

Conducting Spoken Tests are still a big challenge in most of the ELT scenarios

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According to the latest ELT trends, improving communicative skills has become the major concern of most of the English language teaching programmes. Although it has become the major concern, testing oral skills has not yet proven to be an easy task. Oral tests can often be difficult to design, administer and mark. Therefore, there are number of aspects that we need to pay attention to, when designing, conducting and marking oral tests. Starting from the availability of necessary resources, elicitation techniques, marking criteria that are used to score the test and the authenticity/the validity of the test have predominant roles to play in achieving the intended goals of the test. Although all the above mentioned aspects are necessary to reach a better outcome, this research gives much focus on the authenticity of the oral tests that are conducted in ELT scenarios. In order to retain the authenticity, the test needs to be related to real-life situations. Yet, this technique is not completely fault proof as defining 'the real-world' can be problematic sometimes. On the other hand, scoring these oral tests can be challenging as they allow subjectivity when assessing and this again affects the authenticity of the test. Thus, the major intention of this research is to find out the reasons as to why it is difficult to retain the authenticity of the oral tests, by observing the data gathered through a speech test, that was conducted in a particular Sri Lankan university context and analyzing the information provided by the examiners of the test in the form of interviews and questionnaires.

Key words: Oral test, Authenticity, Real-life situations, Subjectivity when assessing