MONOGRAFÍA

How to test productive skills in English Language Teaching


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How to test productive skills in English Language Teaching

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Dedication

This monograph is dedicated:

To God, for giving me the opportunity to live and for being with me in every step I take.

To my beloved mother, Eufemia Lume, for her constant and unconditional support, to my father, José Sánchez, and to my grandparents who are always by my side.
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**Introduction**

This work has the aim to make a little analysis about productive skills in which teachers to use it as tool to measure the knowledge of how the student learn in class with a certain topic. For the great majority of teacher the most common problems in any learning situation is to create a good interaction. This is especially consequential when we are using a second language.

Testing language skills measures a student’s ability to communicate in real life situation across all our skills beyond the confines of grammar and lexis. Teachers will get a meaningful profile of skill for each learner, so they can be sure understand a student’s strength and weakness.

Language learning takes lot of hard work and time. However, if the person can set himself or herself realistic shorter -term aims, he or she will find it easier to manage his or her learning and see the progress taking a testing writing or orally.

This monograph has been divided into three chapters. Chapter one presents a general view about testing, what and how language skills are integrated in the classroom. Also acquisition of knowledge (bottom-up/ top-down approach) and schema theory. Chapter two begins with testing speaking in order to develop with components, technics using in a test. Finally, chapter three focus on testing writing, components and techniques.
Chapter One

Theoretical framework about strategies and skills

1.1. Skills

A well-rounded communicator needs to be adroit in each of the four language skills. These four skills give learners opportunities to create contexts in which to use the language for exchange of real information, in contrast to their own ability and confidence. Listening and reading are the receptive skills. Students do not need to produce language, they receive and understand it. The productive skills are speaking and writing because students are applying these skills in a need to produce language. Dishari (2013)

Skills is an organization of decisions used as an integrated whole. This integration decide what to say, when to say it, and how to say it. When we learn our first language, we commonly learn to listen first, then to speak, then to read, and finally to write. These are four language skills. So, learners can learn a second language using the same steps.
1.2. Test, testing and teaching

Brown (2004) defined a test as a measurement method to gauge someone’s skills, knowledge or performance in a certain area in a controlled environment. It is also referred as an assessment tool, a number of techniques or procedures that the test-taker must take part in or perform in accordance to the items we want to evaluate.

According to Ur (1996) a test may be defined as an activity whose main purpose is to communicate to the tester how well learners can do something. This is in contrast to practice, whose main purpose is sheer learning. Learning is a result from a test, just as feedback on knowledge that transfer from activities or practices. The test gives a score which is achieved to define the level of learning.

Test may be used as a means to:

a) Give the learners information about their performance and decide what to teach next class.

b) Give the students information about what know, so that they also have an awareness of what they need to learn or reinforce.

c) Assess for some purpose external to current teaching (a final grade for the course selection).

d) Promote students to learn or review specific material.

e) Provide a clear indication that the class has reached from their learning, such as the end or a unit, thus contributing to a sense of structure in the course as a whole.
Testing we understand any formal or informal task set a given moment for one or several purposes. It may be more structural or more communicative, longer a shorter, but always given as a precise means to provide assessments. As teacher you will want to know you’re your students are progressing and how you teaching has been. The students, for their part, need to be reassured that they progress and they will want to be shown how best they can improve their performance. So you need to use tests either published ones, or test that you have devised yourself.

Desheng and Varghese (2013) proposed that a testing becomes an integral part of teaching because it provides significant information or inputs about the growth and achievement of learner’s difficulties, styles of learning, uneasiness levels. Efficient teaching and effective testing are two sides of the same coin. Test evaluates not only the progress and achievement of learners but also the effectiveness of the teaching materials and methods used.

A great number of tests done in schools are of the kind of progress tests, whereas international exams are almost always efficiency tests. In tests, teachers can measure the progress of their learners, particularly in the aspect of the four English language skills, in other words: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

For optimal learning to take place, students in the classroom must have liberty to experiment, to try different things with their own hypotheses about language without feeling that their overall competence is being judged in terms of errors. Learners must have opportunities to play with their language in a classroom without being formally graded teaching sets up practice games of language learning the opportunities for learners to listen, to write, to speak or to read. Then take note down and process information and then recycle through the skills that are trying to explain with own knowledge.
1.2.1. **Authentic testing**

A testing requiring students to use the same competencies or combinations of knowledge, skill and attitudes that they need to apply in the criterion situation professional life. An authentic testing have to do with students demonstrating that they know a body of knowledge have developed a set of skills and can apply them in a “real life” context and can solve real problems. Nnorom and Ukafor (2011).

An Authentic testing is multiple forms of assessment that reflect student learning, achievement, motivation and attitudes on activities classroom. An authentic testing is to improve the learning process and help students gain knowledge while completing tasks that are useful to their experiences in the future.

1.2.2. **Types of authentic testing**

To implement the authentic testing, there are some crucial points that teachers have to prepare. First of all, they have to be able to design an authentic testing and learning objectives as suitable as possible for the students. The authentic testing is scored by using a rubric, rating scales, and a checklist. A rubric consists a set of specific criteria, used in evaluating student works such as learning, knowledge, competence, values, etc.

Nitko (1993) considered two types of rubrics in assessment: holistic and analytic. In the former, the teacher is to score the product as a single entity, leaving its component parts separate. On the other hand, the latter requires the teacher to evaluate the individual parts of the final product and only then combine those individual scores into a total average score. Analytical marking refers to a method whereby each separate criterion in the mark scheme is awarded a separate mark and the final mark is a composite of theses individual estimates. Each paper is scored using an agreed scale and an examinee’s score is the average of the combined marks. The notion of impression marking specifically excludes any attempt to
separate the discrete features of a composition purposes. In holistic evaluations, markers base their judgments on their impression of the whole composition: in frequency – count marking, markers total or enumerate certain elements in the composition such as: cohesive devices, misspelled words, misplaced commas, or sentences errors. Weir (1998).

1.3. Receptive and productive skills

1.3.1. Listening

One of the two receptive skills. Although it is the first skill we acquire in our mother tongue, it is frequently referred as the most complex skill to master when learning foreign languages. This is because learners feel the need to understand every single word that is said in a listening extract, which is more often than not counterproductive to their overall understanding of what is being expressed. In addition to this, people who have difficulty to focus are often poor listeners, which can set back the acquisition of this skill in a new language.

A good technique to help enhance listening skills is to nurture the ability to predict what will be said and make use of other cues to help decipher the message, like key words, for example. In the same sense, listening skills can be further developed by having students listen to the phonetic sounds of the target language, which will result in an improvement in pronunciation. Moreover, we should not limit students to be exposed to just one type of accent, and instead we must provide them with a wide range of speeches from people of different backgrounds and regions. By teaching learners a good number of listening activities we also help them enrich their vocabulary.
1.3.2. Speaking

Language is a medium for communication, and in simple terms, speaking is the delivery of ideas through the mouth. This productive skill refers to putting together ideas and transmitting them as words so others can understand the message that is conveyed, and it is very important to make sure the level of input is higher than the level of language production. The mastery of this skill is more complex than it seems at first glance, as it also involves the use of paralinguistic attributes, i.e. voice quality, voice modulation, pronunciation, intonation, tone, and so on.

