

English Language Assessment Support Material

Unit standard	30991				
Title	Listen to and understand formal English language spoken texts in an academic context				
Level	4	Credits	10	Version	2

Assessor Guidelines

Assessors need to be very familiar with the outcome being assessed by the unit standard. The performance criteria and the guidance information contain information, definitions, and requirements that are crucial when interpreting the standard and assessing learners against it.

Note:

These guidelines are supplied to enable assessors to carry out valid and consistent assessment using this internal assessment resource.

Assessors must manage authenticity for any assessment from a public source, because students may have access to the assessment schedule or student exemplar material.

Use of this assessment resource without modification may mean that students' work is not authentic. While this resource exemplifies how to assess understanding of formal English language spoken texts in an academic context, other assessment activities and approaches could be taken to make the context relevant to students in their environment and ensure that submitted evidence is authentic.

See [Gathering evidence of learner achievement](#)

Assessors should use innovative, valid and fair ways of recognising achievement, without overburdening themselves or the learner with too much assessment.

Context/Setting

This activity requires students to listen and respond to two formal English language spoken texts that have not been previously studied. One of the texts must be an interaction and one must be a presentation.

It is recommended that:

- the outcomes are assessed as part of an integrated unit of work, relevant to the learning context of the learner;
- assessment be conducted in conjunction with assessment against other English Language unit standards at this level.

Award of Grades

This unit standard can be awarded with an Achieved grade only.

For Achieved, learners must:

- Listen to and understand formal English language spoken texts in an academic context.

Range:

- At least two texts, one of which is an interaction and one a presentation.

Conditions of Assessment

This assessment will take place over a timeframe set by the assessor.

- All assessment activities must be conducted in English, which must not be the learner's first language.
- Learners must be given time to read any written instructions and questions before the listening task. Clarification of task instructions may be requested by the learner, so long as this does not lead the learner to the correct answer.
- Learners may use an English dictionary.
- Learner's responses may be oral or written. If responses are oral, they must not be heard or observed by other learners.
- For quality assurance purposes, including moderation, if the learner's response is oral or demonstrated, the assessment must be recorded both aurally and visually. Recordings must ensure the learner is clearly visible. Recorded work must not be edited. Guidelines for digital submissions can be found at:
<https://www2.nzqa.govt.nz>

Resource Requirements

- Two spoken texts: an interaction and a presentation
- Questions to assess listening comprehension

Additional Information

- The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) describes language proficiency at six levels. This unit standard is at a level informed by the CEFR. Teachers and assessors are encouraged to refer to the descriptors in the *Supporting Document* to gain a clearer understanding of the competencies required by these standards.
- This assessment resource contains one task for a presentation. However, to achieve this standard, learners must complete a total of two tasks: one interaction and one presentation.
- Responses may contain minor phonological or linguistic inaccuracies, but errors must not impede meaning. This standard assesses listening skills, not spoken, reading or written skills.
- Spoken texts for this unit standard:
 - must be at least eight minutes;
 - may include lectures, seminars, discussions, tutorials;
 - must be appropriate to the spoken mode, or a text which is designed for oral delivery;
 - must be repeated once only, i.e. read a total of two times;
 - must be delivered in clear speech;
 - can be listened to face-to-face, or in pre-recorded audio or audio-visual format. If audio-visual materials are used, these must not include large amounts of written text.
- The transcript and assessment schedule are for assessors only and not to be shared with learners during the assessment process.
- Refer to your organisation's policies before offering a resubmission or further assessment opportunity.

Assessment Activity

Unit standard:	30991
Standard title:	Listen to and understand formal English language spoken texts in an academic context
Credits:	10
Resource title:	AI in language learning – friend or foe?
Assessor guidance:	Use of this assessment resource without modification may mean that students' work is not authentic. The assessor will need to set a different context or topic and develop fresh and relevant texts that reflect the interests and circumstances of their students. The text example and questions in this assessment activity provide models of possible approaches.

Model assessment

Assessor instructions for students

Introduction

This assessment activity requires you to listen to two formal English language spoken texts in an academic context and answer questions about main ideas, supporting details, specific information, and overall meaning or viewpoint.

