

PAPER 5

SPEAKING

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Paper format | The Speaking test contains four parts. |
| Timing | 14 minutes. |
| No. of parts | 4. |
| Interaction pattern | Two candidates and two examiners. One examiner acts as both interlocutor and assessor and manages the interaction either by asking questions or providing cues for candidates. The other acts as assessor and does not join in the conversation. |
| Task types | Short exchanges with the interlocutor and with the other candidate; a one minute 'long turn'; a collaborative task involving the two candidates; a discussion. |
| Task focus | Exchanging personal and factual information, expressing and finding out about attitudes and opinions. |
| Marks | Candidates are assessed on their performance throughout the test. |

STRUCTURE AND TASKS

PART 1

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Task type and format | Conversation between the interlocutor and each candidate. The interlocutor encourages the candidates to give information about themselves, to talk about past experiences, present circumstances and future plans. |
| Focus | General interactional and social language. |
| Timing | 3 minutes. |

PART 2

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Task type and format | The interlocutor delegates an individual task to each candidate. In turn, the candidates are given a pair of photographs to talk about. |
| Focus | Organising a larger unit of discourse by comparing and contrasting, giving information, expressing opinions. |
| Timing | One minute 'long turn' for each candidate. |

PART 3

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Task type and format | Two-way conversation between the candidates. The candidates are given visual and spoken prompts, which are used in a decision-making task. |
| Focus | Exchanging information, expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing and/or disagreeing, suggesting, speculating, decision-making etc. |
| Timing | 3 minutes. |

PART 4

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Task type and format | Discussion on topics related to the collaborative task. The interlocutor leads a discussion to explore further the topic of the collaborative task. |
| Focus | Exchanging information, expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing and/or disagreeing. |
| Timing | 4 minutes. |

The four parts of the Speaking test

Format

The paired format of the FCE Speaking test (two examiners and two candidates) offers candidates the opportunity to demonstrate, in a controlled but friendly environment, their ability to use their spoken language skills effectively. The test takes 14 minutes. One examiner, the interlocutor, conducts the test and gives a global assessment of each candidate's performance. The other, the assessor, does not take any part in the interaction but focuses solely on listening to, and making an assessment of, the candidates' oral proficiency.

At the end of the Speaking test, candidates are thanked for attending, but are given no indication of the level of their achievement.

The standard format is two examiners and two candidates, and wherever possible, this will be the form which the Speaking test will take. In cases where there is an uneven number of candidates at a centre, the last Speaking test of the session will be taken by three candidates together instead of two. The test format, test materials and procedure will remain unchanged but the timing will be longer: twenty minutes instead of fourteen. A 1:1 test format will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and emergencies.

The Speaking test consists of four parts, each of which is assessed. Each part of the test focuses on a different type of interaction: between the interlocutor and each candidate, between the two candidates, and among all three. The patterns of discourse vary within each part of the test.

■ PART 1 – INTERVIEW

This part tests the candidates' ability to provide information about themselves and to offer their opinions on a range of topics.



Sample tasks and assessment criteria: pages 56 and 59.

This part of the test gives candidates the opportunity to show their ability to give basic personal information about themselves, e.g. family life, daily routines, free-time activities, etc. Candidates are expected to respond to the interlocutor's questions, and to listen to what their partner has to say.

The candidates do not need to talk to each other in this part of the test, though they may if they wish.

■ PART 2 – LONG TURN

This part tests the candidates' ability to produce an extended piece of discourse.



Sample tasks and assessment criteria: pages 57 and 59.

In this part of the test, candidates are given the opportunity to speak for one minute without interruption. Each candidate is asked to compare and contrast two colour photographs, commenting on the pictures and giving some personal reaction to them. They are not required to describe the photographs in detail.

Candidates can show their ability to organise their thoughts and ideas, and express themselves coherently in appropriate language. Candidates should pay attention while their partner is speaking, as they are asked to comment briefly (for about 20 seconds) after their partner has spoken. Candidates should be made aware, however, that they should not speak during their partner's long turn.

Candidates will always be asked to 'compare and contrast' two photographs. They will also be asked to say something which relates directly to the focus of the photographs.

■ PART 3 – COLLABORATIVE TASK

This part tests the candidates' ability to engage in a discussion and to work towards a negotiated outcome of the task set.



Sample tasks and assessment criteria: pages 58 and 59.

