

Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla



Facultad de Lenguas

Maestría en la Enseñanza del Inglés

**Developing learners' communicative competence
through continuous oral and listening assessment for
high-stake tests using web sources**

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for the degree of
Maestría en la Enseñanza del Inglés

by

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Abstract

Due to the lack of established programs to achieve the objectives to obtain a high-stake test, the need of designing a test preparation program is essential and important. The proficiency competence needs to be developed according to standards, thus, in the present project, a training course was designed in which the main objectives were to identify the key outcomes which can promote motivation and confidence through continuous assessment by using communicative approach and web sources, to obtain and guarantee good performance during a high-stake test or certification. The group was integrated of 6 learners who were taking part of a six-months program. They had an upper intermediate level and needed to support formally their knowledge by a formal B1/B2 level, obtaining 83% of good achievement in final results according to the learners' profile and CEFR.

Key words: high-take test, assessment, certification, communicative approach.

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The future is coming... All set!!!

I am ready!!!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
FRONT MATTER	
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgments	iv
Dedications	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Justification	2
1.2 Background and study significance	2
1.3 The context of the research	3
1.4 Research location	4
1.5 Objectives	4
1.6 Research questions	5
1.7 Chapter summary	5
CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW	
2 Introduction	6
2.1 Syllabus design	7
2.1.1 Needs-based syllabus	7
2.2 Instructional design for significance learning	8
2.2.1 Task-based approach	8
2.2.2 Communicative approach	9
2.2.3 Skill-based teaching approach	9
2.3 Criterion-referenced exam	10
2.3.1 Pragmatic competence	10
2.3.2 Communicative competence	11
2.3.3 Language proficiency competence	12
2.4 Customizing test preparation courses for student success	13
2.5 Listening and Speaking testing	14
2.6 Conclusions	18
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN	
3 Introduction	19
3.1 Research design	19
3.2 Subjects	20
3.3 Data collection instruments	21
3.3.1 Initial interview and diagnostic language tests	21
3.3.2 Course design	24
3.3.3 Intervention interviews	25
3.3.4 Learners' test evaluations	26

3.4	Data collection procedure	27
3.5	Data analysis and validation	27
3.6	Conclusions	28

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

4	Introduction	29
4.1	Research questions	29
4.1.1	RQ1 impact of assessment	30
4.1.2	RQ2 strategies	31
4.1.3	Section conclusion	33
4.2	Students' questionnaire results and conclusions	33

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

5	Introduction	37
5.1	Findings of study	37
5.1.1	Thesis supervisor model	39
5.2	Study contributions	40
5.3	The reflective account	40
5.4	Limitations and recommendations for further research	40
5.5	Conclusions	41

References	42
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Appendixes

Appendix A – Planning and design	48
Appendix B – Training material	62
Appendix C – Language literacy	86

List of figures

3.1	BTC model procedure	23
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List of tables

3.1	Participants in the research (pseudonyms were used to protect their identity)	22
3.3.1	Common questions related to B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) descriptors	23
3.3.2	Assessing Speaking Performance – B2 level (UCLES, 2015).	24
3.3.3	Evaluation obtained before the training course and the desired level.	24
3.3.4	Evaluation obtained before and after the training course.	25
3.3.5	TOEFL iBT speaking and listening content tasks.	26
4.1	Parameters of course design according to Dudley (Adapted from Developments in Specific Purposes book) used for the training session.	31
4.2	Authentic Assessment Characteristics of Oral Language.	32

4.3	Oral Language Assessment Criteria (adapted from Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners).	32
4.4	Oral Assessment Activity Matrix	33
4.5	Students' perception about the previous courses taken in other schools.	34
4.6	Results after the diagnostic test.	35
4.7	Primary factors and strategies which were considered according to students' needs.	36
4.8	Specific characteristics of the lesson plan.	36
4.9	Secondary factors which were considered according to students' needs.	37
4.10	Results obtained after the high-stake exams.	37

Chapter I

Introduction

1. Introduction

Throughout recent years, the role of the teacher has changed, and most people feel that these changes have improved it. However, the learners' needs have changed due to a new culture of learning (Douglas et al, 2011; Prensky, 2001) which moves from the stable twentieth-century infrastructure to a fluid twenty-first century and these characteristics are out of teachers' control.

It is well known that the study of complex systems into physical and social systems has led to an integrated framework of methods which guides to better results and high impact advances (Jacobson et al, 2006; Juarrero 2007). In addition, considering learners are essential part of a complex dynamical system, which is integrated, connected and interacted of interdependent systems and disciplines.

Several studies (Rose, 1994; House, 1996; Hall, 1999) have focused on developing awareness of pragmatics through explicit instruction. Their results generally support the notion that pragmatic development can be enhanced through explicit awareness-raising techniques. It is claimed pragmatics should be taught because this will raise awareness of appropriate language use but it does not appear to be easily transferable from first language (L1) to second language (L2) (Kasper, 1992; Schmidt, 1993).

This is evidenced by a number of studies of classroom language learning and instruction (Wishnoff, 2000; Bardovi-Harlig, 2000), in which some empirical evidences from research of L2 pragmatic production, judgment, perception, competence, and proficiency are shown. This theme is essential to the overall

conceptualization, which constitutes the theoretical foundation of this research to provide language-learning assessment of adults A1 Learners during lessons' sequence of examination-oriented lessons by developing pragmatic competence in a second language in English (Kasper & Blum-Kulka, 1993).

1.1. Justification

Due to the lack of established programs to achieve the objectives planned by formal speaking language competences, the need of designing a test preparation program is extremely important, due to the fact that the proficiency competence needs to be developed according to standards such as the Common European Framework (CEF) and Cambridge profile.

1.2. Background and study significance

Important factors are required to design a specific program where learners' needs, language competences and objectives need to be included. Two fundamental areas are part of the syllabus design where a contract is determined between the instructor and the student (Matejka & Kurke, 1994; Smith & Razzouk, 1993). That is the reason why a needs-based syllabus is applied (Wong and Wu, 1998) by using a holistic view (adapted from *The Learner-Centered Curriculum Book*, Nunan, 1988), which can be highlighted by the following characteristics:

- Focuses on communication and genuine everyday language rather than grammar which can help to reduce anxiety and tackle the panic,

- Selects on the basis of what language items the learner needs to know according to the Common European Framework and Cambridge B2 Profile,
- Aims to train the student to communicate effectively in order to complete the tasks in the certification, demonstrating a proficiency speaking competence,
- Gives speaking as much time as reading in order to complete the certification sections effectively, applying supporting and controlled tasks,
- Resembles the natural language learning process by concentrating on the content / meaning of the expression rather than the form (use of English).
- Requires teaching competences to cope with professional development, evidence and reflection that are related to demanding time and expertise in the area (Munkundan, 2010).

1.3. The context of the research

Technology is helping human beings to improve many areas and processes. In language teaching it can be said that the use of technology is present in many classrooms of the world. This research describes the advantages of the use of this type of materials to teach the English and succeed in high-stake tests.

1.4 Research location

This research was conducted at a Mexican institution located in Central Mexico. It was applied in a language school where there is not a formal TOEFL training course program and evaluation procedure to guide accurately to a proficiency language framework, determined by a B2 language competence and customized by computer assisted language learning (CALL) and theoretical foundations.

The group was integrated of 6 learners who were part of a six-month program in which they had an upper intermediate level and needed to support formally their knowledge by a B2 certification or standardized test. All subjects were enrolled in an optional English course. Thus, participants were motivated to get specific preparation to succeed in high stakes tests. Their teacher integrated a specific test training treatment , taking into consideration the specific needs of each of the participants.

1.5 Objectives

The most important aims of this research are listed below:

- To analyse the effect of collaborative activities using web sources and blended learning on learners' confidence and autonomy.
- To analyse the effect of continuous assessment and learner-centred activities on learner's pragmatic and communicative competence (Cuban, 2001; Semple, 2001; Lam & Lawrence, 2002).

1.6 Research questions

To facilitate and focus the project, the following three research questions were developed. The first two questions are associated with the role of the assessment and the final question is related with the anxiety and support learners' autonomy.

- **RQ1:** What is the impact of continuous assessment with learner-centered activities on participants' pragmatic and communicative competence in **High-stake Tests**?
- **RQ2:** Which are the factors which can promote the best communicative language competence performance of the learners?

1.7 Chapter summary

This introduction described what type of research will be carried out and the significance of the study. During the project, evaluations will be applied to determine important factors which can lead to a better improvement of the high-stake test training course and B2 learner language performance.

Theoretical framework, methodology, analysis of the data and final conclusions will be presented in the following chapters.

Chapter II

Theoretical framework and literature review

2.0 Introduction

Important factors are required to design a specific program where learners' needs, in which language competences and objectives need to be included. Two fundamental areas are part of the syllabus design where a contract is determined between the instructor and the student (Matejka and Kurke, 1994; Smith and Razzouk, 1993). Thus a needs-based syllabus was constructed (Wong and Wu, 1998) based on a holistic view which can be highlighted by certain characteristics, focusing on communication and genuine everyday language effectively rather than grammar which can help to reduce anxiety and tackle the panic, selecting on the basis of what language items the learner needs to know according to criterion-referenced profile, and applying supporting, communicative and controlled tasks.

The following areas of research were included: authentic assessment, language competence, communicative competence, pragmatic competence, the communicative approach, skills-based approach, task-based approach, syllabus design, holistic view, professional development and criterion-referenced exams. All this data is discussed in detail in the following chapter.

The personal interest is to identify the most important language learning factors, which can help to promote speaking communicative competence development. Therefore, this chapter provides a discussion of the issues that are related with this.

2.1 Syllabus design

Syllabus design is an important stage in which many elements need to be considered to assess learners accurately during the sessions. An assessing component is an essential part of every language program in order to measure language aptitude, proficiency, placement, diagnosis, progress and achievement. According to Finch (2001) the field of language testing in general and of performance testing in particular is fraught with problems of theory and practice, considering feedback for the program evaluator(s), Washback information for teachers and students, and motivational implications as well. Thus, a tailored-made syllabus is needed which can facilitate the learning process and teach beyond the test.

2.1.1 Needs-based syllabus

Many conversations turn to see an authentic assessment as an important element to obtain better achievements for both teachers and students, however, most of the teachers agreed that feedback is only focused on a summative task and learners have a tendency to be compliant with the corrections provided in writing, instead of affecting students' perception about their own performance, considering our teacher-feedback time was for naught.

Learners have specific needs, depending on the profile; the use of a needs-based syllabus needs to be considered essential to achieve accurately the objectives, promoting communicative competence, cognitive abilities and affective learning (Kohonen, 1999, p.224). That is the reason why a specific instructional design “authentic assessment” for significance learning is needed.

2.2 Instructional design for significant learning

In 1999, Kohonen proposed the term “authentic assessment” as a process oriented means of evaluating communicative competence, cognitive abilities and effective learning, using reflective form of assessment in instructionally-relevant classroom activities. For my learners this means developing autonomy in which reflective awareness through self-assessment and peer assessment, in other words, how to manage learning, rather than just managing to learn.

During the communication and interaction inside the classroom, the teacher needs to guarantee a good achievement and improvement. The design of this case study used a task-based, communicative and skills-based teaching approach to guarantee a reliable and valid method of evaluation, particularly suitable for communicative competence.

2.2.1 Task-based approach

In a task-based lesson the teacher does not pre-determine what language will be studied. Rather, the lesson is based around the completion of a central task and the language studied is determined by what happens as the students complete it. Task performance conditions and the way these affect performance represent a fertile area for research (Skehan, 1998, p.177).

Thereby, different tasks were selected from common and realistic sceneries where learners build the necessary skills that will required to complete them and move to the next stage (Derrick, 2003, p. 21), considering meaningful for a good communicative development.

2.2.2 Communicative approach

The communicative approach is based on the idea that learning language successfully comes through having to communicate real meaning by communication and learning tasks. Breen (1987) indicates learners can cope with unpredictable, be creative and adaptable, and often transfer knowledge and capability across tasks.

Communicative language teaching seeks to explore a practical, diverse and wide-ranging approach to language teaching, in which the language is used for real communication during the process of learning. When learners are involved in real communication, their natural strategies for language acquisition will be used, and this will allow them to learn to use the language, supported by a skills-based teaching focus.

2.2.3 Skill-based teaching approach

A systematic testing system is an essential part of every language program (Brown, 1995, p. 12) in order to measure language aptitude, proficiency and achievement. That is the reason for which the skill-based teaching approach is used where washback information for teachers and students and motivational implications are included. Washback effect is the direct or indirect effect of examinations on teaching methods. According to the effect of examinations on what we do in the classroom we may refer to 'positive' and 'negative' backwash (Heaton, 1990, p. 170; Hughes, 1989, p. 1). This reflective model encourages students to be involved in their learning process, promoting positive attitude, changing in the fostering of life-long learning skills, teaching beyond the test.

