

# Upper Level Interactive Explanation of Rubric

**Content of Message** and **Comprehensibility of Message** are big picture domains which reflect the communication of the message. Consequently they are affected by quality of interaction, fluency, vocabulary, and language control.

## Content of Message

This domain assesses how well the student performs the task assigned, including using language at the appropriate level.

**Quality of Interaction:** Minimal engagement may produce undeveloped content.

**Fluency:** Frequency of pauses may produce undeveloped content.

**Vocabulary:** Inadequate and/or inaccurate vocabulary may produce undeveloped content.

**Language Control:** Inadequate and/or inaccurate use of basic language structures may produce undeveloped content.

## Content of Message

- Required elements of the task should be in boldface type and/or listed under Minimum Requirements.
- There is no penalty for omission of elements if the student produces much detail on part of the task and runs out of time.
- A response which completes the requirements of the task and is adequately developed will receive no penalty for not using the full time allotted.

Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

**1 Content minimal and/or frequently inappropriate; ideas repetitive and/or irrelevant.**

- Student makes an effort but falls very short, possibly missing some required elements.
- Content may be unrelated to the assigned task.
- There may be little ratable material.

**2 Content somewhat adequate and mostly appropriate; ideas expressed with very little elaboration or detail.**

- Content is relevant but lacks appropriate details.
- A required portion of the task may be missing.

**3 Content adequate and appropriate; ideas developed with some elaboration and detail.**

- Content directly relates to the task as given.
- Content has sufficient information or detail based on learned material.
- Content may show a variety of sentences and some cohesive devices.

**4 Content rich; ideas developed with elaboration and detail.**

- Content includes much information related to the task.
- Content shows a variety of vocabulary.
- Content shows a variety of sentences and some cohesive devices.



### Comprehensibility of Message

This domain measures how much interpretation is required by a rater accustomed to interacting with language learners.

**Quality of Interaction:** Little engagement in the interaction and/or inability to sustain the conversation may produce responses which require interpretation.

**Fluency:** Long pauses and/or incomplete thoughts may hinder comprehensibility when they require interpretation.

**Vocabulary:** Inaccurate use of vocabulary which requires interpretation hinders comprehension.

**Language Control:** Errors in basic language structures may hinder comprehensibility when they require interpretation.

#### Comprehensibility of Message

- Comprehensibility covers the big picture and is not limited to pronunciation.
- Errors in language control and vocabulary may, but do not always, interfere with comprehensibility.
- Use of English *does* interfere with comprehensibility. The use of a word in English should be considered as a blank where nothing is said.
- A response which includes all the required elements yet is very short cannot receive a score higher than a 3 because the sample lacks sufficient evidence of communication.
- If a response is extremely short and/or repetitive, it can receive a score as low as 0.5.

Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

#### **1 Message barely comprehensible, requiring frequent interpretation; pronunciation may frequently interfere with communication.**

- Sample almost impossible to understand as spoken.
- Errors of vocabulary, language control and/or pronunciation may be impossible to decipher.
- Sample requires rater to “figure out” what the student is trying to say.

#### **2 Message mostly comprehensible, requiring interpretation; pronunciation may occasionally interfere with communication.**

- Rater should be able to comprehend most of the sample, but some sections may be difficult to interpret due to errors in vocabulary, language control and/or pronunciation.
- Rater may have to pause more than three times during the sample in order to comprehend.
- Rater may have to replay the sample in order to comprehend.

#### **3 Message comprehensible, requiring minimal interpretation; pronunciation does not interfere with communication.**

- Rater may have to pause two or three times in order to comprehend the sample.
- Rater should not have to replay the sample.

#### **4 Message readily comprehensible, requiring no interpretation; pronunciation enhances communication.**

- Rater should be able to understand all of the sample without pausing.

## Upper Level Interactive Explanation of Rubric

**Quality of Interaction and Fluency** reflect the delivery of the message. Each domain should be rated independently.

### Quality of Interaction

This domain assesses how well the student comprehends the message and interacts with a partner. It measures the level of engagement in the process and the effort to sustain the conversation naturally through the use of appropriate communication strategies such as clarification, circumlocution, rejoinders, and/or the eliciting of further information.

Issues regarding Quality of Interaction:

- Natural flow of conversation occurs when both partners listen to each other and respond to each other's comments, resulting in a conversation that is not disjointed.
- The bullets below each descriptor clarify various communication strategies and aspects of Quality of Interaction. The rater does not need to hear evidence of all of them in order to rate the sample because the task and resulting interaction may not require all of these communication strategies.
- Rejoinders are conversation enhancers such as "I agree," "I'm sorry," "You are right," "Really?", "What a shame!", etc.
- Students should not be penalized for not circumlocuting or not asking for clarification if they are unnecessary.
- A student should not be penalized for his/her partner's inability to respond and/or sustain the conversation.

Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

#### **1 Minimal engagement in the interaction; little ability to sustain the conversation.**

- Interaction may be disjointed.
- Student does not comprehend the message and/or is unable to ask for clarification.
- Student comprehends the message but gives an inaccurate or irrelevant response.
- Student gives minimal responses.
- Student rarely elicits further information.

#### **2 Some engagement in the interaction; some ability to sustain the conversation.**

- Interaction may be somewhat disjointed.
- Student mostly comprehends the message and/or is able to ask for some clarification.
- Student responds somewhat adequately.
- Student occasionally elicits further information.

