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TECHNOLOGY AND LANGUAGE LEARNING: EXPOSURE TO TV AND RADIO NEWS AND SPEAKING PROFICIENCY

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Abstract

Technology has dominated the world by extensive improvements in audio/visual mass media such as TV and radio. TV and radio are not just entertainment tools anymore, but can be used as pedagogically valuable technology that can provide authentic language input for language learning. This study examines the effect of exposure to TV and radio news on improving EFL learners' speaking proficiency. To achieve this purpose, a speaking proficiency test is administered to 200 language learners, with 60 intermediate language learners selected and randomly divided into Groups 1 and 2. During the experiment, Group 1 participants are exposed to TV and radio news inside and outside the classroom, while Group 2 participants are only exposed to selected utterances extracted from different kinds of TV and radio programs other than news. At the end of the experiment, both groups take another sample speaking proficiency test to determine any significant improvement in their speaking proficiency. The results of the post-test indicate that Group 1 participants performed better than Group 2 participants, proving that exposure to TV and radio news promotes EFL learners' speaking proficiency.

Keywords

EFL, ESL, media-assisted language learning

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INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades (1990s and 2000s), different technologies such as computers, mobile tools, and audio/visual mass media have dominated the world by sharing and showing a variety

of programs that both instruct and entertain the audience. The impressive developments in audio, video, and computer-mediated communications programs offer many possibilities for teachers to construct activities around listening to TV and radio news programs, watching related videos, and holding conversations in real-time (Chinnery; Parker; Salaberry; Bell; Ishihara and Chi; Bedjou; Mcconatha; Praul and Lynch). TV and radio are two old technologies that allow easy access to authentic language input via different programs such as news, films, songs, documentaries, and many other programs have also been the focus of many studies (Brinton and Gaskill; Poon; Baker; Berber; Bell, just to name a few). Among the different TV and radio programs, news has received greater attention in these studies.

Linguistically, TV and radio as dominant audio/visual mass media share particular characteristics that make them different from other genres. One characteristic of TV news, for instance, which makes it pedagogically worthy to be used in EFL and ESL classrooms is vocabulary recycling (Blatchford 148; Brinton and Gaskill 413). This recycling of vocabulary in TV and radio news is considered a redundancy of input, which generally helps students in their second language comprehension (Chaudron 46; Chiang and Dunkel 362).

Because news writers and experienced news reporters are aware of the role of the news genre in shaping public attitude, they make careful attempts to present news stories, discussions, and commentaries in the most precise and direct ways possible to attract the most attention. News agenda also use specific vocabulary items and structures to make the news more understandable by a larger audience. In other words, ambiguous structures which may hinder comprehension are almost always avoided in developing and presenting news items. The lexico-syntactic feature of this genre is what makes TV and radio news a valuable source of vocabulary input for EFL/ESL learners. As the news consistently include the same words and utterances, TV and radio news programs may be used for their pedagogical benefits (Blatchford 148).

Another essential characteristic of TV news genre is the fluency of speech with appropriate pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking, and the use of interjections and interruptions (Bell 9). Chambers considers fluency as a component of oral proficiency, which is acquired and emerges naturally. Fluency of speech is also a dominant linguistic feature of utterances designed and developed to be read by newscasters (538).

One more important feature of TV and radio news is its special discourse—the nature of the news, the cognitive, affective and social status of both the news items and the audience, the structure of the news, etc. Thus, while listening to a piece of news, according to Van Dijk, “Understanding is not merely [obtained by] associating meanings to words, sentences or discourses, but constructing mental models in episodic memory, including our own opinions and emotions associated with an event we hear or read about” (367).

One of the most important ways of improving EFL learners' speaking proficiency is proved to be through extensive exposure to fluent native speakers or even fluent nonnative ones. Particularly, from among all the TV and radio programs, the TV and radio news are very effective in teaching different aspects of language. However, TV news may be different for at least two reasons: first, many language learners seem to be interested in different news types depending on their personal dependency and/or affiliation; second, due to the various discursual functions of the TV news, the listener may or may not have to focus on either form or content.

Whatever the story, one of the audio-visual inputs which proved to be effective in helping EFL learners improve their fluency in English speaking is the TV and radio news speech genre. This research intends to investigate the effects of exposure to mass media (i.e., TV and radio) news on EFL learners' speaking proficiency.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Exposure to mass media news (for example, TV and radio news), the pedagogical value of such materials, and the possibility of using TV and radio news in all levels of EFL/ESL settings in order to enhance different language skills have been the focus of so many studies.

