

# Addendum: English Language Proficiency Assessments for California Usability Pilot Report: A Final Report

The purpose of this addendum to the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California Usability Pilot Report is to provide updates on the changes that were implemented based on the findings and recommendations from the April 2019 Usability Pilot, and to provide a path forward for continuous improvement.

**Contract #CN140284**

**Prepared for the California Department of Education by Educational Testing Service**

**Presented September 24, 2019**

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Table of Contents

[Overview 1](#_Toc20210428)

[Implementation of Recommendations 2](#_Toc20210429)

[Recommendation 1: Improve Test Familiarity Materials 2](#_Toc20210430)

[Recommendation 2: Create Educator Resource Materials 5](#_Toc20210431)

[Recommendation 3: Allow Single-listen for Listening Stimuli 7](#_Toc20210432)

[Recommendation 4: Deliver Recorded Audio Files for Listening Test through the Testing Interface 8](#_Toc20210433)

[Recommendation 5: Increase Accessibility Resources Familiarity 8](#_Toc20210434)

[Recommendation 6: Increase Technology Familiarity 11](#_Toc20210435)

[Recommendation 7: Simplify the Administration of the Speaking Test 12](#_Toc20210436)

[Recommendation 8: Improve the Directions for Administration 13](#_Toc20210437)

[Recommendation 9: Enhance Training for Test Examiners 14](#_Toc20210438)

[Path Toward Continuous Improvement 16](#_Toc20210439)

## Overview

The purpose of this addendum is to articulate how the recommendations presented in Section 8 of *English Language Proficiency Assessments for California Usability Pilot: A Final Report* (hereafter referred to as “*ELPAC Usability Pilot Report*”) were implemented for the October 2019 field test.

In reviewing this addendum, it is important to note the following characteristics of the usability pilot that was conducted in April 2019:

* The usability pilot was a small-scale study that was conducted at the earliest stage of the development of the computer-based English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (ELPAC), prior to the large-scale conversion of paper-based ELPAC items to a computer-based format.
* Because the study was conducted at the initial stages of the development, it is possible that additional training for students and test examiners as well as refinement to the *Directions for Administration* (*DFAs)* may have ameliorated some of the initial usability challenges that were experienced and might have remedied themselves as users gained more familiarity with the platform.
* The study was limited to a small sample size due to its one-on-one, intensive data collection methodology. Thus, it is possible that other students with different characteristics not represented in the sample may experience different outcomes when interacting with the computer-based ELPAC.
* A convenience sample was used to collect the data. Although six schools across two local educational agencies (LEAs) participated in the study, and were selected because they represented the key variables of interest, the sample was not representative of geographic diversity across the state of California.

Therefore, while wide-spread generalizations cannot be made based on the results of the study, it has provided valuable information on how to better improve the conversion of the ELPAC task types and computer-based administration.

## Implementation of Recommendations

In this section, the recommendations listed in Section 8 of the *ELPAC Usability Pilot Report* are presented alongside the implemented actions.

### Recommendation 1: Improve Test Familiarity Materials

Improve test familiarity materials (tutorials, training tests, practice tests) to ensure students are prepared to take the computer-based ELPAC and test examiners are prepared to administer it.

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1.1** | Ensure that the full suite of test familiarity materials as planned (including tutorials, training tests, and practice tests) is developed and made available as scheduled in advance of the field test and the operational launch. | Training tests, practice tests, and tutorials are all under development. Training tests and tutorials will be released in September 2019, which is before the October 2019 field test. Practice tests will be released in November 2019, which is before the February 1, 2020 opening of the Summative ELPAC administration window. | September 2019 and November 2019 |
| **1.2** | Clearly communicate to LEAs a strong recommendation that test examiners and students participating in the field test take the training tests prior to the field test. | LEA ELPAC trainers and test examiners attending the Administration and Scoring Training for the Field Test and Summative administrations will be instructed to bring a mobile device to the training to practice test administration using the training tests. | September–October 2019 |

Recommendation 1 table *(continuation one)*

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1.3** | Provide explicit training and direction for test examiners and students about the need to use the scroll bar that is built into the test delivery system to minimize the risk of usability difficulties interfering with students’ ability to navigate items and enter responses. | Use of the technological platform is incorporated into the training of educators during the in-person training. | October 2019 |
| **1.4** | Along with the training tests, provide test examiners the opportunity to practice using all platforms and tools that will be used to administer the Speaking domain, including the speech-capture tools, the Data Entry Interface (DEI), and the *DFAs*. | LEA ELPAC trainers and test examiners attending the Administration and Scoring Training will be instructed to bring an electronic device to the training to practice test administration using the training tests. Administration videos will be shown and available for LEAs to use in their local training that show the administration and scoring of the Speaking domain, including the DEI, one-on-one kindergarten through grade two administration, and group administration grades three through twelve. | September–November 2019 |
| **1.5** | Before the operational administration, make available full-length practice tests that represent the item types, task types, and content that students can expect to experience on an operational computer-based ELPAC. | Full-length practice tests will be released on the [ELPAC](https://elpac.org/) website in November 2019. | November 2019 |