Speaking is almost always connected to listening, so it is often presented in pair work or group activities, and as a skill it can be enhanced by taking part in discussions and debates.

1.3.3. Reading

Reading is another receptive or passive skill and it is defined as the process of looking at a sequence of written symbols to obtain meaning and draw conclusions from them. It does not only provide information to the person but also helps one improve in all aspects of the language, like grammar, vocabulary and writing, among others. It also helps our brains to develop a form of language intuition, by imitating sentences we have read beforehand and producing similar sentences to convey a message.

It is very important to get students to form the habit of reading, be it books, articles, magazines, and so on, to become familiar with idioms, jargons and neologisms.

1.3.4. Writing

This productive skill is often referred as the process of communicating ideas and thoughts in a readable form through the use of symbols, and it provides learners with palpable evidence of their current level as well as helps them measure their achievements so far.
Through writing, the other three skills are complemented and both vocabulary and grammar are consolidated. Nonetheless, this is also a skill that is not easy to master, even for native speakers of a language, as it requires a good understanding of the basic system of a language, for example punctuation, grammar structures, and so on, as well as a good grasp of the concepts of cohesion and coherence. To help learners improve in this skill, the teacher should give high importance to composition and creative writing, and be sensitive in the aspect of error correction.

Teachers should work to enable the necessary conditions to facilitate the learning process, with a goal in mind to reach the established goals. In order to attain a successful learning, all the four language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) must be integrated in an effective way. Only by integrating the four skills we can make sure the learners will reach a high level of communicative skills, one of the most important tools nowadays in this competitive world.

1.4. How does comprehension work?

1.4.1. Schema theory

A schema theory is basically a theory about knowledge. It is a theory that is represented and how that representation facilitates the use in particular ways. All knowledge is packaged into units. These units are the schemata. Embedded in these packet of knowledge is, in addition to the knowledge itself, information about how this knowledge is to use.

Rumerlhart (1980, p. 41) mentioned that:

Schemata can represent knowledge at all level—from ideologies and cultural truths to knowledge about the meaning of a particular word, to knowledge about what patterns of excitations are associated with what letters of the alphabet. We have schemata to
represent all levels of our experience, at all level abstraction. All of our generic knowledge is embedded in schemata.

A schema, then, is a data structure for representing the generic concepts stored in memory. There are schemata representing our knowledge about all concepts like situations, events, sequence of events, actions and sequence of actions. Schemas, or schemata have been described as cognitive constructs which allow for the organization of information in long – term memory. The mind, stimulated by key words or phrases in the text or by the context, activates a knowledge.

Wallace (1992) proposed that:

Schemas also allow us to predict the continuation of both spoken and written discourse. The first part of a text activates a schema, that is, calls up a schema which is either confirmed or disconfirmed by what follows. We may either call up the wrong schema altogether or need to keep readjusting it as the discourse in the text unfolds.

(p. 33)

Pankin (2013) suggested some characteristic:

- Schemas are dynamic. They develop and change based on new information and experiences and thereby support the notion of plasticity in development.
- Schemas guide how interpret new information and may be quite powerful in the influence.
- Schemas are higher-order cognitive structures that have been hypothesized to underlie many aspects of human knowledge and skill
- Schemas, or schemata, store both declarative (“what”) and procedural (“how”) information.
- Schemas represent knowledge at all levels of abstraction
Schemata are psychological constructs that have been proposed as a form of mental representation for some forms of complex knowledge. The schema theory teaches general knowledge and broad concepts. Build on the knowledge (schemata) and make connections between ideas. Prior knowledge is necessary for new knowledge.

1.4.2. Top-down and bottom up approaches

We call top-down processing the way we process and understand a written text by paying attention to specific cues like context, background knowledge and so on, starting by understanding the overall message and only then getting to the lower levels of the language, such as semantics, syntax, and phonology. The activation of each level depends on inputs from other levels both top and bottom; a semantic processing needs the information the level lexicon and syntactic.

Here is where “schema”, or the process in which learners combine their background knowledge with information in a text, begins playing a fundamental role in the top-down approach, by providing students with the ability to understand cues in the text and help comprehend the message. Thus, it is important for teachers to help students activate their schema, by means of listening and reading activities.

The processes of bottom-up, ranging from the identification of the graphic signs, progressing successively, until the identification of the words and finally of the phrase.

Birch (2015, p. 42) suggested that:

The reading comprehension will go from the most simple to the most complex, from the recognition of the letters until the semantic processing of the text. The mechanisms of information processing will be as follows: letter-phoneme-word-meaning of the word-syntactic-semantic. In the processing top-down subject reader establishes a partnership between the representation phonological word and an internal
representation of its meaning in the existing semantic memory. As far as process of understanding a text the subject based on his previous knowledge and cognitive resources is formulating hypothesis, making predictions and making inferences in relation to the text, to build their interpretation.

According to Birch (2015), in order to make sense of a written text, it is necessary to analyze the words and letters that compose it. Thus, learners with rich world knowledge will understand more easily the meaning of what is being transmitted. Both linguistics and researchers agree that it is essential to combine both top-down and bottom-up strategies, strategies that are far more effective when students are exposed to real-life scenarios.

As for bottom-up strategies, they are defined as the process of deciphering messages by focusing on grammatical characteristics as a starting point to then move up and reach higher elements such as speaker’s purpose. On the other hand, top-down are defined as a set of procedures that help the activation of students’ background information in order to get the main idea of an extract.

Therefore, from the hypothesis, predictions and inferences the text is processed for verification. It is a sequential and hierarchical processing from top to bottom in which from complex processes like suggesting a hypothesis goes to more specific processes (semantic interpretation, syntactic analysis, decoding) therefore its sense is top-down from bottom up.

In order to use bottom-up strategies, we begin by identifying phonemes, then linking them together as syllables, then those syllables merge together to form words, groups of words become clauses, etc., to finally reach an overall understanding of the whole text.

Even without realizing it, learners make use of both bottom-up and top-down types of processes when they read a text. For instance, when facing a situation in which their vocabulary is insufficient to understand a text, they may focus on the top-down cues to get information about the context or purpose and this way compensate for their lack of
vocabulary. Nevertheless, more often than not, learners will lean too much on bottom-up strategies, paying excessive attention to isolated words and sentences. Thus, it is the task of the teacher to help students learn how to take full advantage of top-down cues through the use of activities that focus on them.

1.5. **Discrete or integrated skills?**

According to Hinkel (2010), one of the simplest and most elemental integrated teaching approaches is that of incorporating two skills in the same language medium (spoken and written). This is to say that for the spoken medium we can include listening and speaking tasks, whereas for the written one we can include reading and writing. As mentioned before, this integrating is easy to implement in the classroom and required very little effort from both the teacher and students. Additionally, receptive skills, in other words listening and reading, cannot be taught in isolation, and require a productive skill, but not necessarily their productive counterpart. For example, in the case of listening skills, learners can either speak or write about what they have understood from a previously read text. Moreover, integrating more than two skills can also be done without much difficulty.

