

Final Analysis Project Part 4

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My learner Hannah is Korean. She is 36 years old. She came to the U.S. on F1 visa to learn English. The General English for Spouses/Partners (GES) class is one of the many classes she took to learn English. The content focus for GES class is the “the functional oral language skills in English commonly used in social settings” (ELC website). In this part, I will discuss my learner’s language produce, especially spoken language, based on authentic assessment and rubrics.

Oral language

I administered the BVAT and used oral interviews as the performance assessment to evaluate Hannah’s oral language. According to the BVAT English test results, Hannah had limited verbal cognitive skills in English. She could not name half of the items in Picture Vocabulary. For example, she failed to name “magnet”, “faucet” and “globe”. She was unable to give synonyms or antonyms to half of the words in Oral Vocabulary due to her limited lexicon. For instance, she didn’t know the meanings of words as “untamed” and “conceal”, and thus, cannot provide a synonym. But when she was given the Korean BVAT test, she got half of the missed items right, suggesting that she had the concept and knowledge in Korea but the knowledge has not been transferred to English yet (BVAT Comprehensive Manual, p. 5).

After Hannah finished the BVAT, I asked for her comments on the test. She thought the test was reliable to some extent, but she questioned the item design: “some words are very old one. So we don't use this. Maybe the younger people don't know what it is” (personal communication, 3/17/2014). Thus, though the BVAT is instrumental in bringing in students’ native language to fully assess their conceptual knowledge (Manual, p. 5), its questionable content validity weakens its power to predict test takers’ verbal expressive skills. Also, the items cover the verbal knowledge of only a small number of English words. Thus, the test results cannot give a whole picture of Hannah’s oral language knowledge.

Given the BVAT’s limitation, I will use the interviews I had with Hannah, together with my classroom observations, to discuss her oral language. Hannah has excellent listening skills. In class, she could understand nearly all of the teacher’s directions at normal speech (SOLOM rubric). Sometimes, she was the coordinator between the teacher and other students in her group: other students would ask for her understanding and she would explain the directions to her group members. When I talked with her after class, she could easily follow our conversation. On the day when she and other students were given a group interview assessment, she could understand and follow multi-step directions given by the facilitator: introducing herself, talking about past museum experiences, discussing with peers to figure out a route and time to visit the museum, and assessing her own performance at the end of the interview.

In terms of her speaking ability, Hannah could express her thoughts freely and fluently in general. But sometimes, her speech was disrupted by her search for “the correct manner of expression” (SOLOM Level 4). As was showed in the transcript (Appendix B), she explained why she must be on F1 visa in order to take courses in college, “If I want to....If I take the classes in college, I should have F1 visa.” Here, she was restructuring her speech and searching for a correct way to speak. The disruption

showed the mental rehearsal going on in her mind (Herrera, 2013). For Vocabulary, her inappropriate uses of some words and her “lexical inadequacies” justified her vocabulary at Level 3.5 (SOLOM rubrics). For example, she hoped to learn “how to meet someone who speaks English with me” from the GES class (transcript 1, Appendix A). When she said “meet”, she actually meant “communicate” or “talk”. Hannah’s pronunciation was at Level 3.5. She naturally changed her intonation either for emphasis or for posing a question. But she had problems with some sounds. When a word has two consonants glued together, Hannah would miss one of the consonants. For example, “actually [’æktʃuəli]” was pronounced as “[’æfʊli]”. [l] sound was missed in “bachelor [’bætʃlə]”, so she pronounced it as “[’bætʃə]”. Hannah exposed a lot of grammatical mistakes in her oral language, though these errors did not “obscure meaning” (Level 4 rubric). Some mistakes in subject-verb agreement were “there is (are) many girls, who speaks (speak) too much” and the GES is better than the ChatELC program because “they also covers (cover) some grammars” (Appendix B). Hannah used present tense a lot to describe things that happened in the past. For example, she talked about her past English learning experience, “Before I go (went) to abroad, I hardly speak (spoke) English. I feel (felt) very afraid when I should speak English.” And she described the day when she took the Michigan Test, “In the testing room, I just sit (sat) by myself. If I did it very fast, then I can (could) finish it earlier.” (transcript 1).