2.3 Criterion-referenced exam

Tests are tools used to assess knowledge, skills, and abilities; however, performance testing is limited by considerations of validity, reliability and efficiency, as a part of some criterion-referenced exams. Thus, teachers of many types of courses face the spectre of standard test-preparation classes in which some activities can be incorporated to help students build the necessary skills that will be required of them once they complete their exams and move to the next stage (Derrick, 2013, p. 21).

It is essential to include them in our authentic assessment where some observable factors can be associated with learning such as construction of meaning, sharing of experiences, identification of needs and purposes, critical evaluation of performance strategies and awareness of language competence.

In applied linguistics, natural language learning process is considered as a part of second language acquisition and typically concerned with the language system and learning processes. The experiences of the learner, particularly in the classroom can be assessed and examined naturalistic acquisition such as pragmatics competence, where learners acquire a language with little formal training or teaching.

2.3.1 Pragmatic competence

Several studies (Hall, 1997; McKay, 2005) have focused on developing awareness of pragmatics through explicit instruction. Their results generally support the notion that pragmatic development can be enhanced through explicit awareness-raising techniques. Such activities can be classified into two main types: activities aimed at raising students' pragmatic awareness, and activities offering opportunities for

communicative practice (Kasper 1997). Awareness raising activities are activities designed to develop recognition of how language forms are used appropriately in context.

A consistent theme across the various studies related to pragmatic development and ESL is that pragmatics should be taught because this will raise awareness of appropriate language use but it does not appear to be easily transferable from first language (L1) to second language (L2) (Kasper, 1992; Schmidt, 1993, Kasper & Schmidt, 1996). Pragmatic competence refers to being able to use language effectively in order to achieve a specific purpose and to understand language in context.

In simple terms, Pragmatics is about culture, communication, and in the case of second languages, about intercultural communication. In order for second language learners to acquire pragmatic competence, they need to acquire cultural understanding and communication skills.

According to Watzlawick, (2001) “We cannot communicate. All behavior is communication, and we cannot behave.” Every behavior or action can be considered communication, and each of our actions reflect our cultural background including our opinions towards gender, religion, sexual orientation, lifestyle, politics and even personal space.

2.3.2 Communicative competence

Communicative competence is a broad concept from which pragmatic competence derives which is considered very relevant in leaning language. Communicative competence is not only a matter of knowing rules for the composition of sentences and being able to employ, according to contextual demands (Widdowson, 1989, p. 135).

Thomas (1983) suggest the term pragmatic competence to be relevant in learning a language, since lack of this knowledge may cause breakdowns or misunderstanding in communication where idiomatic expressions, gambits and paralinguistic features are included.

In this research different topics were selected from realistic and tailored-made resources, guaranteeing an excellent strategy to develop language proficiency competence and improvements, according to criterion-referenced exams.

2.3.3 Language proficiency competence

Language proficiency assessment provides a baseline measurement and quantitative feedback of a candidate's language performance. Performance testing is limited by considerations of validity, reliability and efficiency, for this reason it is essential to include them in our authentic assessment but psychologist and educators still little about how language learning occurs, and why and how some individuals are more competent than others.

However, there are some factors which can be observable and associated with learning such as construction of meaning, sharing of experiences, identification of needs and purposes, critical evaluation of performance strategies and awareness of this process (Harri-Augstein and Thomas, 1991, p. 7). In addition, these factors can be examined partially as evidence in the ongoing reflective self-examination of language performance. This is beneficial in marking and ensuring the language proficiency competence development directly by language learner's performance. For this reason, the learners need to be considered as an important participant in their learning process.

2.4 Customizing test preparation courses for student success

In this research, the communicative, skills-based and task-based approach were combined between pure and hybrid tests, the ability to use the language for communicative purposes, focusing on language instead of knowledge of the language (Mohammed, 2012). However, when to test? When my course was planned, the exam itself was a primary influence.

In my pilot program all the exam classes were tested at different stages of the course, for various purposes it is essential monitoring by pre-testing, revision texting and mock exams. During the sessions, a formative assessment was applied where I began providing students more detailed feedback about their progress and teaching beyond the test.

The authentic assessment was applied by the mentioned approaches, using computer assisted language learning (CALL), where informative, instructional, experiential and exploratory material are used (Tomlinson, 2012, p. 143) and adapted to learners' sessions.

Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004) suggested that teachers' self-reflection is extremely important in order to determine principles and systematic procedures for materials adaptation. The main purpose of adapting the material to the BGTP is to guarantee the communicative competence by a Communicative approach.

Actually, the BGTP in this approach would combine between pure and hybrid tests, the ability to use the language for communicative purposes, focusing on language instead of knowledge of the language. This symbiosis helped the students to develop

autonomy and teach beyond the test, guaranteeing significance impact on learners' performance and developing language awareness.

2.5 Listening and speaking testing

Douglas Brown and Priyanvada Abeywickrama in their book called "Language Assessment, Principles and Classroom Practices" offer two chapters about listening and speaking assessment. They state the importance of the concept "contextualized test" in which is considered a subcategory of assessment of the four skills, in which listening and speaking are included. Both chapters focused on the opportunity to apply principles of assessment where speaking and listening are always closely interrelated, directly and empirically observed and coloured by the accuracy and effectiveness of a test-takers' skills, which necessarily compromises the reliability and validity of an oral or listening production test.

Based on Brown's concept, in my view, it is better to consider the performance of the speaking and listening as integrated skills and combined of more skills in the real world too. On the other hand, authentic assessment is an important element to obtain better achievements for both teachers and students, however, most of the teachers agreed that feedback is only focused on a summative task and learners have a tendency to be compliant with listening and speaking corrections provided, instead of affecting students' perception about their own performance, considering our teacher-feedback time was for naught (Derrick, 2013, p. 20). Thus, these perspectives were very important factors for this research design, because they helped them to build the

necessary skills, which are required to complete the tests and move to the following stage.

A systematic testing component is an essential part of every language program (Brown, 1995, p.12) in order to measure language aptitude, proficiency, placement, diagnosis, progress and achievement. According to Finch (2001) the field of language testing in general and of performance testing in particular is fraught with problems of theory and practice, considering feedback for the program evaluator(s), washback information for teachers and students, and motivational implications as well. Thereby, how can we create and design an appropriate listening and speaking skill assessment? Brown considers teachers have the opportunity to apply principles of a formal assessment from micro to macro skill levels. I think these levels have essential factors, which help us to adapt and create formally better tasks for the lessons.

Teachers are important actors who must assess adequately during the learning process, but how do we reconstruct our instruments and language models for assessing English? Does the test measure what it is intended to measure? It can be argued and supported that the increase in participation and cooperation in evaluation enhances organizational learning in which both academic and administrative issues are included, including authentic assessment.

In Brown's chapter, categories of listening performance assessment tasks are important role for an authentic assessment. This is because every category determines the type of procedure, objective and assessment task, which are considered for listening evaluation performance. An authentic assessment must be included during the active evaluative information to teachers and learners. The active students' participation where global understanding from several listening ranges must be included gradually

to assume responsibility during their learning process. My philosophy consists in teaching beyond the test, focusing on my students' improvement and development English proficiency through a more skills-based focus.

The personal approach which was applied, considered some sub-skills which are required in order to do the following: listen for the main idea, points and connections, understand a wide range of language varieties, comprehend a wide range of vocabulary and sentence structure through both listening and speaking depending on the level, and meaningful and active practice in and out the class. These were adapted from Derrick's approach and my 15-year professional experience. Proper staging and organization over a longer time period at which key people such as learners and teachers are taking action during the plan, including another skill such as speaking.

Brown states the taxonomy in speaking performance assessment tasks includes certain elements, which can act as a checklist of objectives, depending on micro or macro skills. Performance testing is limited by considerations of validity, reliability and efficiency (Finch, 2001, p. 89), for this reason it is essential to include them in our authentic assessment where some observable factors can be associated with learning such as construction of meaning, sharing of experiences, identification of needs and purposes, critical evaluation of performance strategies and awareness of this process. In order to measure my students' improvements, after an evaluation I always asked individually some questions which can help them to identify the correct strategies to use and improve.

Designing assessment tasks for listening and speaking skills is considered extremely vital to elicit particular elements in the test-takers at specified level of language (Brown, 2010, p. 164 and 189). In my test, the communicative approach

would combine between pure and hybrid tests, the ability to use the language for communicative purposes, focusing on language instead of knowledge of the language (Mohammed, 2012). However, when to test? When my course was planned, the exam itself was a primary influence.

Kohonen proposed the term “authentic assessment” as a process oriented means of evaluating communicative competence, cognitive abilities and effective learning, using reflective form of assessment in instructionally-relevant classroom activities. For my learners this means developing autonomy in which reflective awareness through self-assessment and peer assessment, in other words, how to manage learning, rather than just managing to learn. My study looked at the revision of the most important factors, which need to be considered in authentic assessment criteria. In my pilot program all sessions need to be tested at different stages of the course, for various purposes (pre-testing, revision texting and mock exams). During my lessons, a formative assessment is always applied where more frequent detailed feedback is provided about their personal progress and teaching beyond the test.

All in all, proficiency is the ability to use the English language effectively for specific purposes, functions, and discourse in specific communities where some factors like language awareness; sociolinguistic sensitivity and negotiation skills are needed (Canagarajah, 2006), showing a solid communicative language competence. That is the reason why the learners need to be exposed by different tasks to reduce test-taking anxiety (Derrick, 2013, p. 21) and focusing on listening and speaking skills. A test is considered reliable if it consistently yields similar, or ideally even the same results when conducted multiple times under the same conditions. Thereby, the teachers must select the most adequate actors which can guarantee good learners’ performance and

achievement, measuring the ability to take part in acts of communication (Hughes, 1989, p. 19; Bickley, 1989, p. 2).

In language testing, validating a test means being able to establish a reasonable link between a test-taker's performance and her actual language ability, considering washback information and impact for teachers and students, and motivational wash forward implications. For this reason, designing an adequate assessment task is extremely important. To sum up, depending on the level of learner and objective of the task, the formative assessment is followed, considering certain aspects of the time and reflective process.

2.6 Conclusions

In chapter 2, a discussion is provided about the literature that was directly relevant to assessment. On the other hand, an explanation is given about syllabus design and assessment, which are important factors to guarantee language proficiency competence.

Chapter III

Research design

3.0 Introduction

In this globalized world where English language is considered as an important benchmark for better opportunities of employment and studies; firstly, need of designing a training preparation program is extremely necessary, where the proficiency competence needs to be developed according to standards of language competency requirements. Secondly, the lack of established programs, which didn't exist, and can achieve the objectives planned by formal standard speaking and listening benchmarking.

3.1 Research design

The main purpose of this research was to identify the factors, which can help the improvement of learners' performance in a high-stake test, developing communicative language competence and implementing continuous formative assessment during a test preparation program called BTC (Behavioural Training Course). Chapter three presents the description of the participants, the research methodology and instruments, the data collection procedure, the data collection analysis, and the conclusion of this chapter. The main characteristics of the approach are to foster communicative competence by implementing continuous formative assessment with learner-centred activities (Cuban, 2001; Semple, 2001; Lam & Lawrence, 2002). This project would be beneficial for both certification candidates and trainers.

In the first chapter of this research, firstly the learners' profile and rationale are described. In this section, some instruments are described and the factors which are used to measure the language competence requirements and the quality of the training sessions. After that, the approaches and rationale, which are used for having chosen the instruments, are described; the data collection procedure is explained, not forgetting the data analysis procedure and methodology are described.

3.2 Subjects

The research was done at an institution where private English classes are taken, located in the central part of Puebla, México. This institution offers different types of language courses such as lingua franca and English for Specific purposes. The six participants were selected as a purposive sample from an English course for specific purposes.

A specific training course was needed, in which the learners required good communicative skill development to be successful on high-stake tests or rigorous language benchmarks. The knowledge of the language competences was specially focused on extensive listening and reading that could serve as essential factors for enhancing and improving communicative language competence.

Participants in this study were six students (see Table 3.1 below). The students were adults whose ages ranged from twenty-four to fifty-four with specific English needs.

