ANALYSING L2 LEARNERS' INTERACTIONS IN GROUP DISCUSSIONS

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ABSTRACT

Determining membership in group discussions has not gained much attention than it deserves. This study sets out to examine L2 learners' oral interactions in group discussions in answer to two research questions, namely: (1) Are there differences in the performance of the High, Intermediate and Mixed Ability groups when engaged in group discussions; and (2) What are the revealing differences in the oral interactions of the High, Intermediate and Mixed Ability groups? Three groups of four, of varying levels of language ability were chosen by purposeful sampling for the study. The sample were first semester First Year students undergoing diploma courses in a private polytechnic off the east coast of West Malaysia, in which English is taken as a compulsory subject. The instruments used were a common Group Discussion Test and a Group Discussion Scoring Guide. The sample was given five minutes preparatory time and ten minutes to engage in a discussion. The group discussions were recorded and then transcribed. Results show that participants of same language ability performed better than those who were placed in a mixed ability group. Additionally, the Mixed Ability group did not exhibit more turn taking and longer stretches of utterance nor show better ability to ask for opinion or express agreement and disagreement to opinions. Implications for setting strategies for teaching-learning and testing for better learner interactions in group discussions may be drawn from the study.

Keywords: Group discussions, mutuality, equality, high ability, intermediate ability, ESL learners

INTRODUCTION

Group discussion (GD) has been variously defined and characterised, ranging from a thoughtful exchange of ideas over a topic that has been pre-selected for the group (Abbot and Godinho 2001) to the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings and ideas between two or more people (Brown 2004) and the effort of a group who talk informally to arrive at an understanding of values (Walter and Scott 1966, cited in Garside 1996). Despite the variations in definition and characterisation, two common elements prevail, which are the 'thinking' and 'cooperation' of participants in the interaction towards achieving mutually desired goals of the issue being discussed. Since the GD gives participants the platform to express their views and to comment

on the views of other participants, it has increasingly become an accepted measure to test oral language competency for the appropriate spontaneity of response to task, or the lack of it. It has the advantage of not only examining a number of candidates at one time, thus saving much resource that could be put to more efficient use elsewhere and for a better purpose, but it has also shown to be a tool that could capture unrehearsed, non-artificial responses from candidates in their quest to fulfil the requirements of the given oral task. The Malaysian University English Test (MUET), which measures pre-university candidates' ability in the four skills of reading, speaking, listening and writing, for instance, is able to show good correlation of scores obtained by candidates for the productive skills of speaking and writing over the years (Malaysian Examinations Council 2000-2014). However concerns about the appropriateness of paired and group-work oral tests as a measure of individual candidate's contribution to the task have been expressed, among others, by McNamara (1997) and Swain (2001), mainly on the issue of scoring. As Swain (2001, cited in Galaczi 2008) noted, "in a group, the performance is jointly constructed and distributed across the participants" (p. 92) which posed a problem to language testers to accurately measure individual candidate's contribution in relation to other candidates' contribution to the discussion. This is a concern and is being addressed in this investigation.

Besides, whether each participant gets the opportunity to express his or her views and to comment on the views expressed by the other members of the group, or otherwise, is dependent on group membership and the interaction dynamics that unfold. Concerns about age, course of study, topic, ethnicity, gender, influence of culture and language ability being determinants of group composition and consequently affecting interaction dynamics have been expressed by concerned parties (Galaczi 2008; Hemerka 2009; Gan 2010; May 2009; Davis 2009; Nakatsuhara 2011; Chou 2011; Ockey 2013). Studies have shown varying patterns of group dynamics and differing goals achieved within different group compositions and interactions. Galaczi (2008) in her study of the interactions of thirty dyads of varying levels of language ability and personality in an oral test found three patterns of interactions, namely "collaborative", "parallel" and "asymmetric" (p. 96) based on the criteria of "mutuality" and "equality" (p.97) of interactions. In the "collaborative" type characterised by "short turns, rapid speaker exchange, avoidance of gaps, supportive overlaps" and "frequent acknowledgement tokens" interaction (p. 97), the participants who were of comparatively equal language ability were found facilitative

