

# Conversation Based LEARNING

*Because life is not a grammar test*

**Speaking Improves 50%**

**Standardized Test Scores 20%**

**From First-Day Placement Test  
to Last-Day Improvement Data**

**GUNTHER BREAU**

# From first-day placement test to last-day improvement data

## 1 Placement Test

Gives your ability, and your first test partners.

Placement Test Score	First Test Partners
99	
92	1
90	
89	
88	2
87	
85	
83	3
80	
79	
78	4
76	
73	
72	5
68	
67	
64	6
58	
57	7
54	

## 2 Homework Check

Forces you to do the book, prepares you to speak, and it's easy to count.

**Write what you will say**  
Focus! Make good, long sentences and try to use some new vocabulary.

Every question is about you, so you know the answers.

- What did you do last summer? What did you do last weekend? What did you do last night?  
*Last summer I went to a beach party. All I did was sleep and watch TV. I did the dishes once.*
- What was your hardest class last semester? How many times did you take the Speaking test?  
*My hardest class was Marketing. The professor lectured in English, and it was hard to follow.*
- How many hours are you taking this semester? Did you drop any courses last semester?  
*I'm taking 18 hours. Three major courses, four required courses, and two elective courses.*
- Do you belong to a club? Is it a real club or just an excuse to meet and drink?  
*I joined the guitar club. Luckily, they did and have an audition. I would love to be in a band.*
- Did you ever have a part-time job? How many classes did you take? Were you ever fired?  
*Last summer I worked two students in math. My professor lectured at 7:11.*
- Are you good at sports? Any sport? What is your best and worst sport?  
*I'm good at sports that require speed, like soccer. But bad at sports that require concentration, like golf.*
- Are you talented at anything? Did you ever win a contest? Art, music, math, anything?  
*I'm good at drawing and painting. My whole family is artistic, it runs in the family. My mother teaches art.*
- Did you play any sports or learn any skills as a child? Basketball? Piano? Swimming?  
*I took basketball for six years until high school. I was a third-degree black belt.*

Really Me too Why? When? Where? Who? How often?  
Anyway Whatever Kind of Half and half It depends

1 Sports & Summer

## 3 Conversation Class

Speed Dating  
One topic, many partners.

Switch every 7 minutes

## 6 Ability

The first test gives your ability, and your second test partners.

	Total Words Spoken	Second Test Partners
A	662	1
	649	
	621	
B	582	2
	569	
	552	
C	549	3
	523	
	518	
D	451	4
	427	
	423	
D-	360	5
	341	
	314	
	291	6
	254	
	225	
	172	7
	140	
	129	

## 5 Self-Correction

Personal feedback for students and accurate grading data for teachers.

C16 Kim, Choi-lee

I spoke 180 words ÷ 25 times = 7.2 words per utterance

- So they also good at English?
- Yes
- you love to listen music?
- I tried that class twice but all fail.
- Is that class very popular to student? Is it hard to listen that class?
- Yes very popular, yes
- Why? the test is difficult?
- I failed to enter the class.
- I heard that class is really expensive.
- Yes. It's really expensive to me.
- Can you swim?
- Do you join any club or study club?
- Oh, my friend also join that club. She says it's very interested.
- Oh, yes. But I didn't go.
- I heard they went China and... What they did in China?
- I think they go there to teaching....
- Teaching Chinese?
- No. They just exchange culture things.
- They went China and met China university students?
- Um. High school.
- Oh, then gave Chinese students about Korea cultures and they introduced Chinese students.
- Yes. And then I falled off and that when I went hospital.
- Why you didn't go there?
- Because I think it is really long span.
- About 10 days? What about you?

## 4 Conversation Test

3 students, 17 minutes  
Students record and transcribe.



After midterm, do it again.

A comparison of midterm and final test data will show 50% improvement.