The candidates are given oral instructions and provided with a visual stimulus (one or several photographs/artwork/computer graphics, etc.) to form the basis for a task which they carry out together. Candidates are expected to work towards a negotiated completion of the task and are assessed on their speaking skills while doing this; they are not penalised if they do not complete the task.

The task gives candidates the opportunity to show their own range of language and their ability to invite the opinions and ideas of their partner. There is no right or wrong answer to the task.

■ PART 4 – DISCUSSION

This part tests the candidates' ability to engage in a discussion based on the topic of the collaborative task in Part 3.



Sample tasks and assessment criteria: pages 58 and 59.

In this part of the test, the interlocutor directs the interaction by asking questions which encourage the candidates to broaden and discuss further the topics introduced in Part 3.

This part of the test gives candidates an opportunity to show that they are capable of discussing certain issues in more depth than in the previous parts of the test.

Preparation

General

- Classroom activities which involve students working in pairs and small groups will give them practice in skills such as showing sensitivity to turn-taking and responding appropriately to their partners, which are essential to success in the Speaking test.
- Make sure your students are familiar with the format of each part of the test. They should be aware of the different interaction patterns (who speaks to whom) and what stimulus will be provided by the examiner.
- Encourage your students to speak clearly and audibly so that they can be heard by both the interlocutor and assessor, and to paraphrase when they do not know or cannot remember a word.
- Train your students to listen carefully to the instructions so that they know precisely what they have to talk about.
- Encourage your students to initiate discussion and to respond to what other students have to say. Remind them that they can always ask the examiner to repeat the instructions or a question before they embark on the task.

N.B. In some centres candidates from the same school are paired together. However, where candidates from a number of different schools are entered at the same centre, some candidates may find that they are paired with a candidate from another school. Students should check with the centre through which they are entering for the local procedure.

By part

■ PART 1

■ In this part of the test, examiners will ask candidates a range of questions about their everyday life, for example sports they enjoy, travel and holidays, work experience and so on. Encourage students to respond promptly with answers which are complete and spontaneous. Rehearsed speeches should be avoided as these might be inappropriate for the question asked.

■ Encourage your students to look for opportunities to socialise with English speakers. In class, they could role-play social occasions in which they meet new people, e.g. parties, long train journeys, joining a new class, starting a new job.

■ Students could be put into small groups to brainstorm questions from the categories above. The different groups could then answer each other's questions.

■ The questions asked in Part 1 may relate to past experiences, present activities, or future plans. Make your students aware of the different structures required to respond to these questions appropriately.

■ PART 2

■ Teach your students to listen carefully to the instructions and to carry them out. The examiner always asks the candidates to compare and contrast the photographs 'and say...'. Remind your students that they should listen carefully to the instructions which follow the words 'and say...'. If they do not do this in the test, they may miss the focus of the task and find it difficult to speak for a full minute.

■ Encourage your students to paraphrase instructions orally. This will help them to understand precisely what they have to do.

■ Writing the instructions down in their own words may improve your students' awareness of the type of questions asked. Remember, however, that while it is not possible for candidates to make notes during the Speaking test, it is acceptable for them to ask the examiner to repeat the instructions if they feel it is needed.

■ Asking your students to talk for up to a minute about any topic (such as things they do in their free time, or ways to learn vocabulary) will give them practice in organising an extended turn and in linking their ideas together.

■ Give your students practice for this part of the test by cutting thematically linked pairs of photographs from magazines and giving them a focus. For example, you might choose photographs of two different types of holiday and ask your students to compare and contrast the photographs and say what people would enjoy about a holiday in each of the different places.

■ Students could bring photographs to class and speak about them.

■ At FCE level, candidates are not expected to give detailed descriptions of each picture. Rather, candidates are asked to compare and contrast the pictures and give some personal reaction. Get your students to share ideas in pairs or small groups about what they might say before attempting the task.

■ Your students may find it useful to observe a good model answer given by a more advanced learner of English or by the teacher.

■ Encourage your students to focus on achieving accurate production of structures and vocabulary which are likely to be useful in this part. In particular, ways of expressing similarity and difference may help: e.g. *'they both ...'*; *'one similarity is that ...'*; *'one difference is that ...'*; *'in this picture there's ... , whereas in the other there's ...'*. Remind your students that using comparatives and linking words will produce a more extended and coherent sample of speech than simply stringing together a series of simple statements. This will help gain them marks under the assessment criterion Discourse Management.

■ Practice for this part of the test should be timed as students need a feel for how long one minute is. Without this, they may finish the task too quickly and as a result fail to give the examiners an adequate sample of language.

