NES

PROFILE

English to Speakers of Other Languages (507)

PEARSON

# NES Profile: English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) (507)

Overview

This *NES Profile* provides information about the test, including the approximate percentage of the total test score derived from each content domain. The complete set of the content domains, the test framework, is provided here and contains all of the competencies and descriptive statements that define the content of the test.

This *NES Profile* includes the following materials:

» the test competencies associated with each content domain

» a set of descriptive statements that further explain each competency

» sample test questions aligned to the competencies

» any applicable reference materials, as noted below

Test Field	English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) (507)
Test Format	Multiple-choice questions
Number of Questions	Approximately 150
Test Duration	Up to 3 hours
Reference Materials	None required
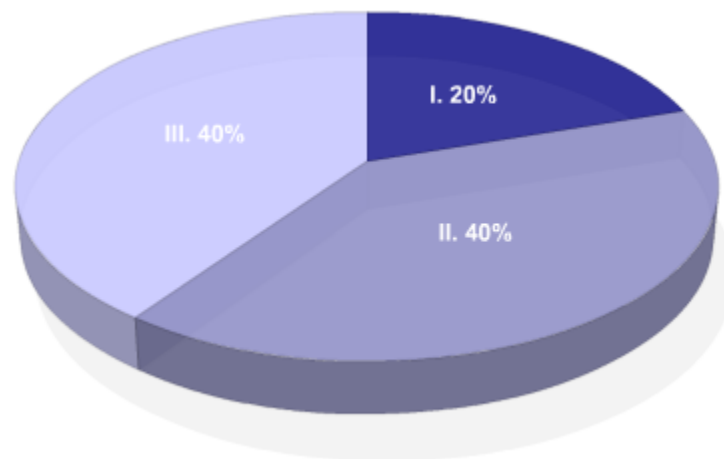
Key	Approximate Percentage of Test	Content Domain	Range of Competencies
	20%	I. Foundations of Language and Language Acquisition	0001–0002
	40%	II. Foundations of ESOL Instruction	0003–0006
	40%	III. Instruction and Assessment of English Language Learners	0007–0010

Content Domain I: Foundations of Language and Language Acquisition

Competencies:

0001 Understand linguistic and sociolinguistic concepts as applied to ESOL instruction.

Descriptive Statements:

» Demonstrate knowledge of phonology and how to apply this knowledge to ESOL instruction.

» Demonstrate knowledge of morphology and how to apply this knowledge to ESOL instruction.

» Demonstrate knowledge of syntax and semantics and how to apply this knowledge to ESOL instruction.

» Demonstrate knowledge of oral and written forms of discourse and how to apply this knowledge to ESOL instruction.

» Demonstrate knowledge of pragmatics and how to apply this knowledge to ESOL instruction.

» Demonstrate knowledge of English language variations, including registers and dialects, and how to apply this knowledge to ESOL instruction.

Sample Item:

Use the sentence below to answer the question that follows.

The speaker lectured on the Golden Gate Bridge.

The sentence best illustrates which of the following linguistic concepts?

A. structural ambiguity

B. the effect of intonation on meaning

C. semantic ambiguity

D. the effect of register on meaning

Correct Response and Explanation

C. This question requires the examinee to understand linguistic concepts as applied to ESOL instruction. The meaning of this sentence is ambiguous because it can be interpreted in multiple ways. One interpretation is that the speaker gave a lecture about the topic of the Golden Gate Bridge. Another interpretation is that the speaker was standing on the Golden Gate Bridge when he or she gave a lecture. Because of this possibility for multiple interpretations of meaning, the sentence is semantically ambiguous.

0002 Understand theories and processes of language acquisition and literacy development as applied to L1, L2, and ESOL instruction.

Descriptive Statements:

» Apply knowledge of historical and current theories and research in language acquisition (for L1 and L2), including the role of L1 in L2 acquisition and the nature of bilingualism/multilingualism.

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» Apply knowledge of historical and current theories and research in L1 and L2 literacy development, including the role of L1 literacy in L2 literacy development and concepts and challenges related to literacy development in English.

» Apply knowledge of stages and sequences of second-language acquisition, including differences between social- and academic-language development and characteristic features of different English language proficiency levels (i.e., beginning, intermediate, and advanced).

» Apply knowledge of individual, academic, and sociopolitical factors that can affect L2 acquisition and development.

» Apply knowledge of cognitive, metacognitive, and social/communicative language-learning strategies that support L2 acquisition and development.