In summary, Hannah had good verbal skills. She understood every day conversations and classroom instructions. Her speech was generally intelligible and fluent with only a few pronunciation and grammar errors. Thus, to improve her oral language, she should enlarge vocabulary, be provided a systematic training on verb tense, and practice oral language more in a variety of settings.

Reading

Since there are few assessments available for me to measure the adult learner’s reading abilities, I will use my classroom observations, learner reading strategies survey, and test items in OWLS to get a glimpse of my learner’s “process” and “product” of reading (handout, 3/18/14).

In one GES class, students were expected to read one text introducing one Nashville local event, summarize its main idea, and present the event orally to their partners. My learner got the main idea of the text correctly and explained to her partners that she would like to go the painting exhibit at USN and discover by herself the boy’s journey of escaping from brutal war and finally settling in Nashville.

Because the reading texts intended to publicize the events to local people, the language was relatively concise and direct. Hannah did not have difficulty understanding the text. But she had problem understanding figurative or descriptive language in literature works. For example, the item 36 of the OWLS test asked test takers to write down a follow-up story. The sentences in the writing prompt were challenging for my learner to understand. The last sentence was “As darkness settled in, the noises that had appeared natural by sunlight became so menacing that I found myself paralyzed with fear.” After the test, Hannah said she didn’t know what “menacing” and “paralyzed” meant, but she could roughly capture their meanings based on the words as “darkness” and “fear” in the context. So Hannah could rely on semantic cues within the text to increase text comprehension (Brantley, 2007). The use of context clues was one of the

reading strategies she employed when she read articles. She completed a reading strategies survey (see Appendix C). It showed that Hannah often “connected first language to English” to think about the text and “reread” something to enhance comprehension. Sometimes, she “stopped once in a while” and summarized what she just read. She would also think about “what good readers do” and “try these things out” as she read. What's more, she would “visualize” and drew on what she already knew to better understand what she was reading.

From the survey, I learned that Hannah possessed some reading techniques to facilitate her understanding of texts. But since the reading materials used in the classroom and OWLS test are not comprehensive in genre, I assume that the reading strategies Hannah is aware of using will probably not work very well if the text contains a lot of discipline-specific words, demands more background knowledge that she doesn't have, or has complex sentence structures. So if I want to fully examine her reading abilities, I will use more reading materials that are varied in genres and topics.

Writing

Since the writing tasks in the GES class were integrated with reading and listening in classroom activities, the authentic assessments for my learner are performance-based: projects on introducing a recipe (PowerPoint slides and posters), OWLS written responses, and previous writing samples. I will discuss Hannah's writing abilities in general and then, use 6-trait scoring rubrics to analyze one writing sample in detail.

I will evaluate some of Hannah's writings based on the Common Core State Standards Writing Rubrics for Grades 11-12. Though the grade levels are not suitable for my learner, elements included in the rubrics are still instrumental in analyzing an English-language learner's writing work. My learner knew the writing conventions very well. Her writing “demonstrates standard English conventions of usage and mechanics” such as correct spacing, punctuations, capitalization, and paragraphing (CCSS writing rubrics). Hannah's writing had a clear focus. The ideas and concepts included served the writing's purpose very well. For example, the recipe slides introduced how to cook the bulgogi (Appendix D). It described steps to follow, compared two ways to cook the meat, and also stated the benefits that Bulgogi has. The home therapy poster showed clearly how to make “boiled pear preserved in honey” (Appendix E). It provided exact measurements for each ingredient and explained the six steps clearly with concise language and pictures to enhance comprehension (CCSS writing rubrics).