■ PART 3

■ Remind your students to make full use of the visual prompts before coming to a decision. If they decide too quickly, they may run out of things to say. In this part of the test, the examiner will say *'First talk about ... Then decide ...'* The *'First talk about'* instruction forms the bulk of the task. Train your students to move on to negotiating a decision only after having discussed the content of the visuals fully.

■ It is very important for candidates to interact with each other when they carry out the task. All classroom discussion in pairs and small groups, therefore, provides excellent preparation.

Remind your students to make positive contributions to move the discussion forward and show a willingness to take turns, inviting others to speak and listening and responding, as well as initiating discussion themselves.

■ In classroom activities, one student in each group could be made responsible for ensuring that every member of the group gets an equal opportunity to speak, so that students become alerted to the importance of turn-taking.

■ It may be useful to focus on achieving accurate production of functional language likely to be useful in this type of discussion. This may include ways of managing the discussion: e.g. *'Shall we start with this one?'*; *'What do you think?'*; *'Shall we move on to ...?'*. Ways of expressing and justifying opinions, and agreeing and disagreeing (politely) are also likely to be useful.

■ PART 4

■ Encourage your students to give full answers to the questions asked.

■ Let your students practise asking each other for their opinions on everyday situations and current events and encourage them to give full answers to the questions asked.

■ Candidates should take the opportunity to initiate discussions and to involve the other candidate in the discussion. Therefore, as with Part 3, classroom discussions in pairs and small groups provide excellent preparation.

■ In order to raise awareness of the types of questions asked and of effective ways of answering them, it may help to give pairs of students different topics and ask each pair to think of six discussion questions for their topic. These sets of questions could then be exchanged by the different pairs and discussed.

■ Encourage your students to focus on achieving accurate production of functional language likely to be useful in this type of discussion. This will probably include ways of expressing and justifying opinions, and agreeing and disagreeing.

■ Remind your students that this is not a test of knowledge. It is quite acceptable to admit to not knowing much about a particular topic, but this should be followed by some sort of opinion (e.g. *'I don't actually know very much about this, but ...'*, so that the response provides a larger sample of language for assessment than *'I don't know'*.

PAPER 5: SPEAKING

Part 1

For Oral Examiners' Use Only

Education and Work

- Can you remember your first English lessons? What were they like?
- What do you think were the most important things you learned at primary / elementary school?
- Do you plan to study anything in the future?
- Would you prefer to work for a big or a small company? Why?
- What do you think would be the most interesting job to do?

Leisure and Entertainment

- Do you like reading books? What sort of books do you enjoy reading most?
- What sports do people play most in your country? And what do people enjoy watching?
- Is it easy to meet new people where you live?
- Do you normally go out with family or friends?
- What do you enjoy doing with your friends?
- Where's the best place to spend a free afternoon around here/in your town?
- How expensive is it to go out in the evening where you live?
- Do you like going to the cinema?
- Tell me about your favourite filmstar.
- What are you going to do this weekend?

The Media

- How do you find out what's happening in the world?
- Do you ever listen to the radio? What programmes do you like?
- How important is TV to you?
- Do you like the same TV programmes as your parents?
- What's the difference between reading the news in the newspaper and watching it on TV?
- Do you think computers will replace newspapers and TV in the future?

Travel

- How do you prefer to travel, by train or plane? Why's that?
- What's the longest journey you've ever been on?
- What's public transport like in your country?
- Where did you spend your last holiday? What did you do?

©UCLES 2002

For Oral Examiners' Use Only

First Certificate in English Speaking Test

Part 1 (3 minutes)

2002 Test Materials

Interlocutor

Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is and this is my colleague He / she is just going to listen to us.

And your names are ?

Could I have your mark sheets, please?

Thank you.

(Hand over the mark sheets to the Assessor.)

First of all we'd like to know something about you, so I'm going to ask you some questions about yourselves.

either: (non UK based candidates)
(Candidate A), do you live in?
(name of town where examination is being held)

And you (Candidate B)?

or: (UK based candidates)
Where are you from (Candidate A)?
And you (Candidate B)?

- What do you like about living (here / name of candidate's home town)?
- And what about you (Candidate A/B)?

(Select one or more questions from any of the following categories as appropriate.)

Homelife

- Could you tell me something about the area where you grew up? What did you like about living there?
- How much time do you spend at home nowadays?
- What do you most enjoy doing when you're at home?
- Could you describe your family home to me?

