Do Oral Placement Tests in English Language Institutes Conform to Interview Principles? -A Survey Conducted in Iran

Nastaran Sadeghi

Ph.D. Candidate of TEFL, Islamic Azad University Karaj Branch, Faculty of Literature and Foreign Languages, ELT Department, Iran

Abstract

This study aims to discover whether the oral placement tests in English language institutes in Iran conform to interview principles. To achieve this goal, thirty four placement interviews from different English language institutes in Iran are investigated and compared with the interviews principles in different point of views. Patton 2002 believes that in all interviews on any given topic, it is possible to ask any of six main types of question about: Experiences and behaviors, Opinions and values, Feelings, Knowledge, sensory information and Background or demographic information. Moreover, Kvale1996 believed that all interviews questions can be categorized in ten groups: Introducing questions, Follow –up questions, Probing questions, Specifying questions, Direct questions, Indirect questions, Structuring questions, Silence, Interpreting questions, and Throw away questions. Furthermore, Another categorization which is presented by Aoki 1995, Face-to-Face interviews, messenger, Telephone and E-mail.While investigating, the researcher found that although all of them are placement tests but they are not testing the knowledge directly. Evaluation is done through interviews in which all six categories are included and simultaneously, the English knowledge is tested as well. Also our recorded oral placement tests are completely matched with the Kvale's stages as well. And according toAoki can be categorized in his categorization. Consequently, the oral placement tests in English language institutes in Iran are not considerably different with the interview principles and they follow the same rules as all interviews follow through different perspectives.

Keywords: *English Language Institutes, Interviews, Iran, Oral tests, Placement tests*

Introduction

Basically, a language school is a school where a person studies a foreign language. Classes at a language school typically aim at communicative competence in a foreign language. Students differ widely by their age, educational background, and work experience. At language schools, students generally have the possibility of choosing a specific course according to their language proficiency. For instance they can choose grammar courses or conversation courses or communicative courses or translation courses due to their interest and their need. In general, new students take a placement test which enables teachers to determine the most appropriate level for the student. There are two kinds of placement tests in English institutes in Iran, Written and Oral. The written tests are directly evaluating knowledge through different questions on all skills, grammars, vocabularies and so forth.On the other hand, oral tests are usually look like interviews. All teachers are evaluating knowledge in their interviews, but their questions are not directly focusing on proficiency, whereas the questions are around students' background, opinions or behaviors and simultaneously, students have to use the needed vocabulary or the grammar. English as a foreign language is no longer the main object of specialized language classes, but increasingly a medium of university-level instruction in a range of content areas (Dafouz et al 2018), however, the number of participants in language classes have been growing recently, and it is not ignorable.

Dornyei (2007) believes that interviewing is mostly used in our social life, and everyone is familiar with interviewing. Miller and Crabtree 1999 points out that interviewing which consists turn taking conversations and expectations for participant roles, is usually shared cultural knowledge. Among different methods of qualitative inquiries, Interview is mostly used in qualitative researches and usually used in different linguistic contexts by researchers. (Block 2002, Richards 2003, Rubio 1997). Patton 1990 believes that the purpose of interviewing is to understand what is in interviewee's mind and not to put our idea to his or her mind. The fact is that most of interviewees provide the information which the interviewer needs. The goal of research based on qualitative data is not necessarily to collect all or most ideas and themes but to collect the most important ideas and themes. (Weller et al 2018).

Best & Kahn 2006 believed if the interviewee becomes aware of the intention of the interviewer, the interview data will be misleading. Mostly, interviewees give their answers based on what they think the interviewer wants to know. In this case, the most important thing for the interviewer is to insure the participants to understand that the researcher is not biased about the result of the Conducting interviews consist of some steps which are general in all interviews, according to Dornyei 2007, the steps are as follows:

The First Few Questions

The initial questions have great importance for breaking the ice in contact with the interviewee. It is important that the interviewee feel relaxed while interviewing. This is why researchers often start with easy personal or factual questions, for example, about the respondent's family or job.

Content Questions

Patton 2002 believes that on any given topic, it is possible to ask any of six main types of question about which are Experiences and Behaviors, Opinions and Value, Feelings, Knowledge Sensory information (i.e. what someone has seen, heard, tasted, or smelled, etc.) and Background or Demographic information.

