Little or no evidence of correct basic grammar structures/word order.</li> <li>▪ Requires repeated clarification. Little or no ability to understand spoken English.</li> </ul>
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responses minimally comprehensible. Response may include very few words.</li> <li>▪ Pronunciation affected by first language, inhibiting communication.</li> <li>▪ May frequently repeat words and phrases.</li> <li>▪ Limited use of basic language structures.</li> <li>▪ Requires frequent repetition/clarification to comprehend spoken English.</li> </ul>
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responses comprehensible with repetition and/or clarification. Responses lack fluency. Often pauses to search for words.</li> <li>▪ Pronunciation often affects communication.</li> <li>▪ Uses a minimal variety of vocabulary.</li> <li>▪ Uses basic structures appropriately about half the time.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates comprehension of simple words/phrases from learned topics.</li> </ul>
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responses mostly comprehensible. Requires interpretation on the listener's part.</li> <li>▪ Speech is choppy and/or slow with frequent pauses. Few or no incomplete thought expressions.</li> <li>▪ Pronunciation occasionally interferes with communication.</li> <li>▪ Vocabulary too basic for fluent usage. Emerging use of basic language structures.</li> <li>▪ Comprehends familiar information in standard situations.</li> </ul>
Level 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Generally comprehensible responses. May require elaboration.</li> <li>▪ Pronunciation rarely inhibits communication.</li> <li>▪ Able to express nearly all thoughts but has some pauses.</li> <li>▪ Uses a variety of vocabulary and high frequency expressions.</li> <li>▪ Uses basic language structure appropriately about 75% of the time.</li> <li>▪ Can comprehend implications beyond surface meaning (e.g. mood)</li> </ul>
Level 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Comprehensible responses. Requires minimal listener interpretation.</li> <li>▪ Some hesitation but continues and completes thoughts.</li> <li>▪ Pronunciation does not interfere with communication.</li> <li>▪ Adequate and accurate use of vocabulary.</li> </ul>
Level 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responses easily comprehensible. Requires no interpretation on the part of the listener.</li> <li>▪ Speech is continuous with few pauses or hesitation.</li> <li>▪ Pronunciation does not interfere with communication.</li> <li>▪ Rich, varied vocabulary use. Attempts at elaboration.</li> <li>▪ Control of basic language structures.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates comprehension of conversation with native speakers.</li> </ul>