#### **3 Consistent engagement in the interaction; ability to sustain the conversation.**

- Interaction flows naturally most of the time.
- Student comprehends the message.
- Student gives adequate responses.
- Student elicits further information.

#### **4 Consistent engagement in the interaction; ability to sustain and advance the conversation.**

- Interaction flows naturally.
- Student readily comprehends the message.
- Student gives rich responses.
- Student elicits further information.

### Fluency

This domain assesses the ease with which the student delivers the message.

Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

**1 Speech halting and uneven with long pauses or incomplete thoughts.**

- There is a lot of hesitation and stopping.
- There may be a long period of silence.
- Student may not complete thoughts.

**2 Speech choppy and/or slow with frequent pauses; few or no incomplete thoughts.**

- There are significant pauses as the student searches for words to complete thoughts.
- Thoughts are mostly complete.

**3 Speech shows some hesitation but speaker manages to continue and complete thoughts.**

- There are some pauses, but speech flows naturally most of the time.
- Thoughts are mostly complete.

**4 Speech shows few pauses or false starts.**

- Speech demonstrates ease and comfort with the language and any pausing is natural.
- Thoughts are all complete.

## Upper Level Interactive Explanation of Rubric

**Vocabulary and Language Control reflect the accuracy and variety of the language. Each of these domains should be rated independently.**

### Vocabulary

This domain assesses the extent to which the student uses vocabulary accurately, reflecting sufficient variety and appropriateness to this level.

Issues regarding Vocabulary:

- In a *formative assessment*, recently learned vocabulary should be evident.
- Students should be trained to recall learned vocabulary rather than resort to an English word. In addition, students should be taught to use basic circumlocution. For instance, if a student does not know the word for an “auto-repair shop,” the student could use words such as “where they fix cars,” “a place for broken cars,” “a car hospital,” or “a car doctor.”
- Titles of films, books, and TV shows can be given in English without penalty.
- In a *summative assessment* (usually an end-of-year assessment), the student should incorporate both basic and advanced vocabulary.

Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

#### **1 Inadequate and/or inaccurate use of vocabulary.**

- Response lacks variety of vocabulary.
- Student may frequently repeat words or expressions.
- Vocabulary may be used inappropriately or out of context.
- Some English may be used, but infrequently.
- Response may include very few words.

#### **2 Somewhat inadequate and/or inaccurate use of vocabulary and too basic for this level.**

- Student uses minimal variety of vocabulary.
- There may be some repetition of words and expressions.
- Some vocabulary may be used inappropriately.
- Response may include one or two English words.
- Response may lack quantity of words.

#### **3 Adequate and accurate use of vocabulary for this level.**

- Student uses a variety of vocabulary.
- Vocabulary is used accurately and appropriately.
- Student incorporates some advanced vocabulary.
- Response includes no English.

#### **4 Rich use of vocabulary and appropriate use of idiomatic expressions.**

- Student accurately uses a rich variety of vocabulary and some idiomatic expressions.
- Response includes a large quantity of vocabulary and/or expressions.
- Student includes less commonly used vocabulary.
- Student may use known vocabulary to circumlocute unknown words.



## Language Control

This domain assesses the level of accuracy and use of basic and advanced language structures.

### Basic Language Structures — Upper Levels

#### Western European Languages

- Formation and use of present tense
- Formation and use of the past tense (preterite and *pass compos* )
- Reflexive verbs
- Noun-article-adjective agreement
- Interrogatives/Question formation
- Word order
- Articles
- Use of the possessive “my” and “de” to indicate possession (French and Spanish)

#### Japanese

- Word order (subject—object—verb)
- Forms of address and their usage (*san, kun*)
- Use of particles or relationals (*wa, ga, o, e ni, de*)
- Tense/(adjective/verb)/(present/future, past)
- Negatives (verbs/adjectives)
- Progressive form (~*imasu* form)
- Interrogatives/Question formation

Issues regarding Language Control:

- It is important to focus on language structures used correctly, not only on errors.
- At this level students are expected to participate in sustained exchanges showing accuracy in present time with less accuracy in past and future times.
- In *formative assessments* which ask students to use a recently taught advanced structure (e.g., the subjunctive), this structure should be considered temporarily a basic language structure for the purpose of scoring the performance.
- In *summative assessments*, such as those given at the end of the year, students are asked to demonstrate the skills acquired over the whole language learning experience. Although students have been taught more advanced language structures (e.g., the subjunctive), these structures may not have been internalized. Therefore, lack of control of advanced structures should not heavily impact the student’s score in a summative assessment. More emphasis should be placed on basic language structures.

Each rating for this domain has particular characteristics:

#### 1 Emerging use of basic language structures.

- Basic language structures, as defined above, are used correctly approximately half of the time.

#### 2 Emerging control of basic language structures.

- Basic language structures, as defined above, are used correctly about three quarters of the time.

#### 3 Control of basic language structures.

- Basic language structures, as defined above, are used correctly most of the time, not all of the time.

#### 4 Control of basic language structures with occasional use of advanced language structures.

- Basic language structures, as defined above, are used correctly most of the time, not all of the time, and advanced language structures are used occasionally with some success.

### Use of Basic Language Structures

Inadequate/inaccurate use	= used accurately less than 1/2 of the time
Emerging use	= used correctly about 1/2 of the time
Emerging control	= used correctly about 3/4 of the time
Control	= used correctly most of the time, not all of the time