Recommendation 1 table *(continuation two)*

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1.6** | Provide resources for educators, including test examiners, about key administration features of the computer-based ELPAC (i.e., technical specifications manual, test administration manual, etc.). | Use of the technological platform is incorporated into the in-person training. Additionally, resources such as a technical specifications manual and test administration manual will be released ahead of the field test. | October 2019 |
| **1.7** | Communicate the changes and new features of the computer-based ELPAC prior to the field test, including, but not limited to, the following topics:   * + Listening stimuli played only once except in scenarios described in Proposed Action 3.1   + Reading on the screen for kindergarten through grade two   + Recording, replaying, and re-recording Speaking responses   + Available accessibility resources including computer assistance for students who need those resources   + Test examiners’ roles in providing assistance in computer and interface navigation | LEA ELPAC trainers and test examiners attending the Administration and Scoring Training will have printed materials and videos that communicate the changes and new features of the computer-based ELPAC. | September–November 2019 |

Recommendation 1 table *(continuation three)*

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1.8** | Develop communication materials to inform educators, administrators, and parents about key features and changes made in the computer-based ELPAC. | Communications around preparing technology for the computer-based ELPAC, new embedded accessibility resources, and use of the Technology Readiness Checker for Students (TRCS) have been developed and will be disseminated based on the timing of specific releases. | September–December 2019 | |
| **1.9** | For the Speaking domain, consider the inclusion of a practice item that requires test examiners and students to use the voice capture tools together. | The new Speaking *DFAs* include student and test examiner practice questions as part of the voice capture check in TDS. There are also instructions related to voice capture. | July–August 2019 | |
| **1.10** | Create an interactive tutorial that will help teachers and test examiners determine if a student needs additional support in navigating the online test as well as orient students to the testing platform. | The TRCS resource will be created for students to engage in common actions on a technological platform. Guidelines will also be created to provide teachers and test examiners with suggestions for additional resources that a student might need based on the outcome of their TRCS report. | September 2019 | |
| **1.11** | Consider making domain-specific tutorials in different languages in order to help students orient to each domain. | Translated test directions will be provided in the top three primary languages in California as an available support to orient students to each domain. | September 2019 | |

### Recommendation 2: Create Educator Resource Materials

Create resource materials for educators and test examiners to help determine if students are ready to take the computer-based ELPAC under typical conditions.

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2.1** | Create a checklist (or resource) of students’ computer and technology skills to navigate essential and optional tools or features of the computer-based ELPAC for students and test examiners. | An online resource, TRCS, has been created to help educators determine a student’s familiarity with interactions on a technological platform. | September 2019 |

### Recommendation 3: Allow Single-listen for Listening Stimuli

Allow students to listen only once to audio stimuli on the Listening test.

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **3.1** | Before the field test, implement an item-level setting and configuration of Listening stimuli. This setting would allow students to listen to Listening stimuli only one time and listen to stems and options multiple times. Exceptions, wherein students are assigned the designated support that allows the students to listen to stimuli multiple times, would be managed via a test setting that would be entered in the Test Operations Management System (TOMS). | The settings to limit the playback of Listening stimuli to one time and to allow students with a designated support of listening to a stimuli multiple times will be used in the practice test and all operational tests. | November 2019 |
| **3.2** | Another option to consider is posting the audio files to TOMS and having test examiners stream them, similar to what is done for the paper-based ELPAC. | Because Proposed Action 3.1 was implemented, this option did not need to be implemented. | N/A |

### Recommendation 4: Deliver Recorded Audio Files for Listening Test through the Testing Interface

Maintain recorded audio files for Listening stimuli on the kindergarten and grade one Listening tests, similar to the grades two through eight Listening tests.

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **4.1** | Maintain administering Listening with audio recordings at kindergarten and grade one. | The training tests, the practice tests, and all operational tests will include audio files for kindergarten and grade one students. | July 2019 |
| **4.2** | Add directions to item-level audio files that prompt the student to point to the answer or state the answer. | The audio files for kindergarten and grade one students direct the student to point to the answer when the options are pictures. For text options, students are directed to say their answer. | July 2019 |

### Recommendation 5: Increase Accessibility Resources Familiarity

Increase familiarity and practice of accessibility resources for both test examiners and students.