Probes

What the interviewee has said as a starting point to go further. Probes may include detail-oriented and clarification questions e.g. can you explain more?

The Final Closing Question

They are the pronounced final sentences or conclusion of the interviewee, and usually the interviewer reaches them by asking: "Is there anything else you would like to add?" or "What should I have asked you that I didn't ask?"In our technological world, students need to develop their skills in English language in order to share the ideas, concepts, scientific and technological findings. The role of speaking ability has become more important nowadays. One of the most important abilities to develop is the oral proficiency. Burns and Joyce (1997) believe that speaking is an interactive process of meaning construction, which involves the receiving, processing, and production of information. It is a social activity because the speaker must hold the listener's attention with ease and fluency. Therefore, tests of speaking try to determine whether the examinees have the ability to communicate accurately and effectively in real life situations.Similarly, according to Nakamura (1997) speaking skill can lead to the improvement of other language skills as well. It is important to test learner's speaking ability to recognize whether a learner can speak a second language or not.On the other hand, Most texts on qualitative methods propose a list of interview questions and the following typology in an integrated list based on similar concerns embedded in mosttypologies of interview questions, drawing on sources such as Kvale's (1996, pp. 133-5) typography of questions (Que & Dumay, 2011).In this respect, Kvale1996 believed that all interviews questions can be categorized in 10 groups as it is shown below.

Table 1
Types of interview questions with examples, adapted from Kvale (1996)

	Types of questions	Purpose of questions	Examples
1	Introducing question	To kick start theconversation and move to the main interview	"Can you tell me about […]?" "Do you remember an occasion when […]" "What happened in the episode mentioned?"
2	Follow up questions	To direct questioningto what has just been said	Nodding "mm", Repeating significant words
3	Probing questions	To draw out more complete narratives.	"Could you say something more about that?" "Can you give a more detailed description of what happened?" "Do you have further examples of this?"

4	Specifying questions	To develop more precise descriptions from general statements.	"What did you think then?" "What did you do actually do when you felt a mounting anxiety?" "How did your body react?"
5	Direct questions	To elicit direct responses	'Have you ever received money for good grades?" "When you mention competition, do you then think of a sportsmanlike or a destructive competition?"
6	Indirect questions	To pose projective questions	"How do you believe other pupils regard the completion of grades?"
7	Structuring questions	To refer to the use of key questions to finish off one part of the interview and open up another, or to indicate when a theme is exhausted by breaking off long irrelevant answers	"I would now like to introduce another topic […]."
8	Silence	To allow pauses, so that the interviews have ample time to associate and reflect and break the silence themselves with significant information	
9	Interpreting questions	Similar to some forms of probing questions, to rephrase an interviewee's answer to clarify and interpret rather than to explore new information.	"You then mean that […]?" "Is it correct that you feel that […]?" "Does the expression […] cover what you have just expressed?"
10	Throw away question	To serve a variety of purposes, i.e. to relax the subject when sensitive areas have been breached.	"Oh, I forgot to ask you […]."

To elaborate, precise information is provided for each type of questions:

Introducing questions
Introducing questions are meant to "kick start" an interview and move to the interview's focus as rapidly as possible. They are not related directly to the research questions but are opening questions, such as "Can you tell me about [. . .]", or "do you recall [. . .]", or "what happened in [. . .]", assuming that the interviewee is ready to talk and is not intimidated, nervous or cold.

Follow-up and probing questions
Follow-up and probing questions attempt to extend the subjects' answers through the inquiring, persistent and occasionally critical attitude of the interviewer. This can be done directly through rephrasing a statement, or simply through semi-verbal sounds, nods or body language. Akin to "active listening", these techniques can lead to further elaboration. Kvale (1996) notes that

experienced interviewers can recognize red lights in the answer such as unusual terms or intonations which may signal the existence of a rich vein of information as discussed earlier in the semi-structured interviews.

Specifying and direct questions

Specifying and direct questions are used to develop more precise descriptions from general statements (Kvale, 1996). Direct questions are usually postponed until later in the interview after interviewees have had the opportunity to make their own spontaneous descriptions. It is essential for the interviewer to carefully prepare before asking relevant specifying and direct questions to ensure the right people are asked the right questions.

