Persuasion Scoring Scheme (PSS) Guide

INTRODUCTION

The *Persuasion Scoring Scheme* (PSS) assesses the content and structure of a persuasive language sample. The PSS is comprised of seven characteristics for completing a persuasive language sample. The characteristics correspond to the topics listed on the planning sheet that is given to students.

Samples contained in the SALT Persuasion reference database have all been coded for the PSS. This database can be utilized to compare a student's persuasion skills to those of his/her typically-developing peers. Clinicians can compare individual characteristics of the PSS or the composite score using the database. The persuasion task may be repeated to assess progress of persuasive skills through the high school years.

SCORING GUIDELINES

Assigning PSS Scores

The PSS is scored using a 0 - 5 point scale. 5 points are given for "Proficient/Advanced" production, 3 points for "Satisfactory/Adequate" production, and 1 point for "Minimal/Immature" production. Scores of 2 and 4 are undefined and require judgment. Scores of zero (0) are given for student errors such as not completing the task when prompted, refusing the task, unintelligible production(s), and abandoned utterances leaving characteristics incomplete. Scores of NA (non-applicable) are given for mechanical/examiner/operator errors, e.g., interference from background noise, issues with recording (cut-offs, interruptions), examiner not following protocol, examiner interrupting student. Use points in the scoring rubric as a guideline to determine level of proficiency for each characteristic. Not *all* points listed in each characteristic must be present when assigning score.

Helpful Scoring Tips

- Print the persuasion transcript.
- Read the transcript as fluidly/inclusively as possible, ignoring SALT transcription codes.
- Write comments and circle or flag key words/utterances pertaining to points on the planning sheet
- For *each* point, review the PSS scoring rubric before assigning a score. Read the criteria along the continuum of points. Determine what is present in the transcript and score accordingly. This will insure better intra- and inter-rater reliability.
- Frequently review what constitutes a score of 0 or NA.
- Scoring the PSS is a subjective measure by nature; however, as you gain experience, the process of scoring will become reliable.

PSS SCORING RUBRIC

Refer to the scoring rubric in page 3 for guidance when assigning scores to each of the PSS characteristics in a persuasion sample.

USING SALT TO ENTER ESS SCORES (SALT 16)

Use **Edit → Insert PSS Template** to insert the PSS plus line template at the bottom of your transcript. Then type the individual scores after each label.

PSS Template	Example of PSS Scoring
+ IssueID:	+ IssueID: 2
+ SupportReasons:	+ SupportReasons: 3
+ PointOfView:	+ PointOfView: 3
+ Compromises:	+ Compromises: 3
+ Conclusion:	+ Conclusion: 4
+ Cohesion:	+ Cohesion: 3
+ Effect:	+ Effect: 3

PSS Scoring Rubric

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Characteristic	Proficient/Advanced (5)	Satisfactory/Adequate (3)	Minimal/Immature (1)
Issue Identification and Desired Change	• Existing rule or situation is clearly understood before supporting reasons are stated • Desired change is clearly stated	• Existing rule or situation can be discerned; may require shared knowledge • Desired change can be discerned	• Speaker launches into persuasion with no mention of existing rule or situation • Desired change is difficult to determine
Supporting Reasons	• Reason(s) are comprehensive; include detail • Benefit(s) to others are clearly understood	• One or more reasons are offered to support desired change • Benefit(s) to others are unclear or omitted	• Reason(s) are confusing or vague • Significant/obvious reason(s) are not stated • Reason(s) are not plausible; do not support change
Other Point of View (Counter Arguments)	• Other point(s) of view are clearly explained; include detail • Includes language to support or refute other point of view	• Other point(s) of view are acknowledged OR • Dismissive of other point(s) of view	• Other point(s) of view are unclear or omitted
Compromises	• Includes language, with some detail, to support or refute compromising	• Compromise(s) are acknowledged OR • Dismissive of compromising	• Compromises are unclear or omitted
Conclusion	• Desired change is clearly restated/summarized • Arguments are clearly restated/summarized • Concludes using language such as, "to conclude", "therefore", "and so", "in sum", etc. • First step(s) for change are mentioned	• Desired change is restated • One or more supporting reasons are restated • Ending is inferred and/or lacks transition to conclusion, e.g., "And that's all", "that's it", "I'm done"	• Summary statement(s) are omitted • Unclear to listener that the persuasion task is completed
Cohesion	• Points are fully covered before moving on to another • Transitions between points are smooth/clear using mature language • Referents are clear • Listener can easily follow the argument	• Point are covered, but lack organization • Transitions between points are acceptable • Referencing is adequate • Listener can follow the argument with some effort	• Points are not fully covered before moving onto another • Abrupt transitions between points • Referents are unclear, hard to follow • Argument is difficult to follow
Effectiveness	• Argument is extremely compelling • Argument is entirely plausible • Argument is well stated • Mature language is used • Minimal errors of syntax/form • Supported points well • Speaker's delivery is passionate • Speaker engages listener	• Argument is compelling • Argument is plausible • Argument requires little or no clarification • Acceptable syntax/form • Speaker's delivery is clear; not necessarily passionate • Effort to persuade is evident • Speaker makes some attempt to engage listener	• Argument is minimally or not compelling • Argument is not plausible • Language is unclear • Errors of syntax/form may be prevalent • Speaker's delivery lacks effort; not passionate • Speaker makes no attempt to engage listener • Speaker uses inappropriate/immature tone

Scoring: Each characteristic receives a scaled score 0-5. Proficient/Advanced characteristics=5, Satisfactory/Adequate=3, Minimal/Immature=1. Scores in between, 2 and 4, are undefined, use judgment. Significant factual errors reduce the score for that topic. Scores of 0, NA are defined below. A composite is scored by adding the total of the characteristic scores. Highest score=35.

A score of 0 is given for student errors, e.g., not covering topic, not completing/refusing task, student unintelligibility, abandoned utterances.

A score of NA (non-applicable) is given for mechanical/examiner/operator errors, e.g., interference from background noise, issues with recording (cut-offs, interruptions), examiner not following protocol, examiner asking overly specific or leading questions rather than open-ended questions or prompts.

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ANALYZING THE PSS SCORES (SALT 16)

Use the **Analyze menu → Persuasion Scoring Scheme** report to list each individual PSS score along with the composite score.

COMPARING YOUR NSS SCORES TO THE DATABASE SAMPLES (SALT 16)

Use the **Database menu → Persuasion Scoring Scheme** report to list each individual PSS score along with the composite score. Scores are listed for your transcript and for the selected database samples.

TRYING IT OUT

Download the PSS practice transcripts from the SALT web site and compare your scores to those of our trained transcribers.

REFERENCES

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