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **5.1** | Provide test examiners and students opportunities to learn about and try out accessibility resources on ELPAC task types outside of the formal test-taking experience through the use of practice tests, training tests, and tutorials. These opportunities should be provided so that, ideally, students are not getting their initial exposure immediately preceding or during the test. | Training tests, practice tests, and tutorials are all under development. Training tests and tutorials will be released in September 2019, which is before the October 2019 field test. Practice tests will be released in November 2019, which is before the February 1, 2020 opening of the Summative ELPAC administration window. | September–November 2019 |

Recommendation 5 table *(continuation one)*

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **5.2** | Provide explicit direction for test examiners in their training, as well as their *DFAs*, to use universal tools. Aspects of training particularly relevant to accessibility resources include   * + providing test examiners of kindergarten, grade one, and grade two test-administration training on how to use appropriate accessibility resources for their students (e.g., setting up streamline mode or using expand passages features or line reader to track text on the screen); | Listening, Reading, and Writing *DFAs* contain language in the “Before Testing” and “During Testing” portions of the front matter that addresses these subjects as appropriate for each grade.  Below are examples of bullets from the front matter:   * + If desired, set up any additional resources (e.g., large mouse cursor) to facilitate administration of the computer-based ELPAC.   + Where appropriate, use the universal tools (zoom, line reader, etc.) introduced during test examiner training and described in Matrix 4. | July 2019 |

Recommendation 5 table *(continuation two)*

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **5.2** | * + setting up any additional resources (e.g., large mouse cursor) to facilitate administration of the computer-based ELPAC; and   + adding directions in training and *DFAs* to remind students to use the resources built into the platform, not those in the specific device (e.g., zoom using the test delivery system, not the track pad or touch screen) to minimize risk of unforeseen usability challenges (e.g., a student zooming beyond what is allowed by the built-in test delivery system constraints). | * + To minimize risk of unforeseen usability challenges, use the resources built into the platform, not affordances of the specific device, to adjust settings (e.g., zoom using the test delivery system, not the track pad or touch screen). | July 2019 |

### Recommendation 6: Increase Technology Familiarity

Provide appropriate supports to ensure level of familiarity with technology does not impede a student’s ability to take the computer-based ELPAC.

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **6.1** | Explore the possibility of making supports available to help younger students who may not be comfortable reading stimuli in the Reading section on a computer screen. | Two new supports were added to Matrix Four to assist students who do not have enough experience with technology to navigate through the test delivery system alone, and to assist students who cannot enter their responses without support. The Test Navigation Assistant has been added as a non-embedded universal tool and the Designated Interface Assistant has been added as a non-embedded designated support. Print-on-demand has been added as an embedded designated support so students who may not be comfortable reading on the computer screen will have the opportunity to print the items, if the test examiner feels this is necessary. | June 2019 |
| **6.2** | Provide comprehensive communication around Matrix Four: Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations for the ELPAC and the Individual Student Assessment Accessibility Profile process. Test examiners should be made familiar with the enhanced accessibility resources allowed for the computer-based ELPAC during training and reinforced through reminders in the *DFAs*. | An ELPAC Accessibility Framework has been created which covers guidelines for the use of accessibility resources. This will be communicated to the field when the ELPAC regulations are approved. | September 2019 |

### Recommendation 7: Simplify the Administration of the Speaking Test

Simplify the Speaking administration to make the administration of the test and scoring easier for the test examiner.

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **7.1** | Revise the Speaking-administration model such that test examiners are able to administer the Speaking test to the student utilizing just the student’s testing device and a Speaking *DFA*. In this model, test examiners would enter the student’s Speaking scores in the DEI immediately after the administration of Speaking, alleviating the need to coordinate the student’s screen and the DEI simultaneously. For example, provide mock score sheets within the Speaking *DFA* that would allow test examiners to still score in the moment and keep track of the scores that would be entered in the DEI immediately after the administration. | Speaking DFAs have been developed specific to each grade and grade span allowing the test examiner to read test directions and questions, and have access to rubrics, anchor samples, and prompting guidelines for test administration. The *DFAs* include a score sheet that test examiners may use to score in the moment and then enter the Speaking scores into the DEI upon completion of the administration. The Speaking *DFAs* are available in PDF and may be downloaded for optional printing. | July–August 2019 |
| **7.2** | Update the *DFAs* with specific directions for the test examiner to sit face-to-face with the student or at a 90-degree angle with the student while viewing the student testing interface between them. | The Speaking *DFA* has two diagramed options for seating arrangements for the test examiner and student. | July 2019 |