Sample Item:

A high school English language learner is making very slow progress in acquiring communicative competence in English. The student only produces short phrases orally or in writing for fear of "saying it wrong" and frequently consults a bilingual dictionary when encountering a new word, even when the context provides clear clues to the word's meaning. This student's acquisition of English would likely benefit most from instruction designed to promote development of:

    A.   grammatical accuracy.

    B.   language automaticity.

    C.   intrinsic motivation.

    D.   language transfer.

Correct Response and Explanation

B. This question requires the examinee to understand processes of language acquisition as applied to ESOL instruction. This English language learner's English language skills lack fluency. The student's concern with language forms and desire for accuracy is hindering his or her ability to communicate fluently in English. Developing the ability to process language more automatically will improve this student's fluency and communicative competence in English.

Content Domain II: Foundations of ESOL Instruction

Competencies:

0003 Understand the role of culture in language learning and academic achievement and how to apply this knowledge to ESOL instruction.

Descriptive Statements:

» Apply knowledge of the content of culture (e.g., values and beliefs) and the effects of cross-cultural differences in the classroom and school.

» Apply knowledge of sociocultural variables that can affect L2 acquisition and development, including the role of cultural identity in language development and the effects of racism, stereotyping, and discrimination on language learning and academic achievement.

» Apply knowledge of cultural differences in communication styles and effective cross-cultural communication techniques.

» Demonstrate knowledge of how to create a culturally inclusive learning community that promotes all students' language learning and academic achievement.

Sample Item:

Several English language learners in a second-grade class have recently emigrated from the same country. The teacher observes that these students often arrive late to school and also tend to continue engaging in an activity after other members of the class have moved on to the next activity. As a result, the new students often find themselves engaging in activities on a different schedule than the other students in the class. Which of the following questions should the teacher consider *first* when trying to determine the most likely source of the students' difficulty?

A. Do concepts of time in the students' home culture differ from typical time expectations in U.S. schools?

B. Are the students experiencing stress at home that may be hindering their emotional adjustment to the new culture?

C. Do the students have learning disabilities that may be interfering with their ability to manage their time effectively?

D. Are the students feeling accepted and comfortable in the school environment?

Correct Response and Explanation

A. This question requires the examinee to understand the role of culture in language learning and academic achievement and how to apply this knowledge to ESOL instruction. Different cultures have different values related to time. In the typical U.S. classroom, punctuality is highly valued and time is highly structured. Some other cultures place less significance on punctuality and adherence to a schedule. Students from these cultures often have difficulty adjusting to the time constraints of the U.S. classroom. Because these students are newly arrived English language learners from the same home culture and are experiencing common difficulties associated with cross-cultural differences in concepts of time, cultural factors should be this teacher's first consideration in this situation.

0004 Understand principles of standards-based ESOL instruction, including appropriate application of ESOL instructional approaches and resources.

Descriptive Statements:

» Demonstrate knowledge of characteristics, goals, and research on the effectiveness of various models and types of ESOL programs.

» Demonstrate knowledge of the historical and research bases of past and current ESOL teaching approaches and methodologies.

» Demonstrate knowledge of how to plan standards-based ESOL instruction that is based on assessment results and allows for differentiation for students at varying levels of English language and literacy development.

» Demonstrate knowledge of criteria and methods for selecting, adapting, and designing ESOL instructional resources.

» Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for using materials, resources, and technologies for a variety of instructional purposes to support standards-based language and content instruction for English language learners.

» Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for using technology to enhance effective teaching and learning in the ESOL classroom.

Sample Item:

Which of the following historical trends in ESOL instruction has had the most direct effect on current approaches to ESOL instruction?

A.   a movement away from immersion toward greater use of the L1 in instruction

B.   an increased emphasis on accurate production of oral language under carefully structured conditions

C.   a shift in focus from explicit learning of language to implicit acquisition of language

D.   an increased emphasis on communicative functions and authentic uses of language

Correct Response and Explanation

D. This question requires the examinee to understand principles of standards-based ESOL instruction, including appropriate application of ESOL instructional approaches. Communicative competence can be defined as the ability to use language appropriately for various purposes in various situations. A primary emphasis of most current approaches to ESOL instruction is to develop English language learners' communicative competence. This emphasis has its roots in the trend of the 1990s toward communicative language teaching, which is characterized by a focus on communicative functions and authentic uses of language.

0005 Understand concepts and issues related to assessment of English language learners.

Descriptive Statements:

» Demonstrate knowledge of different types of assessments used in ESOL programs and classrooms, including quality indicators of assessment instruments (e.g., validity, reliability).

» Demonstrate knowledge of various purposes of assessment in ESOL programs and classrooms and strategies for communicating assessment results to stakeholders.

» Recognize the importance of, and strategies for, using multiple measures of assessment, aligning assessment with relevant language and content-area standards and objectives, and conducting ongoing assessment to inform ESOL instruction.

