



Assessing speaking skill in english in cuban higher education

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Assessing the learning of English as a foreign language is a relevant aspect within the policy for improving the English language learning in Cuban higher education. The authors of this paper, members of the Cuban Language Assessment Network in Higher Education, designed and elaborated tasks, as well as an analytical rating scale to evaluate the student's performance in English speaking skill at university level. This aspect is part of the priorities of the network, which includes specialists from all the Cuban universities, led by the University of Informatics Sciences and the guidance of an expert member of the European Association of Language Testing and Assessment. The purpose of this paper is to describe the results achieved so far in the tasks design to evaluate English speaking skill and its corresponding rating scale. To achieve this objective, several workshops were held: with an emphasis on theory, initially; then of a theoretical–practical nature, which

came up with the tasks, the scales and allowed to initiate the benchmarking process. Empirical and theoretical methods were used, as well as, mixed methods which include qualitative and quantitative paradigms. As the main result, a task proposal was obtained to evaluate speaking skill, which is made up of three parts and includes both production and interaction. Similarly, an analytical rating scale was developed, based on the descriptors of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and adapted to the Cuban context. This paper is the result of some years of hard–teamwork which is still in progress.