In their research, Brinton and Gaskill argue that using TV and radio news utterances as teaching material has proved effective on improving listening comprehension of EFL learners having difficulty in dealing with comprehending news utterances (404).

Poon, in a similar study which focused on using TV news to improve listening proficiency, investigates the effectiveness of listening to news compared to non-news material on ESL listening comprehension. The participants are 66 language learners ages 18-22 in diverse disciplines, with 34 in the experimental group and 32 in the control group. During the study, the experimental group is taught using recordings from news material. The control group is taught using several non-news material including commercial listening comprehension material. The research design is pre-post test using two standardized listening proficiency tests. The results of the study indicate that the experimental group participants made more progress in their listening than the control group. Thus, listening to TV and radio news material seems to be more beneficial than listening to non-news material.

In addition to the abovementioned studies, Baker's study focuses on the pedagogical value of TV news in EFL classes and listening comprehension. According to Baker, TV and radio news can help EFL students improve their listening comprehension (32). Baker highlights suggestions for incorporating TV news programs into language learning at all levels. According to the study, language learners at various proficiency levels approach TV news in the target language with

differing objectives; for example, beginning learners concentrate on listening skills and vocabulary building, whereas advanced learners focus on content and accuracy. Some suggestions for the effective exploitation of news broadcasts are provided for four levels of student development (33).

The use of fast speech such as those in TV and radio news in EFL/ESL classrooms has also been studied. Cauldwell's study aims at discovering the relationship between direct encounters with fast speech such as in TV and radio news and teaching listening to EFL students. Cauldwell's study, which is more anecdotal than experimental, emphasizes that students may have problems coping with fast speech at first due mainly to the speech-rate. However, EFL students can address these problems and improve their listening proficiency through increased exposure to fast speech. In order to solve the problem of fast speech perception, a software which could facilitate direct encounters with fast speech by tuning the speed of the speech is introduced (Cauldwell 524).

Another short study by Mackenzie also emphasizes the possibility of using TV and radio news reports at all levels of EFL learning. The study rejects the assumption that because reporters speak too fast, the content is too complex, and the vocabulary is too difficult, TV and radio news cannot be used at the lowest levels of EFL situations. Mackenzie shares his own experience of carefully selecting news items and using some techniques in teaching students in the elementary and intermediate levels at the Simul Academy in Japan. The content of the selected news items should depend primarily on the students' interest and background knowledge because students feel more comfortable listening to content that is familiar to them. This study is also anecdotal and suggests techniques in using news items in EFL/ESL classrooms.

Regarding proficiency and comprehension of television and radio news in a foreign language, Berber shows that through enough exposure, students can easily cope with the comprehension of such materials. Cabaj and Nicolic also notes that extensive exposure to TV and radio news can help students cope easily with TV and radio news broadcasts. Moreover, through exposure to TV news and radio programs, students acquire the knowledge, structures, strategies, and vocabularies that they can use in everyday situations.

In the same line, Bell's study focuses on the pedagogical value and informative aspects of TV and radio news broadcasts in EFL settings. He considers background knowledge or content schemata, formal schemata, and linguistic difficulty as three broad categories for selecting TV and radio news stories for the EFL classrooms (3).

In short, majority of the aforementioned descriptive and experimental works have been conducted on the pedagogical value and the effect of exposure to TV and radio news genre on promoting different language skills especially listening comprehension, but none of them has specifically focused on the relationship between exposure to mass media news genre and EFL learners' speaking proficiency. This is the reason for carrying out the present study.

DEVELOPING SPEAKING PROFICIENCY IN EFL CONTEXTS

Developing language proficiency in general and speaking proficiency in particular has always been the main concern of language learners in EFL contexts such as Iran. It may be because social interaction in English does not exist in EFL contexts. Social interaction is generally understood to lead to the improvement of speaking proficiency (Pica 495). However, teachers may help language learners acquire a satisfying speaking proficiency by exposing them to authentic communicative input or data such as audio/visual mass media programs from TV and radio. As mentioned earlier, many studies have emphasized that audio/visual mass media can be a rich source of authentic linguistic input.