Hannah was conscious of coherence in her writing. She was “skilled” in that she “used words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text” (CCSS writing rubrics). In her written response to item 34, Hannah used connective adverbs as “first” and “secondly” to explain two reasons why there should not be school on Saturdays. And the home therapy poster was easy to follow by using phrases such as “step 1” to link the procedure.

In light of development, Hannah was at the “developing” but not “proficient” stage of writing. For example, for test item 36 in the OWLS test (Appendix F), she was expected to write three or four sentences to complete a story. The follow-up story Hannah wrote demonstrated essential elements of story writing: theme (“danger” and “fear”), character (“I”) and plot (ending). She described how “I” felt in face of the darkness: “I

couldn't see any lights", "I was so afraid, so I couldn't move or talk". But the languages were not vivid enough to depict the "fear" inside the character. Also, the ending was so sudden and abrupt that it didn't impress the audience that much.

The OWLS test has limitations in that the writing prompts determine the genre of the writing and the student's responses cannot reflect students' ability to write in multiple genres. Now I will use 6-trait scoring rubrics to analyze one of Hannah's writings.

The writing talked about the famous Korean singer PSY's influence upon Korean pop music culture (Appendix G). I scored 5 on the ideas of the writing because the idea was "original" and the writer seemed to be "writing from knowledge or experience" but the writing needed more "accurate and precise details" on what changes PSY brings to K-pop (6-trait scoring rubrics). The organization of the writing was smooth. The structure was clear. Some expressions (e.g. "for example", "Before..., there is no...") distinguished the thesis and from the supporting details. But the text was not very coherent. For example, Hannah wrote, "He expands K-pop's musical boundaries. Till lately, K-pop has lacked any variety". Here, connections between ideas were "fuzzy" and some connective words were needed to make a smooth transition. The sentence could be edited as "Before PSY brings new elements into K-pop, K-pop didn't have as many styles as it does today."

The voice of the text was at score 5 in that the tone was sincere. The writer tried to engage readers, for example, she gave vivid descriptions on how PSY integrated new ideas into his concerts. But a lot of "weak" verbs obscured her passion to introduce the topic. In terms of word choice, some words such as "sprinkle" and "fly" helped readers have the "mind pictures". But the verbs were not varied much. Hannah used "make", "try" and "change" a lot. Lack of variation in word choice failed to engage the readers as much as possible.

The sentence fluency was scored 5 because the sentences were generally fluent but more connective words were needed to make relations among sentences clearer. The writing conventions were scored 5.5 in that it demonstrated accurate spelling, punctuations, and spacing. The grammar and usage were correct but did not "contribute to clarity and style".

Conclusion

My learner Hannah has no problems understanding English in classroom setting and daily conversations. She has some errors in grammar and pronunciation but these errors do not obscure meaning. She is a good reader in that she is aware of using strategies to facilitate understanding. Her writings have good development and organization, but they can be improved with better word choice and more varied sentence structures. During the project, I learned that authentic assessment is powerful to increase engagement, develop students' meta-cognitive strategies (handout, 3/21/14). When I said to students that the recipe posters they created would be scanned and emailed back to them so that all the students could try the recipes after class, Hannah was more serious about the recipe. She kept revising her recipe. So when a task has a purpose and meaning in real life, students will engage and pay more efforts into it (Herrera, 2013). What I've learned in my practicum encourages me to try authentic assessment to examine my students' language abilities in my future teaching.

Reference:

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Appendix A
(interview conducted on 2/11/2014)

S: How many ESL classes do you take?

H: Ehhh..... You mean how many different classes? (S: Yeah) I took four classes in Nashville State Community College and this class.

S: What are the four courses you take at Nashville State?

H: Listening and speaking, writing, grammar and reading.

S: For what reason you want to take those courses? Which areas do you want to improve your English?

H: Actually. I want to improve oral the kind of skills. And....also speaking.

S: When you registered for this class, what do you expect from this class?

H: I think I got enough grammar and writing course in the State Community College. So I felt that I need some more composition. About how to meet someone who speaks English with me.