Indirect questions

Indirect questions often take an open-ended form with the intention to open up the opportunity for the interviewees to elaborate on things that they see as important and meaningful to their life (McCracken, 1988). Indirect questions are more projective and attempt to get at theinterviewee's attitudes by discussing similar attitudes in others. Such indirect questions may open up a new avenue of inquiry, and will usually require further questioning to interpret the answer.

Silence

Silence allows pauses in the interview, which can offer the interviewee time to reflect and gather energy for more disclosure. It should be noted that not all cultures are equally talkative and expressive. Some are much more so (such as North America), while others are taciturn and may even use silence as an integral part of their language, especially in formal meetings.

Structuring questions

Structuring questions refer to the interviewer's management of the experience and the use of key questions to complete one part of the interview and open up another. For example, they can be used when a theme is exhausted by breaking off long irrelevant answers with comments such as "I would now like to introduce another topic [. . .]" (Kvale, 1996).

Interpreting questions

Interpreting questions are similar to some forms of probing questions in their rephrasing of a respondent's answer. Here, however, the purpose is clarification and interpretation rather than exploration and mining of new information. Some examples could be "You then mean that [. . .]?", "Is it correct that you feel that [. . .]?", or "Does the expression [. . .] cover what you have just expressed?" (Kvale, 1996).

Throw away questions

Throw away questions serve a variety of purposes, including the aforementioned rapport building and, on occasion, these questions can be used to relax the subject whenever the

interviewee indicates that sensitive areas have been breached." (Que & Dumay, 2011).There is another categorization of interviews which is stated by Aoki 1995, in which the interviews are classified in four groups: Face-to-Face (FtF) interviews, messenger, Telephone and E-mail. Interviewing can be done in different ways: face-to-face interviews are the most popular way. Interviewing by telephone is also used commonly. But due to developments in computer technology, two other ways are rising widely recently. All kinds of computer mediated communication (CMC) tools have been developed during recent years. It is a process where messages are electronically transferred from a sender to one or more recipient(s), both they could happen synchronously (in real time) and asynchronously (independent from time and place) setting. Examples of tools used for CMC are e-mail and messenger. The below table shows the mentioned classification thoroughly.

Table 2
The four interview techniques stated by Aoki 1995

	TIME	PLACE
Synchronous communication	FtF	FtF
	MSN messenger	
	Telephone	
Asynchronous communication	E-mail	E-mail
		MSN messenger
		Telephone

FtF interviews are characterized by synchronous communication in time and place and MSN messenger and telephone interviews are characterized by synchronous communication in time, but asynchronous communication in place. E-mail interviews are characterized as asynchronous communication in time and place. It is possible to argue that MSN messenger and telephone interviews are characterized by synchronous communication in cyberspace. As cyberspace is considered as "the no place" (MORSE, 1998), since communication in a virtual place brings other advantages and disadvantages than communication in a real place, as in FtF interviews. Therefore by synchronous communication of place we meant a real place, not a virtual place. (Burke, Lisa A. & Miller, Monica K. 2001). All four interview techniques share common principles and can be equally used for interviews in a research. But important distinctive criterion is concerned with the nature of the information one wants to have, especially the importance of social cues. It completely depends mainly on the situation, the interviewee, and the interviewer.This study aims to discover whether the oral placement tests in English language institutes in Iran follow the interview.

Methodology
Participants
Participants in this research are selected randomly from those aiming to attend English classes in a language institute. They are new to the institute. But they have some English knowledge, therefore they have to be interviewed for placement. The mentioned sample group consists of men and women, teenagers and adults but children are excluded. Thirty four interviews are selected from different institutes in Tehran and Karaj. On the other hand, the interviewers are the supervisors of those institutes, who have a good command of English knowledge and they master on all levels and all books applied in the institute.

Instrumentation
The oral tests are used for placements. These tests are not totally similar to each other, they differ by institutes. But all these tests follow similar steps. They are based on the levels and books which are applied in the institute. These tests are conducted step by step and gradually harder. The questions start from the easiest to more difficult ones.

Procedure
Those volunteers who enter an institute to register for English classes, if they are newcomers to the institute and if they have some English knowledge, have to take oral or written exams for placement. This research concerns with those volunteers who are supposed to be interviewed for the placement. They are selected randomly, but the age and gender are not considered but children are excluded. Moreover, the interviewers are the supervisors of those institutes, who have acceptable knowledge of English and they master on all levels and the books of the institute.