In view of that, we believe that language learners have difficulty developing a satisfying speaking proficiency in EFL countries mostly because of their lesser exposure to utterances filled with fluently produced discourses such as those found in audio/visual mass media programs like TV and radio news. English language learners mostly watch different kinds of movies for their intensive and extensive listening practice. However, since fluency of speech is a key feature of the utterances produced in different TV and radio news, we believe that greater exposure to news from TV and radio may prove effective in promoting EFL learners' speaking proficiency.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present study was conducted in Iran, an EFL context that lacks social interaction in English as a source of language input. Accordingly, we selected Iran to provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of an alternative source of language input by exposing EFL learners to authentic input via audio/visual mass media programs from TV and radio on speaking proficiency.

More particularly, this study is set out to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent does greater exposure to TV and radio news genre improve EFL learners' speaking proficiency?
2. To what extent does greater exposure to TV and radio non-news programs improve EFL learners' speaking proficiency?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will guide EFL learners and suggest ways for them to improve their speaking proficiency through effective exposure to either fluent utterance from TV and radio news or general language listening materials. The findings also verify the previous research on exposure to audio/

visual news or non-news materials by providing empirical evidence. Moreover, the results of the study may be important to language teachers, practitioners, and institutions for investment in technology for language learning by exposing the language learners more than before to either news or non-news language input for the enhancement of their speaking proficiency.

METHOD

Research Site

The present study was conducted in Iran which is an EFL context. In relation to the EFL program at the research site, it should be mentioned that the program comprises eight academic semesters. During the first four semesters, language learners are basically prepared to develop their overall language proficiency. This very purpose has been set to be achieved through various reading, grammar, and conversational courses. During the second four semesters, language learners are mostly taught various specialized courses such as teaching methodology, linguistics, translation courses, and testing. The aim of these courses is to prepare the language learners to be EFL instructors or translators.

Despite all the courses the language learners have to take, the majority of them fail to develop their overall language proficiency even to the intermediate level after going through various courses. One of the reasons is that language learners are not exposed to English in real world communication. Moreover, many language learners just rely on many print materials or wait to be fed by the teachers to develop their speaking proficiency. In other words, language learners have more exposure to print materials than authentic audio/visual mass media programs. Considering this, greater exposure to audio/visual mass media programs rather than print materials may prove more effective in enhancing speaking proficiency in EFL contexts.

Subjects

The initial participants of this study are 200 third-year language learners majoring in TEFL, including both males and females ages 21-26 from Iran. Out of the initial population, 60 participants are selected to carry out the research. Regarding the participants, it should be mentioned that the third-year EFL learners are selected because third-year EFL learners in Iran pass all conversation, reading, and grammar courses in the first two years and, after that, take courses in oral reproduction of stories, idioms and expressions, and paraphrase and translation of TV and radio materials. It is supposed that it is easier for them to deal with news and non-news mass media listening materials.

Instruments and Materials

The first instrument is a set of parallel speaking proficiency tests from IELTS which are used as pre-post tests. The speaking proficiency tests are parallel to increase the internal validity of the findings. Moreover, the reliabilities of both tests are verified prior to the study. The IELTS test is selected to measure the speaking proficiency of the participants because it is one of the valid standardized tests which the researchers can utilize.

The second instrument is a checklist to score the speaking proficiency tests. In order to score the interviews, a checklist developed by Askari is used (see Appendix). The validity of the checklist has also been verified by him through a pilot study. Regarding the checklist, it should be mentioned that it scores each interview (speaking test) out of 30. It includes six scales—fluency, comprehension, communication, vocabulary, structure, and accent. Each scale incorporates five levels (5 points). It should also be mentioned that, to develop the speaking proficiency assessment checklist used for scoring the interviews, various sample checklists including Hughes, Farhady et al., and IELTS Center are reviewed and closely evaluated by Askari.

Regarding the materials, two kinds of different materials from TV and radio are prepared and used. The first material is a collection of 150 hours of authentic news programs including both video and audio extracted and prepared from *CNN*, *Voice of America (VOA)*, *BBC*, and *CBS* given to Group 1 to work on inside and outside the classroom. Different channels, both British and American English programs, are selected to focus on both forms of English. The collection of the news programs consists of news headlines, sports news, economy news, political news, scientific news, and social news. Various types of news content are selected to give the language learners the choice to listen to their preferred type from the collection outside the classroom for their extensive exposure. Moreover, the most important criterion for selecting various news programs is the content and linguistic difficulty (Bell 3). Efforts are made to select non-episodic news programs that do not require prior knowledge of the story. Moreover, the researchers tried to select various news programs with almost the same speech-rate.