Likewise, Almarza (2000) mentioned that by integrating skills, the learning process becomes more meaning and purposeful, as the students can see by themselves that each activity or task is interconnected to the one before. In addition, the understanding of language areas, for example acquisition of new vocabulary, is enhanced as it is dealt with in both oral and written forms. Thus, it is required that teachers provide activities before and after the session to help contextualize and extend the content of both listening and reading skills, the receptive ones.
As for writing, it is a skill which cannot be taught or learned in isolation. It can be defined as the consolidation of the other areas of language, due to the fact that it gives the learner practice in using and combining different structures as well as lexical elements. What is more, writing is often regarded as the most difficult skill to develop, be it from a cognitive perspective or taking into account the difficulties derived from the acoustics.

One of the most essential jobs of the teacher is to improve students’ listening skills, as there is a clear relationship between listening understanding and oral production.

In order to have more informed discussions in class, it is advised to provide reading materials for students to read before they come to class, and it is preferable to make use of real world articles found in newspapers and magazines. This can lead to further activities where learners continue to be involved, and of course, whole class discussions, especially those unplanned discussions, provide opportunities for students to practice their oral skills, and as the level of the students become more advanced, they will be given more challenging tasks that require them to use a broader range of vocabulary, as well as a higher level of accuracy and fluency.

The current models of integrated teaching of the four language skills have the objective of developing learners’ fluency and accuracy. Nowadays, English is widely employed as the main medium of international communication, thus it appears to be quite easy to predict that this type of pedagogical model which integrates the four language skills will continue to have the edge over other models.

Another significant thing teachers must do is to be able take apart the most relevant ideas and concepts for every learning and teaching environment and adapt the methods proposed here to the distinct age groups, backgrounds, skills, interests and needs, as well as syllabuses that are to be followed.
Chapter two

Testing speaking

As we know, the most important problem that a teacher faces while testing oral skills is how the learners must have adequate vocabulary and which some ideas of how to put sentences together. All those interested in the teaching of English as a foreign language have analyzed, investigated and discussed the role and importance of speaking skills and the way they could be tested in the teaching- learning process. It has been noted that the way oral production is being tested is definitely important in order to obtain better results in the effective and appropriate use of spoken language. That focuses attention on fluency, smoothness of execution, appropriateness, formality required, coherence, effectiveness, accuracy and range.

As Weir (1998) noted that:

The criteria for communicative testing, namely that tasks developed within this paradigm should be purposive, interesting and motivating, with a positive washback effect on teaching that precedes the test; interaction should be a key feature; there should be a degree of intersubjectivity among participants; the output should be to a certain extent unpredictable: a realistic context should be provided and processing should be done in real time. (p. 73)
The essential task for the teacher to clearly establish what activities the student is expected to do, to what extent the dynamic communicative characteristic associated with these activities can be incorporated into the test, and what are the dimensions of the task.

For many years, the role and importance of speaking skills and the way they could be tested in the teaching-learning process has been discussed. It has been noted that the way oral production is being tested is definitely important in order to obtain better results in the effective and appropriate use of spoken language.

2.1. **Fundamental principles in testing speaking**

2.1.1. **Why and how to test speaking**

It is important to know why and how we should test the students´ abilities to communicate orally. It should be said that wherever a teaching-learning process is carried out, some instruments must exist that are able to value and measure what the individual learner has learnt or is able to do with language. Any form of formal test to check the abilities learners have in speaking skills should be administered, but its content and testing techniques must be planned keeping in mind the syllabus content or what they have been taught according to the study of needs. Therefore, test construction must a flexible, formative and integral procedure in which the most reliable, valid, practical, comprehensive and confidential guidelines are set to test the different language components involved in speaking.

When teaching and testing speaking, it is important to keep in mind the two main features of language: accuracy (precision and linguistic acceptability of the language) and fluency (ability to develop ideas and the way for expressing them). To do that, students should be aided to understand and produce correct language. As a hearer or speaker the pupil should be made aware of the appropriateness and acceptability of the language he/she uses. Torres (2010).
2.2. Testing speaking (applying the criteria)

A good number of teachers prefer testing grammar and vocabulary concepts rather than testing the skills themselves. Indeed, testing speaking skills can represent a problem as it is time-demanding, but it is necessary to assess the progress made by the learners in this particular skill. Some examples to effectively assess this skill may include: narrating a story, roleplays, and discussions, among others. For smaller classes, and provided time is not an issue, activities that require no more than three students interacting in a group task while the teacher evaluates is recommended. For effective testing of speaking skills, the teacher who must participate actively in the design of the test by forming a test which looks as if it measures the students’ oral production.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ACCURACY (LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE LANGUAGE FORM)</strong></th>
<th><strong>FLUENCY (COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE LANGUAGE FUNCTION)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability to master a language as a system</td>
<td>Ability to use language to communicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>Mechanical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil’s ability to pronounce sounds and follow intonation and stress patterns in an acceptable and comprehensible manner.</td>
<td>The ability to use pauses, punctuation, speed, rhythm and sentence length.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Language use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils’ ability to produce appropriate morphological and syntactical patterns in a given speech situation.</td>
<td>The ability to talk in coherent, reasoned and semantically dense sentences, showing a mastery of the semantic and grammatical resources of the language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Judgment skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils’ ability to produce appropriate morphological and syntactical patterns in a given speech situation.</td>
<td>The ability to have appropriate things to say in a wide range of context and for a particular audience. Ability to select, organize, order, create and develop thoughts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>The ability to transmit, negotiate and share information accurately and fluently</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Torres (2010)
2.2.1. **Self-assessments**

Scrivener (2005) points out that while the fear of getting bad marks can motivate students, surprisingly, when students assess themselves they feel more in control, and altogether this is an effective activity that raises self-awareness in their learning. For instance, a teacher could hand out a list of criteria and ask students to compare themselves against each point, by writing a short sentence, whether it is in English or in their mother tongue, to promote honest and “guilt-free” self-reflection in the classroom. In addition to this, small groups of students can be formed to discuss their thoughts and elaborate on their reasoning behind what they wrote earlier.

2.2.2. **Accuracy and fluency**

According to Thornbury (1999) suggested that:

Teaching sequences were based on the initial mastery of such items (known as discrete items of grammar). Only later were these items combined with other previously learned items, and practiced in free production. A great deal of remedial teaching was also required, since accuracy was as much the goal as the starting point of this very focused approach and the standard by which accuracy was judged was based on descriptions of written, rather than spoken, language. In fact, language learners were set objectives that most native speakers would find hard to meet.

It may be sufficient simply to achieve the ability to communicate intelligibly across a limited range of genres, contexts, and topics. In other words, fluency may be a more important objective than formal accuracy. Accordingly, proponents of a more fluency-driven approach proposed a model of instruction that started out from (rather than ended up with) the learner’s attempts to communicate. But even teachers who adhered to the traditional model find it hard to resist this new prioritizing of fluency. A more
tolerant attitude to error has been one effect. Another has been the increased incorporation of fluency activities into the classroom, even at relatively early levels. This recognition of the important of speaking for its own sake- not simply as proof of grammar mastery- has radically affected course design, including syllabus specifications and assessments. (p. 115)

The main objective of fluency tasks is to encourage quick communicative exchanges, leaving aside grammar accuracy, which results in learners becoming less inhibited and less anxious. Including even one casual activity per class helps students simply exchange ideas and engage in low risk, safe communication between themselves. Some activities works on multiple levels. Students, can familiar with vocabularies and they have the opportunity to learn more while sharing their personal dreams and experiences. Fluency requires practice, and practice makes progress.