S: You like more opportunities to talk? More conversations? You want the opportunity to speak with someone with similar background or with native speakers? Which kind of opportunities do you prefer?

H: With native speaker. (S: OK.)

H: 'Cause in my course, there is less of students who is similar with me, but they all came from different countries. They all have different accents. It's hard to understand them. I think native speakers' accents are better to understand.

S: You said that you've been in Canada for two months and Texas for three months. Do you think that your stay at those places help you improve your English?

H: Just a little bit. Before I go to abroad, I hardly speak English. I feel very afraid when I should speak English. But after that experience, I feel more brave. So it helped me a little bit but not that much.

S: Till now, what kinds of English assessments have you taken? I know for the Nashville State, they probably have given you the Michigan Placement Test. How many times have you taken the test?

H: Just one time. After that, they...erh.....have planned to change the Michigan Test to the 'computer-based test. In last semester..... ..last 'semester, they offer.....if we take the online test, they gave us extra credit for the classes. So I took that one, too. On Michigan test, they don't have...eh...actually they have listening, but this one...ehh...On Michigan test, you took the test at the same time in the.....room. But on the online-based test, I can do by myself.

S: Can you take the online test at home?

H: No. In the testing room. I just **sit** by myself. If I did it very fast, then I can finish it earlier.

S: When did you take the paper test?

H: EH...(停顿)Last July.

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Appendix B
(interview conducted after the BVAT administration)

S: Do you think it (the BVAT) is reliable?

H: I think it's pretty reliable. But some words are very old one. So we don't use this. Maybe the younger people don't know what it is. In Korean, we have very similar synonyms. We have tons of synonyms. So maybe.....but you can only have few synonyms in here. So you cannot check their ability correctly, maybe.

S: When you process information, it will be quicker if you can see the Korean texts?

H: Yeah.

S: Do you think it reflects your verbal ability? Do you want to replace Michigan test with it or you prefer the Michigan test?

H: I think Michigan test and this one are very different. Michigan test is focusing on the grammar or writing or something. But this one is kinda, the relations between the words, so.....

S: I probably need to know some of your information. You are here on J2 visa?

H: No. F1. Cuz I should go to the school. If I want to....If I take the classes in college, I should have F1 visa. So, I have my own F1 visa.

S: I think most of your partners, they are here on F2 or J2 visa.

H: Yeah.

S: What's your major for college?

H: I have a Bachelor's Degree on Library Science and I have my master's degree on Archiving.

S: When did you come to the U.S.?

H: Last July.

S: So you've been taking the Nashville State classes since last July?

H: Since last August.

S: OK. You mentioned that you also go the ChatELC. Is it the conversational English, group conversation offered by ELC?

H: Yeah. It's a group conversation. Actually I don't like that class very much.

S: Why? Do you meet in a classroom or randomly choose a place to go?

H: We meet at English Language Center.

S: Why don't you like it?

H: Ehh..Actually.... In the last semester, there were only four or five people in the groups, so it was much better. And in this semester, there is some girls, who speaks too much. Usually, Asians are kind of shy and also calm. In my class, there is one Japanese girl and I will always...don't have much opportunity to talk.

S: So those talkative girls are not from Asian countries.

H: Yeah. They are Turkish.

S: So you want more opportunities to talk, especially with native speakers?

H: En.

S: How do you think the GES class?

H: I think it's better than the ChatELC. Cuz they are focusing on conversation but they also covers some grammars. I think it's good.

S: I think that's all I want to know. Thanks for your time.

H: You're welcome.