The second material is a collection of 150 hours of authentic programs rather than news prepared from TV and radio for Group 2 to work on inside and outside the classroom. This collection consists of films, cartoons, soap opera, songs, and documentaries. Similar to the news programs, the content of this collection also contains both British and American forms of English.

Procedure

The procedure underlying the present study comprises three parts. The first part covers the issues about instruments verification. The second part is the selection of the participants. The last part puts forth the exposure period.

Verifying the Instruments

This research is conducted based on pre-test and post-test design. The first step to take is to verify the reliabilities of the IELTS speaking proficiency pre-tests. To do so, the tests are given to a trial group of third-year students including both males and females. Then, the reliabilities of both tests are calculated separately by means of KR-21 formula. The reliability of one of the tests is 0.891 and the other one is 0.783. Therefore, both tests are verified to be utilized for the data collection.

Selection of the Participants

Once the reliabilities of the IELTS speaking proficiency tests are verified, one test is given to 200 third-year language learners majoring in TEFL and including both males and females. When the scores of the test are obtained, 60 participants who score one standard deviation above and below the mean are selected as homogeneous language learners. Then, the 60 homogeneous participants are divided into two groups as Group 1 (n=30) and Group 2 (n=30) based on random judgment sampling.

Regarding the speaking test, it should be mentioned again that the scoring is carried out using the speaking proficiency scale developed by Askari. To do so, each interview is scored out of 30 according to the speaking proficiency scale which includes the six scales of fluency, comprehension, communication, vocabulary, structure, and accent, and each scale incorporates five levels (5 points).

More importantly, in order to increase the reliability of the speaking scores, rating activities are carried out first by the researchers, and then by an inter-rater, and later the mean score of speaking pre-post tests for every participant is calculated.

Exposure Period

Throughout the one-year experiment (two academic semesters), Group 1 is exposed to news materials and Group 2 to non-news materials in two separate classes that meet for three hours a week, accompanied by discussions of the viewed programs. In other words, the researchers provide Group 1 participants with news media exposure (from the above mentioned 150-hour collection) as one kind of genre-specific language listening material to work on inside the classroom with researcher monitoring. Simultaneously, Group 2 is provided with exposure to non-news programs (from the above mentioned 150-hour collection) as one type of general language listening material to work on inside the classroom.

During the experiment and for each interval between every two sessions, the participants in Group 1 are asked to watch and listen to at least four hours of the already selected news from the collection of mass media outside the classroom (e.g., at home) and transcribe it. The participants

themselves decide on the content from the collection according to their preferences. Later, the transcription is controlled by the researchers. Group 2 participants are also asked to do the same with non-news media programs outside the classroom. In other words, they are also asked to watch and listen to at least four hours of the already selected non-news media programs from the collection outside the classroom and write down whatever is heard.

In relation to the out-of-class exposure, the participants in Group 1 are asked to have four hours exposure to their preferred content from the news collection initially to make sure that they have at least a minimum amount of exposure. Group 2 participants are asked to do the same with non-news materials outside the classroom.

After one year of exposure of Group 1 to news from mass media and Group 2 to non-news programs from mass media, all the participants take the second sample speaking proficiency test from IELTS as a post-test to check if there is any improvement in their speaking proficiency. After the participants are interviewed (speaking post-test), the scores of both groups from the pre-test and post-test are compared by means of t-test analysis to determine any changes in their speaking proficiency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to answer the research questions, the data obtained from the administration of pre-post tests to Group 1 and 2 are compared statistically by means of t-test. The following tables show the statistical analysis of Group 1 and Group 2 participants' pre-post tests scores.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics related to Group 1 pretest and posttest results

Groups	N	MEAN	SD	t-test
Group 1 pretest	30	19	.50	-3.023
Group 1 posttest	30	24	.46	

T-observed=-3.023

T-critical=1.671

T-observed bigger than t-critical

Table 2. Descriptive statistics related to Group 2 pretest and posttest results

Groups	N	MEAN	SD	t-test
Group 2 pretest	30	18	.58	-0.202
Group 2 posttest	30	20	.41	

T-observed=-0.202

T-critical=1.671

T-observed smaller than t-critical

In relation to Group 1's performance in the pre-post tests, it should be mentioned that the mean score of the participants in Group 1 in the pre-test is 19 out of 30. This mean score rises to 24 in the post-test which is indicative of significant progress. Using the statistical analysis of t-test for Group 1, it is observed that the t-critical (1.671) is lower than the observed (-3.023). According to Hatch and Farhady, it makes no difference whether the t-observed is positive or negative in reading the table; because the distribution is symmetrical, the minus quantities would be the same (110). This means that the improvement is significant.