Table 3.1 *Participants in the research (pseudonyms were used to protect their identity)*

Participants	English Level	High-stake Tests / Communication in action
Nina	Basic (A2)	Test at IPN (Instituto Politécnico Nacional)
Alondra	Basic (B2)	Test at UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)
Alejandra	Intermediate (B1)	Personal purposes (business)
Oswaldo	Intermediate (B1)	Personal purposes (Job training)
Sair	Intermediate (B1)	TOEFL (Master Degree in Spain)
Alejandro	Intermediate (B1)	Personal purposes (Job training)

3.3 Data collection instruments

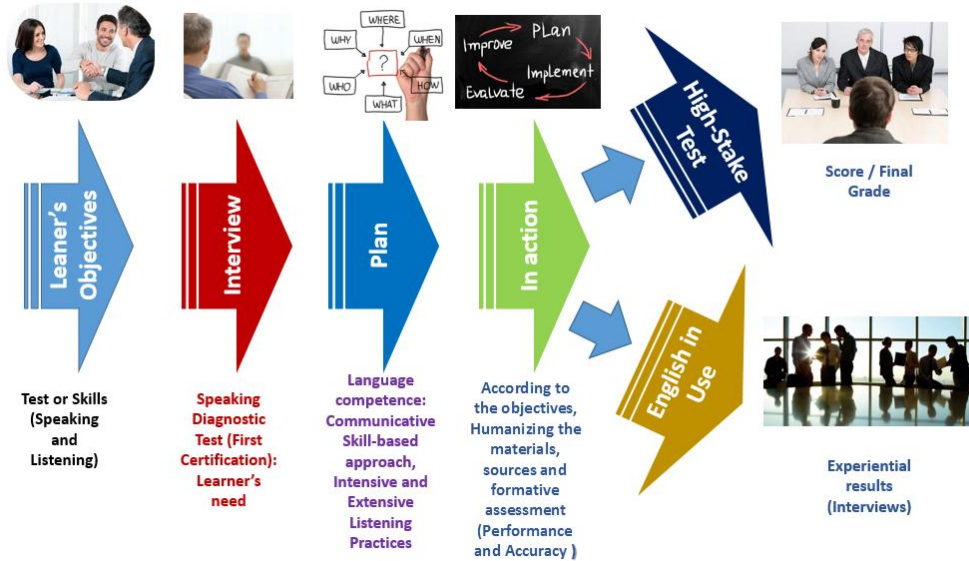
This study included different instruments such as interviews, documentary evidence (test results and competences language results), recordings (pre and post training), diagnostic tests (pre and post training), rubrics, questionnaires, the foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, 1986; Speilber in Baker, 2011), planning evaluation (Farrell, 2011), and speaking evaluation by CEFR. Observations and interviews were carried out pre, during and after the training course.

3.3.1 Initial interviews and diagnostic language tests

Firstly, before the training course starts, it was necessary learners were interviewed to determine their expectations, needs and learning styles (Frendo, 2005), depending on the information provided, teacher is able to select, organize and adapt the material which was needed (See Figure 3.3.1).

Figure 3.1

**BTC
model
procedure
s.**



Secondly, another essential step was to determine how good the learners' language use was by a placement or diagnostic test. For this reason, learners were asked some common questions related to B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) descriptors, in which TOEFL speaking task 1 and 2 were included (See Table 3.2.1). This test was selected to provide a comparison with other learners, known standards or benchmarks, providing face validity and reliability.

Table 3.3.1. Common questions related to B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) descriptors

- 1) **Which characteristic describes you best?**
- 2) **Movies are popular all over the world. Do you agree or disagree? Use reasons and examples to support your answer.**

According to B2 assessment scale, learners were evaluated, considering only three of four descriptors at Level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR): Grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, and pronunciation.

Table 3.3.2. Assessing Speaking Performance – B2 level (UCLES, 2015).

B2	Grammar and Vocabulary	Discourse Management	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows a good degree of control of a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on a wide range of familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces extended stretches of language with very little hesitation. Contributions are relevant and there is a clear organisation of ideas. Uses a range of cohesive devices and discourse markers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is intelligible. Intonation is appropriate. Sentence and word stress is accurately placed. Individual sounds are articulated clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiates and responds appropriately, linking contributions to those of other speakers. Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5</i>			
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms, and attempts some complex grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary to give and exchange views on a range of familiar topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces extended stretches of language despite some hesitation. Contributions are relevant and there is very little repetition. Uses a range of cohesive devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is intelligible. Intonation is generally appropriate. Sentence and word stress is generally accurately placed. Individual sounds are generally articulated clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiates and responds appropriately. Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>			
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows a good degree of control of simple grammatical forms. Uses a range of appropriate vocabulary when talking about everyday situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produces responses which are extended beyond short phrases, despite hesitation. Contributions are mostly relevant, despite some repetition. Uses basic cohesive devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is mostly intelligible, and has some control of phonological features at both utterance and word levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiates and responds appropriately. Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.
0	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>			

Every descriptor is divided into six bands from 0 to 5, with 0 being the lowest and 5 the highest. Descriptors for each criterion are provided for bands 1, 3 and 5 and indicate what a candidate is expected to demonstrate at each band. In the following table 3.3.3, students' results are shown.

Table 3.3.3. Evaluation obtained before the training course and the desired level.

Learner	Score which was obtained	Level which was desired
Nina	A2	B1
Alondra	A2	B1
Alejandra	B1	B2
Oswaldo	B1	B2
Sair	B1	B2
Alejandro	B1	B2

Table 3.3.4. Evaluation obtained before and after the training course.

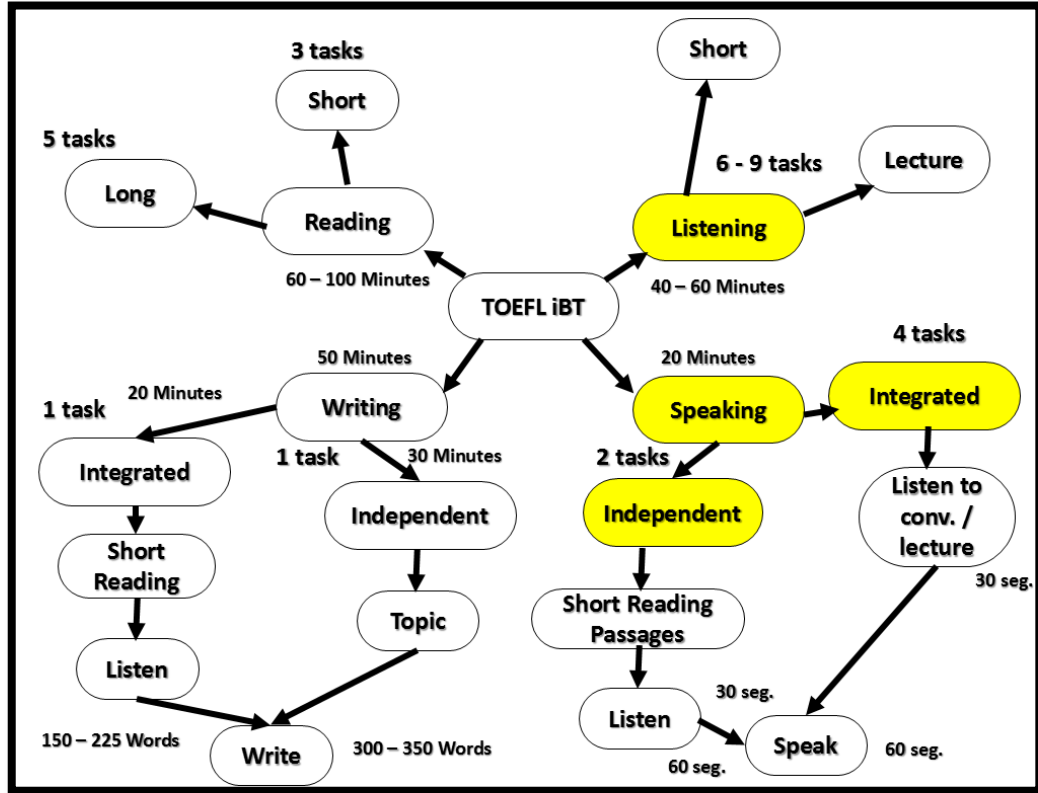
Learner	Score	Level desired
Nina	A2	B1
Alondra	A2	B1
Alejandra	B1	B2
Oswaldo	B1	B2
Sair	B1	B2
Alejandro	B1	B2

3.3.2 Course design

The training course was designed according to the TOEFL it speaking and listening content tasks, learners' needs, styles and time (Parkes et al, 2002), integrating a critical approach to syllabus design (Flowerdew, 2005). (See below Table 3.3.5).

The purpose of this course design delineated the responsibilities of students and of the instructor for various tasks, including other requirements and expectations (Matejka and Kurke, 1994), this approach made clear what rules were for teacher and students (Smith and Razzouk, 1993; Pastorino, 1999).

Table 3.3.5. TOEFL iBT speaking and listening content tasks.



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The TOEFL iBT test measures the ability to use and understand English at the university level. On the other hand, it evaluates how well you combine your listening, reading, speaking and writing skills for academic purposes, and demonstrate the English-language proficiency level.

On the other hand, in this course, intensive and extensive listening and readings were used to increase their vocabulary. The whole treatment description and sample materials can be found in Appendixes A, B and C.

3.3.3 Intervention interviews

Based on Brown's concept, it was better to consider the performance of the speaking and listening as integrated skills and combined of more skills in the real

world too. Every session, teacher considered 15 minutes to highlight the most important aspects about the language literacy, fostering sociolinguistic sensitivity (McKay, 2005).

Authentic assessment was an important element in this training course to obtain better achievements for both teachers and students, that is the reason these perspectives was considered essential for the learners, because they helped them to build the necessary skills which were required to complete the tasks, tests and move to the following stage (Derrick, 2013).

In addition, students were elicited from different language data and different levels of performance. Learners answered some questionnaires to evaluate the session, material, and their language improvements (Farrell, 2000).

3.3.4 Learners' test evaluations

A systematic testing component was an essential part of this training language program (Brown, 1995, p.12) in order to measure language aptitude, proficiency, placement, diagnosis, progress and achievement. According to Finch (2001) the field of language testing in general and of performance testing in particular is fraught with problems of theory and practice, considering feedback for the program evaluator(s), washback information for teachers and students, and motivational implications as well. Thereby, how can we create and design an appropriate listening and speaking skill assessment?

Brown's criterion was used to apply principles of a formal assessment from micro to macro skill levels. These levels had essential factors, which helped to adapt and created formally better tasks for the sessions.

This training course considered some sub-skills, which were required to listen for the main idea, points and connections, understanding a wide range of language varieties and vocabulary. These were adapted from Derrick's approach and my 15-year professional experience.

3.4 Data collection procedure

Learners were interviewed every two sessions for promoting language literacy consciousness (pragmatics competence). Web sources, pictures, videos, field notes and / or other strategies were used to record the interviews and to collect information on the observable elements. Learners were audio recorded before and after the training period.

Randomly the learners were evaluated according to language competence criteria (CEFR) and the interview data was compared with observational data in three-cognitive dimensions, *reflection in-action*: Present time, *reflection on action*: Past memories, and *reflection for action*: Reflect and act for future opportunities. All learners were interviewed independently to analyse the data and then compare results to evaluate how effective the training was.

3.5 Data analysis and validation

To guarantee proficiency language improvements, specific purposes and functions were used to foster language awareness, sociolinguistic sensitivity and negotiation

skills (Canagarajah, 2006), showing a solid communicative language competence. For this reason, learners were exposed by different tasks to reduce test-taking anxiety (Derrick, 2013, p. 21) and focusing on listening and speaking skills.

At least, a task with similar characteristics of TOEFL was considered during the sessions ideally under the same conditions. Thereby, the students' good performance and achievements were guaranteed, measuring the ability to take part in acts of communication (Hughes, 1989, p. 19; Bickley, 1989, p. 2).

Depending on the level of learner and objective of the task, the formative assessment was followed, considering certain aspects of the time and reflective process. Learners answered some questions related to the today's lesson, including some factors such as degree of difficulty and changes about the lesson (Farrell, 1990).

The final data validation after the training course were: Three learners took some criterion-referenced exams: TOEFL, Language Competence's Evaluation of IPN and UNAM. (Test Results and Interviews); on the other hand, a learner travelled and worked abroad. (The effectiveness will be evaluated - Interviews) and finally two learners communicated with native speakers. (The effectiveness will be evaluated - Interviews).

3.6 Conclusions

In this chapter, the context of the research, the participants, data collection instruments, the data procedure and analysis were described. In the following chapter, the results of the study are shown.

Chapter IV

Results

4.0 Introduction

As mentioned before, this project created some effective suggestions, which can help, and support to teachers and students' training. This chapter will show the data analysis for the information collected via methods, which were described in Chapter 3. The analyses for the research questions in Chapter 1 are presented and their significance will be discussed in the following Chapter 5.

Beliefs, misconceptions, strategies per category using tables and pictures are presented per categories. Finally, the analysis of the students' questionnaires about their performance and opinions on the results are also presented. As mentioned before in chapter 3, 5 students participated in this project. All the learners obtained good results for this thesis research.