Appendix C: learn reading strategies survey

	I often do this.	I do this sometimes	I never do this.
Learning new words I pay close attention to words I don't know and try to figure out what they mean.	✓		
Skip it If I don't understand something, I forget about it and just keep reading.		✓	
Summarizing When I read I stop once in a while and try to remember just the important parts.		✓	
Connecting my first language to English I often think about things that I learned in my first language when I read in English, or I think about things in English when I read in my first language.	✓		
Rereading If I don't understand something, I go back and read it again.			
Pronouncing the words It's really important to say the words in my head the way they are written on the page.		✓	
Making sure I understand When I read I often check my understanding to see if things make sense.		✓	
Putting things together As I find ideas and information, I try to think about what I already know about these things.		✓	
Memorizing I try to remember everything I read by saying the words in my head over and over again.			✓
Asking Questions When I read I ask myself questions and then I look for answers in the story or text.			✓
Visualizing As I read, I think about what things, people and ideas might look like.		✓	
Using Korean and English When I read in English and I don't know a word, I look to see if the word is like one that I know in Korean. If I'm reading in Korean and don't know a word, I look to see if it's like a word I know in English.	✓		
Translating Sometimes I translate what I'm reading in English to my first language and that helps me understand better, or I translate from my first language to English.			✓
Code-Switching Sometimes when I'm reading, I use both of my languages to think about the text. I go back and forth between my two languages when I think.		✓	
Using what I already know I often think about what I already know to better understand something that I am reading.		✓	
Day dreaming I often get bored when I read and I think about other things.			✓
Thinking about reading Sometimes I think about what good readers do and I try these things out as I read.		✓	

Appendix D: bulgogi recipe

How to Cook Bulgogi

Hannah
February 27, 2014

What is Bulgogi?

- ▶ Korean traditional food
- ▶ Also known as Korean barbecue
 - ✓ Bul = Fire, Gogi = Meat
- ▶ Popular to foreigner



Ingredients(For 3 people)



- ▶ Beef(1lb, Sirloin or Rib eye)
 - ✓ Thin slice
- ▶ Mushroom(Some)
 - ✓ Shitake, Enoki
- ▶ Onion(1), Green Onion(2), Carrot(1/4)
 - ✓ Sliced
- ▶ Soy Sauce(6T), Sesame Oil(2T), Cooking wine(2T)
- ▶ Sugar(2T), Black Pepper(pinch)
- ▶ Garlic(3 Cloves), Peer(1/2C), Kiwi(1/2)
 - ✓ Crushed

Prepare the Meat

- ▶ Get rid of blood with kitchen towel
 - ✓ It would help get rid of stink
- ▶ Prepare the meat with black pepper
 - ✓ Leave it one hour → make the meat tender



Marinate the Meat

- ▶ Make a marinade sauce
 - ✓ Put the all ingredients for marinade sauce in a bowl and mix
 - Soy sauce, Sesame oil, Wine, Sugar, Black Pepper, Garlic, Peer, and Kiwi
- ▶ Put the prepared meat into the sauce
 - ✓ Mix with marinade sauce well
 - ✓ Leave it to be marinated more than 2 hours (Keep it in the refrigerator overnight)



Mix the Vegetables



- ▶ After marinating, put the rest of vegetables into the marinated meat and mix it well
 - ✓ Mushroom, Onion, Green Onion, and Carrot
- ▶ Leave it for a while before cook

Cook the Meat

Grill on the Charcoal Fire

- ▶ The best way to have delicious Bulgogi

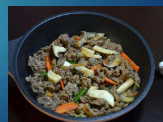
- ▶ Inconvenient



Pan Fry on the Stove

- ▶ You can do it in your kitchen

- ▶ You can Put some additional ingredients



Enjoy the Bulgogi

- ▶ Good for health
 - ✓ Have both meat and diverse vegetables at the same time
- ▶ Delicious
 - ✓ Not spicy, Not too sweet
- ▶ Easy to make
 - ✓ Easy to get ingredients, Easy to cook



Appendix E: home therapy poster

Boiled Pear preserved in honey

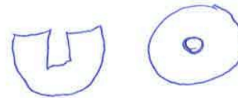
Ingredients

- 1 Pear
- 3~4 spoons of honey
- water

Step 1 : cut the pear ($\frac{1}{3}$ from the top)