In relation to the data obtained from the pre-post tests for Group 2, the mean score in the pre-test is 18 and in the post-test is 20. This minor progress can be interpreted as improvement. However, in order to see if this positive change in the mean score can be interpreted as a significant improvement or not, a statistical analysis of t-test should be conducted for the scores of Group 2. The t-test indicates that the t-critical (1.671) is higher than the t-observed (-0.202), indicative that the change in the mean score is not highly enough to lead to a significant improvement.

The data obtained by each group in the pre-post tests regarding each component of speaking proficiency is also presented in the following figures.

Figure 1. Group 1 mean scores for each component in pre-post tests

Figure 2. Group 2 mean scores for each component in pre-post tests

The first figure shows the statistical analysis of the mean scores obtained for each component of speaking proficiency by the participants in Group 1 in the pre-post tests. The means of the scores of various speaking proficiency components in the pre-test show significant improvement when compared to those of the post-test. The figure shows that the means related to the scores of fluency, comprehension, communication, vocabulary, and accent are 3 (out of 5 points) in the pre-test which increased to 4 (out of 5 points) in the post-test. This may be due to the fluency of speech and the vocabulary recycling feature of news which lead to improvement in different components of speaking proficiency. Nevertheless, the mean score of one component which is “structure” is 4 (out of 5) in the pre-test and remains the same in the post-test.

The second figure is related to the statistical analysis of the means of the scores obtained for each component of speaking proficiency by the participants in Group 2. Accordingly, the means of the scores of fluency, comprehension, structure, vocabulary, and accent are 3 (out of 5 points) in the pre-test which remains the same in the post-test. The only component which increased in the mean score is communication.

According to the statistical analysis of the data, the results of the present study are in line with the studies conducted by Brinton and Gaskill, Poon, Cauldwell, and Mackenzie regarding pedagogical value and the effect of exposure to mass media news on improving different language skills, particularly listening proficiency.

In relation to the first research question about the effect of greater exposure to TV and radio news on EFL learners’ speaking proficiency, the findings prove that greater exposure to audio/visual mass media news can improve the speaking proficiency of EFL learners to a significant extent. The reason behind this improvement in speaking proficiency may be that the recycling feature of vocabulary used in TV news and the lack of inappropriate pausing help the participants in Group 1 improve their speaking proficiency to a significant extent.

An observation of the researchers from the participants in both groups during the research period is that one of the reasons behind the better performance of the first group in the post-test may be their high interest in the content of the materials they are exposed to. During the study, the first group participants select the topics they had schemata to help them better comprehend the information. Moreover, it is observed that the first group participants comprehend the news items quickly and join the discussions with great interest. The researchers also observe that the participants in the first group are more interested and more actively involved in the discussions of the news items during the class activities. This leads to low affective filter, understood to enhance language learning.

The first group's significant improvement in speaking proficiency may also be associated with the fact that TV and radio news genre provides listeners/viewers with a specific language input made around one of the most authentic types of language discourse by focusing on currently broadcast local and global events with which most individuals make real sense of connection. Although the vocabulary items used in developing TV and radio news items are almost highly specialized and the assumption is that this highly specialized vocabulary items may hinder comprehension, the recycling feature of vocabulary items in news stories can help comprehension over time. The research participants in Group 1 show their willingness in their creative use of different vocabulary, sentences, utterances, and structures extracted from news in talking about the topics during the post-test. Through this, they can show their ability in the kind of words they need to express their ideas with high fluency of speech. Their automatic production of speech and appropriate use and rate of pauses at specific junctures with the correct use of supersegmental features (rhythm, intonation, and stress) similar to that of the news is also significant. This reflects how exposure to news items has impressive effects on the participants' speaking fluency because fluency of speech is a dominant linguistic feature of news stories presented by the newscasters.

In relation to the second research question about the effect of greater exposure to non-news language materials on improving EFL learners' language proficiency, it can be said that the participants in the second group did not improve their speaking proficiency to a significant extent compared to participants in the first group. Nevertheless, this does not mean that they cannot improve other language skills that are out of the scope of the present research. Group 2 participants' utterances during the research and in the post-test offer fewer traces of fluency and automatic speech production. Their attempts to produce their ideas are accompanied by long silences before starting their responses.