4.1 Research questions

The research questions presented in chapter 1 were the following:

RQ1: What is the impact of continuous assessment with learner-centered activities on participants' communicative language competence in **High-stake Tests**?

RQ2: Which are the factors, which can promote the best communicative language competence performance of the learners?

In the next section, the results of the analysis are presented via tables, narratives and images. The array with the students' beliefs and needs are presented below. Tables 4.1 through 4.4 present learners' needs, diagnostic of students' levels, desired level, B2 competence criteria, and assessment criteria in that order. For each learner those pieces of information were collected according to the research questions and contributed to the creation of an appropriate training plan (shown in 5.1). The criterion, evidence, beliefs, misconceptions, enabling cause and effects are presented as well.

4.1.1 RQ1 Impact of assessment

According to Dudley, balancing the parameters, which are arising from institutional, and learner expectations are extremely important. Initial revisions may be major, but thereafter the details may only need fine-tuning, negotiating the course with the learners and reacting quickly to the needs as expressed at the beginning of the course and as they change over the period of the course, as shown below in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. *Parameters of course design according to Dudley (Adapted from Developments in Specific Purposes book) used for the training session.*

-
- Intensive or extensive course
 - Assessment or non-assessment sessions
 - Intermediate needs or with delayed needs
 - Teacher as provider, facilitator or consultant
 - Broad or narrow focus course
 - Pre-study, pre-experience or run parallel course with that study or experience
 - Common-core or specific material to learners' study or work
 - Homogenous or heterogeneous group
 - Course design after consultation with the learners and the institution
-

The learners, who participated in this research, expressed with details what they expect and need about the course. However, there are essential characteristics of assessment, which need to be considered, as shown below in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 *Authentic Assessment Characteristics of Oral Language.*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the purpose, • Planning of action, • Developing rubrics and/or scoring procedures • Setting standards • Involving students in self-and peer assessment • Selecting assessment activities • Recording information

By assessing during certain period, the teacher could determine a plan of action or re-adaption according to students’ needs. Thus, some factors are enlisted to determine the impact of continuous assessment with learner-centered activities on participants’ communicative language competence during this training course.

4.1.2 RQ2 Strategies

To determine the factors which can promote the best communicative language competence performance of the learners, a list of elements is described considering the main characteristics of a class and course design, according to the assessment criteria, as shown below in table 4.3 and table 4.4.

Table 4.3. *Oral Language Assessment Criteria (adapted from Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners).*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authentic listening material (Recordings) • Communicative activities • Self-reflective assessment

- Setting standards according CEFR
- Peer assessment
- Selecting assessment activities

Table. 4.4 *Oral Assessment Activity Matrix*

Assessment activity	Formal	Level of proficiency	Student preparation	Language function
Oral interview	Individual / pairs	All levels	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing • Giving information • Giving and opinion
Picture-cued Description or Stories	Individual	Beginning-Intermediate	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing • Giving information • Giving and opinion • Listening for gist • Listening for specific information
Radio broadcasts	Individual, groups, whole class, pairs	Intermediate, advanced	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening for description, directions • Summarizing
Video Clips	Individual, groups, whole class, pairs	All levels	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing • Giving information • Giving directions
Information gap	Pairs	All levels	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing • Giving information • Giving directions
Story/Text retelling	Individual	Beginning, Intermedia	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing • Giving information • Summarizing • Greeting/leave-takings • Asking for/giving information
Improvisations/roleplays/simulations	Pairs, groups	All levels	Some preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requesting assistance • Agreeing/disagreeing • Giving/evaluating an opinion • Giving advice • Giving directions • Suggesting • Persuading • Encouraging
Oral Reports	Individual	All levels	Extensive preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing • Explaining • Giving/asking for information
Debates	Groups	Intermediate-advanced	Extensive preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing • Explaining • Giving/asking for information • Persuading • Agreeing / disagreeing

4.1.3 Section conclusion

Firstly, for the first question, using the instruments from the previous Chapter 3, the question was answered, indicating the pattern, which was found. In the second question, some factors were identified to determine the factors, which can promote the best communicative language competence performance of the learners. Finally, the significance of the results, which were shown in this chapter, will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.2 Students' questionnaire results and conclusions

The results of the RQ1 and RQ2 will be presented in tables according to the parameters, which are considered important for the course design, including a balance during the training course.

During the first stage, the learners were interviewed and expressed some common opinions about their previous courses, as shown below in Table 4.5.

Table. 4.5 *Students' perception about the previous courses taken in other schools.*

Characteristic of the inadequate training courses

- Lack of teacher's feedback
 - No skill strategies
 - No active participation, and intensive practice during the sessions
 - Useless material such as books, copies.
 - Tiring and drilling training sessions
-

- Meaningless language learning
- Lack of sociocultural knowledge

After the diagnostic test, the learners were evaluated and according to B2 CERF criteria, shows the following results, as shown below in Table 4.6.

Table. 4.6 *Results after the diagnostic test.*

Participants	English Level	High-stake Tests / Specific purposes
Nina	Basic (A2)	Test at IPN (Instituto Politécnico Nacional)
Alondra	Basic (A2)	Test at UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)
Alejandra	Intermediate (B1)	Specific purpose (business)
Oswaldo	Intermediate (B1)	Specific purpose (Job training)
Sair	Upper Intermediate (B2)	Specific TOEFL score (Master Degree in Spain)
Alejandro	Intermediate (B1)	Specific purpose (Job training)

According to O'Malley, authentic assessment demands some technical quality parameters to determine reliability and validity for this reason some primary factors were used by initial revisions and fine-tuning periods, considering teacher and learners' negotiation over the period of the training course, as shown below in Table 4.7 and the specific characteristics of the lesson plan in table 4.8.

Table. 4.7 *Primary factors and strategies, which were considered according to students' needs.*

-
- Diagnostic test (B2 – CEFR Criteria)
 - Extensive reading and listening as input
 - Active practice during the sessions
 - Reduce anxiety and nervousness by language awareness
 - Promoting self-consciousness about communicative competence
 - Authentic preparation material according to specific needs
 - Questioners and interviews
-

Table 4.8 *Specific characteristics of the lesson plan.*

-
- Communicative skill-based teaching approach
 - Material adaptation:
 - Intensive listening and extensive reading plan to improve lexis knowledge
 - Humanizing the sources to reduce anxiety
 - Reflective approach to promote autonomy and self-confidence
 - Language literacy: communicative and pragmatics language competence awareness
 - High-stake test consciousness
 - Teaching beyond the test:
 - Incorporating activities to help students build the necessary skills that will require of them once they complete their exams and move to the next stage. (Derrick, 2013)
-

After the revisions and fine-tuning periods, some secondary factors were added and applied, as shown in table 4.9.

Table. 4.9 *Secondary factors which were considered according to students' needs.*

-
- Active speaking and listening skills practice during the sessions
 - Active participation
 - Reflective communicative language competence
-

-
- The use of authentic or semi-authentic material according to B2 level
 - Extensive listening and speaking sessions
 - Questioners and interviews
-

Finally, after the training period, four of the learners were evaluated and obtained the following results as shown in table 4.10. On the other hand, the documents, which support the English evaluation, are given in the appendix section of the thesis.

Table. 4.10 *Results obtained after the high-stake exams.*

Participants	Level	High-stake Tests / Specific purposes
Nina	Intermediate (B1)	Test at IPN (Instituto Politécnico Nacional)
Alondra	Intermediate (B1)	Test at UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)
Alejandra	Upper Intermediate (B2)	Specific purpose (business)
Oswaldo	Upper Intermediate (B2)	Specific purpose (Job training)
Sair	Upper Intermediate (B2)	Specific TOEFL score (Master Degree in Spain)
Alejandro	In progress	Specific purpose (Job training)

After the studies, the students commented how meaningful the strategies were during the sessions. For example, Nina commented that she used the strategies, which were taught during the sessions such as listening for gist and detail. On the other hand, Nina mentioned she didn't feel nervous or anxious due to the listening strategies as well.

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction

This final chapter presents a summary of the research project presented in this thesis. In addition, after having the findings of the research, the conclusions are presented according to the significance and reflective process during the research. Then, the research questions are answered, the findings, the contributions, implications, recommendations, limitations, and further possibilities for the research will be discussed.

5.1 Findings of study

The present study is a systematic investigation using a scientific methodology to obtain knowledge and contribute to knowledge in the English language teaching for specific purposes field. This research involves a formal assessment involving a stated objective with a set of procedures to reach that objective.

According to my previous experience, taking a training course is not guaranty to improve language competence and obtain a certification. However, this research showed how important assessment is to achieve the objectives. That is the reason why this method provided important evidence to evaluate the efficacy of a training program and assess appropriately the learner performance. It may become an example of how teachers can try to do something innovative and a meaningful in the teaching area.

The present study showed the best way to assess students' performance considering the misconceptions and beliefs. This study was also an example of how teachers can

adapt authentic and semi- authentic materials, which are considered meaningful for the learners' objectives and cultural literacy.

During the first interview, learners expressed how essential a good training is to obtain a specific score in a certification for this reason all students' needs were used as an important factor to plan the training sessions. In the first stage of this research, some finding such as learners' level, specific needs, type of material according to the high-stake test, extensive listening and reading showed how effective are to foster active participation, promote autonomy and self-confidence during the sessions.

Learners didn't consider their cultural awareness and language literacy as essential and important factors during the communicative competence development. For this reason, they lack of skill strategies, which can help them to improve and obtain a certification, can cause difficulties such as communication breakdowns. The consideration of these elements helped students to promote cultural awareness to avoid communication breakdowns and how to improve.

Thus, this research is an important evidence of how teachers can promote language awareness by applying a communicative approach, using semi-authentic and authentic material. During the placement test, students were unable to organize the ideas, including the type of vocabulary, but after an extensive reading session, they improved considerably according to the B2 Cambridge Certification criteria.

In my view, learners who are more interested in learning and improving participate more actively, and that in my case. All the learners interact frequently in the sessions despite some of them are not prominent enough in the language. By sharing, students 'illustrate how they develop their differing ways of understanding the world' (Brown, 2006. P. 17) Students can express freely, developing their cultural awareness by active

and collaborative participation. The culture represents an active factor in their communicative language development by using authentic and semi authentic material.

The knowledge of the language competences was specially focused on extensive listening and reading that could serve as essential factors for enhancing and improving communicative language competence, including cultural awareness. Due to all the learners were motivated in learning, I always promoted the respect for multicultural background using authentic material of different topics which can foster tolerance, acceptance, respect, solidarity and critique. As Nieto stated, “Tolerance encourages true diversity or helps schools develop a multicultural perspective.”

5.1.1 Thesis supervisor model

Although my students have certain influence on language literacy according to their areas of specialization, they lack of cultural literacy, which can facilitate the English language acquisition. For this reason, I always fostered scaffolding sequences by certain procedures such as explicit models, direct explanation, inviting to participate in discussions, verifying and clarifying student understanding during the learning process. In a session, different scaffolding sequences can be used as a combination of factors, which complement and foster the language literacy.

During the explicit modelling, for instance a verbal example is shown by a video, reading or audio recording, and the learners are encouraged to adopt similar structure or model to overcome the functions provided by the task. Some idiomatic expressions related to a category are provided and learners need to think about a story by using these expressions.

5.2 Study contributions

Firstly, this research attempted to design and evaluate a program that aims to wave web sources and extensive readings to assess adequately speaking competence and to improve proficiency language competence. Secondly, to foster autonomy and self-reflection in A2 and B1 learners to promote confidence, and reduce anxiety during a High-stake test. Finally, to determine important factors which indicated the efficacy of the training program.

5.3 The reflective account

During this research, several perspectives were used to analyse the data, in this way the results presented are evaluated according to the model, teachers' perception and students' misconceptions.

According to Wilkinson (2012), the majority of the words, which are used in the classroom, determined how learning procedures and language literacy development are taking place. For this reason, many authentic or semi authentic materials from web sources were used including YouTube videos, readings and radio station' recordings. The use of this material showed how effective the training sessions were due to some students obtained the score they need for their personal needs.

5.4 Limitations and recommendations for further research

This study is limited mainly by certain factors which need to be considered before applying the assessment criteria. The first limitation was the students' profile,

including the level, multi-intelligence, learners' discipline and time. However, if these factors are considered beforehand, excellent results could be obtained.

5.5 Conclusions

All in all, the cultural awareness and language literacy are not only required to be developed by learners, but teachers as well. Educators need to polish their ethnographical English awareness in order to facilitate the communicative language and literacy development, and to ease anxiety during certifications or test. Besides, the facilitators are required to understand social and cultural practices, scaffolding learners to experiment with new lexis, and expressions that can facilitate their language acquisition. As Rogoff stated in 2003, "Experience with several communities also may provide cognitive and social flexibility and the potential for new syntheses of cultural ways."