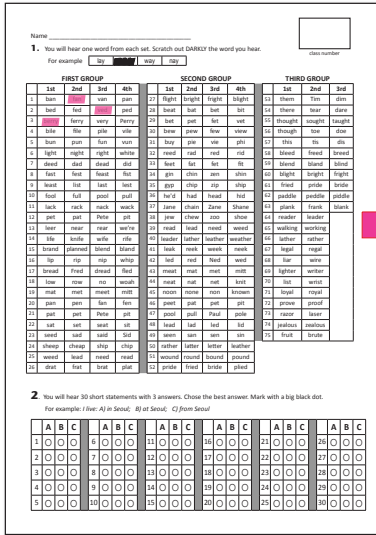
**50% Improvement**

	How many times I spoke	Average words per utterance	Total words I spoke
Midterm test	47	8.5	400
Final test	28	15.3	480
<b>Improvement</b>		<b>80%</b>	<b>20%</b>

# 1 Placement Test

## This Test Changes Everything

It changes the mindset, which changes the class from grammar based to ability based. 12 minutes to give, 5 minutes to grade. And more accurate than the 3-hour American SAT test.



The test can be Google graded. Grade hundreds in 2 minutes. Students mark their answer on paper (for a permanent record). Then, they enter answers on their phones.

1. Because you know their ability on the first day, everything after is to improve ability, not determine it.
2. You don't have to waste class time and midterm and final weeks on grammar-grades tests to determine their ability and provide a basis for grades.
3. Ultimately, *how can you improve their ability if you don't know their ability?*

The university entrance exam measures intelligence and attention span for cramming.

**This test measures their ABILITY.**

This is also a levels test for the first conversation test. Partners are grouped by similar ability. This makes the test fair, and accurate.






Knowing their ability on the first day POWERFULLY changes your mindset. It's like you're a superhero with magic psychic powers. You know their ability, and you have not even spoken to them yet.

**On the first day of class I know their:**

1. Speaking ability
2. Pronunciation problems
3. Prepositions problems
4. First conversation test partners

*That's a pretty good use of 20 minutes.*

Pronunciation    Prepositions    Score    1st conversation test partners

Pronunciation	Prepositions	Score	1st conversation test partners
74	25	99	1   
70	22	92	
69	21	90	
69	20	89	2   
65	23	88	
66	21	87	
65	20	85	3   
67	16	83	
64	16	80	
60	19	79	4   
58	20	78	
63	13	76	
59	14	73	5   
58	14	72	
53	15	68	
54	13	67	6   
52	12	64	
48	10	58	
49	8	57	7   
47	10	57	
45	9	54	

# 2 Homework

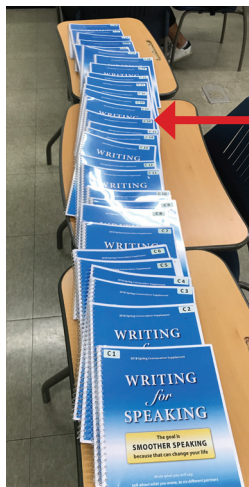
**Homework is important. It's worth 40%. They do it or they fail.**

This is a new century with new technology. Every page is on audio. They do the book at home. Each unit has 12 pages, 9 of them require student input. Each page is worth 1 homework point.

**30 minutes of homework generates 2 hours of conversations. Just add partners.**

**Students can basically choose their own grade:**

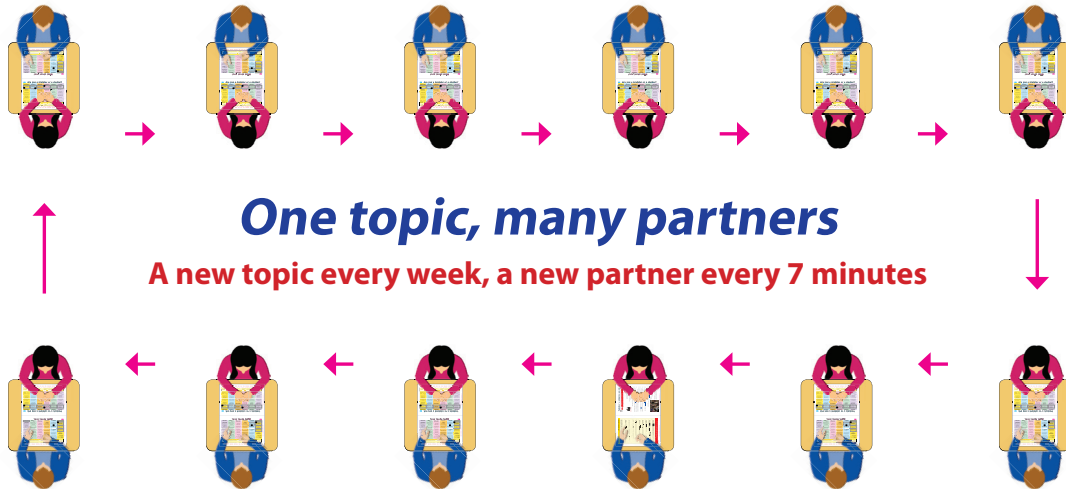
C = Do the first 8 pages, takes	<b>30 minutes</b>
B = Do the first 8 pages, and the Descriptive Paragraph	<b>1 hour</b>
A = Do the first 8 pages, Descriptive Paragraph and TOEFL essay	<b>2 hours</b>