This activity will take place in class time.

Task

This resource contains one task, using a presentation as its spoken text. To achieve the standard, you will also need to complete a task for a spoken interaction.

You will be given a question sheet to complete as you listen. After you have listened the first time, you will be given time to add to your responses. The text will then be read a second time, and you can check your responses and add any missing information.

You will need to show that you can:

- Explain and link main ideas, supporting details and specific information in the texts. You need to get at least four main ideas, six supporting details, and six items of specific information correct for each text (PC 1.1).
- Analyse and explain the overall meaning or viewpoint of the speaker/s (PC 1.2).

You should start completing the table in Question 1 while you listen the first time. After you have listened the first time, add any information that you remember and highlight the gaps. When you listen the second time, add the remaining information. After you have finished listening, complete Question 2.

AI in language learning – friend or foe?

Read through the questions carefully before you listen the first time.

Section I: Main ideas, supporting details and specific information are explained and linked in formal spoken texts (PC 1.1).

As you listen, complete the table. From the box, select the functions or tools that are beneficial and include these under 'Benefits'. Select the tools that can be problematic and include these under 'Problems'. Some may fit both categories and may need to be used twice.

Explain the benefits and include the apps mentioned by the speakers. Explain the problems and provide the sources quoted by the speaker.

LLMs	data sharing	speech recognition	translation tools	communication tools
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Benefits of AI				Problems with AI			
	Function or tool	How does this benefit language learning? Explain, using the information mentioned by the speaker. Try to include at least two points in each section.	Apps		Function or tool	Why is this problematic? Explain, using the information mentioned by the speaker. Try to include at least two points in each section.	Sources
1	a)	b)	c)	4	a)	b)	c)
2	a)	b)	c)	5	a)	b)	c)
3	a)	b)	c)	6	a)	b)	c)

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7. Why does the speaker mention the various apps by name? (Refer to Questions 1–3)

8. Why does the speaker mention the sources? (Refer to Questions 4–6)

Section II: Overall meaning or the viewpoint of the speaker/s is analysed and explained (PC 1.2).

Answer this question after you have listened to the talk and completed the table on the previous page.

1. What is the overall viewpoint of the speaker regarding AI in language learning?

2. Explain why you think this:

Transcript – for assessor use only

AI in language learning – friend or foe?

Kia ora and welcome to this presentation about AI in language learning. AI has received a lot of attention and has become a bit of a controversial topic. This is especially true when it comes to its role in language learning and its use on language courses. Today I want to try to unravel some of the controversy around AI to figure out if it is good or bad, if it is your friend or if it is your foe – your enemy. Or perhaps a bit of both.

But before we can decide on this, let's look at what AI is.

AI stands for *artificial intelligence*, which refers to machines or computer systems designed to perform tasks that usually require human intelligence. These tasks might include things like recognizing speech, making decisions, translating languages, or even playing chess.

AI has evolved over the past few decades, thanks to advancements in technology, computing power, and machine learning. Machine learning is a subfield of AI where computers are trained to learn from data and improve over time. For example, AI programs can analyse huge amounts of text or spoken language to learn how humans use language and then respond in a way that sounds natural. This process has led to the development of applications like language translation tools, chatbots, and even virtual language tutors.

AI has a lot of potential to support and enhance language learning, and some people have even gone so far as to speculate that we will soon get to the point where we do not need human language teachers anymore. So what can AI do to help language learners?

Perhaps most obviously, AI can help with translation. Translation tools like the app Google Translate have improved significantly over the past few years as AI has developed and built its capability on large amounts of language data. This is obviously very useful for very new language learners, who can translate a phrase from their own language into English, listen to how it is pronounced, practise it, and then use it. It can also be useful for advanced learners like yourselves. When you come across a word or phrase in an academic text, you can find out its meaning and its pronunciation. If it's a word with several possible meanings, an AI-powered translation tool will be able to tell you exactly what the word means in that particular sentence or text. That is because AI looks at the context and the surrounding words.

