

Stage III: Speech emergence

Students have developed a vocabulary of about 3,000 words and can communicate with simple phrases and sentences. They will ask simple questions, that may or may not be grammatically correct, such as “ May I go to bathroom? ” ELLs will also initiate short conversations with classmates. They will understand easy stories read in class with the support of pictures. They will also be able to do some content work with teacher support. Here are some simple tasks they can complete:

- Sound out stories phonetically.
- Read short, modified texts in content area subjects.
- Complete graphic organizers with word banks.
- Understand and answer questions about charts and graphs.
- Match vocabulary words to definitions.
- Study flashcards with content area vocabulary.
- Participate in duet, pair and choral reading activities.
- Write and illustrate riddles.
- Understand teacher explanations and two-step directions.
- Compose brief stories based on personal experience.
- Write in dialogue journals.

Dialogue journals are a conversation between the teacher and the student. They are especially helpful with English language learners. Students can write about topics that interest them and proceed at their own level and pace. They have a place to express their thoughts and ideas.

Stage IV: Intermediate fluency

English language learners at the intermediate fluency stage have a vocabulary of 6000 active words. They are beginning to use more complex sentences when speaking and writing and are willing to express opinions and share their thoughts. They will ask questions to clarify what they are learning in class. These English language learners will be able to work in grade level math and science classes with some teacher support. Comprehension of English literature and social studies content is increasing. At this stage, students will use strategies from their native language to learn content in English.

Student writing at this stage will have many errors as ELLs try to master the complexity of English grammar and sentence structure. Many students may be translating written assignments from native language. They should be expected to synthesize what they have learned and to make inferences from that learning. This is the time for teachers to focus on learning strategies. Students in this stage will also be able to understand more complex concepts.

Stage V: Advanced Fluency

It takes students from 4-10 years to achieve cognitive academic language proficiency in a second language. Student at this stage will be near-native in their ability to perform in content area learning. Most ELLs at this stage have been exited from ESL and other support programs. At the beginning of this stage, however, they will need continued support from classroom teachers especially in content areas such as history/social studies and in writing.

http://www.everythingsl.net/inservices/language_stages.php

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

by Judie Haynes

All new learners of English progress through the same stages to acquire language. However, the length of time each student spends at a particular stage may vary greatly.



Stage I: Pre-production

This is the silent period. English language learners may have up to 500 words in their receptive vocabulary but they are not yet speaking. Some students will, however, repeat every thing you say. They are not really producing language but are parroting.

These new learners of English will listen attentively and they may even be able to copy words from the board. They will be able to respond to pictures and other visuals. They can understand and duplicate gestures and movements to show comprehension. Total Physical Response methods will work well with them. Teachers should focus attention on listening comprehension activities and on building a receptive vocabulary.

English language learners at this stage will need much repetition of English. They will benefit from a “buddy” who speaks their language. Remember that the school day is exhausting for these newcomers as they are overwhelmed with listening to English language all day long.

Stage II: Early production

This stage may last up to six months and students will develop a receptive and active vocabulary of about 1000 words. During this stage, students can usually speak in one- or two-word phrases. They can use short language chunks that have been memorized although these chunks may not always be used correctly.

Here are some suggestions for working with students in this stage of English language learning:

- Ask yes/no and either/or questions.
- Accept one or two word responses.
- Give students the opportunity to participate in some of the whole class activities.
- Use pictures and realia to support questions.
- Modify content information to the language level of ELLs.
- Build vocabulary using pictures.
- Provide listening activities.
- Simplify the content materials to be used. Focus on key vocabulary and concepts.
- When teaching elementary age ELLs, use simple books with predictable text.
- Support learning with graphic organizers, charts and graphs. Begin to foster writing in English through labeling and short sentences. Use a frame to scaffold writing.