1. Homework forces students to show up prepared, and homework pages are easy to count. The home work grade is transparent and objective.
2. Homework for a class of 30 can be checked in class in 15 minutes, while students are using their paragraphs or essays to start conversations.
3. Homework is conversation preparation. The more they prepare, the more they improve. So their homework grade is also a reliable improvement grade.
4. Because homework is 40% of the grade, this prevents great speakers who are lazy students from making an easy A.
5. If students are too lazy to do 30 minutes of homework a week, that's not a Conversation Based Learning problem. That's a lazy student problem.



# 3 The Class: Speed Dating



The bigger the class the better.

More partners = more variety = more interesting = more repetition = more improvement

1. Walk in, put your phone on the roll sheet, look at the board, find your seat and partner, and sit.
2. Meet, greet, introduce yourself, and chat. After 7 minutes, the teacher yells, **SWITCH!**
3. Students seated on the inside say, **Bye, Gotta go, Nice meeting you, See you later**, and move on.
4. Next class you'll do it again, better, smoother, with new partners.



We don't give you new grammar to study every week. **We give you new partners!** THEY provide you with new information, pronunciations, vocabulary, and questions. We don't give you advanced (and irrelevant topics), we give you advanced ways to talk about yourself. That's a very relevant topic on a job interview.



How do you get good at something? **You do it more than once.**

# 4 Conversation Test

**MS Word can measure speaking ability.**  
**It's as easy as 1, 2, 3.**



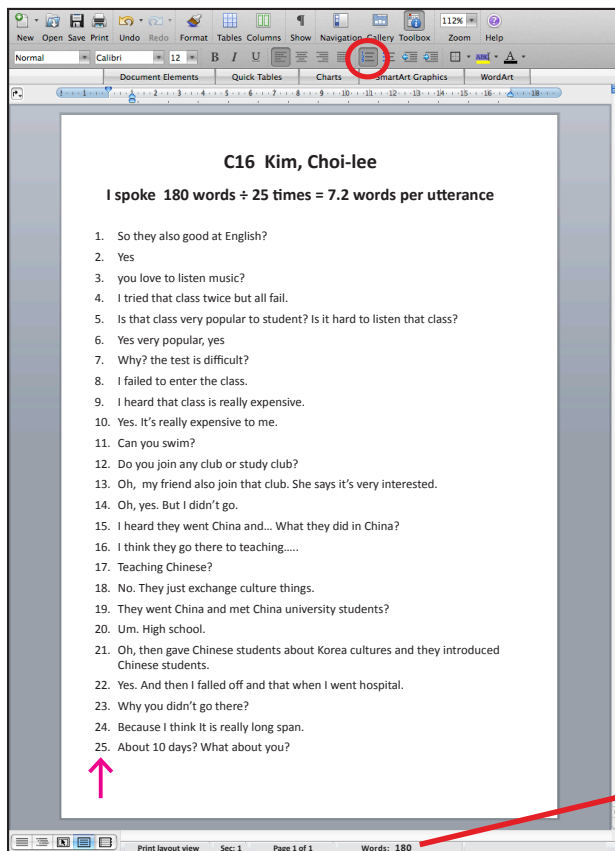
**1**

1. Three students of similar ability have a 17-minute conversation.
2. Students record with their phones.
3. Students transcribe just what they said on MS Word (about 2 hours).
4. MS Word gives the total words spoken, and how many times they spoke.
5. Simple division gives their average words-per-utterance.

**2** Students go home or to the computer lab and type just what they said. It takes 2 hours or less. *Easy.* They email or upload it, and go meet their friends.

**3**

**Total Words is their speaking ability**



	Total words
1	695
2	668
3	643
4	582
5	564
6	544
7	521
8	509
9	453
10	421
11	421
12	398
13	367
14	345
15	321
16	288
17	267
18	245
19	180
20	167
21	149

← After 10 years of English education, and two hours after the test, the speaking ability of everyone in class is known.