Step 2 : Scrape out the seed and make a hole in the center of the pear



Step 3 : Put honey into the hole of the pear



Step 4 : Cover the hole with cutted pear



Step 5 : Put the pear in a small pot and put just little bit of water



Step 6 : Boil the pear until get some juice from the pear

Finally, Drink the juice of the pear

The pear juice is good for sore throat and fever

Appendix F: OWLS test written responses

34. Write two reasons why there should not be school on Saturdays. Write your reasons in complete, expressive sentences.

There should not be school on Saturday. At first, teachers can't work on Saturday because working more than five days in a week is illegal. Secondly, most of parents don't work on Saturday, so kids need some time with their parents.

35. Write one sentence using these four words: she know whose she

She knows Jane, whose sister she went same high school with.

36. Write three or four sentences to complete the following story:

The day came to a rapid close. As darkness settled in, the noises that had appeared natural by sunlight became so menacing that I found myself paralyzed with fear.

It seemed like there was no people around me, and I couldn't see any lights. I was so afraid, so I couldn't move or talk. After I cried silently for a while, finally two of park rangers found me, and they took me home safely.

Appendix G: learner writing sample

Instructional recommendations:

1. teach ^{to use} conjunctions to connect sentences
2. avoid repetition and use "vivid verbs" to ^{fully} engage readers
3. teach student to make an outline before writing in order to have structured and clear writing
4. teach student to use complete sentences (eg. A sentence must have a subject)
5. plural nouns, tense.

Writing 3

September 10, 2013

Writing Assignment

PSY : Changes Korean Pop Music Scene

PSY makes Korean pop(K-pop) music industry diverse. Recently, he became a world star with his song Gangnam Style. But in Korea, PSY has been one of the most influential Korean singer since he released his debut album. He expands K-pop's musical boundaries. Till lately, K-pop has lacked any variety. Only few kind of music has become popular. For instance, ^{incomplete} boy or girl group's dance music. But PSY always try to make creative songs and performances. He makes and performs all kind of music. He makes and sing ballad, dance music, rap, and more kind of music. His songs and performances are unique. So, now people can enjoy differences of K-pop music. Also, ^{he} He changes K-pop concert culture. He loves performing in front of his huge fan. He wants his fans ^{to} enjoy his concert very much, so he does not only sing and dance ^{but} also does lots of performances during the concert. He puts some new ideas on his stage whenever he holds a concert. ^{mind pictures} For example, sprinkle water on the stand, flying with a rope. ^{incomplete sentence, nonparallel structure} (His concert is spectacular) ^{His concerts are spectacular.}

^{tense} Before he starts these kind of performances, there is no concert like this in Korea. But now singers are changing. They try to do many new performance in their concert. PSY is a talented entertainer, and his passion of the music ^{word choice} makes K-pop music diverse.

- (5) voice: 5 < ✓ sincere, intend to engage readers (giving examples)
 ✗ "weak" verbs obscure her passion to introduce the topic
- (4.5) word choice: 5 < ✓: some action verbs such as "sprinkle" and "fly" make the picture vivid
 ✗: Words don't vary that much. Use "make", "try", "change" a lot; ~~the~~ words lack of engaging power probably: "became a world star" → "rose to fame"
- (5) sentence fluency: 5 < ✓: generally fluent and coherent, concise
 ✗: Sentence beginnings are alike, "he" "people"; need more connecting words to make the sentence relation clearer.
- (5) ideas: 5 < ✓ "margable" topic; original idea, clear content & theme
 ✗: need more details on what changes PSY bring to K-pop
- (5) organization: 5 < ✓ easy to follow, clear "situation-statement-elaboration"; title is the thesis statement
 ✗: a few bumps, need transition between sentence 2 and sentence 3
- (5.5) conventions: 5 < ✓ accurate spelling, punctuations, and spacing
 ✗ Grammar and usage are in a large correct, but do not "contribute to clarity and style"