Recommendation 7 table *(continuation)*

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **7.3** | Update the *DFAs* with directions for the test examiner to begin the audio recording of Speaking responses before the test examiner asks the questions. Thus, the student would be able to provide a response immediately without waiting for the test examiner to begin the recording. | The Speaking *DFA* has incorporated directions for the test examiner to begin the audio recording of Speaking responses. For each test question, a [**Microphone**] icon [Image of microphone used to trigger test examiner to select the recording button in the Speaking domain.], has been placed before the SAY statement to provide an indicator and reminder to the test examiner to begin the recording. | July 2019 |

### Recommendation 8: Improve the Directions for Administration

Improve the organization of the *DFAs*.

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **8.1** | Put task-type administration directions within the domain where they are used instead of in tables at the beginning of the *DFAs*. | The Speaking *DFAs* are set up by task type, and the administration directions are embedded within the test examiner script. Notes to the test examiner and prompting guidelines are placed within each task type and if appropriate, each test question. | July 2019 |

Recommendation 8 table *(continuation)*

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **8.2** | For Speaking, ensure that there is complete consistency between what is on the screen and the language in the *DFAs*. Add scripting in the *DFAs* for transitions between task types and audio recording practice. Make the layout of the Speaking *DFA* very close to the previous version of the *Examiner’s Manual*, which is familiar to experienced test examiners. | Ensured there is consistency through internal quality checks and testing of the testing interface with the DFAs. The Speaking *DFAs* are a very close version of the *Examiner’s Manuals* where scripts, prompting, and pointing are all on the same page. For each test question, a [**Microphone**] icon [Image of microphone used to trigger test examiner to select the recording button in the Speaking domain.], has been placed before the SAY statement to provide an indicator and reminder to the test examiner to begin the recording. | July–August 2019 |

### Recommendation 9: Enhance Training for Test Examiners

Enhance training for test examiners.

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **9.1** | Ensure that the test examiner training is developed and delivered to test examiners in advance of the field test and the operational launch. Based on the experience of the usability pilot, make any adjustments to the plans for execution of this training that may improve its effectiveness while remaining within the scope of the current contract. | Twenty-two, day-long statewide trainings will be held for LEAs. The training will incorporate test administration for kindergarten through grade twelve and include videos of students and test examiners on the computer-based platform. Most of the day will focus on the administration and scoring of the Speaking domain. | September–November 2019 |

Recommendation 9 table *(continuation one)*

| # | **Proposed Action from the Report** | **Implementation** | **Implementation Date** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **9.2** | Consider having the current in-person trainings by the state focus on new computer-based technology and, in particular, on the one-on-one administrations of kindergarten through grade two and Speaking. | LEA ELPAC trainers and test examiners attending the Administration and Scoring Training will be instructed to bring an electronic device to the training to practice the administration using the training tests. | September–November 2019 |
| **9.3** | Use the training tests for kindergarten through grade two, and Speaking for all grade levels and grade spans, to model administration and allow participants to practice computer-based administration during the in-person trainings. | The training will have participants watch a video of the one-on-one kindergarten through grade two administration and participants will log on to the kindergarten training tests for practice. | September–November 2019 |
| **9.4** | Demonstrate exemplary administration models during in-person trainings. | Training videos will be created to demonstrate exemplary administration models and then shown during the trainings. | October 2019 |

## Path Toward Continuous Improvement

The transition to a computer-based assessment is significant for all stakeholders involved, especially the students. While the goals of the transition are to create consistency, take advantage of the computer-based assessment platform, and increase the range of available accessibility resources to enhance the students’ overall experience, the transition will require measured and thoughtful steps.

After developing the set of recommendations based on the findings of the April 2019 Usability Pilot, Educational Testing Service (ETS) conducted a follow-up meeting with 13 of the 19 test examiners who participated in the study on May 30, 2019. During the meeting, ETS reviewed each recommendation and proposed action, and planned for the implementation listed in this document. The test examiners conveyed positive feedback toward the planned implementation.

Upon completion of the field test in October 2019, ETS will distribute a post-test survey to participating LEAs to evaluate the efficacy of the implemented changes.

In addition, ETS will conduct follow-up focus groups with the test examiners who participated in both the usability pilot and field test to gather targeted feedback on the changes that were made from the usability pilot to the field test.

The California Department of Education and ETS are committed to facilitating the smooth transition to a computer-based ELPAC through a plan of continuous improvement. Each milestone activity will be supported by solicitation of feedback and engagement of stakeholders in order to inform improvements for future administrations.