with one another in following the discussion and expressing agreement or disagreement on the issue at hand. As a consequence of being able to manage the interaction and achieving the desired goal of the discussion, they were rated highly for their interactions. In the "parallel" type characterised by "solo versus solo", "lengthy gaps" and "minimal topic extensions" interaction (p.97), participants were found to be self-centred and competing for the floor. In this interaction type, participants were also of equal language ability but had forceful personality, each exerting one another's conversational dominance and attempting to control the discussion. In the "asymmetric" type, in which one participant was the more dominant while the other more passive, it was characterised by unbalanced quantity of talk and topic development. This asymmetry in interaction, it was concluded, could be due to a lack of language proficiency in the passive participant, cultural influence where one expects to be invited to speak, or inappropriate interactional behaviour causing the passive participant to shy away from giving his opinion. Because of a lack of equality and mutuality of interactions, both the parallel and the asymmetric pairs were awarded lower scores compared to the collaborative pairs.

Davis (2009) replicated the study with some variations in the People's Republic of China on four groups of four candidates from different majors who were randomly assigned to groups on two separate tasks. For the first task candidates were grouped with members from the same major and in the second task they were grouped with members from different majors. Davis found that there was little difference in the performance of the candidates on the two separate occasions, which goes to show that course of specialisation, has little influence on variation in the performance of the candidates. Davis also looked into the quantity of language used during the GD. He found that the lower proficiency group produced more words when they were interacting with the higher proficiency students. The quantity of words used in the interaction however had little influence on their scores. Although the quantity of words produced by the lower and higher proficiency students were the same, the lower proficiency students obtained lower scores. Davis concluded that this could be due to the content being discussed during the interaction. Gan (2010) in an in-depth observation of the ways in which participants co-constructed meaning found different patterns of speech exchange within different language ability groups. Within the higher-scoring group, the students engaged constructively with one another's ideas through a range of speech functions such as agreement or disagreement, explanations, refutations and

suggestions. Conversely within the lower-scoring group, the ensuing interactions appeared more controlled, possibly after having gone through much practice to facilitate within-group discussion. An interesting feature, though, was the lower scoring members' attempt at resolving linguistic deadlocks and members' assistance with one another through co-construction to find the correct linguistic forms and to express meaning. Gan (2010) believes that the group oral assessment format could be adopted to authentically reflect students' interactional skills.

Candidates sitting for their oral test often do not have the option to choose with whom they can be with for the group discussion activity. The choice often rests with the administrators of the test. For convenience, the grouping, more often than not, is based on course of study, class name-list, registration location or mere random grouping. Within such groupings, there could be a mix of candidates of different age, gender, ethnicity and language ability. The body of knowledge reveals that there is scarcity of research done on GD based on language ability group composition, and, for want of a better understanding of how ESL candidates of different language abilities interact in a group this study was set to achieve that purpose. Age was not a major concern in this investigation as the age gap among all candidates was minimal. Similarly the topic factor was taken care of as all candidates were given the same topic and task to perform. All candidates were from the same ethnic group and shared the same educational background. With as minimal variations as possible, the study was conducted to seek answers to the following research questions:

RQ1: Are there differences in the performance of the High, Intermediate and Mixed Ability groups when engaged in group discussions?

RQ2: What are the revealing differences in the oral interactions of the High, Intermediate and Mixed Ability groups?

METHOD

The study was a qualitative investigation of the pattern of interactions of three groups of First Year first semester students of a private polytechnic pursuing diploma studies in Corporate Communication and Civil Engineering. Prior to their being grouped, the candidates were selected based on their Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM) English Exam results and on the basis

of that result, six with high scores (A grade) and six with average scores (B and C grades) were selected for the study. Four of the high scorers were assigned to the High Language Ability (HLA) group while four of the average scorers were assigned to the Intermediate Language Ability (ILA) group. The remaining two high scorers and two average scorers were grouped together to form the Mixed Language Ability (MLA) group.

The instruments used in the study were the Polytechnic's Group Discussion Test of Oral English (refer to Appendix A) and the Group Discussion Test of Oral English Rating Scale (refer to Appendix B). All groups had the same task to fulfill and were being rated by the same examiners, using the same rating scale. The oral test required the candidates to speak in a group based on an issue of how best to encourage a friend to learn to speak better English. Four solutions were proposed in which each candidate was to opt for a solution as his stance on that issue. Each candidate was required to argue out and persuade and convince the other candidates to his point of view, and in the closure, all candidates were expected to come to an agreement about the best solution to assist a friend to learn English in a better way. The underlying criteria for assessing oral communication in the investigation were interactive ability, linguistic ability and content knowledge based on Bachman and Palmer's (1996) and Canale and Swain's (1981) Communicative Competence Theory.