2.3. **Samples of criteria and rubrics to test speaking**

A test speaking should focus on student’s ability to interpret and convey meanings for authentic purpose in interactive context. Teachers need to use testing tasks which are as authentic as possible in a classroom setting.

Table 2 shows the use analytic rubric in scoring students’ of speaking skill.
# Table 2

*Rubric for test speaking skills*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>- Very clear so easy to understand.</td>
<td>22-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Easily understood despite the influence of the mother tongue can be detected.</td>
<td>18-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- There are pronunciation problem so that listeners need full concentration.</td>
<td>14-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- There are serious pronunciation problems that cannot be understood.</td>
<td>10-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>- No or few grammatical errors.</td>
<td>22-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sometimes there is a mistake but it does not affect the meaning.</td>
<td>18-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Often make mistakes making the meaning hardly comprehensible</td>
<td>14-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Severe solecism that it could not be understood</td>
<td>10-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>- Using the appropriate vocabulary and expressions.</td>
<td>22-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Occasionally using less precise vocabularies and should be explained again.</td>
<td>18-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Often using inappropriate vocabularies.</td>
<td>14-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Vocabulary is very limited so that the conversation cannot be happening</td>
<td>10-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>- Very fluent</td>
<td>22-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Fluency is slightly disturbed by the language problem</td>
<td>18-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Often hesitated and stalled because of the language limitations</td>
<td>14-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Object hesitated and stalled because of the language limitations</td>
<td>10-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Talk disjointed and stopped so that the conversation cannot be happening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ur (1996, p. 135) suggested that, a scale of oral testing criteria. The students are tested on fluency and accuracy and may get a maximum of five points on each of these two aspects, ten points in all. Table 3 shows a template for holistic rubric and figure 1, too.

**Table 3**

*Scale of oral testing*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accuracy</th>
<th>Fluency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little or no language produced</td>
<td>Little or no communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor vocabulary, mistakes in basic grammar,</td>
<td>Very hesitant and brief utterance,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>may have very strong foreign accent</td>
<td>sometimes difficult to understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate but not rich vocabulary,</td>
<td>Gets ideas across, but hesitantly and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makes obvious grammar mistakes,</td>
<td>briefly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slight foreign accent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good range of vocabulary,</td>
<td>Effective communication in short turns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occasional grammar slips, slight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foreign accent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide vocabulary appropriately used,</td>
<td>Easy and effective communication, use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>used, virtually no grammar mistakes,</td>
<td>long turns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>native-like or slight foreign accent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL SCORE OUT OF 10: _____________________________________________**

Ur (1996)
2.4. Ideas for correction work after a fluency activity

Scrivener (2005) gave a list of suggestions for fluency activities. For example:

a) Write on the board some sentences that have been used in the lesson and discuss them with the learners.

b) Write a number of sentences on the board and have students stand up and correct them.

c) Write a short story that includes some errors that you overheard during class and hand out copies of the story to the students. Now, in groups, they have to find the mistakes and correct them.
d) Write two groups of sentences, A and B. Each list has the same number of sentences, and they are almost identical except that in each pair there is a mistakes whether in list A or B. This way, for example, the correct form of sentence number 1 may be in list A, while in list B the sentence is almost identical but erroneous. For this activity, the class is divided in pairs and students discuss the sentences with their partners without looking at each other’s lists, to reach a conclusion on which sentences are correct or which are not. After finalizing this activity, students can look at each other’s lists.

Scrivener (2005) noted that more often than not, teachers face the problem of overcrowded classrooms which makes it seem an unrealistic task to properly assess the speaking skills of their students. Nonetheless, by using a list of criteria, this task becomes less difficult even with very large groups. To do this, firstly, the teacher should give task instructions in a clear and concise way, as well as inform students and they are expected to do. Then, once students start working in pairs or small groups, the teacher should keep track of each student’s strengths by using a checklist, and if necessary, extend the assessment over a few lessons, making sure to write down the improvements shown in the learners, as well as making the necessary adjustments in accordance to the results.

In addition, it is important that teacher and learners talk together getting a chance to become more fluent and confident. This should be done by clearly establishing the objectives and how they will be reached. This is to say that learners are expected to learn to speak by performing speaking tasks, and given encouragement to speak as well as opportunities to practice their oral skills.

Scrivener (2005) mentions that a teacher could start a class discussion by bringing a relevant topic to class, as well as materials (a newspaper article, a video, or a question) to trigger whole class conversation. At this point of the lesson, there should little to no emphasis on grammar or lexis. In addition, other main techniques include the usage of “open
questions”, in other words questions that begin with who, what, why, how, where, when, and so on. These kind of questions are preferred over than “closed questions”, in other words questions that can be answered simply with a yes or a no. In addition, “open questions” are far more effective when one wants to focus on specific issues that actually have an effect on the students and their surroundings.

One of the most problem in the classroom is to come to class and to speak about a topic and to ask straight. This cause a slight panic. In addition if your students haven´t had time to think. It´s usually a good idea to organize speaking activities in pairs, three and small groups, as well as with the class as a whole.

2.5. Techniques to test speaking

To facilitate the testing of accuracy and fluency it is suggested to focus student’s attention on interesting, meaningful and motivating activities which promote and encourage the use of spoken language in real- authentic situations. It is so because for man people the test situation itself creates considerable anxiety which can badly affect their performance. So, it is necessary to expose the learners to commutative activities that make them feel more relaxed and confident. Most of the proposed communicative activities to test accuracy and fluency in speaking are based on pair work or group work. It is important to point out that students feel more comfortable when speaking with a partner because the learners feel they are talking to someone about their own live, whose interests are identical to theirs, which makes the communication as comprehensible as possible. It usually makes them more willing to speak, to say more when they do speak, to participate among themselves and to take the initiative much more because the students feel more relaxed.
Weir (1998) proposed some techniques: Group planning tasks, answering and advertising, role-play, live monologues, pictures different tasks, half minutes topics and the free interview.

a. **Group planning tasks**

One example could be that of “holiday planning”. In this activity, the teacher must prepare some advertisements or leaflets that advertise vacation trips. Have students make small groups and instruct the learners that they must reach an agreement on where to go for a holiday. Each group is given some leaflets or brochures and each group has to plan a holiday that is within a certain budget. Give students a fair amount of time to read the materials and prepare a short presentation. In this short presentation, each group will have to persuade their classmates to choose the holiday they have selected. Once every group has made their presentations, the whole class debates and picks a holiday from among the presented options.