Design
In this research, the supervisors have to evaluate the English knowledge of the participants by interviewing. According to their knowledge and the books, students will be selected for different levels. Therefore, the interviewer has to start the questions from the easiest ones and by success of each participant in the question; the interviewer has to try harder ones. In case of failure in a question, the supervisor does not try harder ones and does not go to higher level. But he/she tries another question in the same level to check whether the participant is able to pass the level or not.The main emphasis of our research is to check whether the questions agree with Patton's principles about interviews' content questions which are mentioned earlier.

To do so, the researcher has recorded thirty four interviews from different supervisors, then they are transcribed and are compared with the Patton's principles mentioned for content questions earlier.

Results

By investigating the recorded oral tests, the researcher found that all these tests are evaluating English knowledge of participants, but the appearance of them is not in the form of exams, they look like interviews. And supervisors ask personal questions from participants about their opinions, ideas or experiences and they evaluate their knowledge through the same questions, sometimes it happens that the supervisor cannot reach the needed answer, therefore he/she has to emphasize on a structure or some words in order to understand whether the participant knows them or not. Precisely, as kvale (1996) stated, all the recorded oral tests can be summarized in the below Table.

Table 3
Recorded oral tests according to Kvale's classification

	Types of questions	Examples
1	Introducing question	-Hi. How old are you -Where are you from?
2	Follow up questions	What do you do to stay healthy? - Answered Do you eat junk food? (Asking about behaviors) -Never - Never? How often do you eat fast food? -every year? Once a year! You mean you eat pizza once a year?
3	Probing questions	-How long have you studied English? - Answered. -What is the best thing about studying English? Is it good to learn?
4	Specifying questions	Can you talk about your dreams?
5	Direct questions	Are your friends more important than your family?
6	Indirect questions	Do you have any recommendation for me to play the piano?
7	Structuring questions	Ok. Now I am going to talk about another topic… What do you do in your free time?
8	silence	-playing piano - pause - I like playing piano and I enjoy it in my free time. What do you eat for breakfast every day?
9	Interpreting questions	-…. -Do you eat bread? -Answered -What about your lunch? Do you eat rice every day? - Answered
10	Throw away question	Oh. I forgot to ask you how long you are playing piano.

On the other hand, the results can be shown in Patton's point of view as well as the following:

Table 4
Recorded oral tests according to Patton's Classification

	Types of questions	Examples
1	Experiences and Behaviors	- How often do you go to theaters? - What do you do I your free time?
2	Opinions and Values	- What do you do to stay healthy? - Are your friends more important than your family?
3	Feelings	- Can you talk about your dreams? - What do you do when you are happy?
4	Knowledge	- Can you spell your name?
5	Sensory information	- When you enter a restaurant, what attracts you first?
6	Background or Demographic information	- Do you play any musical instruments?

Discussion and Conclusion

A language school is a school where a person studies a foreign language. Classes at a language school typically aim at communicative competence in a foreign language. When a student intends to continue learning English in Iran, s/he has to attend in a language school, and according to his/her needs or interest, has the possibility of choosing the courses, translation courses or grammar or so on and so forth.Since Students differ widely by their age, educational background, and work experience they have to take a placement test which enables teachers to determine the most appropriate level for the student. There are two kinds of placement tests in English institutes in Iran, Written and Oral. The written tests are directly evaluating knowledge through different questions on all skills, grammars, vocabularies and so forth. On the other hand, oral tests are usually look like interviews. All teachers are evaluating knowledge in their interviews, but their questions are not directly focusing on proficiency, whereas the questions are around students' background, opinions or behaviors and simultaneously, they have tested their knowledge in vocabulary or the grammar. On the other hand, among different methods of qualitative inquiries, Interview is the most common tool in qualitative researches and usually used in different linguistic contexts by researchers and everyone is familiar with it.The main question is whether these oral placement tests in English language institutes conform to interview principles?To achieve this goal, thirty four placement interviews from different English language institutes in Iran are investigated and compared with the interviews principles in different point of views.Participants in this research are selected randomly from those aiming to attend English classes in a language institute. They are new to the institute. But they have some English knowledge, therefore they have to be interviewed for placement. The mentioned sample group consists of men and women, teenagers and adults but children are excluded. Thirty four interviews are selected from different institutes in Tehran and Karaj (two main cities in Iran). On the other hand, the interviewers are the supervisors of those institutes, who have a good command of English knowledge and they master on all levels and all books applied in the institute.