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Appendix A:

Planning and Design

LESSON PLANS

MEI

Candidate: José Luis Carrillo Valdés

Observation: 1st Session

School: Instituto Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM)

Level: Bilingual system / 1st Semester / High School

Length of lesson: 1 hour 30 Minutes

Type of lesson: Computer Science (Using integrated skill lesson)

Class profile

The class is integrated of 6 students between the ages of 18 and 35 years old. The class is held 3 hours per week (Saturday). This is the 1st week of the course. The learners were not my students previously.

Main Aim

By the end of this lesson, the learners will be better able to identify the sections which are part of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) internet based Test.

Personal Aim

- By the end of this lesson, I will be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses about my teaching literacy, considering certain strategies in order to encourage and elicit learners' participation during the lesson.
- The use of integrated skill lesson to nurture students' participation and motivation.

Assumptions

Considering the learners have an intermediate level, they will participate actively during the lesson.

Possible problems and solutions

Although learners have language literacy, they lack of certain language literacy, for this reason I encourage them to participate actively by different activities.

LESSON PLAN – 1st Session

Group: 03 / 1st Semester Teacher: Carrillo Valdés, José Luis.

Date: August 8th, 2015

Stage Time	Activity	Aim	Procedure	Material	Class interaction	Skills
0 – 10 Minutes	Diagnostic stage	To analyse the context	The learners are asked a questionnaire to diagnose the context	Pieces of paper, pencil, pen	----	----
I – 15 Minutes	See and Watch (Warm up)	To foster the students' participation.	T shows an infographic related to the TOEFL ibT. In teams, learners will observe and explain what they observe to infer the topic.	Projector, Laptop	T-Sts (Lockstep)	Listening and Speaking
II – 10 Minutes	TOEFL and I	To contextualize the sections which learners will take in the TOEFL ibT.	In groups, the students need to speak about the information which is presented. Then, they need to answer a specific exercise on the web.	Projector, Laptop, pieces of paper, paper, pen	T-Sts / Sts-T & St-St	Speaking
III – 10 Minutes	TOEFL ibT	To show the objectives which the students will be able to achieve.	T shows the infographic on the screen and explains the points presented in the source. After, learners will ask some questions if they need it. T presents the following video and the students must take notes.	Projector, Laptop, pieces of paper	Sts-Sts	Language consciousness about the TOEFL, Speaking, Listening
IV – 10 Minutes	Video actively	To motivate sts to participate, providing some important characteristics about TOEFL ibT.	T elicits students to provide some ideas about the topic. After, they present the topic in front of the group.	Projector, Laptop, pieces of paper	Sts-Sts	TOEFL literacy, Speaking
V – 15 Minutes	Dance	To promote active students' participation in order to promote centred-student model.	Teacher explains the points given in the video in detail, and finally, learners answer the following exercises on the web.	Projector, Laptop	T-Sts / Sts-T	Speaking and Listening
	Relax and	To provide a give sympathetic and useful feedback.	T shows a powerpoint presentation to			Speaking and

VI – 10 Minutes	breath		clarify the training course’s purpose and objectives.	Projector, Laptop	T-Sts / Sts-T	Listening
VII – 15 Minutes	Remember the time	To support the importance of the use technology in our society.	T asks sts to prepare a presentation (using Prezi) for the following session on which they need to reflect about the importance of learning strategies before the test.	Projector, Laptop, SW	Sts-Sts	TOEFL ibt knowledge, Speaking
VIII – 20 Minutes	All set	To nurture self-reflection and promote autonomy		Laptop		

Post-reflection

This table aimed to identify important factors that allowed me to organize and adapt the class management, and provide *form-focused negotiation* (Lyster et al, 2002) such as *Self-repetitions* and *Confirmation checks*.

In the following table, the several negotiations of meaning are shown.

Negotiation of Meaning Observation Format		
Negotiation types	Frequency	Field notes
More 'here-and-now' topics	Often (St-St interaction)	Learners feel confident when they interact each other.
Topic initiating Moves	Very often (St-St interaction)	Learners interact each other by asking questions. e.g. (What do you think about? Do you agree with me?)
Confirmation checks	Sometimes (St-St and T-St interaction)	T- Watch the video and take notes about the topic.. Sts- key words?
Clarification Request	Sometimes (T-St Interaction)	T asks some questions about the test.
Self-repetitions	Often (T-St interaction)	T – Can you repeat the instructions given, please? St – We need to watch the video and...
Other-repetitions	Sometimes (St-St Interaction)	St1: I listened “listening section”. St2: listening section?
Expansions	Sometimes (St-St Interaction)	St1: This is test which is evaluated by.... St2: Really???... what else?.

The negotiation of meaning is an active process where the learner physically treats a material by pressing, grasping, lifting or pulling, in a social context, for this reason speaking about material, I used certain striking material (video and pictures) which had certain qualities and grabbed the attention of the learners, and provoked certain types of learning (Fujii et al, 2007; Fredriksen, 2012).

The knowledge is not simply transferred from teacher to students but is negotiated among certain participants, objects, materials and spaces (Lez Taguchi et al, 2009),

which significantly complicates the planning process. Considering the educational context are complex unities with various attributes, I considered in certain stages, student-student interaction, because learners benefit from instructional material such as communicative activities that create opportunities of negotiation. Finally, written instructions could guarantee a better development during my lesson plan (Fujii et al, 2007).



Topic: Introductory Session – TOEFL Training course

Teacher: Carrillo Valdés, José Luis

Objective: By the end of the lesson, the learners will be better able to identify the main characteristics of TOEFL ibT which let them optimise their performance on their respective exam dates.

- ▶ Diagnostic Step
 - ▶ Act 1 – Diagnostic
- ▶ TOEFL Information
 - ▶ Act 2 – TOEFL Info
 - ▶ Act 3 – TOEFL Crossword
- ▶ Misconceptions about English
 - ▶ Act 4 / 5 – Visual Images and Video
- ▶ Evaluation Step
 - ▶ Act 6 – Questionnaire

Activity 1

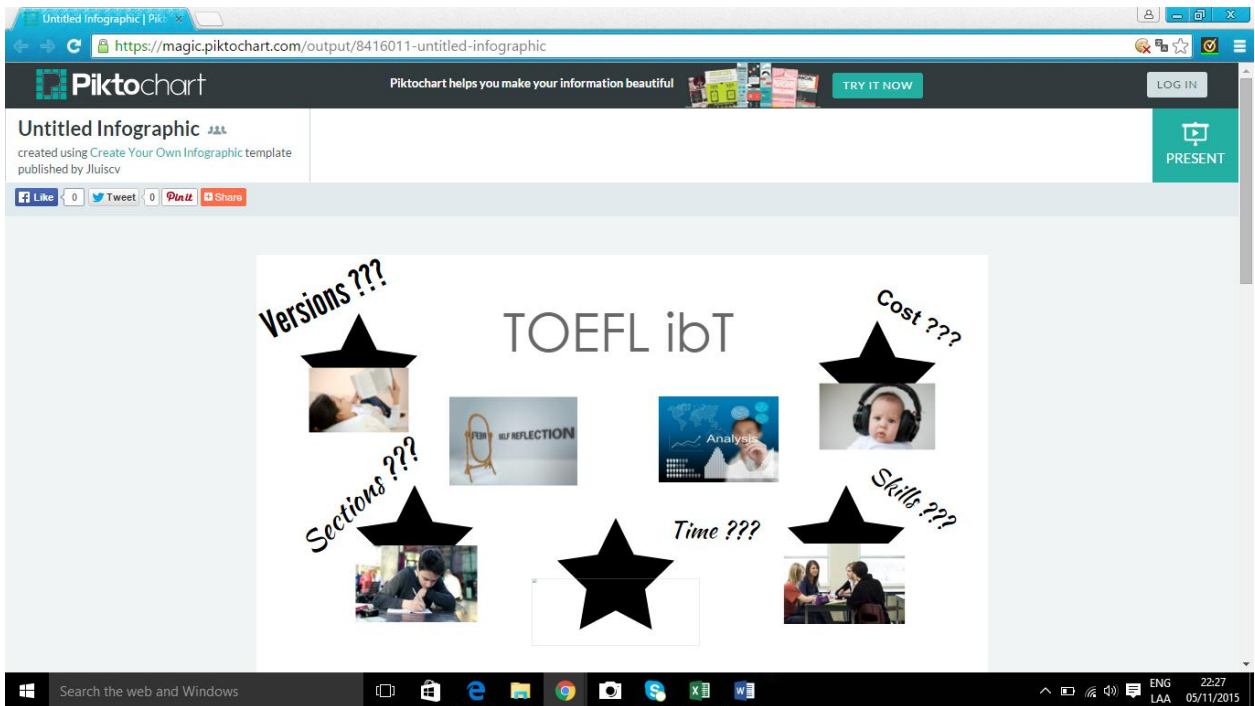
In the first stage, the analysis of the context is done; the learners are evaluated using specific try-and-teach tasks or activities, which were previously designed in terms of the learner. Students need to complete the following format to obtain the diagnostic from the course.

Activity 1 – Session 1

How I like to learn English	Reasons why I am taking this training course	What I know about TOEFL	What I want to know	What I will learn	What I learned

Activity 2

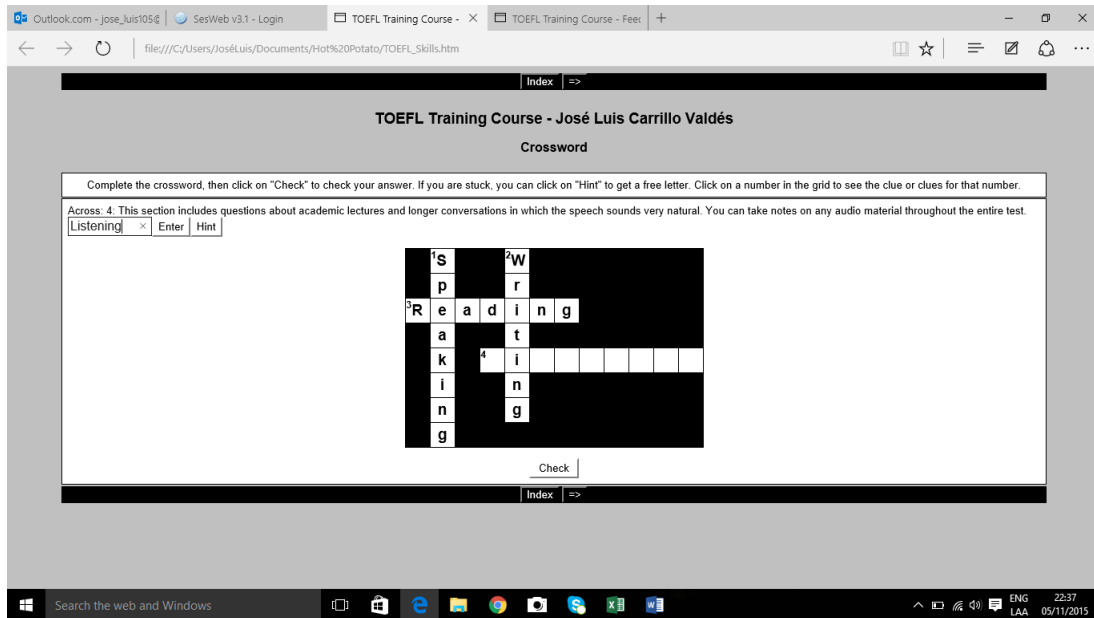
Teacher shows the following infographic where different images are shown. The learners will observe and explain in order to infer the topic. In my lesson plan, the teaching-learning process is considered as a student-centered model (Cuban, 2001; Semple, 2001; Lam and Lawrence, 2002).



<https://magic.piktochart.com/output/8416011-untitled-infographic>

Activity 3

In groups, the students need to speak about the information which is presented. Then, they need to answer the following exercise on the web. The type of interactions, which I used, helped me to give sympathetic and useful feedback, being highly motivating for my students.