» Apply knowledge of how to interpret the results of standardized assessments with respect to English language learners.

Sample Item:

A high school ESOL teacher is choosing a standards-based assessment to measure the academic achievement of English language learners. Which of the following questions should be the teacher's most important consideration when evaluating the appropriateness of a potential test for this purpose?

    A.   Are students familiar with the format of the test?

    B.   Is the test recommended by other secondary educators?

    C.   Are students likely to find the test interesting and engaging?

    D.   Is the test free of cultural and linguistic bias?

Correct Response and Explanation

D. This question requires the examinee to understand concepts and issues related to assessment of English language learners. Many standards-based achievement assessments designed for native speakers of English contain culture-specific content and complex language that can hinder English language learners' ability to demonstrate their actual knowledge of academic content. While other factors, such as lack of familiarity with test format, can be addressed during test preparation, cultural and linguistic bias is much more difficult to prepare students for. Therefore, choosing a test that is relatively free of bias should be this teacher's most important consideration in this situation.

0006 Understand how ESOL instruction is impacted by national laws and policies, personal professional development, and school and community partnerships.

Descriptive Statements:

» Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of significant legal decisions and national legislation on ESOL programs.

» Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for establishing professional goals and pursuing professional growth opportunities in the field of ESOL.

» Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for collaborating with colleagues to provide English language learners with comprehensive, challenging educational opportunities.

» Demonstrate knowledge of strategies for serving as a professional ESOL resource in the school community.

» Demonstrate knowledge of the role of family and community in English language learners' development and strategies for building partnerships with families and community members.

Sample Item:

An ESOL teacher would like to serve as a resource for content-area teachers who work with English language learners. Which of the following strategies would be most appropriate and effective for this purpose?

    A.   providing the teachers with current journal articles that describe the importance of differentiating content instruction for English language learners

    B.   visiting the teachers' classes routinely to monitor the class curriculum and recommend modifications to meet the needs of English language learners

    C.   offering the teachers interactive workshops that provide concrete strategies for supporting English language learners' language development and content learning

    D.   reviewing the teachers' lesson plans to ensure that adequate consideration is being given to English language learners' cultural and linguistic differences

Correct Response and Explanation

C. This question requires the examinee to understand how ESOL instruction is impacted by school partnerships. When serving as a resource for content-area teachers, an ESOL teacher should establish him- or herself as an expert in the field of ESOL while respecting the content-area teachers as experts in their areas of specialty. The ESOL teacher should also treat content-area teachers as equal partners in the endeavor of educating English language learners. One particularly useful strategy for fulfilling this role effectively is to offer professional workshops that provide content-area teachers with concrete, practical ideas for working with the English language learners in their classrooms.

Content Domain III: Instruction and Assessment of English Language Learners

Competencies:

0007 Understand research-based best practices in ESOL instruction.

Descriptive Statements:

» Apply knowledge of strategies for creating, organizing, and managing a supportive, student-centered learning community for English language learners.

» Apply knowledge of research-based best practices for promoting English language development, including providing opportunities for comprehensible input and output, providing appropriate feedback, and integrating listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

» Apply knowledge of strategies for supporting the language development and academic achievement of individual English language learners, including students who have had limited formal schooling (LFS), have special needs, and/or are gifted and talented.

» Apply knowledge of research-based best practices in vocabulary instruction to support English language learners' listening, speaking, reading, and writing development in English.

Sample Item:

An ESOL teacher explicitly teaches beginning-level English language learners conversational strategies (e.g., elaboration, circumlocution). The teacher also regularly arranges for the students to practice these strategies in conversations with partners who are at varying levels of English proficiency. This instructional approach supports the students' English language development primarily by:

    A. promoting their ability to produce comprehensible language output.

    B. helping them understand differences between social and academic language functions.

    C. providing them with exposure to different English language varieties.

    D. enhancing their awareness of the influence of social context on language use.

Correct Response and Explanation

A. This question requires the examinee to understand research-based best practices in ESOL instruction. A vital component of effective communication is conveying a comprehensible message. Successful language learners compensate for their language deficiencies by using conversational strategies, such as elaborating to clarify meaning and using known words to explain an unknown word, to make their messages comprehensible. Teaching English language learners how to use such strategies and giving them practice applying the strategies in conversation promotes their ability to produce the comprehensible language output that is essential for effective communication.

0008 Understand how to assess and promote English language learners' oral and aural language development in English.

Descriptive Statements:

» Apply knowledge of classroom-based assessment of English language learners' oral and aural language development in English.

» Apply knowledge of instructional practices that promote English language learners' development of listening skills and strategies for a variety of social purposes.