 The test was conducted in a special recording room in which the candidates were seated facing each other in a group. The candidates were given five minutes of preparation time and ten minutes to engage in a discussion based on the prompt. At the end of each group discussion session, the candidates were awarded scores for their oral performance. Each group discussion was recorded and transcribed. Sacks et al. (1974) turn-taking model and Galaczi's (2008:97) criteria of equality (the work distribution among participants) and mutuality (the creation of shared meaning from one turn to the next) were adopted to analyse the nature of the interactions. These may fall on a continuum from high to low.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study are presented in answer to the two research questions, as follows:

RQ1: Are there differences in the performance of the High, Intermediate and Mixed Ability groups when engaged in group discussions?

The differences in the performance of the three groups are discussed in terms of scores obtained for each of the scoring criteria, number of turns taken by each candidate in the interaction and the quantity of words spoken, as depicted in the following tables.

Table 1: Performance of groups in the Group Discussion

Candidate	Task Fulfillment (6m)	Language Ability (6m)	Communicative Ability (3m)	Total Score (15m)
HIGH LANGUAGE ABILITY GROUP (HLA)				
A	4.5	4.5	2	11
B	4.5	4.5	2	11
C	4	4	2	10
D	4.5	4	2	10.5
INTERMEDIATE LANGUAGE ABILITY GROUP (ILA)				
A	4	4	2	10
B	3	3	1.5	7.5
C	4	4.5	2.5	11
D	4	4	2	10
MIXED LANGUAGE ABILITY GROUP (MLA)				
A	4.5	4	2.5	11
B	2	2	1	5
C	2	2	1	5
D	3	3	2	8

As shown in Table 1, overall, candidates from the HLA and ILA groups performed comparatively better than the MLA, achieving scores depicting a 'satisfactory speaker' in the GD. All candidates, with the exception of Candidate B from the ILA obtained scores of more than 7.5. In contrast, in the MLA group, two of four candidates only managed to obtain a total score of 5, depicting a 'modest speaker' achievement while one of the identified high scorers

barely managed to clinch a score of a 'satisfactory speaker'. In the HLA, all candidates demonstrated almost equal ability in the three components of task fulfillment, language ability and communicative ability. In the ILA, despite scoring lower in the SPM English Exam, candidates performed creditably when compared with the HLA group. With the exception of Candidate B, all candidates demonstrated ability to fulfill the required task, to form comprehensible strings of connected discourse and to follow ideas presented commendably. In the MLA, the identified average scorers were overwhelmed by the presence of the high scorers and were neither able to match the conversation dominance of the more able speaker nor present a clear legitimate idea. In Table 2, more detailed analysis of the groups' performance is shown.

Table 2: Number of turns, quantity of words spoken and total scores obtained by candidates

Group	Candidate	No of Turns	Quantity of Words Spoken	Total Score Obtained
HLA	A	5	177	11
	B	3	204	11
	C	4	215	10
	D	4	205	10.5
ILA	A	9	380	10
	B	3	110	7.5
	C	3	178	11
	D	9	234	10
MLA	A	5	630	11
	B	3	67	8
	C	2	15	5
	D	1	13	5

As shown in Table 2, the HLA group demonstrated almost equal distribution of turn-takings and quantity of words spoken and invariably achieving almost similar total scores. Equipped with the language ability and GD etiquette, candidates gave themselves ample opportunity to express their views and to comment on the views of others, as depicted by the fairly equitable