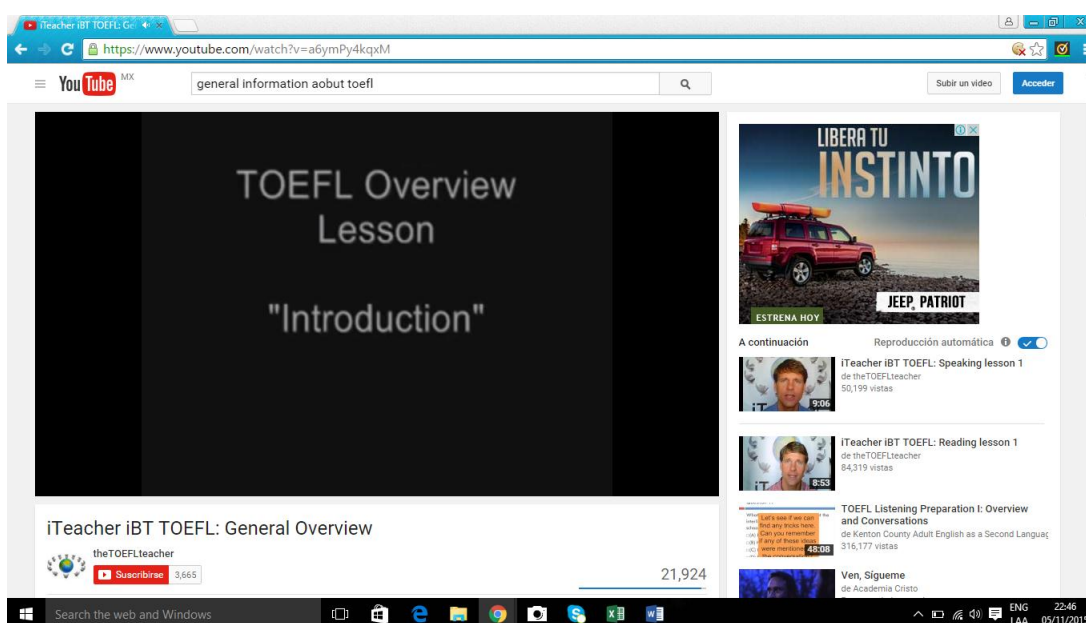
Activity 4

After, the teacher explains the points presented in the source, using the infographic.



Activity 5

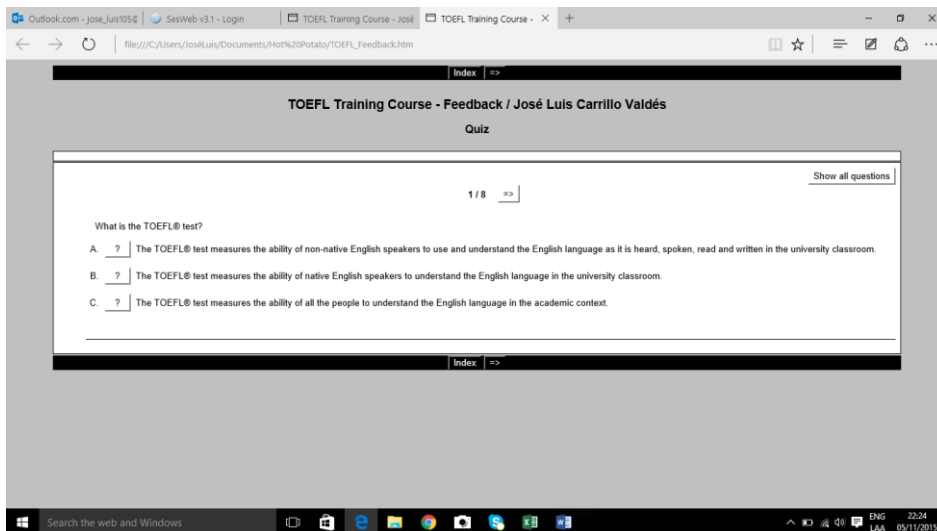
Later, the teacher presents the following video and the students must take notes. The use of videos and pictures engaged students to participate actively that is why the student-student, teacher-student and student-teacher interaction promoted good speaking communication, needed to achieve Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) which is a level required for academic school study in order to justify opinions, make hypothesis and interpreting evidence (Bentley, 2010).



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6ymPy4kqxM>

Activity 6

Then, teacher explains the points given in the video in detail, and finally, learners, answer the following exercises on the web. Some qualitative and quantitative instruments are used, letting me to identify the weaknesses in terms of experimental and interdisciplinary task, to provide active experiences through student-centered and peer-to-peer learning, developing communicative language competence.



Activity 7 – Final Step

Finally, the teacher shows a powerpoint presentation to clarify the training course’s purpose and objectives.



Justificación del uso de los recursos tecnológicos

Actividad	Recurso	Justificación del recurso tecnológico	Momento de uso de la herramienta
2, 4	Infografía	Promueve el trabajo colaborativo mediante la discusión entre estudiantes para sacar conclusiones. Permite el aprendizaje profundo de los temas. Promueve la autonomía y fomenta la expresión de opinión y la creatividad.	Contextualización del tema. Pre-integración.
3	Crossword - Hotpotatoes	Promueve la reflexión de manera individual o colaborativa, respecto a lo que se haya visto en la sesión. Permite el aprendizaje con profundidad.	Revisión de lo aprendido. Integración experta.
5	Video	Promueve el aprendizaje activo en el estudiante. Fomenta la ubicuidad, ya que permite a los estudiantes, el acceso a la información por medio de dispositivos móviles.	Contextualización del tema Instrucción dirigida.
6	Questionario - Hotpotatoes	Promueve la reflexión respecto a lo que se haya visto en la sesión de manera individual o colaborativa, lo que permite en los estudiantes el aprendizaje con profundidad.	Revisión de lo aprendido. Integración experta.
7	Powerpoint presentation	Promueve la reflexión respecto a lo que se haya presentado en la sesión de manera individual o colaborativa, lo que permite en los estudiantes el aprendizaje con profundidad de los temas.	Revisión de lo aprendido. Integración experta.

Activity 1 – Session 1

How I like to learn English	Reasons why I am taking this training course	What I know about TOEFL	What I want to know	What I will learn	What I learned

Appendix B:

Training Material

Listening Training Format – TOEFL Training Course

Name:		First session:	
Course / Teacher:	TOEFL Training Course Carrillo Valdés, José Luis	Last session:	

Training Session:				
Date:				
Programme:				
Radio Host:				
Time/Schedule:				
#People:				
Gender:				
Role/Relationship:				
Words / Phrases:				
Place:				
Topic:				

Training Session:				
Date:				
Programme:				
Radio Host:				
Time/Schedule:				
#People:				
Gender:				
Role/Relationship:				
Words / Phrases:				
Place:				
Topic:				

Diagnostic Questionnaire – Listening Skill

Name:	Age:	Date:
Years of studying English:	Professional / personal background:	Course: TOEFL Preparation Course (TPC001)

1. Do you like listening skill? Why?
2. How often do you train? Why?
3. How many hours do you train your listening skills?
4. What is the most difficult and easy in listening for you? Why?
5. Do you know a special technique to develop your skills? Describe it briefly.
6. Did you learn this technique in your previous English classes or school?
7. Do you consider materials as some essential factors to develop your listening skills? Provide some examples. Which ones?
8. Did you usually practice listening in your previous English Classes? How often?
9. How many sections does TOEFL have in listening?
10. What are the most important factors to obtain good results in TOEFL in listening section?
11. Do you consider the socio cultural background as an essential factor in your listening skill development?

Diagnostic Questionnaire – Listening Skill

Name:	Age:	Date:
Years of studying English:	Professional / personal background:	Course: TOEFL Preparation Course (TPC001)

1. Do you like listening skill? Why? - **Motivation**
2. How often do you train? Why? – **Discipline**
3. How many hours do you train your listening skills? - **Discipline**
4. What is the most difficult and easy in listening for you? Why? – **Weakness and strengths**
5. Do you know a special technique to develop your skills? Describe it briefly. - **Weakness and strengths.**
6. Did you learn this technique in your previous English classes or school? - **Weakness and strengths.**
7. Do you consider materials as some essential factors to develop your listening skills? Provide some examples. Which ones? - **Materials**
8. Did you usually practice listening in your previous English Classes? How often? – **Previous classes**
9. How many sections does TOEFL have in listening? – **Test knowledge**
10. What are the most important factors to obtain good results in TOEFL in listening section? **Test knowledge**
11. Do you consider the socio cultural background as an essential factor in your listening skill development? **Pragmatic/communicative competence**

Video and listening activities

Week	Video / Listening activity	Activity	What promote
0	TOEFL iBT - Diagnostic test, Listening section (Page 20 - 27) Cambridge University Press	Diagnostic test	Adequate Planning
	TOEFL iBT - Diagnostic test, Speaking Section (Page 29 - 34) Cambridge University Press	Diagnostic test	Adequate Planning
1	TOEFL Overview https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6ymPy4kqxM	Introductory task	High-stake test
	TOEFL Speaking Question 1 Help https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUVIoEuj7jo	Speaking practice	High-stake test Language competence
	Amy Cuddy: El lenguaje corporal moldea nuestra identidad https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ks-_Mh1QhMc	Listening strategies	High-stake test Pragmatic competence
	TYPES OF PEOPLE IN CANADA!!! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6h4c6RIqjuc	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	Sky high 4, Unit 12, lesson 3. Page 109 (Track 56 - 57)	Listening for detail Listening for inference	
	LBC Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence Tackle anxiety
2	English Topics - Things Every American Child Knows https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rcZtBsXwqeU	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	TOEFL Speaking Question 2 Help https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dr5BSIlk33g	Speaking practice	High-stake test
	The Five Phrases That Can Change Your Life: Adam Braun at TEDxColumbiaCollege https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8oE2kqVXkk	Note taking	Language competence
	FCE, Listening and Speaking Skills, Page 109 (Track 4.36)	Listening for specific information	Language competence
	LBC Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence Tackle anxiety
3	English Topics - Bad Habits in English https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2gGn-s_QkQc	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	TOEFL Speaking Question 3 Help https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3N7qnuwZ6Q	Speaking practice	High-stake test
	Breaking the language barrier Tim Doner	Word-map	Language

	TEDxTeen 2014 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNmf-G81Irs		competence Promote motivation
	FCE, Listening and Speaking Skills, Page 110 (Track 4.37)	Listening for attitude and opinion	Language competence
4	TOEFL Speaking Question 4 Help https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_WiVbLJE58M	Speaking practice	High-stake test
	English Topics - English you say without thinking https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vw8E3yjHUeU	Listening practice	Pragmatics competence
	Cameron Russell: El aspecto no lo es todo. Créanme, soy modelo https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KM4Xe6Dlp0Y	Note taking - coding	Language competence Promote motivation
5	TOEFL Speaking Question 5 Help https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=finAaswghmQ	Speaking practice	High-stake test
	English Topics - Alisha and Michael's Favorite English https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pMg4mcNIyk	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	Hacking language learning: Benny Lewis at TEDxWarsaw https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0x2_kWRB8-A	Note taking	Language competence Promote motivation
6	Get Fluent With 1 Trick - Become A Confident English Speaker With This Simple Practice Trick https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l96V7dQtq9E	Listening practice	Language competence
	TOEFL Speaking Question 6 Help https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hV5XKoe_Sbg	Speaking practice	High-stake test
	How to stop screwing yourself over Mel Robbins TEDxSF https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lp7E973zozc	Word-map	Language competence Promote motivation
7	English Topics - Tips to get good at English https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFOvRtqaFg	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	TOEFL Speaking question 1 - English Simple https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TU5HqUQZHpy	Speaking practice	High-stake test
	The skill of self confidence Dr. Ivan Joseph TEDxRyersonU https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-HYZv6HzAs	Note taking - coding	Language competence Promote motivation
8	English Topics - English Conversation Strategies https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AcVWQCJc0jk	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	TOEFL Speaking question 1 (PART 2) - English Simple https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8k-tpRGF0	Speaking practice	High-stake test
	Best Ted Talks 2015 - Draw your future - Take control of your life	Note taking	Language competence

	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vl6wCiUZYc		Promote motivation
9	English Topics - Misconceptions about America https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ky4axzxbY	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	TOEFL Writing - Question 1 - Integrated Essay https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hT3Z_M8vPSc	Speaking/Writing practice	High-stake test
	The Surprising Science of Happiness Dan Gilbert TED Talks https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4q1dgn_COAU	Word-map	Language competence Promote motivation
10	English Topics - Things we miss about America https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0WQeOwgN2xg	Listening practice	Pragmatics competence
	TOEFL Writing - Question 2 - Independent essay: How to do personal examples https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqJJP9izenQ	Speaking/Writing practice	High-stake test
	The Five Phrases That Can Change Your Life: Adam Braun at TEDxColumbiaCollege https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z8oE2kqVXkk	Note taking - coding	Language competence Promote motivation
11	English Topics - Weirdest English Idioms https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JjLhf_QqPh8	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	TOEFL Reading help https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjO8a00VTa8	Reading practice	High-stake test
	Por qué leo un libro al día (y Uds. también deberían): la ley del 33% Tai López TEDxUBIWiltz https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bB_fVDlvhc	Listening strategies	Language competence Promote motivation
12	What Really Matters at the End of Life BJ Miller TED Talks https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apbSsILLh28	Note taking	Language competence Promote motivation
	Youtuber Whispers QA With Caspar https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsrggohSnpk	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	LBC Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence Tackle anxiety
13	What creativity is trying to tell you: Jonathan Tilley at TEDxStuttgart https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMOqIJ9V_K4	Note taking - coding	Language competence Promote motivation
	English Topics – English Tongue Twisters https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqUiHc5csn0	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	Listening and Speaking 4. Cambridge University Press. Pag. 23.- Track 33 & 34	Listening strategies	Language competence
14	English Topics - Must-Know Business Buzzwords https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6wJcsspd-k	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	Why we choose suicide Mark Henick TEDxToronto	Listening strategies	Language competence