← Total words on the first test determines partners for the second test. This ensures fair and accurate testing.

← For example, these three students will be partners on the second test.

They are beginning speakers, speaking as fast as they can.

**It's a communicative test, and MS Word measures precisely how much they communicated.**

# The second test gives their improvement

Their second test partners are determined by their total words spoken on the first test. This makes the test fair and accurate.



**C24 Park, Lee kim**

**2nd conversation test**

	How many times I spoke	Average words per utterance	Total words I spoke
Midterm test	25	8.4	210
Final test	22	15.4	285
	<b>Improvement</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>36%</b>

**Thus, my speaking improved 60% this semester.**

**VOCABULARY**

MOVIES	FOOD & FITNESS	SUMMER BREAK
Love at first sight	Pig out	Weekend warrior
Crush on someone	Appetizer	Couch potato
Soul mate	Freebie	
Steady girlfriend		
Outdoor person		

**The top 5 mistakes and how to fix them.**

- No, I didn't heard about that.**  
No, I didn't hear about that.
- I have never been gone to there.**  
I've never been there.
- I am interesting in that.**  
I am interested in that major.
- What is your best favorite movie?**  
What is your favorite movie?
- Will you go to a festival or them park on this winter vacation?**  
Will you go to any festivals or theme park this winter vacation?

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- Usually I'm weekend warriors, but last weekend I stayed at home because this week is midterm exam, so I was staying at home and studying for midterm exam. What did you do last weekend?
- No, I didn't heard about that.
- Last weekend I was couch potato. What about you?
- I don't like gory films. I like superhero movies, like the Avengers and Ironman.

Each semester every student has about 100 conversations with about 25 different partners. Of course they improve. *But, exactly how much?*

**There. That's how much.**

**Their utterances are 84% longer.**  
Longer speaking is smoother speaking.

**They spoke 36% more.** That means shorter pauses and fewer pauses.

This is a **direct measure** of speaking ability, and improvement.

### **What about mistakes?**

They find and fix their own mistakes. This is a new world, and finding mistakes is no longer part of the teacher's job.

**Get a hobby.**

**Measure how much students do, not how much they do wrong.**

That's it. It's a communicative test and MS Word gives you **precisely** how much they communicated. And, how much **more** they communicated on the second test. *What about mistakes?* It's not a mistake test, it's a conversation test. You let your students speak. They improved, and you can prove their improvement.

# 5 Semester Results

## You know their ability

Average of 3 tests	
Total words spoken	Words per minute
682	40
649	38
621	37
582	34
569	33
552	32
549	32
523	31
481	28
451	27
427	25
423	25
360	21
341	20
314	18
291	17
254	15
225	13
196	12
184	11
172	10

## You have wide-spread grades

Homework	Conversation Tests	Attendance	Final grade
40%	40%	20%	100%
39	39	20	98 A+
38	38	20	96 A+
39	36	20	95 A+
37	35	20	92 A
38	33	20	91 A
36	33	20	89 B+
36	32	20	88 B+
33	32	20	85 B+
34	29	20	83 B
33	29	20	82 B
32	28	18	78 C+
29	29	20	78 C+
35	22	20	77 C+
28	27	20	75 C
28	27	20	75 C
27	27	18	72 C
25	29	18	72 C
24	24	17	65 D
22	17	16	55 F
12	17	16	45 F
10	15	10	35 F

## You can prove they improved

	Average words per utterance	Total words I spoke
4 week test	8.6	436
8 week test	13.4	482
14 week test	17.2	523
<b>Improvement</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>20%</b>

*Therefore, my speaking improved 60% this semester.*

**When Speaking Ability improves, so do Standardized Test Scores**



# We use partners, not grammar



This book has a wire spine. Why? It's a conversation book.

## It's all about you

Write what you will say

Talk about what you wrote

**Get smoother at the basics**  
How do you get good at something? You do it more than once.

All ONE question. Talk a while. AFTER they answer, you can ask a real follow-up question.

