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|  | **Inadequate** | **Fair** | **Adequate** | **Good** | **Excellent** |
| **Speaking Rate and Fluency** | Speaking pace makes utterances consistently difficult to comprehend, or disruptive to normal response and flow of partner response. Displays almost constant use of dysfluencies[[1]](#footnote-1) in manner that is disruptive to the partner responses, and/or receives partner negative sanction (e.g., frowns, statements of inappropriateness, furrowed brow, etc.) | Speaking pace makes utterances occasionally difficult to comprehend, or disruptive to normal response and flow of partner response. Displays frequent use of dysfluencies\* in manner that is disruptive to the partner responses, and/or receives partner negative sanction (e.g., frowns, statements of inappropriateness, furrowed brow, etc. | Speaking pace is, only a small number of instances, difficult to comprehend, or disruptive to normal response and flow of partner response. Displays occasional use of dysfluencies\* in manner that is disruptive to the partner responses, and/or receives partner negative sanction (e.g., frowns, statements of inappropriateness, furrowed brow, etc.). | Speaking pace is occasionally varied, and never seems to impair partner comprehension or response. Displays few dysfluencies\*, and those used do not appear to be disruptive to partner. | Speaking pace is varied compatibly with articulation and vocal variety so as to facilitate partner comprehension and response. Displays no noticeable dysfluencies\*. |
| **Vocalization** | Vocalizations are almost constantly nervous, shaky, breaking in pitch, and/or equivocal in tone or volume. Speaks with frequent errors, slurs, and/or incomprehensible utterances, resulting in frequent partner clarification gestures or statements. Speaks in an extremely monotonous manner without variation. Speaks at extremely quiet/soft or extremely loud level. | Vocalizations are frequently nervous, shaky, breaking in pitch, and/or equivocal in tone or volume.  Speaks with occasional errors, slurs, and/or incomprehensible utterances, resulting in occasional partner clarification gestures or statements. Speaks in a fairly monotonous manner with minimal variation. Speaks at very quiet/soft or very loud level. | Vocalizations are occasionally nervous, shaky, breaking in pitch, and/or equivocal in tone or volume. Speaks with only a small number of errors, slurs, and/or incomprehensible utterances, resulting in no noticeable partner clarification gestures or statements. Speaks in a somewhat monotonous manner with occasional variation. Speaks at somewhat quiet/soft or somewhat loud level. | Vocalizations are generally calm and/or forceful, firm, composed. Speaks with no noticeable errors, slurs, and/or incomprehensible utterances, and no noticeable partner clarification gestures or statements. Speaks with modulated and varied tonalities. Generally speaks at audible and comfortable level. | Vocalizations are consistently calm and/or forceful, firm, composed, assertive. Speaks with clearly comprehensible utterances, but not with excessive “clip” or stilted pronunciation. Speaks with frequent variation in tonality, but not excessively ‘cartoon-like’ or excessively animated fashion. Consistently speaks at audible, comfortable, and adaptive level. |
| **Non-Verbal Behaviors** | Constantly shifts posture and/or maintains rigid and stiff posture, unrelated to partner or context. Oriented directly away from partner in lean and body orientation/lean; or is severely oriented toward partner to the point of being intrusive. Very frequently plays with hair or other objects; engages in self-focused behaviors unrelated to the conversation. Constantly displays blank, uninterested or hypnotic gaze, or highly exaggerated, cartoon-like expressions, inconsistent with subject matter. Never nods head to indicate comprehension, agreement or acceptance, or nods constantly. Displays no gestures, or constantly displays excessively animated or numerous gestures. | Very frequently shifts posture and/or maintains rigid and stiff posture, generally unrelated to partner or context. Oriented strongly and obliquely away from partner in lean and/or body orientation/lean; or is frequently intrusive in orientation toward partner. Frequently plays with hair or other objects; engages in self-focused behaviors unrelated to the conversation. Frequently displays blank, uninterested or hypnotic gaze, or highly exaggerated, cartoon-like expressions, inconsistent with subject matter. Rarely nods head to indicate comprehension, agreement or acceptance, or nods frequently. Displays few gestures, or occasionally displays excessively animated or numerous gestures. | Frequently shifts posture and/or maintains rigid and stiff posture, often unrelated to partner or context. Oriented slightly and obliquely away from partner in lean and/or body orientation/lean; or slightly intrusive in orientation toward partner. Occasionally plays with hair or other objects; engages in self-focused behaviors unrelated to the conversation. Occasionally displays blank, uninterested or hypnotic gaze, or highly exaggerated, cartoon-like expressions, inconsistent with subject matter. Occasionally nods head to indicate comprehension, agreement or acceptance. Displays occasional gestures, or, a few gestures that are excessively animated. | Shifts posture occasionally, and appears comfortable. Oriented neutrally toward partner in lean and/or body orientation/lean, with occasional variability or shifts. Only very occasionally plays with hair or other objects; engages in self-focused behaviors unrelated to the conversation. Generally displays variation in facial affect consistent with subject matter and partner. Occasionally nods at topic or context at relevant times. Displays frequent gestures that do not interfere with conversation. | Maintains apparently comfortable posture, adapting to partner and context. Oriented obliquely toward partner in lean and/or body orientation, with occasional variability or shifts. Displays no noticeable displays of unmotivated movements. Consistently displays variation in facial affect consistent with subject matter and partner. Frequently nods at topic or context at relevant times. Displays frequent, complimentary gestures that facilitate and/or elaborate conversation. |