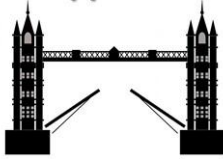
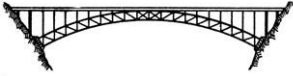

	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D1QoyTmeAYw		Promote motivation
	Complete CAE – Course Book – Page 12 Mastering language	Listening Strategies	Language and pragmatic competence
15	What Really Matters at the End of Life BJ Miller TED Talks https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apbSsILLh28	Note taking	Promote motivation
	BREAKING UP WITH MY ROOMMATE ft. ThatcherJoe https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_XJgFCI9nU	Listening practice and strategies	Language and pragmatic competence
	Practice test 1 – Listening section 1-6 & 7-11 (Page 461 - 463) Cambridge University press	Listening practice	High-stake test practice
16	English Topics - American Superstitions https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJmOtClXyRY	Listening practice	Pragmatic competence
	Real Writing 4, Student's book. Page 56. Happiness	Listening strategies	Language competence
	LBC Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence
	Practice test 1 – Listening section 12-17 & 18-23 (Page 464 - 466) Cambridge University press	Listening practice	High-stake test practice
17	How to make healthy eating unbelievably easy Luke Durward TEDxYorkU https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q4yUIJV31Rk	Note taking - coding	Language competence
	LBC Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence Tackle anxiety
	Practice test 1 – Listening section 24-29 & 30-34 (Page 461 - 463) Cambridge University press	Listening practice	High-stake test practice
18	Words and expressions - Make a list of the words and expressions that helped you decide what each place is. (Listening and Speaking 4 – Pag. 30 - Track 50)	Listening for gist	Pragmatic competence
	Vivir con menos = mayor felicidad - Graham Hill en TED Subtitulado al Español. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47ubkqC2n6w	Word-map	Language competence Promote motivation
	Fathers Day Prank Call ThatcherJoe https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5LffPwl_C0	Listening for detail and gist	
19	Dealing with everyday problems. (Listening and Speaking 4 – Pag. 22 - Track 33 and 34)	Note taking - coding	Pragmatic competence
	Want to sound like a leader? Start by saying your name right Laura Sicola TEDxPenn https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02EJ1IdC6tE	Listening strategies	Language competence

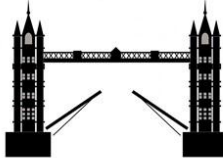


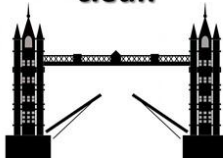


	DOs and DON'Ts - UK / British Culture (Manchester) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_joW8biol9Q	Listening strategies	Language and pragmatic competence
20	The art of making impossible, possible: Ingrid Vanderveldt at TEDxFiDiWomen https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6XNrzmh0EVs	Note taking	Language competence Promote motivation
	UK Visa Section - Take notes of all the important information. (Listening and Speaking 4 – Pag. 26 - Track 43)	Note taking	Language and pragmatic competence High-stake test
	Things Only British People Do https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogiwIVFERc4	Listening strategies	Language and pragmatic competence
21	Body language, the power is in the palm of your hands Allan Pease TEDxMacquarieUniversity https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZZ7k8cMA-4	Word-map	Language and pragmatic competence Tackle anxiety Promote motivation
	Listen to this lecturer give some advice to her students on taking notes in class. Make a note of the advice she gives in the chart below. (Listening and Speaking 4 – Pag. 56, Track 39)	Listening for details	Language and pragmatic competence High-stake test
22	The art of memory: Daniel Kilov at TEDxMacquarieUniversity https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQKt58kuEnk	Note taking - coding	Language competence Tackle anxiety
	Talking about a lecture (Listening and Speaking 4 – Pag. 58 - Track 42)	Listening for gist and details	Language and pragmatic competence High-stake test
23	A Year of Living in the UK! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PkZRVqq92iI	Listening for details	Pragmatic competence
	LBC Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence High-stake test
24	Joe Goes To LONDON https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-TBeC59WVgA	Listening for gist and details	Pragmatics competence

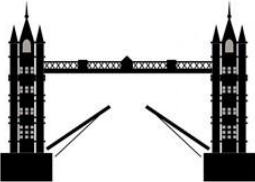





	How to become a memory master Idriz Zogaj TEDxGoteborg https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ebJlcZMx3c	Listening strategies	Language competence Tackle anxiety
	I work well under pressure - (Listening and Speaking 4 – Pag. 72 - Track 54)	Listening for detail and gist	Language and pragmatic competence Tackle anxiety
25	Pamela Meyer: Cómo descubrir a un mentiroso https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_6vDLq64gE	Word-map	Language competence
	LBC Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence Tackle anxiety
	My first two months in England https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPIytUc7Te0	Listening for detail and gist	Language and pragmatic competence Tackle anxiety
26	Real English Conversation Fluency Training - Time Expressions - Master English Conversation 2.0 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rkfs35sQ--c		Language and pragmatic competence
	LBC Radio station – online practice		Language competence Tackle anxiety
	Annoying Gym People https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAk5bWr7bXY	Listening for gist	Language and pragmatic competence
27	Why I teach people how to hack Ýmir Vigfússon TEDxReykjavík https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwJyKmcBOWs	Note taking	Language competence
	LBC Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence Tackle anxiety
	The Internet Slang Challenge https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KPFf0WNCU8	Listening strategies, note taking	Pragmatic competence
28	Esther Perel: Repensando la infidelidad... una charla para quien haya amado alguna vez https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2AUat93a8Q	Word-map	Language competence
	Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence Tackle







			anxiety
	Practice test 2 – Listening section 1-6 & 7-11 (Page 503-505) Cambridge University press	Listening practice	High-stake test practice
29	Monica Lewinsky: El precio de la vergüenza https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_8y0WLM78U	Note taking - coding	Language competence Promote motivation
	LBC Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence Tackle anxiety
	Practice test 2 – Listening section 12-17 & 18-23 (Page 506 - 509) Cambridge University press	Listening practice	High-stake test practice
30	Programming your mind for success Carrie Green TEDxManchester https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmfikLimeQ8	Listening strategies	Language competence Tackle anxiety
	LBC Radio station – online practice	Note taking - coding	Language competence Tackle anxiety
	Practice test 2 – Listening section 24-29 & 30-34 (Page 509 - 511) Cambridge University press	Listening practice	High-stake test practice

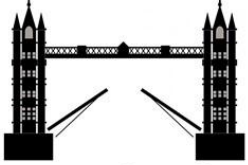


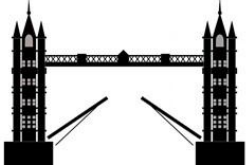


Speaking training material – Talking about yourself




<p><i>self-controlled</i></p>  <p>calm measured restrained</p>	<p><i>forgiving</i></p>  <p>sympathetic tolerant pardoning</p>	<p><i>intelligent</i></p>  <p>smart clever wise</p>
<p><i>supportive</i></p>  <p>sympathetic tolerant pardoning</p>	<p><i>friendly</i></p>  <p>sociable outgoing welcoming gregarious</p>	<p><i>competent</i></p>  <p>capable effective skillful</p>

<p><i>logical</i></p>  <p>rational consistent coherent</p>	<p><i>courageous</i></p>  <p>brave strong gutsy</p>	<p><i>creative</i></p>  <p>inventive daring imaginative original</p>
<p><i>clean</i></p>  <p>neat tidy hygienic</p>	<p><i>honest</i></p>  <p>sincere truthful straightforward</p>	<p><i>loving</i></p>  <p>affectionate tender caring</p>

<p><i>ambitious</i></p>  <p>hard-working strong gutsy</p>	<p><i>cheerful</i></p>  <p>light-hearted joyful gutsy</p>	<p><i>reliable</i></p>  <p>dependable trustworthy consistent</p>
<p><i>independent</i></p>  <p>self-reliant self-sufficient autonomous</p>	<p><i>broad-minded</i></p>  <p>open-minded non-judgmental</p>	<p><i>polite</i></p>  <p>courteous well-mannered respectful</p>

<p><i>enthusiastic</i></p>  <p>optimistic confident</p>	<p><i>able to take risk</i></p>  <p>well-organized working in group</p>	<p><i>confident</i></p>  <p>well-organized a lot experience knowledgeable</p>
<p><i>good leader</i></p>  <p>inspiring - loyal calm in crisis source of inspiration</p>	<p><i>inspiring</i></p>  <p>good at influencing people persuasive</p>	<p><i>good listener</i></p>  <p>interpersonal skills good communicator</p>

<p><i>fair minded</i></p>  <p>emotional intelligent trustworthy reliable</p>	<p><i>persuasive</i></p>  <p>good at influencing people</p>	<p><i>able to delegate</i></p>  <p>managerial skills good at working in a group or team good leader</p>
 <p>writing / typing / IT skills</p>	<p><i>good communicator</i></p>  <p>interpersonal skills emotional intelligence listening skills</p>	<p><i>flexible</i></p>  <p>change plans or ideas time-management skills</p>

<p><i>soft-skills</i></p>  <p>Interpersonal skills: communication, listening effectively, working in a team</p> <p>Personal skills: self- motivation, the ability to organize your work.</p> <p>Thinking skills: problem-solving Research skills</p>	<p><i>soft-skills</i></p>  <p>Team-working skills Time-management skills Listening skills Influencing people Effective meetings Anger management Creative workshops</p> <p>Emotional intelligence</p>	<p><i>hard-skills</i></p> 
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CD 1, Track 6

What personal quality describes you most accurately? Why? Please give details and examples to support your response.

In my opinion, courageousness is the attribute that characterizes me most accurately. I have two reasons. First, I think I am courageous because I'm always ready to try new activities and I'm not afraid of making mistakes. For instance, I went for an audition as an actor last week even though I have no experience. Second, I'm a person who follows my dreams and works to achieve them. For example, I've learned several languages, and right now I'm working on mastering English well enough to attend an English-language university. So to sum up, I feel I am courageous because I'm open to new experiences and I set concrete goals for myself.

TOEFL Ibt – Training course, Oxford, 2014.

Training questions for TOEFL iBT

In this part the two examiners will introduce themselves and then you will each be asked some conversational questions. Be prepared to answer questions about topics like this:

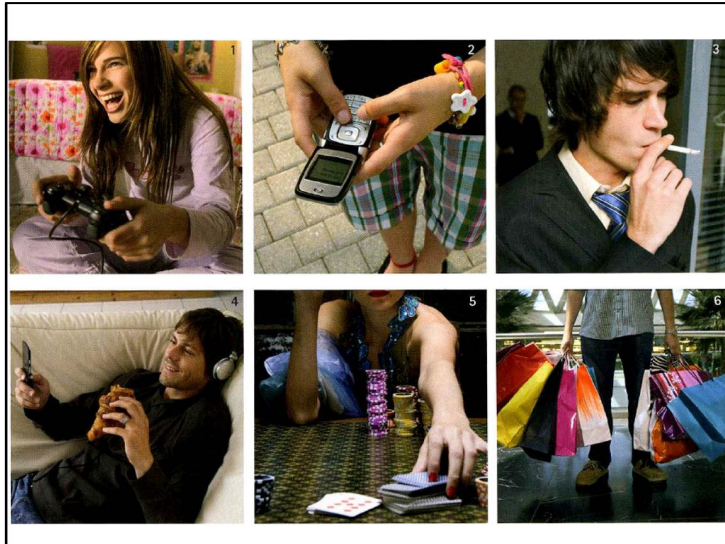
- The family and the place where you live
 - Why you're studying English
 - Your taste in music, TV, books or films
 - Sports you are interested in
 - Your hobbies
 - Your plans for the future
-
- Tell us something about your family
 - Which member(s) of your family are the especially close to?
 - Which member of your family are you most like?
 - What are your earliest memories as a child?
-
- How long have you been studying English?
 - What are your future plans? Will English be useful to you?
 - Which other language would you like to be able to speak?
 - Which other country would you most like to visit?
-
- What kinds of programmes do you like watching on TV?
 - When you go out with friends, where do you generally go?
 - How much exercise do you take?
 - What other things do you do in your free time?
-
- What was the best holiday you've ever had?
 - What would you be your ideal holiday companions?
 - Tell us something about your best friend?
 - How long have you known each other? How did you meet?
 - What's important in a close friend?
-
- Do you have a large family?
 - How many brothers and sisters have you got?
 - If you don't have any brothers or sisters, what are the advantages of being an only child?
 - Do you have many cousins? Do you get on well with them?
 - Describe the relationship you have with one of your family members.