Term	Definition	Example
Adjective clause	A dependent clause that modifies a noun; also called a relative clause. Adjective clauses describe or stand in for nouns, often answer "Which one?" and are introduced by words like <i>who</i> , <i>that</i> , <i>which</i> , <i>whom</i> , and <i>whose</i> .	<i>In the mornings, I go to study to Kaplan <u>which is a center which help you to prepare for the university.</u></i> (Scoring Practice clip 5) Note: There are two adjective clauses in this example, but only one is indicated.
Adverbial clause	A dependent clause that expresses time, cause and effect, contrast, or condition. Adverbial clauses are introduced by words such as <i>if</i> , <i>while</i> , <i>after</i> , <i>because</i> , and <i>since</i> .	<i><u>If you want something ...</u> you have to work hard to ... to have it.</i> (Scoring Practice clip 10.2) <i><u>When I go to my work,</u> I wake up at ... usually I wake up at 5:00 in the morning.</i> (Scoring Practice clip 6) <i>... I don't really know <u>where they go</u> but ...</i> (Scoring practice clip 9.2)
Noun clauses	A dependent clause that takes the place of a noun or phrase by acting as the subject or object of a verb or the object of a preposition. Noun clauses answer the questions "Who(m)?" or "What?"	<i>I don't know <u>how many people are coming.</u></i> The clause "how many people are coming" sounds like a question when it is removed from the sentence. In the larger context, however, it functions as the object of "know"—I don't know something. What is it that I don't know? I don't know <i>how many people are coming</i> .
Strings of phrases or sentences	Phrases or sentences connected by the words <i>but</i> , <i>because</i> , <i>if</i> , or other simple sentence connectors. Note: Strings of sentences are also referred to as <i>independent clauses</i> . The independent clause can stand alone without any grammatical modifications even if the connector is removed.	<i>Well, <u>about transportation ... about ... uhm ... education also ... hobbies ... because could be different ... schedules ... because there are difference too.</u></i> (Scoring Practice clip 11.3)

Grammar Terms and Concepts

If you need more help understanding the terms used in the scoring rubric, you can refer to the grammatical information in the chart below. The examples come from the Benchmarks and Scoring Practice clips on the training video, so they represent actual conversations with adult English language learners. Note, however, that putting too much emphasis on grammar issues may distort how you interpret the scoring rubric. Some test administrators overemphasize the importance of grammar in scoring Language Complexity. It is important to remember that grammar accounts for only a part of the score. Elaboration and organization of the response must also be taken into account when awarding scores in Language Complexity. For more information about grammatical terms and concepts relevant to adult ESL instruction, consult your favorite grammar reference.

Term	Definition	Example
Phrase	A group of words within a clause that functions as a part of speech (e.g., adjective phrases, adverbial phrases)	<i>In the mornings, I go to study to Kaplan ...</i> (Scoring Practice clip 5)
S-V-O	Subject, verb, object	<i>I like ... uhm ... computers</i> (Scoring Practice clip 12.1)
Independent clause	A complete sentence; has a subject and a verb	<i>I buy the food in Giant, and Shopper, and Safeway.</i> (Benchmark clip 2)
Dependent clause	Although not a complete sentence, it contains a subject and a verb; must be connected to an independent clause	<i>If you want to see a doctor, you call somebody first to make an appointment.</i> (Benchmark clip 10)
Subordination	<p>A relationship between two clauses where one is independent and the other is dependent. The use of subordinate clauses (also called dependent clauses), contrastive structures, and greater organization and elaboration are indicators of more complex language because they provide additive detail and elaboration beyond the minimum.</p> <p>There are three kinds of subordinate clauses: adjective clauses, adverbial clauses, and noun clauses.</p>	<p><i>If you want to see a doctor [dependent clause], you call somebody first to make an appointment [independent clause].</i> (Benchmark clip 10)</p> <p>Some words that commonly introduce subordinate clauses are <i>when, which, after, before, while, if, because, although, since, until, and unless.</i></p> <p>Other examples of subordination are responses that begin with "I believe that," "I hope that," "I think that," "I wish that," and so on. However, speakers of English often leave out the word <i>that</i>, making this type of subordination sometimes difficult to recognize in speech. For example, "I believe that she used to be a teacher," and "I believe she used to be a teacher" are both correct and are examples of complexity in language.</p>

BEST Plus Language Complexity Reference Sheet

Language Complexity refers to how the examinee organizes and elaborates the response. Different types of questions require different levels of linguistic complexity in their responses. Sometimes a one-word answer is appropriate. Sometime sentences, strings of sentences, or more complex language is needed to give an appropriate response. In rating this category, you will need to listen for several things. Is the response an appropriate word, phrase, sentence, or string of sentences? How complex is the grammar? Is the detail provided minimal or clearly beyond basic? Is the response organized and cohesive?

