

ELPA Descriptors of Speaking Proficiency

Student Version

	Topic development and coherence	Vocabulary range and accuracy	Grammar range and accuracy	Pronunciation
7	<p>You communicate substantial, skillfully connected ideas.</p> <p>You organise what you say very well. You can refer to things said previously (by yourself or someone else) with ease and skill.</p>	<p>You use quite a wide range of vocabulary, appropriately and with some precision, to talk about a given topic. This range includes idiomatic and specialised vocabulary.</p> <p>You might make occasional minor errors, for example, in the form of a word, just as a native speaker might.</p>	<p>You accurately use quite a wide range of grammatical structures and show an awareness of language style.</p> <p>You might make occasional minor errors, or the kind of slips that a native speaker might make.</p>	<p>You pronounce sounds and words clearly, and you always use rhythm and intonation naturally, to communicate a clear and meaningful message.</p>
6	<p>You can speak for a long time and in a well-organised way, without thinking first about how to communicate your ideas. This does not mean that you speak at length every time you speak, but you can develop an idea with explanations, examples, or supporting details, when you need to.</p> <p>You use a range of cohesive devices—not just connectives—appropriately.</p>	<p>You use a range of vocabulary, which includes less-common, low frequency words and phrases, to talk about a given topic. You may also show an awareness of language style and how words collocate.</p> <p>You might make occasional errors but these do not affect the clarity of your message.</p>	<p>You use a range of complex structures. You may also show an awareness of language style.</p> <p>You often use complex sentences which have no mistakes in them. You might make occasional errors but these do not affect the clarity of your message.</p>	<p>You pronounce sounds and words clearly.</p> <p>You use rhythm and intonation appropriately, and can also use it to enhance your message.</p>
5	<p>You can speak for a long time and in a well-organised way. If you hesitate, it seems that you are searching for ideas, not for words or structures.</p> <p>You use a range of connectives appropriately, and you may try to use other ways of referring to things said previously. You might say, for example, ‘As I was saying a few minutes ago...’ or ‘In situations like that one...’</p>	<p>You use a range of vocabulary with some flexibility to talk about a given topic. This means you don’t have to repeat words, for example, because you can use synonyms or alternate word forms.</p> <p>You make a few errors but these do not affect anyone’s understanding of your message.</p>	<p>You use a range of simple and complex structures with some flexibility. This means that you don’t have to repeat the same structure.</p> <p>You make a few errors but these do not affect anyone’s understanding of your message.</p>	<p>You pronounce sounds and words clearly.</p> <p>You use rhythm and intonation appropriately.</p>
4	<p>You can speak for a long time and usually in a well-organised way. Sometimes when you hesitate, you seem to be searching for words or structures; at other times it seems quite natural.</p> <p>You use a range of connectives, although you may make errors.</p> <p>You may use too many fillers (e.g., ‘you know’, ‘like’).</p>	<p>You use an adequate range of vocabulary to talk about a given topic. You might repeat words and phrases.</p> <p>You may quite often choose the wrong word or the wrong form of a word, especially if you are a risk-taker and like to try out new words and phrases, but this rarely affects other people’s understanding of your message.</p>	<p>You use both simple structures and complex structures. You might repeat particular structures.</p> <p>You may quite often make mistakes, especially if you are a risk-taker and like to try out different structures, but this rarely affects other people’s understanding of your message.</p>	<p>You pronounce most sounds and words correctly, and on the whole your pronunciation does not cause difficulties for the listener.</p> <p>You mostly use rhythm and intonation appropriately.</p>

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3	<p>You are able to keep going, but you only develop ideas a little OR your ideas are not well-organised. When you hesitate, you seem to be searching for words or structures.</p> <p>You use a limited range of connectives, but you make mistakes doing this.</p> <p>You may speak quite slowly.</p>	<p>You use a limited range of vocabulary to talk about a given topic. This means you may use the same common words too often. You seem to know some less common words or phrases, but you may not always use them accurately or appropriately.</p> <p>You make noticeable mistakes, but these do not usually affect other people's understanding of your message.</p>	<p>You use simple structures and a limited range of complex structures. Sometimes you seem to know a structure but you cannot always use it accurately or appropriately. You may use simpler structures too often.</p> <p>You make noticeable mistakes, but these do not usually affect other people's understanding of your message.</p>	<p>You pronounce most sounds or words correctly, but your pronunciation may sometimes cause difficulty for the listener.</p> <p>You may try to use some stress and pausing and intonation, but you may not do so appropriately.</p>
2	<p>You are able to keep going, but it seems to be difficult for you. Your message becomes difficult to follow at times because you hesitate and/or repeat yourself.</p> <p>Your may not use connectives (words like 'but' and 'therefore') accurately, and you may repeat the same ones.</p> <p>You may speak slowly.</p>	<p>You use a restricted range of vocabulary to talk about a given topic, and the only words you really use correctly are common, high-frequency ones. It might be obvious at times that you cannot find the words you need to express your ideas, and that you cannot find alternative words to use.</p> <p>You might make frequent mistakes and so there may be times when the listener does not understand your message.</p>	<p>You try to use a limited range of structures but you can only really produce simple structures accurately.</p> <p>You might make frequent mistakes, and so there may be times when the listener does not understand your message.</p>	<p>You pronounce some sounds or words correctly, but you make some noticeable mistakes, and you repeat them. There may be times when the listener does not understand your message.</p> <p>You do not seem to be aware of the rhythm and intonation of connected speech.</p>
1	<p>You are sometimes unable to keep going, and/or you frequently repeat yourself. You may not be able to organise your ideas.</p> <p>You probably misuse connectives or do not use them at all.</p> <p>You may speak very slowly.</p>	<p>The only words that you use are common, high-frequency ones. This might mean that you cannot say very much about a given topic.</p> <p>You make frequent mistakes, which makes it difficult for the listener to understand your message.</p>	<p>You use simple sentence structures in short, usually unconnected, sentences.</p> <p>You make frequent mistakes, which makes it difficult for the listener to understand your message.</p>	<p>Your pronunciation makes it difficult for the listener to understand your message.</p>
0	<p>You do not say enough.</p> <p>Your ideas are difficult to follow</p>	<p>You do not seem to have the vocabulary to say what you want to.</p> <p>What you do say contains many errors.</p>	<p>You do not seem to have the structures to say what you want to.</p> <p>What you do say contains many errors.</p>	<p>You are very difficult to understand.</p>