

### 3. The key differences between written and spoken English

Before we begin, discuss the following:

- What do you consider the key differences between written and spoken English?
- Do you make your students aware of the differences? If yes, how?
- Do you think your students have more access to written or spoken English? Does this affect the way they write?

#### Written or spoken text?

Look at the following texts and decide if they are written or spoken.

##### Text 1

Uhm, I think the sessions were very useful because we did specific work on specific themes, like, for example, uhm, how to use linking words, when to use them with like with examples and uhm and I think compared to the normal EAP classes this was more detailed, and more focused on well, specific themes.

##### Text 2

I bought the above iron from The Electrical Store in Newford on 10 October. On using it for the first time, I found that the temperature control was faulty; it was not possible to set it for any temperature apart from the highest (cotton).

##### Text 3

The high demand of pensions payments overload the government expenses, as a result, it could lead to a pension crisis. Moreover, the majority of the pensioners have a medical condition; therefore developed countries are spending a huge amount of money in the health care sector as well. The urgent measure taken by many countries in order to control their expenses was to increase the retirement age.

##### Text 4

Ok, well, I can see a girl and a dog. Er the dog is black and has a long ears. Hhmm, I think it's an old English sheep dog. The girl is, I think, about 10 years old.

What are the principal differences?

Spoken language production	Written language production

Let's focus on Text 1 and Text 3 in more detail.

Complete the table.

	Text 1 (Spoken)	Text 3 (Written)
What is this text? How do you know?		
Register (Give examples)		
Purpose		
Language (Vocabulary) used		
Cohesive? How?		
Sentence level (complexity, length, etc.)		

## Common classroom issues (due to written vs spoken English differences)

The following problems are common in UK HE classrooms:

- Students don't use enough academic vocabulary
- Students write in an informal way (looks more like spoken English)
- Students write down the main points but not in a logical way
- Students don't plan before they write, therefore, their writing is not structured and confusing to read
- Students don't use the correct punctuation
- There are numerous spelling mistakes in the student's work
- Their writing is littered with grammar mistakes
- Students don't reference other author's ideas (not something they are used to doing)

### With a partner

1. Look through each problem and discuss how serious the problem is.
2. Do your students have the same issues?
3. How do you overcome these issues? Or How could you overcome these issues?
4. Do you have any further problems to add?