Moreover, the oral tests are used for placements. These tests are not totally similar to each other, they differ by institutes. But all these tests follow similar steps. They are based on the

levels and books which are applied in the institute. These tests are conducted step by step and gradually harder. The questions start from the easiest to more difficult ones. Furthermore, Those volunteers who enter an institute to register for English classes, if they are newcomers to the institute and if they have some English knowledge, have to take oral or written exams for placement. This research concerns with those volunteers who are supposed to be interviewed for the placement. They are selected randomly, but the age and gender are not considered but children are excluded. Moreover, the interviewers are the supervisors of those institutes, who have acceptable knowledge of English and they master on all levels and the books of the institute.In this research, the supervisors have to evaluate the English knowledge of the participants by interviewing. According to their knowledge and the books, students will be selected for different levels. Therefore, the interviewer has to start the questions from the easiest ones and by success of each participant in the question; the interviewer has to try harder ones. In case of failure in a question, the supervisor does not try harder ones and does not go to higher level. But he/she tries another question in the same level to check whether the participant is able to pass the level or not.

To come to the best conclusion, the researcher aims to investigate the results from different perspectives. According to all samples gathered, all supervisors are evaluating knowledge in their interviews, but their questions are not directly focusing on grammar and vocabulary.Based on what has mentioned up to know, there are different characteristics for interviewing.

As mentioned by Patton 2002 six main types of question are:

a. The First Few Questions: The initial questions have great importance for breaking the ice in contact with the interviewee. It is important that the interviewee feel relaxed while interviewing.

b. Content Questions: Patton 2002 believes that on any given topic, it is possible to ask any of six main types of question about Experiences and Behaviors, Opinions and Values, Feelings, Knowledge, Sensory information (i.e. what someone has seen, heard, tasted, or smelled, etc.) and Background or Demographic information.

c. Probes: What the interviewee has said as a starting point to go further. Probes may include detail-oriented and clarification questions. Probes may include detail-oriented and clarification questions e.g. can you explain more?

d. The Final Closing Question: They are the pronounced final sentences or conclusion of the interviewee. And usually the interviewer reaches them by asking: "Is there anything else you would like to add?" or "What should I have asked you that I didn't ask?"

While investigating the recorded oral tests, the researcher found that all these tests follow the Patton's principles completely, therefore from this point of view, all oral placement tests can be considered as interviews. As it is obvious in the tests, the supervisor asks for the student's behavior as well as his or her experiences. Opinions and values are also asked in different questions. Moreover, there are many questions about background or demographic information of students. All these questions are designed to test the needed vocabulary or grammar, etc. simultaneously. Therefore, these oral tests can be definitely categorized as interviews from Patton's point of view.

On the other hand, it is stated that Kvale (1996) has proposed ten types of questions for interviewing: Introducing questions (To kick start the conversation and move to the main interview), Follow –up questions (To direct questioning to what has just been said), Probing questions(To draw out more complete narratives), Specifying questions (To develop more precise descriptions from general statements), Direct questions(To elicit direct responses), Indirect questions(To pose projective questions), Structuring questions(To refer to the use of key questions to finish off one part of the interview and open up another, or to indicate when a theme is exhausted by breaking off long irrelevant answers),Silence(To allow pauses, so that the interviews have ample time to associate and reflect and break the silence themselves with significant information), Interpreting questions(Similar to some forms of probing questions, to rephrase an interviewee's answer to clarify and interpret rather than to explore new information), Throw away questions (To serve a variety of purposes, i.e. to relax the subject when sensitive areas have been breached).

Furthermore, most texts on qualitative methods propose a list of interview questions and the following typology in an integrated list based on similar concerns embedded in most typologies of interview questions, drawing on sources such as Kvale's typography of questions.

As our results show, our recorded oral placement tests are completely matched with the mentioned stages. Therefore from Kvale'sperspective, the oral tests follow the interview rules as well.To elaborate the matter, most of recorded oral tests begin with Introducing questionsin order to start a conversation with the student. Other questions are categorized in the groups of Follow– up questions, Probing questions, Specifying questions, direct questions and indirectquestions. Through these questions, all grammatical points or vocabularies are to be asked. The main test questions belong to these parts. Silence is used to change the subject of questions. Interpreting questions are seen frequently in the recorded tests, to ask student to explain about the answer more.