| **Turn-taking** | Never seeks information from partner, or constantly barrages partner with questions, or asks questions of excessive intimacy or privacy. Makes no effort to involve partner as a topic of conversation through comments or inquiries. Makes no comments about his/her own interests, attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. | Rarely seeks information from partner, or frequently barrages partner with questions, or asks questions of excessive intimacy or privacy. Rarely tries to involve partner as a topic of conversation through comments or inquiries. Rarely comments about his/her own interests, attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. | Occasionally seeks information from partner, or occasionally barrages partner with questions, or asks questions of excessive intimacy or privacy. Occasionally involves partner as a topic of conversation through comments or inquiries. Occasionally makes comments about his/her own interests, attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. | Frequently seeks information from partner, but avoids barrage or excessive invasiveness of questions. Often involves partner as a topic of conversation through comments and inquiries. Often comments about his/her own interests, attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. | Frequently asks questions that are suggestive of insights, involve partner in the conversation, or facilitates conversation. Frequently involves partner as a topic of conversation through comments or inquiries. Frequently comments about his/her own interests, attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. |
| **Self-assertion** | Never expresses personal opinions, or constantly expresses opinions overly aggressively or passively. Provides no verbal encouragement or agreements, or provides it incessantly. Shows no concern for partner’s personal opinions, or is openly hostile to them. | Occasionally expresses personal opinions, or frequently expresses them too aggressively or passively. Indifferent or dismissive of partner’s personal opinions, makes no effort to understand them. | Frequently expresses personal opinions, or occasionally expresses them too aggressively or passively. Acknowledges partner’s personal opinions. | Experiences no difficulties in expressing personal opinions, and such expressions seem neither too aggressive nor passive. Respectful of partner’s expression of personal opinions, asks appropriate questions to gain understanding when they differ from own. | Expresses personal opinions with ease and fluency, and with no disruption of partner or negative sanction. Encourages partner’s expression of personal opinions, asks appropriate questions to gain understanding and promote continued discussion of differences. |
| **Conversation Maintenance** | Provides no extension of topics, does not initiate any new topics; follow-up comments are unrelated to previous topics. | Initiates few topics and provides few extensions of topics; follow-up comments are seldom related to previous topics. | Provides occasional extensions of topics once initiated; follow-up comments are occasionally related to previous topics. | Initiates numerous new topics and provides frequent extensions of topics once initiated; follow-up comments are frequently related to previous topics. | Initiates numerous new topics and facilitates partner topic initiation. Provides fluent, seamless, and innovative extensions of topics once initiated. |
| **Affect** | Displays no smiles or laughter, or displays constant hysterical laughter or constant smirking, regardless of partner stimulus. Completely avoids eye contact, or exhibits fixated or continuous eye contact with partner. Continuously serious and humorless, or uses humor that receives overt negative sanction (e.g., frowns, statements of inappropriateness, lack of laughter in response to laugh tokens, etc.). | Provides almost no verbal encouragement or agreements, or provides it almost constantly. Displays infrequent smiles or laughter, or displays frequent hysterical laughter or constant smirking, almost regardless of partner stimulus. Frequently avoids eye contact, or exhibits very frequent or long durations of eye contact with partner. Generally serious and humorless, or uses humor that receives apparent but not obvious negative sanction. | Provides only occasional verbal encouragement or agreements. Displays occasional smiles or laughter in response to humorous stimuli. Provides occasional eye contact of brief duration at points of turn relevance. Uses some humor that is not apparently sanctioned negatively. | Provides several verbal encouragement or agreements. Displays occasional smiles or laughter in response to humorous stimuli, and/or as positive reinforcement to partner. Provides frequent eye contact of brief duration both during turns at talk and at points of turn relevance. Uses several instances of humor with no negative sanctions and obvious laugh or smile responses. | Provides frequent but coherently timed encouragements or agreements. Displays frequent smiles or laughter in response to humorous stimuli, and/or as positive reinforcement to partner. Provides frequent eye contact that emphasizes vocal utterances and facilitates turn exchange. Uses frequent instances of humor with no negative sanctions and frequent and/or animated laugh and smile responses. |

1. Dysfluencies refers to speech disturbances such as stutters, omissions, repetitions or noticeable pause-fillers (e.g. um, er, ah, okay, like, you know, I mean, etc.). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)