» Apply knowledge of instructional practices that promote English language learners' development of speaking skills and strategies for a variety of social purposes.

» Apply knowledge of instructional practices that promote English language learners' development of listening skills and strategies for a variety of academic purposes.

» Apply knowledge of instructional practices that promote English language learners' development of speaking skills and strategies for a variety of academic purposes.

Sample Item:

An ESOL teacher records an English language learner responding to several open-ended questions that require the student to describe a personal experience or express a personal opinion. Afterward, the student and teacher listen to and discuss the recording. This strategy is likely to support the student's English language development in which of the following ways?

A. helping the student recognize various rhetorical devices used in oral discourse

B. promoting the student's ability to use appropriate pragmatic conventions in various communicative situations

C. providing the student with practice using correct grammatical structures in spontaneous speech

D. developing the student's ability to use self-assessment to monitor the effectiveness of oral language production

Correct Response and Explanation

D. This question requires the examinee to understand how to assess and promote English language learners' oral and aural language development in English. There are a number of advantages of recording English language learners' speech. The capability to pause and replay the recording allows one to analyze short segments of language. The exercise of hearing one's speech from the perspective of a third-party listener prompts one to evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of oral communication. These qualities of recorded speech make it an especially beneficial strategy for developing English language learners' ability to self-assess their oral language production.

0009 Understand how to assess and promote English language learners' literacy development in English.

Descriptive Statements:

» Apply knowledge of classroom-based assessment of English language learners' reading development in English.

» Apply knowledge of classroom-based assessment of English language learners' writing development in English.

» Apply knowledge of instructional strategies for promoting English language learners' beginning reading and writing development in English.

» Apply knowledge of instructional practices that promote English language learners' development of reading skills and strategies for a variety of social and academic purposes.

» Apply knowledge of instructional practices that promote English language learners' development of writing skills and strategies for a variety of social and academic purposes.

Sample Item:

A high school ESOL class is working on an essay writing unit. Which of the following strategies would be most effective for the ESOL teacher to use during the unit to promote the students' accurate use of standard English grammar in their essays?

A. having individual students take turns generating grammatically correct sentences to create a collaborative class essay on the board

B. giving individual students focused corrective feedback on their recurring grammatical errors as part of the essay revision process

C. providing the students with grammatically correct sample essays and having them read and analyze the essays independently

D. asking the students to try to identify grammatical errors as they listen to classmates read their essays aloud during the publication process

Correct Response and Explanation

B. This question requires the examinee to understand how to promote English language learners' literacy development in English. Effective writing instruction for English language learners balances writing fluency with grammatical accuracy. Focusing too much on grammatical forms in the early stages of the writing process can impede a student's ability to communicate ideas fluently. In addition, form-focused instruction is most effective when it is provided within meaningful contexts and targets a few critical errors that students make repeatedly. Therefore, the best approach to promoting these students' accurate use of language forms is to give them focused corrective feedback on their recurring grammatical errors in the revision stage of the writing process.

0010 Understand how to assess English language learners' content-area learning and support their access to the core curriculum.

Descriptive Statements:

» Apply knowledge of classroom-based assessment of English language learners' content-area learning and concept development.

» Demonstrate knowledge of principles, features, and applications of content-based approaches to ESOL instruction and of sheltered approaches to content instruction.

» Apply knowledge of instructional strategies for making academic language and content-area concepts comprehensible for English language learners, including developing authentic uses of academic language and scaffolding content-area tasks.

» Apply knowledge of instructional strategies for promoting English language learners' development of important learning skills and strategies, including critical-thinking skills, to support their content-area learning.

Sample Item:

To introduce middle school English language learners to a particular note-taking technique, an ESOL teacher plays a video recording of a short content-area lecture in segments, while modeling the note-taking technique on the board using student input. This strategy is likely to support English language learners' content-area learning primarily by:

  A.   contextualizing new content-area vocabulary for students.

  B.   helping students link content-area concepts to prior experiences.

  C.   simplifying content-area concepts for students.

  D.   scaffolding students' use of content-area learning strategies.

Correct Response and Explanation

D. This question requires the examinee to understand how to support English language learners' access to the core curriculum. Scaffolding a new content-area strategy, such as a particular note-taking technique, involves facilitating students' proficiency with the strategy through temporary support that is gradually removed until the students have mastered the strategy. An important step in the scaffolding process is providing students with clear models of the strategy before asking them to practice and then apply the strategy independently. This teacher's approach of playing a video in segments and encouraging student contributions while demonstrating the note-taking technique on the board is an excellent example of how to provide English language learners with a clear model of a content-area strategy in order to scaffold their use of the strategy.