There is another categorization of interviews which is stated by Aoki 1995, in which the interviews are classified in four groups: Face-to-Face (FtF) interviews, messenger, Telephone and E-mail. Interviewing can be done in different ways: face-to-face interviews are the most popular way. Interviewing by telephone is also used commonly. But due to developments in computer technology, two other ways are rising widely recently. All kinds of computer mediated communication (CMC) tools have been developed during recent years. It is a process where messages are electronically transferred from a sender to one or more recipient(s), both they could happen synchronously (in real time) and asynchronously (independent from time and place) setting. Examples of tools used for CMC are e-mail and messenger.

Totally, considering the oral placement tests as interviews, according to the above classification, these testscan be considered as face to face interview. Perhaps they could be done through messenger, but they are not so common yet. In addition to the typology of questions, Kvale (1996) suggests that other considerations are also necessary for interviewers in preparing and conducting interviews, including being knowledgeable about the research theme, structured in disposition and nature, clear and articulate in conversation, gentle and sensitive so as to not

intimidate interviewees. The interviewer should also be open and receptive to new ideas but steady in steering the interview in the desired research direction. Despite a gentle disposition and openness, the effective interviewer should also exercise critical Judgment, and test the reliability and validity of the interviewee's story. Finally, the interviewer can add extra value by always seeking to interpret, clarify and extend the interviewee's responses. And definitely, the supervisors are knowledgeable enough, they are fair to students and they are effective teachers as well. According to above mentioned, the recorded tests can be considered as interviews because they are face to face, they happen synchronously. They are in real time, they are dependent to time and place, however it is a kind of test, therefore it should be in real time and place.

It is worth saying that in Iran, learning foreign languages are so popular and common. Iranians believe in learning foreign languages due to different reasons, they like to communicate with all over the world, they think of immigration or they demand a better job, and thus most of the families try to learn one or more foreign languages. Generally speaking, the popular foreign languages are English, French, German, and Italian and then Spanish, therefore, in most schools in different stages and even in some kindergartens, English are taught widely. Even in schools, second foreign language such a French or German are taught as well. Thus, those who enter the language schools usually have learned English to some degree and they prefer to continue it.

As mentioned earlier, there are two kinds of placement tests in English institutes in Iran, written and oral. The written tests are directly evaluating knowledge through different questions on grammars, vocabularies and comprehension tests and so forth. But these written tests have some deficiencies, they are costly and time consuming for supervisors as well as students, it takes time for students to take and it is stressful but definitely it has good points as well. They can evaluate the English knowledge comprehensively and make a better judgement, whereas oral tests, as it is exemplified in the recent research, significantly follow the principles of interviews in three point of views. They look like interviews. They are taken easily and since the questions are not directly about vocabularies and structures, they decrease the stress of students. But definitely they are not totally comprehensive. Therefore, it is recommended to managers and supervisors of English institutes to decide about this important question whether it is possible to substitute the oral tests and eliminate the written ones. Generally, it may take a long time to make a suitable decision about this matter. Definitely, as mentioned earlier, each kind of test has shortcomings and advantages it is not possible to eliminate one of them but theycould come to a better conclusion, perhaps the best choice is a combination of both tests. A short written test accompanied with a friendly interview can be a very reasonable way to receive the best answer. Totally, it is a perfect issue for researchers in Iran to work on.

Another issue is that it is important all institutes in Iran apply similar placement tests. Nowadays because different institutes have used different materials, therefore their placement tests are different, they are based on the policy of each institute and the managers and the methods. In researcher's point of view, it is a deficiencybecause although the books used for teaching and the methods are different but they all have same aim and they have to reach to same point. Therefore it is possible to have similar placement tests. But the best solution is in the first

step, it is recommended to all institutes to use the similar materials and in second step it is recommended to use the similar placement tests. To achieve this point, it is possible to build a team of notable English teachers from different institutes, gather together to reach to an ultimate answer to the question and afterwards,to make a comprehensive placement test. It will be so crucial problem but necessary and vital. It needs great deal of work and research but valuable and important for English learning in Iran, which is an important concern for years.

References

Arnold, J., Dörnyei, Z.,& Pugliese, C. (2015). *The Principled Communicative Approach: Seven criteria for success.* London: Helbling.