Another good example would be “Survival”. Make up a dramatic scenario in which their lives are in danger, for example: natural disasters, accidents, car crashes, and so on. Give students a map and some notes and then allow some time for students to come up with a course of action that gives them the best chance of survival.

b. **Answering and advertising**

The teacher gives pupils a worksheet. In each pair there is student A and students B. Student A wants another person to share a house and has put an advertisement in the newspaper. Students B phones up about it. Both pupils have to ask and answer questions in order to find the corresponding information on the worksheet

**Student A**

THIRD PERSON
Requires to share large house.
Central phone
846592
You have been sharing a large house with two other people for nearly two years. One of them has now decided to leave so you have to find someone to take his/her place. You have put the above advertisement in the local newspaper. Someone (your partner) phones you up about it.

- Before you start, think about the following.
- Where the house is situated
- When the person can move in
- How much the rent is
- How much of the house is shared
- Who does the cleaning, etc
- Anything else you can think of (e.g. near the shop, station, modern, central heating, etc.)
- If the person is interested arranged a day and time when he, she can come and see the house.

Student B

THIRD PERSON
Requires to share large house.
Central phone
846592

You have just moved to this town and are looking for a house or flat to rent. You see the above advertisement and decided to phone up about it. You partner answer the phone.

Before you start, think of some questions to ask. For example, you might want to know:

- Where it is
- When you can move in
• How much the rent is
• What the other people are like
• How much of the house is shared
• If everyone helps with the cleaning, cooking, etc.
• What ‘your room’ is like
• If it is near a supermarket, etc.

If you are interested, try to arrange a day and time to go and see it. You can start by saying.

Good (morning). I’m phoning about your advertisement in the paper.

c. Role-play

In this kind of activity, students have to act out a certain role. They are given a fair amount of time and have to decide how their character would act in different situations or scenes, using information given by the teacher through role cards or by coming up with their own ideas. To fully take advantage of this activity, the roles should be selected with the idea in mind to create natural conflicts due to the different personalities and mindsets. This way, when the discussions and debates are done, the participants will not have hard feelings with each other because in the end it was just them playing a role.

A simple role card could do nothing more than name the role, e.g.

```
O    detective
O    Pop star
O    thief
O    mother
O    19-years-old daughter
O    3-year-old baby
```
Another alternatively they could offer guidance as to what to do rather the role itself, e.g.

![Role-play cards](image)

**Figure 2. Role-play**

Role cards often contain some of the following information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal appearance, clothes, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your interest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Points relevant to the task**

- Pieces of information you know (that maybe others don’t)
- Your opinions about that issue/problem/situation/people/etc.
- What you want to happen, be decided, etc.
- Items of language you may need

**Figure 3. Information cards**

d. **Live monologues**

The learners prepare and present a short talk on pre-selected topic. This eliminates the interviewer effect and provides evidence of the candidate’s ability to handle an extended turn, which is not always possible interviews. If other students take the role of the audience, a questions- and-answer stage can be included, which will provided some evidence of the speaker’s ability to speak interactively and spontaneously. But giving a talk or presentation is only really a valid test if these are skills that learner are likely to need, e.g. if their purpose for learning English is Business, law, or education.
e. **Skits**

In the same vein as in roleplays, in skits, learners have assigned roles. While this kind of activity should be done in pairs or small groups, with the option to leave the group-making to the students themselves, each student is responsible for their own role. A good amount of time should be given to students to prepare and discuss their ideas for the skit.

f. **Pictures difference tasks**

In groups of two, each learner is assigned a picture, which is different from the one given to their partner. Students have to find as many differences as possible without peeking at each other’s pictures, only using their words to describe them.

g. **Half minute topics**

The teacher gives each group a handout and four countries. Pupils places these in the starting point. They throw the dice by turns and move the corresponding number of squares, each time one of them lands on a square, each time one of them lands on a square he/she has a half minute to talk about the topic of the square.

h. **The free interview**

In this type of interview the conversation unfolds in an unstructured fashion and no set of procedures is laid down in advance. Free interview are like extended conversations and the direction is allowed to unfold as the interview takes place. The discourse might see to approximate more closely to the normal social interaction in real life where no carefully formulated agenda is apparent.
Chapter Three

Testing Writing

Writing is a productive, or active, language skill. It is the act of using symbols like letters, punctuation, spaces, etc. to convey a message. This skill requires a certain degree of mastery in the other skills of language, in other words: speaking, listening and reading, and thus is often referred as the consolidation of the four skills.

Testing this skill is an essential part of learning a language. It is an activity that involves reflection and requires sufficient time to choose a topic, organize their ideas and background information. For this task, learners are required to possess an appropriate level of English, with a fair understanding of structures, as well as a good notion of coherence and cohesion.

Ur (1996) defines writing as the means to express a thought or idea, to transmit a message to a reader, so the structures and lexis used in it are important. Moreover, other aspects of formal writing should be taken into consideration, such as handwriting and correct punctuation, as well as the appropriate vocabulary.
3.1. **Fundamental principles in testing writing**

3.1.1. **Coherence and cohesion**

The terms cohesion and coherence are related to making the sense of language in the text. Cohesion and coherence have significant role in the interpretation of message. A good academic writing requires a good combination of cohesive ties and coherent features in the text. In communication process, cohesion gives insights into how the writer structures what he/she wants to convey. A text is formed not only with the structured string of words, but also with the contextual occurrence of the sentences. Coherence is the contextual appearance of the utterances in the text that contributes in understanding the meaning or message. Prasad (2016)

**a. Coherence**

Coherence is referred as the appropriate linkage of a group of ideas at sentence level. In other words, coherence is related to the rhetorical aspect of one's writing, which consist of developing an argument, as well as supporting and synthesizing it, and organizing and clarifying the ideas one wants to present.

There are several tools that can help a learner improve the coherence of their writing and among those one of the most practical is to use a concept map, also known as a “reverse outline”. To properly use a concept map, one should do it after having finished the main ideas of the paper, by writing down the main idea of each paragraph and this way check whether the arguments are connected to the main idea of the text or have strayed from it. By repeating this process, a solid argument can be achieved.
b. Cohesion

In the same vein as coherence, cohesion is also regarded as a key aspect of academic writing, due to the fact that it immediately affects the tone of one’s writing. While it is often said that making grammatical mistakes in a paper will not result in any point loss, if the tone of the writing is inappropriate, it may affect one’s overall score. Cohesive writing is then referred as the connection of ideas at sentence and paragraph levels, which is above plain grammatical correctness.

Heaton (1990) gives some examples that showcase the importance of effectively connecting ideas in one’s writing.

The hotel is elegant. It is one of the most luxurious hotels in the country. The latest international dancing competition took place at the hotel. The hotel spent lots of money to advertise that event. Because the hotel was looking to gain international reputation. However not many people attended the event. (The connection of ideas in this example is not very good).

The hotel, which is one of the most exclusive and top addresses in 17th-century in this city, wanted to promote its image around the world by hosting the latest international dancing competition. Although the event was widely advertised, only a few people took part in the competition. (The connection of ideas is much better compared to the first example).