1. **What's your major?** What year are you? Do you like your major? Did you stay out a year? Do you have a career major? Economics, Family, Health major, etc. it's okay.
2. **What high school did you go to?** Which is more fun, high school or college? Why? I went to an Pasadena High School. It's an all-school but the classes were all made and all kinds.
3. **How many hours are you taking this semester?** How many classes? Do you have a free day? I am taking 20 hours. Seven classes. Three major courses, three required, and one elective course.
4. **What was your favorite subject in high school?** What subject did you dislike the most? Do you remember any English class? I don't remember any because he wanted to get a certificate in English.
5. **How many universities did you apply to?** In which your first choice? (Just check?) I applied to four universities and the two were second choice, but I really liked here.
6. **Do you have a free day?** What do you do on your free day? What's your hobby? I like to go to the gym and study. Just talking. I sleep and watch TV.
7. **Do you study during the week or work all the weekends?** Where do you study? I live for from school or I work near school during the week and do my homework on the weekends.
8. **What did you do for winter vacation?** What did you do for summer? Our winter (I don't recall) was about after the university entrance exam. I played computer games.

*Really? Me too? Why? When? Where? What? How often? Anyway. Whatever. Kind of. Half and half. It depends.*

**Write what you will say, talk about what you wrote**  
KID TWO BOTH WITH ONE WORD.

All ONE question in order or at random. Or even combine today, add numbers next class.

9. **Do you belong to a club or organization?** Are you interested at anything? Sports, music? I don't belong to any club, and I don't have any interest in anything, but they said "theater club" "Pete".
10. **What does your father do? What does your mother do? Do they ever work at home?** My father is a high school math teacher and my mother is a pharmacist.
11. **Are your parents strict or lenient?** Do they play (good or bad) cards? They would be strict, but now that I'm at college they play the 88 in my own. As long as my grades are OK.
12. **Do you have a hobby?** Are you any good at it? How often do you do it? What? Oh, I like to play. I don't play very often, but I like to play. I don't play very often, but I like to play.
13. **Did you ever tutor a student?** What subject? Are you a good tutor? I tutored a student in school for math, but he never went even one step. I think he had no problem.
14. **What time do you go to sleep usually?** Wake up? When do you study? I sleep at 11:00. I don't go to bed until about 11:00, and I wake up about 7:00. I study from midnight to 2:00.
15. **Where do you live? How do you get to school?** Where do you usually eat? I live in a campus, two blocks from school. I used to live downtown and spent three hours a day on the way.
16. **What will you do after class?** What will you do this weekend? After class I go to my major club, and then if I do something near school. Drinking will be involved.

**For example? What about you?**



Transcribe what you said

Correct what you said



C24 Park, Lee kim

**I spoke 400 words = 40 times = 10 words per utterance**

ANSWER & FEEDBACK	WEAKNESSES & CORRECTIONS
meeting person	each person
about	my personal
because	could go on
hardly time	hardly person
first person	look forward to

The top 5 mistakes I will be on:

1. I don't know anything.
2. I'm not in school.
3. I'm not in school.
4. I'm not in school.
5. I'm not in school.

1. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school.

2. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school.

3. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school.

4. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school.

5. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school. I'm not in school.

13. What's your job?  
14. Oh, wow. What you want to be?  
15. I want to be a doctor. I want to be a doctor. I want to be a doctor. I want to be a doctor. I want to be a doctor.  
16. My parents are half and half. My mother is Chinese and my father is Korean. What about you?  
17. Oh, I'm really interested in you. Before I going to the kind of class.  
18. So you go to go to have my weight, maybe a little.  
19. No, no.  
20. How are you?  
21. I'm really good at running?  
22. No way?  
23. What about you?  
24. I'm not really good.  
25. No, that's not that hard exercising.  
26. I'm not good at exercising. I just very like watching basketball.  
27. I don't know.  
28. After class I go to home.  
29. In universities, there are two soccer clubs. In business departments, there are two soccer clubs.  
30. But I think they are more drinking club than sports club.  
31. Oh, it's not good at soccer just enjoying soccer.  
32. And another is very good at soccer.  
33. I want to be a professional, but there no money. What about you?  
34. I usually hang out more regular on the weekends.  
35. I have a very good friend. I'm not really good at soccer. I'm not really good at soccer. I'm not really good at soccer.  
36. I'm not really good at soccer. I'm not really good at soccer. I'm not really good at soccer.  
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49. I'm not really good at soccer. I'm not really good at soccer. I'm not really good at soccer.  
50. I'm not really good at soccer. I'm not really good at soccer. I'm not really good at soccer.

Say, it looks like students do all the work.  
EXACTLY. That's why they improve so much.