AI tools that use speech recognition can also help you improve your communication and pronunciation. There is a range of tools for this, and they have various different functions. However, one thing that they have in common is that they provide real-time feedback, which means that you can correct yourself immediately and learn quicker. Two popular apps that can provide real-time feedback in this way are Duolingo and Babbel. Another good thing about these apps is that you can practise on your own with your phone without other people hearing you, which is especially helpful if you feel embarrassed speaking to people.

You can also get a lot of help from just the LLMs – the Large Language Models – like ChatGPT or Gemini. These apps are available for free online and are easy to use. So how can they help you? Well, if you use them correctly, they can be really helpful for improving your writing skills. You can put some text into for example ChatGPT or Gemini and add a prompt like: "Show me how to make this writing better. Explain what I have done wrong and the changes you make". The tool will then point out the problems in your writing, suggest how to rewrite it and explain why. This could make you aware of what you need to improve in your writing and what to look for when self-editing. They can also help you by providing reading practice. You can ask them to produce a text about something you are interested in, at your specific level, and to create comprehension questions for you.

It probably sounds like AI is going to miraculously improve language learning, but there is also some research that indicates that it may not be as useful as people think.

For example, if we go back to translation apps, these are often strongly disliked by language teachers, and rightly so. Learners who rely on AI translation tools may not develop the deeper, more complex language skills needed to become proficient, fluent speakers and writers. One of the markers of a proficient and fluent speaker is their ability to *think* in the target language, and this skill may be compromised when learners rely too much on translation tools, as this means they keep thinking in their own language and keep using their own language as the reference point. Further, all languages are not equal in terms of AI. Ingrid Piller has investigated how well AI performs in languages other than English. She suggests that AI has significant gaps when it comes to many languages, which means the translations may not be very accurate if your own language is not one of the most common languages.

Further, communication tools may also prevent you from becoming a skilled, proficient communicator. This might sound strange, but it's because language learning is not just about learning grammar and vocabulary; it's also about cultural understanding and social interaction. AI cannot replicate the rich, nuanced conversations you can have with real, human, proficient speakers. AI is also trained mainly on American input, so may not know what is appropriate when communicating in New Zealand. Furthermore, AI programs cannot help with the emotional and social aspects of language learning, such as understanding humour, body language, or tone. One writer, Nicky Hockly, who has evaluated the usefulness of AI chatbots, suggests that they will never be able to replace language teachers who can provide real, human interaction.

However, the biggest concern I have with AI, and especially when it is used by language learners, is data *sharing*. To be effective and improve its performance, most AI-powered language learning apps collect personal data, such as your learning habits, location, and even your voice. Some tools also have facial recognition, and many also collect information about what websites you visit. This means that large amounts of data about you will be stored. This is perhaps not a significant concern when data is only stored within the app, but data can also be shared with third parties, like advertising companies. As a user, you might not always know exactly what data is being collected or how it is being shared. As a language learner, you may not be able to understand the 'fine print' about the data sharing policy. These issues were highlighted in a report by the Human Rights Watch, which revealed that many educational technology products collected personal data and shared this with advertising companies.

So, is AI a friend or a foe? I would say neither – or both. It is not going to solve all our language learning difficulties, but we can make it our friend if we know how to use it appropriately. It is not a vicious enemy, but we do need to increase our awareness of the risks and treat it with caution.

Ultimately, AI should be used as a supplement to traditional language learning methods, not as a replacement. Further, learners who want to use AI need to also ensure that they understand the ethical and privacy issues and how to protect themselves when using powerful AI tools.

Assessment Schedule

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Level	4	Credits	10	Version	2

An assessment schedule has been provided for one assessment task only (presentation). An assessment schedule will need to be developed for the remaining assessment task required for this unit standard (interactional).