- Do you take after your mother or your father? In what ways?
 - Do you see your parents very often?
 - Where do you usually spend your holidays?
 - What types of things do you like doing on your holiday?
 - Do you know where you're going next summer?
-
- What's the best holiday you've ever had? And the worst?
 - Would you prefer to go on holiday with your family or your friends? Why?
 - Is there anywhere you would particularly like to visit? Why?
 - Would you like to go on a cruise? Why/Why not?
 - When you go on holiday do you usually buy souvenirs for yourself?



Adapted of Proficiency - Oxford, 1998.

- 1 Work in pairs or small groups. Choose two of these photographs and discuss what they have in common and how they are different.
- 2 Discuss these questions.
 - a What do these photographs show about the roles of men and women in today's society?
 - b Think of a word or short phrase which sums up your reaction to each photograph.
Examples: *normal, everyday, strange, funny, not what I expect to see, etc.*
 - c How have the roles of men and women in your country changed over the last 100 years? How do you think they will change over the next 100 years?
 - d Are there any particular changes that you would like to see in men's and women's roles?



Topic: Compulsion

Adapted of Proficiency - Oxford, 1998.

- 1 Work in pairs or small groups. Look at the photographs and discuss these questions.
 - a What is the connection is between the unit title *Compulsion* and these photographs? What are the people doing?
 - b Which of these things do you do?
 - c What is your main reason for doing them?
 - d Which things would you never do?

- 2 Discuss these questions.
 - a Do you think that some people have a tendency to become addicted more quickly or easily than others? Do you think something in a person's character causes this tendency? If so, what?
 - b How can addictions affect people's lives?
 - c What can or should be done to help young people to avoid becoming addicted to certain substances or activities?

Material used for listening and speaking training

Act. 1. Give your opinion and reasons concerning the topic below.

People spend too much time and money to fashion.

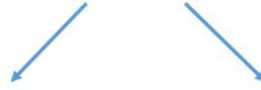
•Do you agree or disagree?

People spend too much time and money to fashion.

- In my opinion, one does not have to be a slave for fashion.
- To start with, following the latest trends in fashion can be extremely expensive. **(Why?)**
 - **This is especially true for those who buy costly designer clothing.**
 - There is also the risk of getting into debt in order to keep up with the latest fashions.
- In addition to this, followers of fashion often give up their individuality for the sake of fashion. **(Why?)**
 - **They choose clothes which suit neither their figures nor their personalities.**
 - This is unfortunate, as the way dress should reflect who we really are.

Some people say childhood is the best time of our life.

Do you agree or disagree?



Some people say childhood is the best time of our life.

Some people say that childhood is the best time of our life. However, being a child has both advantages and disadvantages.

In my opinion, you have very few responsibilities. **For instance**, you don't have to go to work, pay bills, or do the shopping, cooking, or cleaning. This means you have plenty of free time to do whatever you want – watch TV; play on the computer; go out with friends; play sports, or pursue other hobbies. **One advantage is that**, public transport, cinema, and sports centres cost much less for children. **In fact**, being a child is exciting, action-packed time in life.

- **Moreover**, for every plus there is a minus. **One advantage is that**, you have to spend all day, Monday to Friday, at school. Studying usually means you have to do homework, and you have to take exams. **Another point is that**, you may have a lot of free time, but you are rarely allowed to do whatever you want. You usually have to ask your parents if you can do things, from going shopping in town to staying out late or going to a party. **Finally**, although there are often cheaper prices for children, things are still expensive – and parents are not always generous with pocket money. There's never enough to do everything you want. All the things considered sometimes there's not enough to do anything at all.
- **In conclusion**, although some people see childhood as the best time in life, pros and cons children have no real choice, independence, or money. Nevertheless, it is true that choice, money, and independence all bring responsibilities and restrictions – which increase with age.

Training material – Listening and Speaking

Travel broadens the mind and widens our horizons / Travel narrows our minds

Travel abroad is no longer a luxury and nowadays most people in my country have had at least one foreign holiday. Personally, I think this has benefited our society in a number of ways.

Firstly, it enables us to observe and value other cultures and to understand that ours is not the only way of life. Consequently, this helps combat ignorance and narrowed-mindedness, which so often lead to racial prejudice and even violence. Secondly, foreign tourist can learn from and “borrow” those aspects of other cultures, which are better than in their own country. It seems to me that the improvement in my country’s eating habits owes a great deal to foreign travel.

Another benefit is that more people can now see the world’s most spectacular natural sights and visit its most important historic monuments. As a result, we discover our planet and become more knowledgeable in way, which is simply not possible with the Internet or television.

To conclude, I strongly believe that if we travel with an open mind, our horizons will be widened even further.

Instructions

Underline any linking devices that the writer uses. The first one has been done for you. Under each of the following headings write down those linkers which are used to:

1. Introduce the writer’s opinion	3.Show the result or consequences of something
Personally, I think	
2. Indicate the order of points	4. Bring the composition

Can you add any more linking devices to each of these categories?

Your class has been doing a project on travel and transport. Your teacher has asked you to write a composition with the following title:

The best way to travel in a town or city you know well

Write your composition. You should write between 120 and 180 words.

Compositions

1. Your class has been discussing the role of technology in today's society. For homework your teacher has asked you to write a composition, giving your opinions on the following statement:

The mobile phone has made a positive contribution to our lives today.

Write a composition. You should write 120-180 words.

Mobile phones are no longer a luxury item and they clearly have many advantages for those who use them. However, there are also some drawbacks.	
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On the positive side, they enable us to communicate with other people wherever they may be and at any time of the day. Teenagers who need help can contact their parents immediately and emergency can be called to the scene of an accident without delay. Another advantage is that recent models are so light and compact that they fit easily into a pocket or handbag.	
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On the negative side, the mobile phone is thought to be a serious threat to help, particularly in case of children. Moreover, drivers who use one at the wheel constitute a danger to others and fatal accidents have occurred. Finally, what for many people is a useful device, for others is a nuisance and they object to the constant ringing tones in public places.	
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In conclusion, cell phones have certainly improved many people's lives, but we need to be careful when and where we use them.	
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2. Read the model answer and the instructions below. What is the purpose of each of the four paragraphs?

Example: Paragraph 1- a general introduction

3. a) Then underline words and expressions in the model can be grouped in the following way:

Expressing contrast	Adding information	Concluding
On the positive side/ On the negative side	Another advantage is Moreover Finally	In conclusion

- b) Add the following alternative linking devices to the appropriate group in exercise 3a.

In addition (to this)	On the one hand	What is more
On the other hand	Besides this	Furthermore
Some people feel that	On balance	Others argue that
Another disadvantage is	To sum up	All in all

Expressing contrast	Adding information	Concluding
On the positive side/ On the negative side	Another advantage is Moreover Finally	In conclusion

The following linkers can also be used to organize ideas.

First of all First(ly)	Secondly	Finally
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4. The examiners look for evidence of a good range of structures and vocabulary. Which words has the writer of the model answer used to avoid repeating “mobile phones”?

Do people today do enough to protect animals?

<p>Human beings control the world and therefore we have a responsibility to protect animals. Unfortunately, I believe we fail to do this in many ways.</p>	
<p>Firstly, although it is often said that people in my country love their pets more than their family, they often don't look after them properly. Dogs need to be given exercise, but they are often kept in small flats and never taken out for walks. Sometimes people abandon pets when they grow up and are no longer small and cute. These animals have to survive on the streets and therefore often starving and full of disease.</p>	
<p>While it is true that zoos protect animals that are in danger extinction, they often keep them in bad conditions. In the zoos in my country, the animals are kept in small cages and look very miserable. Finally, there is a problem of hunting. Hunting of wild animals and birds is very popular in my country. In my opinion, this "sport" is cruel and wrong. How can anyone get pleasure from killing an animal?</p>	
<p>In Conclusion, I think that more needs to be done to protect domestic and wild animals. There should be stricter laws on how people treat animals and the government should make sure everyone obeys these laws.</p>	

Useful language

In my opinion/view...

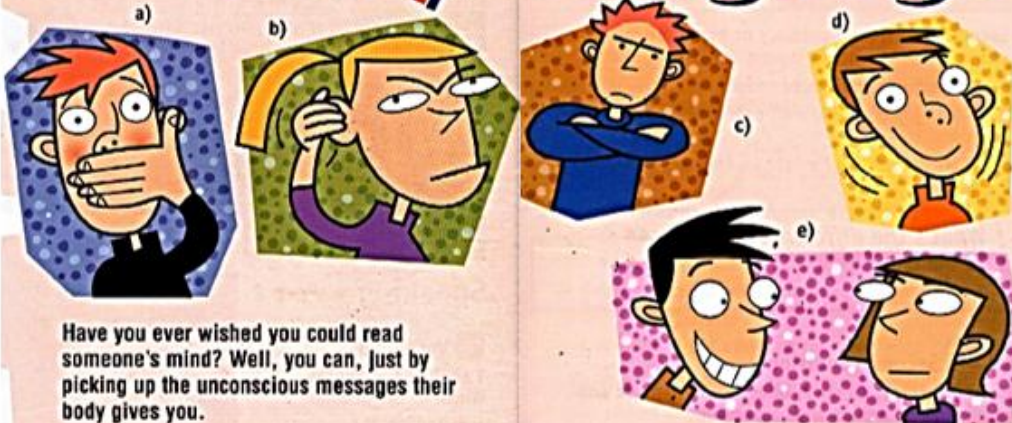
Some people claim/say/believe...

Other people, however, disagree/have a different point of view...

<p>It is true...</p> <p>One possibility is...</p> <p>We could/should...</p> <p>The government needs to...</p>	<p>It is the case that...</p>	<p>For example,...</p> <p>Let's take...</p> <p>To sum up,...</p> <p>If we take...</p> <p>In conclusion</p>
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Appendix C:
Language Literacy

Body Language



Have you ever wished you could read someone's mind? Well, you can, just by picking up the unconscious messages their body gives you.

Did you know that 93 per cent of our communication with others is non-verbal? What we actually say makes up only seven per cent of the picture! That's what US scientist Ray Birdwhistell found out when he began to study body language back in the 1950s. He filmed conversations and then played them back in slow motion to examine gestures, expressions and posture. When he noticed the same movements happening again and again, he realised that the body can talk too!

We use our bodies to send messages all the time. We nod instead of saying 'Yes', shrug our shoulders to mean 'I don't know', or raise our eyebrows to show surprise. But even when we don't want other people to know how we're feeling, our body language can give us away. It's not difficult to find out what someone is really thinking – and they won't even know it! The way we sit or stand, the expression on our face can reveal far more than words. But many of us miss these important signals, because we don't know what to look out for. Here are some useful tips!

How can you tell if a friend is fibbing to you? They'll often start blushing. They're embarrassed because they know they're not telling the truth. They'll probably look away while they're talking as well. That's because our eyes can reveal what we're thinking, even if we're saying the opposite out loud. Boys tend to look at the ground when they're lying, while girls look at the ceiling. If they put a hand over their mouth, it's another signal they're lying. It's as if they're trying to cover up the lie.

Imagine you're asking your teacher for a few more days to finish your homework. As you talk, she starts rubbing her ear. This is a signal that she doesn't want to hear what you're saying – so forget it! Remember putting both hands over your ears as a child to block out your parents' words? Someone who folds their arms tightly across their chest is sending a similar signal. We use folded arms as a defensive barrier to protect ourselves when we feel nervous or think someone is criticising us. So, if you're making a point in a discussion, and the others fold their arms, you'd better give up! They're shutting your ideas out and you won't convince them – even if they say they agree with you.

Have you begun to understand how body language works? Now you can use it to your own advantage. Follow these tips, and you could become the most popular student in the school! You've met someone who you'd like to get to know better. Look them in the eye – it shows you're sincere. When they're talking, lean slightly forward towards them and tilt your head on one side. This gives the message 'I'm interested and I'm paying attention.' Imitate their gestures. If they cross their legs, do the same. But be careful! Don't be too obvious or they'll think you're making fun of them.

Even though body language is common to everyone, there are still some cultural differences. To avoid any communication problems, it's a good idea to learn these if you want to travel abroad and make friends with people from another culture.

(FCE training test, Oxford university press, 1998)