Group 2 participants' failure to improve their speaking proficiency and its components to a significant extent may be due to their greater exposure to miscellaneous speech genres such as films, songs, and other general language listening materials rather than a specific genre during

the period of the study. Participants in Group 2 have difficulty not so much with understanding but expressing their own views regarding the context, for example, of the films that they watch. Other reasons may include difficulty with figurative meanings, colloquialism, and slang in general language listening authentic discourse, a difficulty perhaps owing to their lack of appropriate background knowledge in a particular discourse. Therefore, the above-mentioned factors, along with the lack of vocabulary recycling, may have caused Group 2 participants' lack of significant improvement in their speaking proficiency.

Thus, focusing on one particular genre seems to have more potential in providing a more controlled language input and preparing the grounds for more intensive practice that can lead to more efficient language learning, particularly improving speaking proficiency.

CONCLUSION

In the last few years, different technological developments in audio/visual mass media has dominated the world by sharing and showing a variety of programs to be used for entertainment and instruction. In the same line, the developments in audio, video, and computer-mediated communications programs offer many possibilities for teachers to construct activities around listening to TV and radio news programs, watching related videos, and holding conversations in real-time. The aim of this study is to fill the gap in the experimental work on the effect of exposure to mass media news and non-news programs on speaking proficiency by providing empirical evidence.

The results of the study indicate that greater exposure to audio/visual mass media news genre as a type of authentic language input has a significant effect on enhancing EFL learners' speaking proficiency. In contrast, greater exposure to non-news audio/visual mass media programs may not lead to the improvement of EFL learners' speaking proficiency.

In a nutshell, this study is an important reminder to language researchers and practitioners about the importance of exposing learners to authentic communication input or data such as TV and radio news programs particularly in EFL contexts that lack social interaction as a source of authentic language input. The study verifies previous research on the impact of media exposure by participatory immersion in authentic input in EFL contexts. The research result may inspire teachers to use TV and radio news programs in their conversational classes to teach speaking proficiency. The result of the study also encourages language learners who intend to improve their speaking proficiency to have greater exposure to TV and radio news.

The following recommendation may then be made based on the research findings:

Since fluency of speech is a key feature of TV and radio news, language learners aiming at improving their speaking proficiency should have greater exposure to these kinds of materials.

At the end, it should be mentioned that the present research can be expanded to include language learners with differentiated proficiency levels. In other words, further studies can be conducted to investigate which language proficiency learners benefit more from exposure to various audio/visual mass media programs.

APPENDIX 1

Sample Checklist for Measuring Communicative Abilities

Scale I- Fluency:

- 5- Speaks fluently.
- 4- Speaks with near-native like fluency, pauses and hesitations do not interfere with comprehension
- 3- Speaks with occasional hesitations.
- 2- Speaks hesitantly and slowly because of rephrasing and searching for words.
- 1- Speaks in single word and short patterns, unable to make connected sentences.

Scale II- Comprehension:

- 5- Understands academic discourse without difficulty.
- 4- Understands most spoken language except for very colloquial speech.
- 3- Understands academic discourse with repetitions, rephrasing, and clarification.
- 2- Understands simple sentences, words; requires repetitions, slower than normal speech.
- 1- Understands very little or no English.

Scale III- Communication:

- 5- Communicates competently in social academic settings.
- 4- Speaks fluently in a social academic settings, errors do not interfere with meaning.
- 3- Initiates and sustains conversation, exhibits self confidence in social situations.
- 2- Begins to communicate for personal and survival needs.
- 1- Almost unable to communicate.

Scale IV- Vocabulary:

- 5- Uses extensive vocabulary in any domain appropriately.
- 4- Uses varied vocabulary to discuss general topics and in special interests.
- 3- Uses academic vocabulary, some word usage inappropriate, slightly damages the message.
- 2- Uses limited vocabulary, constant use of one word.
- 1- Inadequate basic vocabulary.

Scale V- Structure:

- 5- Masters a variety of grammatical structures, almost no error.
- 4- Occasional grammatical errors but no problem with understanding.
- 3- Uses some complex sentences but lacks control over irregular forms.
- 2- Uses predominantly present tense verbs, constant errors interfere with understanding.
- 1- Severe errors make understanding completely impossible.

Scale VI- Accent:

- 5- Acceptable pronunciation, with few traces of foreign accent.
- 4- Speaks with few phonemic errors, but almost intelligible pronunciation.
- 3- Occasional errors necessitate attentive listening.
- 2- Constant phonemic errors make understanding extremely hard.
- 1- Severe problems make understanding almost impossible.

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