The best way to develop your writing skills and to enhance the coherence and cohesion of your essay is through feedback. So, to learn how to write well-structured paragraphs and skillfully connect your ideas with logical flow. Cohesion refers to connectivity in a text. Coherence refers to how easy it is to understand the writing.
3.1.2. The component of testing writing

Hegarty (2000) purposed these components for good writing:

a. Vocabulary

Word choice is skillful and precise. Sentence structure are consistently varied and clear. Stylistic and register choices, including voice and tone, are strategic and effective. While a few minor errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics may be present, they do not impede understanding. Use effective word/idioms and usage, word form mastery, appropriate register.

b. Grammar

Learning grammar rules and the mechanics of writing are critical components of learning to write. Having strong skills in writing and grammar allows writers to get their message or story to their readers in a clear and understandable way. It is important to know the rules of grammar and how to use them properly.

c. Mechanic

Mechanics in writing refers to the detailed elements that combine to construct words, sentences, and paragraphs, such as spelling, punctuation, and grammar. It must be well organized and utilize punctuation: periods, commas, semi colons, quotation, and marks and initial capital letter.

3.2. Testing writing (applying the criteria)

Peha (2003) suggested to focus in these criteria: Organization, ideas, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, conventions.
a) **Organization.** The internal structure of a piece, the thread of central meaning, the logical pattern of ideas.

1) Chooses organizational structure based on structure of own ideas,

2) Creates effective beginnings that catch the audience's attention and make them want to read more,

3) Creates effective endings that feel finished and give the audience something to think about.

4) Determines sequencing based on the logical progression of ideas and the needs of the audience,

5) Paces writing effectively, spends the right amount of time on each part, 6) Produces writing that is easy to follow from section to section.

b) **Ideas.**

1) Defines and develops a central idea. Supports the central idea and secondary ideas with interesting and relevant details,

2) Produces a text that showcases a clear and consistent sense of purpose,

3) Sometimes includes something peculiar or unanticipated that is appropriate and effective,

4) Produces a text that shows insight, knowledge, experience, and deep thinking,

5) Produces writing that makes sense and prioritizes the conveying of ideas over structural and grammatical accuracy.

c) **Voice.**

1) Show a level of caring about their writing,

2) Writes expressing honest statements and strong feelings,

3) Takes risks with writing that lead to new learning,
4) Shows a level of comprehension of the link between voice and choice,

5) Consistently asserts personal preferences to make their writing more effective,

6) Produces original and unique texts.

7) Attempts to create and develop a personal writing style.

d) Word choice.

1) Uses language that is appropriate to content, purpose, audience, and form,

2) Uses strong verbs and intensifiers effectively,

3) Writes with appropriate and precise adverbs and adjectives,

4) Produces writing that includes striking words and phrases,

5) Uses appropriate grammatical structures,

6) Shows a clear understanding of formal and informal lexis.

7) Engages in word play.

e) Sentence fluency.

1) Reads own writing with expression,

2) Shows a wide range of sentence beginnings,

3) Displays a variety in the length of their sentences,

4) Produces writing that is easy to read expressively,

5) Uses rhythm, rhyme, alliteration and other "sound" effects appropriately,

6) Makes sentences that are of easy understanding by the reader.

f) Conventions.

1) Adapts their writing style appropriately according to content, purpose, audience, and form,

2) Shows awareness of the vocabulary of writing conventions and uses terms in an appropriate way,
3) Knows that conventions are not rules set in stone but agreements within communities and that these agreements can change over time,
4) Knows that specific rules are determined by publishers who follow a particular "style" which may, in certain ways, be unique to their particular publishing houses,
5) Uses capital letters to indicate where new ideas begin; Uses the word "I" in uppercase, as well as names, places, and things that are one of a kind,
6) Uses full stops, question marks, and exclamation marks—to show when a statement, question, or exclamatory remark ends. (pp. 1-2)

Writing is a quite complex process of arranging symbols in a writing form. The learner makes use of vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, among others, to convey a message, thought, idea, opinion or feeling so other people, the readers, can understand.

3.3. **Samples of criteria and rubrics to test writing**

Unlike other skills, writing cannot be assessed by using a conventional method like a multiple choice or true-false item test. A teacher can only know the students’ writing competence by checking their work in detail. Accordingly, an authentic testing is seen as the most appropriate method in testing students writing skill.

We will evaluate your response based on the following criteria and points, and passing requires a combined score of 20 or more points. Samples of template for analytic rubrics.
Table 4

Writing testing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is difficult to real or understand due to problem in sentence structure, word choice, or vocabulary</td>
<td>Contains confusing sentence structure and vague or imprecise word choice(s)</td>
<td>In written in correct sentences, and word choices are correct, although possibly vague or repetitions at times.</td>
<td>In generally five of errors in grammar, punctuation and mechanic</td>
<td>Has an effective, fluent style marked by sentence variety and a clear command of the English written language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contains numerous errors in grammar, punctuation or mechanics that interfere with the meaning and suggest a lack of control of written English conventions</td>
<td>Demonstrates limited control of grammar, punctuation, and mechanics through distracting or confusing errors</td>
<td>Demonstrates basic control of grammar, punctuation, and mechanic so that sentence levels errors, if present, do not confuse the reader</td>
<td>In generally five of errors in grammar, punctuation and mechanic</td>
<td>Is largely free of errors in grammar, punctuation and mechanics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is difficult to real or understand due to problem in sentence structure, word choice, or vocabulary</td>
<td>Contains confusing sentence structure and vague or imprecise word choice(s)</td>
<td>In written in correct sentences, and word choices are correct, although possibly vague or repetitions at times.</td>
<td>In generally five of errors in grammar, punctuation and mechanic</td>
<td>Has an effective, fluent style marked by sentence variety and a clear command of the English written language</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Demonstrates limited control of grammar, punctuation, and mechanics through distracting or confusing errors</td>
<td>Demonstrates basic control of grammar, punctuation, and mechanic so that sentence levels errors, if present, do not confuse the reader</td>
<td>In generally five of errors in grammar, punctuation and mechanic</td>
<td>Is largely free of errors in grammar, punctuation and mechanics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Taken from Peterman, 2017)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Excellent 9/10</th>
<th>Very good 7/8</th>
<th>Improvement needed 5/6</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory 3/4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Format and Organization</strong></td>
<td>Essay is formatted correctly. In-text citations are utilized smoothly, references provided.</td>
<td>Essay is formatted mostly correctly. In-text citations and references adequate, with possibility of improvement.</td>
<td>Weak or inconsistent formatting. Requires smoother or more complete in-text citations and references.</td>
<td>Very poor formatting. Missing or very weak use of cited material; possibly there may be evidence of plagiarism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar/ Fluency</strong></td>
<td>High-level of English grammar and expression. Variance of sentence length, Formal style and easy to understand.</td>
<td>Clear use of English grammar, with some highlights of complex writing. Overall, reasonably good expression and style.</td>
<td>Grammar is not strong and expression of not complex enough. More varied sentences and sophistication needed.</td>
<td>Very weak grammar and expression; at times it is difficult to comprehend intended meaning. A lack of complexity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality of Argument</strong></td>
<td>Thesis is strong and unique; each point is clearly articulated and developed; research supports but does not take over writer’s own ideas.</td>
<td>Good argument overall, usually clear points and support from secondary sources. Some points could be made more thorough or with more depth.</td>
<td>Argument could be much strong or sophisticated. Supporting points are not well articulated or developed, or do not indicate a clear connection to thesis.</td>
<td>Very weak or non-existent argument. Either it is not clear, or it is not developed in a comprehensible way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cohesion of Topic</strong></td>
<td>Paper remains on topic and does not diverge. Research used is well-balanced with writer’s comments. Logic is portrayed within each paragraph and throughout.</td>
<td>Topic is generally consistent, as is development of paragraphs. Research is typically used well, though there could be slightly more in-depth response to research.</td>
<td>Cohesion is not strong; main point may be adequate, but supporting points reflect main topic weakly. Research is not incorporated carefully, or used effectively.</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory attention to topic throughout; points are not connected with logic and research is used poorly, if at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meets Assigned Criteria</strong></td>
<td>Paper reflects and fulfills assigned breadth and specifics outlined. Eg. correct length and word count, targeted objective of scope and complexity of argument achieved.</td>
<td>Paper reasonably reflects assigned purpose and method; some improvements could be made, but they are not pervasive throughout.</td>
<td>Does not fulfill enough of the criteria outlined: length, formatting, usage of research. Enough lacks that it shows need for extensive revision.</td>
<td>Major elements are missing according to assignment guidelines. Failure to meet overall criteria, such as length, usage of research, development of argument, or formatting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Peterman, 2017)
### Table 6