Bachman, L.F. (1988). Problems in Examining the Validity of the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 10(2), 149-164.

Best, J. & Kahn, J. (2006).*Research in Education.* Boston: Pearson Education Inc.

Brown, J. (1988). *Understanding Research in Second Language Learning.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, J. D. (2001). *Using Surveys in Language Programs.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, J.D. (1989). Improving ESL Placement Tests Using Two Perspectives. *TESOL Quarterly*, 23(1), 65-83.

Brown, J.D. (2012). Testing Spoken Language: A Handbook of Oral Testing Techniques. *TESOL Quarterly*, 23(1), 144-145.

Bryman, A. (2001). *Social Research Methods.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dafouz, E., Hunttner, J., & Smit,U. (2018). New Contexts, New Challenges for TESOL: Understanding Disciplinary Reasoning in Oral Interactions in English-Medium Instruction. *TESOL Quarterly*, 52(3), 540-563

Dobakhti, L. (2016). A Genre Analysis of Discussion Sections of Qualitative Research Articles in Applied Linguistics. *Journal of language teaching and research*, 6(7), 1383-1389.

Dornyei, Z. (2007). *Research Methods Applied Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford university press.

Dörnyei, Z. (2010). *Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, administration, and processing.* New York: Routledge.

Duff, P.A. & Block, D. (2012). Interview Research in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34(4), 757-763

Chapelle, C.A.& Duff, P.A.(2003).Some Guidelines for Conducting Quantitative and Qualitative Research in TESOL. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(1), 157-178

Hokeje, B., & Linnel, K. (1994). "Authenticity" in Language Testing: Evaluating Spoken Language Tests for International Teaching Assistants. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28(1), 103-126.

Holliday, A. (2002). *Doing and Writing Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Kim, H.R., Bowles, M., Yan, X., & Chung, S.J. (2018). Assessing Writing, *Article in press*, 36(1), 49-62.

Kormos, J. (2012). Questionnaires in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration and Processing. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(4), 773-774.

Kvale, S. (1983). The qualitative research interview: A phenomenological and a hermeneutical mode of understanding. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 14(2), 171-196.

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing,* Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Kvale, S. (2007). *Doing Interviews*, London: Sage.

Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, Los Angeles: Sage.

Lazaraton, A. (1995). Qualitative Research in Applied Linguistics: A Progress Report. *TESOL Quarterly*, 29(3), 455-472

Ling, G., Wolf, M.K., Cho,Y., &Wang,Y. (2014). The English Placement Test at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. *ETS Research Report Series*, 48(2), 284-287.

Lynch, B.K., & Davidson, F. (1994). Criterion-Referenced Language Test Development: Linking Curricula, Teachers, and Tests. *TESOL Quarterly,* 28(4), 727-743.

McDonough, J., & McDonough, S. (1997). *Research Methods for English Language Teachers*. London: Arnold.

Patton, Q. M. (1987). *How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation*. London: Sage.

Patton, Q. M. (2015). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, Los Angeles: Sage.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods. Los Angeles: Sage.

Roever,C., & McNamara, T. (2007). Language testing: the social dimension. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics,* 16(2), 242-258.

Ross, S. & Berwick, R. (1992). The Discourse of Accommodation in Oral Proficiency Interviews. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 14(2), 159-176.

ShirinzadehAghdam, Z. & Farahani, A.A. (2012). Speaking as an Indicator of General Proficiency in Placement test: *Journal of English and literature*, 3(6), 136-149.

Sims, J.M & Kunnan, A.J. (2016). Developing Evidence for a Validity Argument for an English Placement Exam from Multi-Year Test Performance Data. *Language Testing in Asia*, 6:1

Weaver, J.E. (1981). Language Tests at School. *TESOL Quarterly*, 15(3), 336-344.

Weller, S.C., Vickers, B., Bernard, H.R., Blackburn, A.M., Borgatti, S., Gravlee, C.C., & Johnson, J.C. (2018). Open-ended interview questions and saturation. *PLoS ONE,* 13(6).

Young, R. & Milanovic, M. (1992). Discourse Variation in Oral Proficiency Interviews. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 14(4), 403-424.

Zhou, W. (2016). Investigating the Construct Validity of Communicative Proficiency in TEP (Oral) at Level B. *Journal of language teaching and research*, 7(4), 690-699.