



# Intelligibility

## *A new proficiency index for Versant*

Sometimes you hear someone speaking English and you have trouble understanding what they're saying. It may not be because of their knowledge of English, it could be just the way they speak that makes it harder for you to understand. Intelligibility means how understandable someone's speech is.

### It's not about being right or wrong

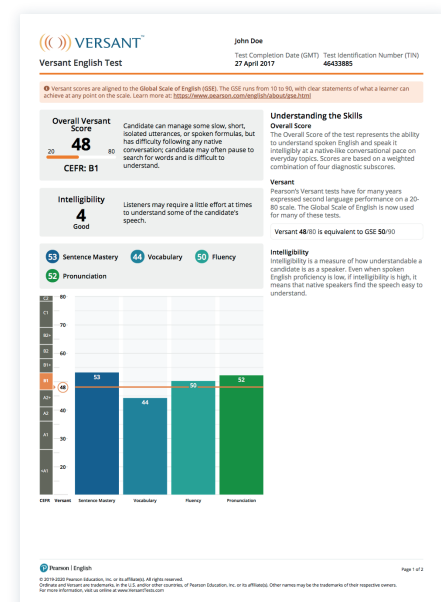
Having high intelligibility doesn't mean speaking without an accent, or with flawless word usage or pronunciation. It simply means that it doesn't take other speakers of the language a lot of effort to comprehend what is being said.

Pearson English's new Intelligibility index score is available exclusively on the Versant English Test score report, enabling corporations to look beyond a candidate's technical English skills to determine how well they can communicate with others.

### Is intelligibility the same thing as proficiency?

Based on Pearson English's research, intelligibility is often highly related to other proficiency areas such as grammar usage, fluency, and overall second language knowledge. But, it's calculated in a way that makes it independent of general proficiency.

Even when spoken English proficiency is low, if intelligibility is high, it means that listeners tend to find the speech easy to understand, even if it's not perfect in accent, word usage, or expressions. It's possible for someone to have a high intelligibility score whether they are a beginner (A1) or more advanced (C1) speaker.



## Intelligibility index at a glance



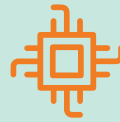
Looks at a speaker's pronunciation, fluency, clarity of expression, and speed of speech



Highly accurate, objective, and consistent measurement of intelligibility



Based on extensive research involving thousands of native and non-native English speakers



Developed specifically for use in the Versant English Test, powered by Pearson English's world-leading AI technology

## Gaining extra insight into a candidate's skills

The Intelligibility index score is intended for use alongside the other proficiency subscores provided on the Versant English Test score report. It provides additional information that can help when making decisions about candidates for specific purposes.

For example, when employees are likely to spend a lot of time on voice calls with customers, hiring someone with both high proficiency and high intelligibility can result in greater customer satisfaction. In some cases, a company may even prioritize intelligibility over proficiency, knowing that the employee's proficiency level is likely to increase with time and experience – intelligibility can be a more difficult skill to learn and improve.

## What do the levels on the Intelligibility index mean?

The chart below describes the different levels of intelligibility and can be used as a guide for corporations when determining which level is required for their employees.

Intelligibility Rating	Intelligibility Level	Description
5	Excellent	The candidate can be understood effortlessly by most listeners.
4	Good	Listeners may require a little effort at times to understand some of the candidate's speech.
3	Moderate	Listeners may require some effort to understand the candidate's speech, and some may not be fully intelligible.
2	Low	Listeners may require considerable effort to try to understand the candidate's speech. Despite the effort, it may still be mostly unintelligible.
1	Very low	Listeners may find it difficult to understand most of the candidate's speech.



## How can Intelligibility be automatically scored?

Ratings on the Intelligibility index were developed using human judgements.

1. A group of native English speakers listened to thousands of test responses and rated them on how much effort it took to understand each voice sample.
2. Our testing experts analyzed many characteristics of speech in those responses and identified those most highly correlated with intelligibility.
3. We trained our patented AI system to measure those features and generate intelligibility ratings that match exactly what the human raters would have given.
4. We checked to make sure that people whose first language is English get high intelligibility scores.

This kind of automated system produces an Intelligibility rating within minutes, and in a way that is consistently fair and reliable for candidates of any background.

---

## Contact Us

To find out more about Versant and the Intelligibility index score, visit [www.VersantTests.com](http://www.VersantTests.com) or contact your local sales representative.