**Rubric for writing skills**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing Authentically</strong></td>
<td>Very original</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Original</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less original</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not original</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content Accordance With the title</strong></td>
<td>Content is very in accordance with the title</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content is in accordance with the title</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content is fairly in accordance with the title</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content is in less accordance with the title</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content is not in accordance with the title</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text harmony</strong></td>
<td>Harmony of text is very precise</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harmony of text is precise</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harmony of text is quite precise</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harmony of text is less precise</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harmony of text is not precise</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary selection</strong></td>
<td>Vocabulary selection is very appropriate</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary selection is appropriate</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary selection is quite appropriate</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary selection is less appropriate</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary selection is inappropriate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar options</strong></td>
<td>Selection of grammar</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Selection of grammar</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selection of grammar</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selection of grammar</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selection of grammar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary Writing</strong></td>
<td>Vocabulary writing is very precise</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary writing is precise</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary writing is quite proper</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary writing is less precise</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocabulary writing is improper</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing tidiness</strong></td>
<td>Writing is neat and easily readable</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing is untidy but easily readable</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing is neat but not easily readable</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing is untidy and hardly readable</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teacher should be involved in every classroom-based assessment. This means that an instructional match between a student’s skills and tasks for the appropriate level cannot be made without the usage of assessment. It is not realistic to expect students’ success or to be able to make necessary adjustments in teaching methods if constant assessment is not present in the classroom. A checklist is often suggested as a tool to facilitate the testing of the language components in written production.

It can be used by the teacher while learners are developing a communicative activity. It could also be possible that at the end of the activity the teacher takes time to record the ability the students have, but it is more difficult for the teacher to remember all those aspects observed on each of his/her students. It is also relevant to say that to obtain reliable and valid results in the testing of these language features, teachers must check one difficult or pretend to check the whole components at the same time.

3.4. Techniques to test writing

Prior to starting a lesson, it is paramount to decide the way the classroom will be set up and how the activities will be structured. If we find it convenient to have students work in groups, we have to decide if the selection of pairs or groups will be done by the students themselves or by us. In this regard, we have to take into consideration the skills, personalities and preferences of the students.

Moreover, it is sometimes useful to establish a group leader, a role given to a student who will ensure the well-functioning of the group, as well as make sure of the exclusive usage of English in the tasks.

While the aforementioned is ideal, it is also important to have contingency plans in case the expected goal is not reached and disagreements are found in groups. For instance, if pair work is not having positive results and these groups are not working well together, a change
in the direction of the group task could be made, such as starting with a whole class
discussion in which everyone has the chance to participate and then can elaborate and expand
their ideas in smaller groups.

It is also imperative to not forget that while writing tasks are often individual activities,
students can still interact with their peers in each stage of the writing process: pre-writing,
during writing and post-writing.

Raimes (1938) suggested this technic “free writing”.

The purpose is evaluate the effectiveness of the total composition including sentence, level
accuracy, larger rhetorical matters such as unity, coherence and organization as well as
effectiveness in conveying ideas to the intended audience, including socially appropriate
language and appropriate selection of supporting details. This is an example of free writing:
Directions: You need a job for the summer. You have just read a “Help wanted”
advertisement for teenage workers (reception, dining room, and clean up) at the Grand
Canyon Lodge in Arizona. Address: U.S. Forest Service, Grand Canyon Lodge, Box 1128,
North Rim, Arizona 82117. Write a business letter. Indicate the position applied for. Describe
your qualifications, such as your age, language background, travel, and personality
characteristic. Indicate when you will be available and how long you can work.

This technic has a good effect because students will be more motivated to write in and out of
class, knowing that their test will be an actual writing task.

Weir (1998) proposed some techniques: Brainstorming, skits, parallel writing and note-
taking,

a. Brainstorming

It is defined as generating words, phrases, ideas and concepts, as quick as possible, as soon
as their come to our minds, without any regard to organization, order or even accuracy.

Through brainstorming, students can work on their own in small groups, and after deciding
on a topic start producing vocabulary and making short lists of ideas relevant to the topic, as well as making connections between the presented ideas and concepts, and asking questions when necessary, all this in a short time frame. Following this step, students can move onto writing their ideas, concepts, phrases, etc. on paper, with minimum regard to grammar, spelling and organization, or even the quality of the ideas that came to their minds.

Brainstorming can also be useful for broad writing activities, for instance when students are asked to write about childhood memories, they can, before writing their paper, write down a list of childhood events and memories, discuss them in small groups, and then select those they consider other might find more interesting or those they remember more vividly from among their list of ideas.

**b. Parallel writing**

Among controlled writing activities, parallel writing is considered as the freest of all. Rather than simply making changes to model texts or writing in accordance to an outline, students read and study a text and using it as a basis and model, begin their own writing on a similar theme. Readings, dictation, tapes, and textbook dialogs can also be used to provide the initial model.

The students listen to a series or short descriptions of people. In front of them they have a table with some information missing, which they have to fill in from the information given in the description. Then they write a description of each person, using the given and the collected information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Hair</th>
<th>height</th>
<th>Clothes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carlos</td>
<td></td>
<td>curly hair</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariel</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Medium- height</td>
<td>a brown skirt and blue blouse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c. Note-taking

In this kind of activity, the teacher reads aloud a passage that is related to a school matter or something that has been shown in the news, while the learners take notes of the information that is being provided by the teacher. Afterwards, students compare each other’s notes in small groups. Then, the teacher distributes a reproduction of the original text or copies it on the board. At this point, each group debates on which member wrote the most accurate notes and what is it that makes them particularly good.

Similarly, another idea would be to take the learners to the outside, like the street or the market, or even watch an event together and have them write down notes about everything that they can observe. Using these individual notes, each student writes an account of what they seen. Finally, they read their write-ups to the whole class and finally discuss all the differences in their annotations.