distribution of quantity of words spoken by each candidate. The scenario was slightly different in the ILA in that there was unequal distribution of turn-takings but a fair distribution of quantity of words spoken by each candidate. More turns were taken by candidates A and D (9 each) while candidates B and C only took 3 turns each. It was also noted that candidate A spoke the most quantity of words (380) for the group. This shows that candidate A had little inhibitions about her lack of language ability as she was not shy to express her opinion and had shown conversational dominance in directing the flow of discussion and holding the floor through long stretches of discourse. All, with the exception of candidate B, obtained almost similar 'satisfactory speaker' scores. In the MLA group, the scenario was the reverse. There was almost total control of the interaction by candidate A whose presence 'saved' the event as the other candidates were not contributing much to the discussion. Candidate A spoke the most number of words (630) for the group as well as for the entire study. Together with candidate B, despite being initially identified as high scorers, they were unable to persuade and commit the other two candidates (C and D) to engage in a discussion towards fulfillment of the oral task. Candidate A took the most number of turns (5) and spoke the most number of words, showing his concern for continuous flow of ideas by taking the lead and engaging in topic expansion as the other candidates did not seem to be contributing to the discussion. Surprisingly, the other identified high scorer (candidate B) did not seem to be contributing to co-constructing meaning either through rebuttals or support of opinion. Candidates C and D of the MLA group had the least number of turns (2) and (1) and spoke the least number of words (15) and (13) respectively, almost invariably suggesting non-participation in the discussion.

RQ2: What are the revealing differences in the oral interactions of the High, Intermediate and Mixed Ability groups?

How members of the same and different language ability commit themselves to task fulfillment for a common purpose is shown in the interactions of the different groups, as follows:

HLA Group

Here the interaction pattern was one of high mutuality and equality, hence the label "collaborative" characterised by fairly lengthy stretch of discourse, balanced turn-takings,

acknowledgement tokens of view expressed and unspoken respect for one another's views. Rebuttals were indirectly expressed in the form of members' defending their commitment to their proposed solution. In this group's interaction, there was substantial mature development of ideas as the members were committed to justifying their opinion and to achieving a shared goal, i.e., to come to a mutually agreed conclusion on the issue. The pattern of 'collaboration' began as follows:

Candidate A: Acknowledgement of audience (Guys … err…)

Initiation of topic (…our friends are having trouble… speaking in English….)

Offer of solution (..I suggest we … show them some English movies…)

Topic expansion (…if we put the subtitle, so they can know how the words are spelt….)

This was then followed by balanced turn-takings of a common pattern of acknowledgment token, offer of solution, topic expansion and offer of turn by each member of the team respectively, as shown below:

Candidate D/C/B: Acknowledgement token of given idea and expression of disagreement (I agree with you but I have my own opinion.../ I agree with both of you but I also got my own idea./ (I agree with you guys but I think .)

Offer of solution (Our friends can read more English materials . ./ as for me students should seek help of English lecturer.. / practise speaking English with your friend is the best solution because … .)

Topic expansion (It can improve their pronunciation as well as improve grammar…/ they can ask as much as they can …in class the students should ask directly to the lecturer../ like they say ' practice makes perfect' …your friend can help you with grammar..)

(Lengthy development of idea by D/C/B)

Offer of turn to next candidate (so how about you candidate C? / what about you candidate B?)

Subsequent to this, the members commit to continue defending their stance on the issue, as shown below:

Candidate D/A/B: Topic expansion/rebuttal and defence of suggestion (I have more suggestion on my read more English material.. when you read alone you will not be ashamed…/ (I kinda have to disagree with you…maybe most of us are not good in English… when I watched movies, I always repeat what the actress say, so I also learn how to pronounce the correct way… / I think I have to disagree with you because if you practice alone you don't know whether you pronounce it correctly..)

(Further development of members' respective ideas)

Ultimately, a consensus was reached and members expressing satisfaction with the decision, as shown below:

Candidate C/D/B/A: Commitment to solution and closure (Err..I agree with candidate A, I think by watch more English movies can help me improve my English. like my grammar, my pronunciation… like candidate D said, read more English material could improve our English, yes that is true but if you read dictionary, there is no button that you can push that make sounds .. teach you/ so I think suggestion by candidate A is more suitable for the problem / it is quite interesting / so we can conclude that watching English movies is the perfect way to improve our English in terms of spelling and pronunciation)

ILA Group

Here the interaction pattern was one of low equality but with mutuality, hence the label "supportive" characterised by modest length of stretch of discourse, slight imbalance of turn-takings, long gap, lack of organization of ideas and instability. Members were fully aware that they have had to reach an agreement on the solution to the issue, and were resolute to present their view, however their views were not fully developed. It was also characterised by premature closure, long gap followed by unsolicited continuation of topic development. Rebuttals to points expressed were modestly conveyed but members were swayed to believe that the alternative proposal was a better solution to the problem. Despite the change of opinion there was not sufficient deliberation of the topic to satisfy every member that the proposed conclusion was the better option. The pattern of 'support' is as shown below:

Candidate A: Introducing topic (I think not everyone speak English very well. So we must help our friends to speak English well)

This was followed by a common pattern of suggestion giving and topic expansion by each member, as shown below:

Candidate A/B/C/D: Offer of solution and topic expansion (My opinion I watch more English movies. I think watching movies is a interesting way to help our friends… it is not too expensive…and it is a very fun way / Err I think practice speaking English with your friend is good… can make ourselves more confident.. we can practice the language better than before / My opinion is seek the help of English lecturer… the lecturer can guide you and correct your mistakes… direct conversation with English lecturer can help you increase your confident / For me read more English material are also good…. because from this method I think this can help us to spell the word correctly and improve our confident to speak… it also help us to pronounce some word…)

At this juncture there had not been any exchange of views and substantial development of the topic, yet there was a premature decision to come to a closure, as shown below:

Candidate C: Premature closure (so the conclusion I think read more English material is the best)

Candidate A/D: Confirmation of conclusion (I agree / so the conclusion is read more English material …)

[Silence]

This was followed by unsolicited continuation of topic development, change of views and cross-over to agree with the argument presented by the other members. However there was not adequate argument put forward for a certain commitment to the issue. The pattern of interaction continued as shown below:

Candidate A: Fairly lengthy turn on topic expansion, first on an irrelevant point followed by substantial development of idea. (I love to watch English movies…we can learn a lot just like…not English movie actually.. when we watch Malay movies.. we can look at subtitles …we can learn a lot from subtitle…subtitles are the very accurate grammar….English movie is a very fun way..)

(Lengthy stretch on topic expansion)

Candidate B: Further support of idea (Yea, and me always speaking with my friends…I can speak English better)

This was followed by a change of opinion, cross-over, agreeing to claims made by the other members, as shown below:

Candidate C: Change of opinion, reaffirming conviction (for me to improve speak English, I agree with candidate B ... practice speaking English with friends...but nut when it comes to writing… I agree more about my opinion... we seek help English lecturer as they can guide us…in proper way)

Candidate D: Change of opinion and challenging ideas of other members (For me I consider candidate's A opinion …because as a teenager… I admit that we not really read and about candidate B's point … practice speaking English with our friends… I don't think so because our friends also have the same level of English like us…so candidate A's point is better)

Ultimately, a decision to end the discussion and to reach a conclusion was made, .as shown below:

Candidate A: Call for closure (I think all of us have a better way but that is not every suggestion is accepted…so we have to choose a better way)

Candidate D/A: Conclusion (all our suggestion, the better is candidate C, seek the help of English lecturer / I agree)

MLA Group

Here the interaction pattern was one of low equality and low mutuality, hence the label "convergence" characterised by extremely long stretch of utterance by a lone speaker (candidate A) desperately trying to 'save' the situation, short return of turn, solo conversation dominance and reliance and non-consensual closure. Although there were four members in the team, effectively only the identified high scorer was the one who, defying the rules of group discussion, presented all possible solutions to the problem in an attempt to keep the discussion moving and to furnish a conclusion to the problem. The pattern of convergence interaction is as shown below:

Candidate A: Acknowledgment of audience (Ok guys..)

Initiation of topic (how to overcome problem of English among our friends..)

Offer of solutions (I think watch more English movies because good English can be learned from it such as idiom, words and how to pronounce the words correctly…

(expansion of topic)

…second,..I think read more English materials… because reading is part of life

(expansion of topic)

Passing a turn (so…what do you think?)

Candidate D: Expressing agreement (I strongly agree with you in … about your opinion)

Candidate B: Expressing unclear idea (I want to give you ….because...the movie have more social ???)

Candidate A: Interjection and highlighting of the negative aspects of first solution and positive aspects of second solution (more social attraction?.... yes, it's true…English movie…social attraction is not a good theme in Malaysia.. English movie has violence, sex and bad words…

…so reading is more for teenagers and students… the more you read the more you learn)

(development of idea)

Candidate A; Offer of third solution (...in addition.. seeking help from English lecturer…ask them properly about the English text if you don't understand …if you are shy you can just text him or call him whenever you want…)

Candidate A; Offer of fourth solution, critiquing fourth solution and closure (..… so practice speaking with your friend …but I don't think it is a good idea because your friend and you both don't know what the word you are speaking…. So the best way of overcome the matter is read more English material … because reading helps you to learn the words better…that's all)