Score	Rubric Description	Examples	Notes
4	Sustains a variety of structures ; develops an idea in detail (using reasons, examples, explanations, descriptions, etc.); vocabulary more precise; response cohesive and often organized .	Oh, I have no experience here in the United States, but from what I heard it's not easy to go to a doctor here because it is very expensive if you don't have any health insurance. Maybe I can compare it with Germany because I don't know a lot about Cameroon. So in Germany you just have to pay your insurance. So you pay monthly. It is not expensive at all, maybe 100 DM, it's like \$50, and you access in all, at all branches in the medicine. And here I have my friend, she told me she went to see a doctor. It was last Saturday. She has to pay seventy, seventy dollars! It's like my, what I paid for the month, my monthly insurance in Germany. It's very expensive here.	Develops an idea in detail using reasons, examples, precise vocabulary, and complex grammatical structures; cohesive response
3	Uses strings of several sentences to provide additive detail , often through phrases and clauses (e.g., prepositional phrases, adverbial clauses, subordination); elaboration clearly beyond minimum	I think the best way is work like part of the team because sometimes you don't know what you, you have to do. And another person know for you, you have to do. So that person can help in that time and in another way if I work all by myself I can sometimes... 'I'm gonna say "What I have to do?" and... it gonna be more difficult. Umm... Here you can... If you want to see a doctor you call somebody first to make an appointment. And then you can wait for hours or for days. They can let you know when exactly you has to be, you has to see the doctor. In my country it is different because if you want to see the doctor right now, you can see it. So the only thing has to do is to go to the doctor and make a line and the doctor will see you. That's a big difference. So... right there we don't call the doctor first.	Strings of several sentences to provide additive detail; use of subordinate clauses
2	Uses long strings of phrases or well-formed sentence(s) with emerging complexity (e.g., use of "because," "if," "but") to provide some additional detail that is minimal but beyond basic	No, in my country is more easy to go to the doctor. Yeah. Because they... there is very... plan for health for the, for the people. Here is very expensive to go to the doctor. Very expensive. It is different in that my country. My country no is very expensive visit the doctor. Umm... I decided to buy my food in the Spanish stores--well--to buy the same food I eat in my country.	Two or three strings; use of "because"; some additional detail but repeats and gives the same information in a different way
1	Words, phrase(s), or simple sentence(s) (i.e., SVO) used to provide basic information with no elaboration; limited vocabulary	Em... For more... work more hours... more money... I think. I buy the food in Giant and Shopper and Safeway.	A well-formed sentence. Use of complementation to add detail (i.e., "to buy the same food...") Word's phrases; no elaboration; limited vocabulary
0	No response, response incomprehensible, or response inappropriate		Simple sentence; no elaboration

BEST Plus Scoring Rubric

Listening Comprehension <i>How well did the examinee understand the setup and question?</i>	2	Response indicates appropriate understanding of the setup and question without repetition (though examinee may have checked comprehension)
	1	Setup and question need to be repeated before examinee responds appropriately, or Response indicates partial understanding of setup and question
	0	Response indicates complete misunderstanding of setup and question (even with one repetition), or No response, response incomprehensible, or response inappropriate

Language Complexity <i>How did the examinee organize and elaborate the response?</i>	4	Sustains a variety of structures; develops an idea in detail (using reasons, examples, explanations, descriptions, etc.); vocabulary more precise; response cohesive and often organized
	3	Uses strings of several sentences to provide additive detail , often through phrases and clauses (e.g., prepositional phrases, adverbial clauses, subordination); elaboration clearly beyond minimum
	2	Uses long strings of phrases or well-formed sentence(s) with emerging complexity (e.g., use of "because," "if," "but") to provide some additional detail that is minimal but beyond basic
	1	Words, phrase(s), or simple sentence(s) (i.e., S-V-O) used to provide basic information with no elaboration; limited vocabulary
	0	No response, response incomprehensible, or response inappropriate

Communication <i>How clearly did the examinee communicate meaning?</i>	3	Response is comprehensible and easy to understand (Despite inaccuracies, the listener does not need to fill in to understand meaning.)
	2	Response is comprehensible but sporadically difficult to understand (From time to time the listener does not need to fill in to understand meaning.)
	1	Response is comprehensible but generally difficult to understand (Much effort is required by the listener to fill in to understand meaning. Confusions may exist.)
	0	No response, response incomprehensible, or response inappropriate