Assessment Criteria

Performance Criteria	Evidence for Achievement	Judgements for Achievement
Outcome 1 Listen to and understand formal English language spoken texts in an academic context. Range at least two texts, one of which is an interaction and one a presentation.	Refer to the evidence for 1.1–1.5 below	A formal English language spoken text in an academic context is listened to and understood.
1.1 Main ideas, supporting details and specific information are explained and linked in formal spoken texts. Range: - at least four main ideas for each text; - at least six supporting details for each text; - at least six items of specific information for each text.	Section I a) <i>Translation</i> b) Learner explains the benefit using their own words, but integrates the information from the main idea and at least two supporting details. c) <i>Google Translate</i> a) <i>Speech Recognition</i> b) Learner explains the benefit using their own words, but integrates the information from the	At least four of Questions 1–6 are correct. Every part of the question (a – main idea, b – supporting details, and c – specific information) must be correct to demonstrate linking. A total of six items of specific information from Questions 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c and 6c are correct. Items are counted individually, e.g. 2c is two items. One of Questions 7–8 is correct.

	main idea and at least two supporting details. See model answer below. c) <i>Babble, Duolingo</i> 3. a) <i>LLMs</i> b) Learner explains the benefit using their own words, but integrates the information from the main idea and at least two supporting details. See model answer below. c) <i>Chat GPT, Gemini</i> 4. a) <i>Translation</i> b) Learner explains the problem using their own words, but integrates the information from the main idea and at least two supporting details. See model answer below. c) <i>(Ingrid) Piller</i> (any spelling) 5. a) <i>Communication tools</i> b) Learner explains the problem using their own words, but integrates the information from the main idea and at least two supporting details. See model answer below. c) <i>(Nicky) Hockly</i> (any spelling) 6. a) <i>data sharing</i> b) Learner explains the problem using their own words, but integrates the information from the main idea and at least two supporting details. See model answer below. c) <i>Human Rights Watch</i> (any spelling) 7. Answer similar in meaning to one of the following examples: <i>To provide examples of the different functions or tools/To give tips on how the functions can be used by language learners.</i> 8. Answer similar in meaning to one of the following examples: <i>To support their claims about the problems of AI/To utilise recent</i>	
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	<i>research about AI/To explain what research has found out about AI.</i>	
1.2 Overall meaning or the viewpoint of the speaker/s is analysed and explained.	Section II Question 1: Answer similar in meaning to: <i>The speaker thinks that there are some benefits with AI for language learning but also some problems, and learners need to be aware of these if they are using AI in language learning.</i> Question 2: Answer providing analysis and explanation, for example: <i>The speaker has divided the talk into two distinct parts. One part is about how AI can help learners and gives examples that are very useful, which indicates that he thinks there are benefits. He also recognises the problems, because the second part is about the problems, and how AI can have a negative impact on language learning and on learners. The conclusion states that AI is useful, but that we need to be aware of the problems when we use it.</i>	Meaning is identified. Analysis and explanation are provided.

Model answer for Section I, Questions 1–6

Benefits of AI				Problems with AI			
	Function or tool	How does this benefit language learning? Explain, using the information mentioned by the speaker.	Examples of Apps		Function or tool	Why is this problematic? Explain, using the information mentioned by the speaker.	Sources/ authors
1	a) Translation	b) New language learners can use translation tools to learn and practise new words and phrases. Advanced language learners can use it to understand new words including what they mean in context.	c) Google Translate	4	a) Translation	b) Because learners may continue to just translate from their first language instead of getting a deeper understanding of English. Also, depending on what your first language is, you may not get an accurate translation as AI is not good at all languages.	c) Ingrid Piller
2	a) Speech recognition	b) You can talk to an app and improve your pronunciation and communication by getting immediate feedback. They are helpful because you don't need to be embarrassed – you can practise alone.	c) Duolingo Babbel	5	a) Communication tools	b) Communication tools do not teach you other parts of communication, like appropriate social interaction in that culture, especially in places like New Zealand. Also, communication tools don't teach you to understand how people in that culture show emotions, or what their body language means.	c) Nicky Hockly
3	a) LLMs	b) They can help you improve your writing by explaining what is wrong in your text. They can make text and questions for you at your level so you can practise reading.	c) ChatGPT Gemini	6	a) Data sharing	b) AI tools and apps collect a lot of data about you, including personal details and voice. They often don't tell you this, or you don't understand what they will collect. They may sell data to other companies, like advertisers.	c) Human Rights Watch

Final grades will be decided using professional judgement based on a holistic examination of the evidence provided against the criteria in the unit standard.