As can be seen from the above analysis, group membership by language ability does have an effect on the manner members interact within the group. In the HLA, equal contribution by every member's stimulus and response activity ensures a systematic sustenance of flow of communication. Members were also found to have adequate knowledge of the topic and satisfactory control of the language to engage in satisfactory, fruitful discussion and to reaching a shared decision at the end of the discussion. In the ILA, a distinctive feature noted was the members' confidence and attempt to engage in a discussion and to ensure that the goal of the task was achieved. A self-appointed leader of the group was observed prompting the other members to contribute in the interaction as a way to direct the flow of discussion while another member took the lead in developing the topic, though superficially and without much organisation. In the MLA, there was overdependence on the lone high language ability member to accomplish the task. Every member's inclination was to converge on the lone member to save the situation.

Based on the nature of the interactions, two issues were noted, namely threat and connectivity. On the first issue, threat was not a problem to the HLA. Every candidate took it upon himself to fulfill the task and in togetherness they deliberated actively employing various speech functions of agreement or disagreement, questioning, requests for clarification, explanation or refutation to achieve their target. Similarly, in the ILA, despite a lack of language ability, members did not appear to be inadequate nor threatened by each other's presence and lack of capability. Every member believed that the task has to be fulfilled and that everyone has to make a contribution to

the task to ensure that the discussion moves to a desired conclusion. In the MLA, the level of threat was perceived as high, from the three members' show of short return of turns and inability to express an opinion and to sustain a conversation. Such show of behaviour depicts the members' insecurity to the oratory skills of the more confident member.

Next was the issue of connectivity. The HLA team seemed to be able to connect with one another through their ability to follow the arguments presented and ability to take and defend a position taken. This was possible with a certain level of language ability. In the ILA, there was a certain level of connectivity as members were able to follow the earlier brief argument and the subsequent discussion even though the topic was not explored and given a mature treatment for lack of language ability. In the MLA, connectivity was a serious issue. Members did not seem to be on the same frequency as there was a total loss of communication between members. It could also be projected that there was a loss of opportunity for the lone member to engage in a lively discussion of the topic had he been grouped with members of the same language ability.

CONCLUSION

The results of the small-scale study have shown that grouping of candidates according to language ability does produce desirable as well as undesirable consequences. It is desirable in that an accurate measure of their oral ability has been put in place and affording active contributions by every participant to the discussion. It is undesirable in that there was not adequate equal match of ability for the oral task such that there could be a loss of opportunity for the better candidates to actively express their ideas and to receive healthy feedback from within the group. Additionally threat as perceived by the members by the presence of 'unequals' within the group may jeopardize any attempt by members of the group to present an idea. It is interesting to note whether in any paired or grouped test of oral language ability, fairness has been exercised for the good of all candidates.

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Appendix A - Group Discussion Test of Oral English

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Instructions to candidates:

- This task is a group task
- Read the situation carefully
- You are given five minutes to prepare points to support or oppose the other candidates' views
- After you have listened to everyone, try to come to a decision as to which of the four suggestions is the best
- Your group is given ten minutes for the discussion.

Situation

Your friend has difficulty in speaking in the English Language. You and your group members are having a discussion on what is the best way for your friend to learn to speak better English. The suggestions are as follows:

1. Watch English movies
2. Practise speaking English with friends
3. Seek the help of the English lecturers
4. Read more English materials..

Appendix B - Group Discussion Test of Oral English Rating Scale

Score \\ Component	6m	5m	4m	3m	2m	1m
Task Fulfillment	Fulfils task very competently	Fulfils task reasonably well	Fulfils task satisfactorily	Fulfils task modestly	Fulfils task in a limited way	Does not fulfil task
Language	Displays very confident control of the language	Displays reasonably confident control of the language	Displays satisfactory control of the language	Displays modest control of the language	Displays poor control of the language	Displays very poor control of the language

Score \\ Component	3m	2.5m	2m	1.5m	1m	0.5m
Communicative Ability	Shows ability to contribute to the discussion very efficiently and effectively	Shows ability to contribute to the discussion very effectively	Shows ability to contribute to the discussion satisfactorily	Shows ability to contribute to the discussion fairly well	Shows ability to contribute to the discussion	Shows very limited ability to contribute to the discussion