3.5. Techniques to respond to students’ writing

Students need to know what is the mistakes in their writing but using others alternatives and how they can identify them. There are some common symbols for classroom strategies in applying these basic principles that students can have in your papers.

Raimes (1983) suggested writing down student sentences that contain errors. Then, after duplicating those sentences, assign a number of them, about three, to each small group. The group’s task is to make the necessary corrections and improvements in those sentences. Once they have finished correcting and improving them, each group shares with the class how they have fixed those sentences. While all this happens, the original authors of those wrong sentences are in the classroom, hearing the suggestions.

It is important to establish some sort of code, like a set of symbols, to clearly indicate errors in a sentence or paragraph. These symbols are to be used once the students have
become familiar with the different grammatical rules and can now apply this knowledge to correct erroneous sentences. Thus, a teacher can circle or underline the mistakes within the text and write the symbol that corresponds to that kind of error next to the word or phrase. Similarly, the teacher can write the symbol in the line that contains an error, so students try to figure out by themselves where the error is located.

Here is a basic list of commonly used symbols:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☑️</td>
<td>star a new paragraph with indentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sp.</td>
<td>spelling error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cap.</td>
<td>error in capitalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.</td>
<td>error in punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>error in verb from or tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▼:</td>
<td>change the word order (&quot;She lost her key car.&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocab.</td>
<td>wrong choice of word (remind for remember)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>form.</td>
<td>wrong word form (efficient for efficiency)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>∧:</td>
<td>missing letter or word (&quot;He\tall&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gr.:</td>
<td>grammar error (&quot;He have gone.&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB:</td>
<td>problem with sentence boundary: fragment or run-on sentence (&quot;Because it was raining.&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS:</td>
<td>error in sentence structure (&quot;He wants that I go.&quot;)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5. Techniques of writing

Raimes (1983) points out that while we must make sure errors are treated with seriousness, the concern for errors cannot dominate the writing lesson. Rather, we should focus on the intended message is and whether it is being conveyed through the sentences. The aim of our language teaching and language learning should be the expression of meaning.
For this reason, we should allow students to help, identify and correct their errors at a later time, and refrain ourselves from correcting on the spot without taking into consideration the ideas the learner has tried to convey.

On the other hand, it is recommended to use another type of color to correct errors, like black or blue, because red is often seen as an "angry" color, which students may find demoralizing, and so it should be avoided.
DIDACTIC APPLICATION

I. INFORMATIVE DATA
   1. Grade and level : Intermediate 2-3
   2. Area : English
   3. Teacher : Melissa Sanchez Lume
   4. Time : 20

II. CAPABILITIES
   2.1 Theme : A perfect wedding!
   2.2 transversal theme : Cooperation, empathy and solidarity

III. OBJECTIVE

Interact fluently with your partner, making and answering questions.

A mingle activity with emphasis on oral fluency; students talk about a perfect wedding

Expressions to use for telling a perfect wedding using vocabulary; rhythm and stress when giving important information.

To write about an important event in his/her life using the grammar (I would like…).

IV. DIDACTIC SEQUENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>METHODOLOGICAL SEQUENCE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| START     | • At the beginning of the class, the teacher greets.  
         | • Teachers writes the date on the board  
         | • Teacher asks some knowledge questions  
         | ✓ How are you today?  
         | • Teacher gives some flowers to the students and they listen to a wedding melody.  
         | • Teacher asks some questions  
         | ✓ How do you feel?  
         | ✓ What comes do your mind when your listen to this melody?  
         | ✓ Do you remember something? | 5 min. | • Audio  
         |                       |      | • Multimedia  
         |                       |      | • Board  
<pre><code>     |                       |      | • Flashcard |
</code></pre>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MIDDLE</th>
<th>END</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • The teacher shows a picture of a couple.  
• The teacher shows pictures about places.  
• The teacher asks some questions  
  ✓ What are they doing?  
  ✓ What is he doing?  
  ✓ Where are they dancing?  
• The teacher tell them about a magic wedding  
  ✓ What would you do in the beginning, in the process and final in your wedding?  
  ✓ Would you like to celebrate that occasion on the beach or in another country?  
• Teacher gives a special card and the students write details about a special wedding  
  series of events  
  Event 1: First, .................  
  Event 2: Next, .................  
  Event 3: Then, .................  
  Event 4: Finally ................. |
| 10 min. | 5 min. |
| • Markers  
• Flowers  
• Card |
| • The students discuss in pairs about their special wedding.  
• Each student talks and the teacher evaluates his/her fluency and accuracy using a rubric.  
• The Students give their cards and the teacher checks their ideas using a rubric.  
• Metacognition:  
  Ss. Answer the questions:  
  ✓ How did you feel?  
  ✓ Did you like it? |
SYNTHESIS

- This monograph has been developed for giving information about the important to be tested using testing, techniques in productive skills.

- Testing integrated skills reflects how students use English in real situation by testing student’s ability to use reading and writing skills and speaking and listening skills in an integrated way.

- Writing is an important skills in language learning besides listening, speaking, and reading. As one of the four skills in language learning, ability in writing also has to be improved. Meanwhile, it is not easy for students to write, especially writing in a foreign language. Guided writing technique is one of the techniques used by the teachers in teaching writing that is assumed can make students easier in writing.

- The most important all four skills support each other, they are interconnected cannot be tested independently.
CRITICAL APPRAISAL AND SUGGESTIONS

- Testing integrated language skills is important and necessary to use instead of traditional test, which are grammar based.

- We, as teachers, must prepare specific tasks and rubrics during our classes.

- We let students speak their new language as much possible, we give them exercises, activities for practice.

- Show to the learners an example of a letter in a textbook or write one yourself. Using these techniques as a model, prepare a group writing activity lets the students in the class write similar them.

- The teacher should find proper media that the students understand the materials easily. The teacher should also present the lesson in an enjoyable and understandable way. Through this monograph, the teacher can consider that techniques are good points in teaching writing since it is easier for the students to understand the ideas before composing a text.
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## Instrument (testing speaking)

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>a. fluency</strong></td>
<td>Suitable speed, pauses and discourse strategies how positively the student contributes to the conversations?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b. communicative ability</strong></td>
<td>Includes the length of utterances, flexibility to speakers of different level, complexity of responses.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>c. Grammar</strong></td>
<td>How accurate and appropriate was the student’s grammar, structure, individual grammar points, functional phrases.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>d. vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>If the student uses a wide variety words and phrases, or uses new vocabulary, learned and related to the topic.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>e. pronunciation</strong></td>
<td>Effort made to use correct intonation, stress, individual sounds.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instrument (testing writing)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing Authentically</strong></td>
<td>Very original</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Original</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less original</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not original</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content Accordance With the title</strong></td>
<td>Content is very in accordance with the title</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content is in accordance with the title</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content is fairly in accordance with the title</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content is in less accordance with title</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content is not in accordance with the title</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text harmony</strong></td>
<td>Harmony of text is very precise</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harmony of text is precise</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harmony of text is quite precise</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harmony of text is less precise</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harmony of text is not precise</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Selection of grammar</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Selection of grammar</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A perfect wedding!

I would like _________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

Also _____________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________

Finally ____________________________________
___________________________________________
___________________________________________