

Episode: [AI and Language Assessment](#)

Series: [AI in the Classroom](#)

Produced by: Digital Futures Institute, Teachers College, Columbia University

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My name is Soo Hyung Joo. I am a doctoral student at the Applied Linguistics Program, and my specialization is in second language assessment. I have always been struck by how learning is not just about knowing the facts, it's really about using the language to communicate the ideas and collaborate with each other. And different learners demonstrate these skills in different ways, depending on their learning styles and communication styles. But many of these traditional assessments cannot really sufficiently address these learning styles or differences. And this is especially more problematic for multilingual learners because they do not have the academic English skills to actually demonstrate these, even though they have the facts and knowledge. So I wanted to make sure that this assessment can capture those different learning styles.

My project is called the Scenario-Based Language Assessment. In other words, the students are immersed in a scenario to perform these real-life skills, but with the help of an AI character.

Hi, June, can you help me out?

Hi, there. Of course I can help you. How do you feel about the experiment? Are you ready to analyze the data?

Yes, I think I'm confident. What should I do first?

That's great to hear. How about we start by summarizing your key findings from the data? What do you notice about the electric force and distance?

It looks like the force is decreasing as the distance is increasing, but I'm not sure about the calculation here. Can you help me out?

You're on the right track. The force does seem to decrease as the distance increases. Can you look at your data and share some specific numbers? It might help us spot the trend together.

The learners found it really realistic. And surprisingly, it actually made me get better data in terms of how the students are performing because they were less intimidated by the idea of taking a test, for example. For now, I am just observing the collaboration that is happening real time with these interactive characters.

Hey, nice to meet you. I'm Anika. I'm a 17-year-old high school student from New Delhi, India. I love science, so I'm thrilled to be a part of this internship.

Hi everyone. I'm Jimmy from Canada. I'm 16 and I want to be an astrophysicist someday. I'm so glad to be teamed up with you guys.

I also want to take it to the next step by measuring the collaboration itself. In the end, I would like to create a rubric that is accountable and a way to really assess the student's collaborative skills and see how they co-construct the meaning with these AI characters.