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.

<table>
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<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| Pre-Level 1 | - Responses barely comprehensible. Contains long pauses or incomplete utterances.  
|          |  - Pronunciation interferes with communication.  
|          |  - Extremely limited vocabulary. Requires nonverbal cues to support communication.  
|          |  - Little or no evidence of correct basic grammar structures/word order.  
|          |  - Requires repeated clarification. Little or no ability to understand spoken English.                                                    |
| Level 1 | - Responses minimally comprehensible. Response may include very few words.  
|          |  - Pronunciation affected by first language, inhibiting communication.  
|          |  - May frequently repeat words and phrases.  
|          |  - Limited use of basic language structures.  
|          |  - Requires frequent repetition/clarification to comprehend spoken English.                                                                 |
| Level 2 | - Responses comprehensible with repetition and/or clarification. Responses lack fluency. Often pauses to search for words.  
|          |  - Pronunciation often affects communication.  
|          |  - Uses a minimal variety of vocabulary.  
|          |  - Uses basic structures appropriately about half the time.  
|          |  - Demonstrates comprehension of simple words/phrases from learned topics.                                                                 |
| Level 3 | - Responses mostly comprehensible. Requires interpretation on the listener's part.  
|          |  - Speech is choppy and/or slow with frequent pauses. Few or no incomplete thought expressions.  
|          |  - Pronunciation occasionally interferes with communication.  
|          |  - Vocabulary too basic for fluent usage. Emerging use of basic language structures.  
|          |  - Comprehends familiar information in standard situations.                                                                               |
| Level 4 | - Generally comprehensible responses. May require elaboration.  
|          |  - Pronunciation rarely inhibits communication.  
|          |  - Able to express nearly all thoughts but has some pauses.  
|          |  - Uses a variety of vocabulary and high frequency expressions.  
|          |  - Uses basic language structure appropriately about 75% of the time.  
|          |  - Can comprehend implications beyond surface meaning (e.g. mood)                                                                             |
| Level 5 | - Comprehensible responses. Requires minimal listener interpretation.  
|          |  - Some hesitation but continues and completes thoughts.  
|          |  - Pronunciation does not interfere with communication.  
|          |  - Adequate and accurate use of vocabulary.                                                                                                 |
| Level 6 | - Responses easily comprehensible. Requires no interpretation on the part of the listener.  
|          |  - Speech is continuous with few pauses or hesitation.  
|          |  - Pronunciation does not interfere with communication.  
|          |  - Rich, varied vocabulary use. Attempts at elaboration.  
|          |  - Control of basic language structures.  
|          |  - Demonstrates comprehension of conversation with native speakers.                                                                          |