Personal Experiences

- Who are the most important people in your life?
- Do you and your friends share the same ideas?
- Tell me about your best friend.
- What's the most exciting thing you've ever done?
- Is there anything you'd love to be able to do in the future?
- What's your favourite day of the week? Why?

©UCLES 2002

PAPER 5: SPEAKING

Part 2



17



18



For Oral Examiners' Use Only

First Certificate in English
Speaking Test

Part 2 (4 minutes)

17 Special moments

2002 Test Materials

18 Leisure activities

Interlocutor

[17]

Now, I'd like each of you to talk on your own for about a minute.

I'm going to give each of you two different photographs and I'd like you to talk about them. *(Candidate A)*, here are your two photographs. **They show people enjoying special moments in their lives.**

[Hand over picture sheet 17 to (Candidate A).]

Please let *(Candidate B)* see them.

(Candidate B), I'll give you your photographs in a minute.

(Candidate A), I'd like you to compare and contrast these photographs, and **say which of the people you think will remember this moment the longest.**

Remember, you have only about a minute for this, so don't worry if I interrupt you. All right?

.....

Candidate A

⌚ 1 minute

Interlocutor

Thank you. *[Retrieve photographs]*

(Candidate B), **do you like doing dangerous things?**

.....

Candidate B

⌚ 20 seconds

Interlocutor

[18]

Now, *(Candidate B)*, here are your two photographs. **They show people doing different activities in their free time.** Please let *(Candidate A)* have a look at them.

[Hand over picture sheet 18 to (Candidate B).]

I'd like you to compare and contrast these photographs, and **say how much you would enjoy doing activities like these.**

Remember, *(Candidate B)*, you have only about a minute for this, so don't worry if I interrupt you. All right?

.....

Candidate B

⌚ 1 minute

Interlocutor

Thank you. *[Retrieve photographs]*

(Candidate A), **do you ever do activities like these?**

.....

Candidate A

⌚ 20 seconds

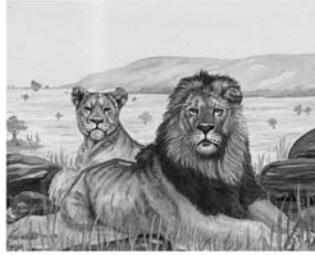
Interlocutor

Thank you.

©UCLES 2002

PAPER 5: SPEAKING

Parts 3 and 4



For Oral Examiners' Use Only

**First Certificate in English
Speaking Test**

Parts 3 & 4

2002 Test Materials

30 Film club

Part 3 (3 minutes)

Interlocutor

Now, I'd like you to talk about something together for about three minutes. I'm just going to listen.

The film club at your school has asked you to choose two films which would be interesting for the students to watch and then discuss. Here are the films they are considering.

[Place picture sheet 30 in front of the candidates.]

First, talk to each other about how interesting these different types of film would be. Then decide which two would be the best for students to discuss.

You have only about three minutes for this. So, once again, don't worry if I stop you, and please speak so that we can hear you. All right?

Candidates
⌚ 3 minutes

.....

Interlocutor

Thank you.

[Retrieve picture sheet 30.]

Part 4 (4 minutes)

Interlocutor

[Select any of the following questions as appropriate.]

- How popular do you think a club like this would be?
- What sort of films do you never watch? Why?
- Are there any films that you'd like to see again? Why (not)?
- Would you prefer to be in a film or behind the camera?
- How important do you think it is to watch films in English?
- What can you learn about a country's culture by watching films from that country?

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

[Check that all test materials have been replaced in the file.]

Assessment

Throughout the test candidates are assessed on their own individual performance and not in relation to each other. Both examiners assess the candidates according to criteria which are interpreted at FCE level. The assessor awards marks according to four analytical criteria:

- Grammar and Vocabulary
- Discourse Management
- Pronunciation
- Interactive Communication.

The interlocutor awards a Global Achievement mark, which is based on the analytical scales.

These criteria should be interpreted within the overall context of the Cambridge Common Scale for Speaking on page 60, where FCE is at Level 3.

■ Grammar and Vocabulary

This refers to the accurate and appropriate use of grammatical forms and vocabulary. It also includes the range of both grammatical forms and vocabulary. Performance is viewed in terms of the overall effectiveness of the language used.

RANGE: The active use of a range of grammatical forms and vocabulary.

ACCURACY: The accurate use of grammatical forms and syntax.

APPROPRIACY: The appropriate use of vocabulary to deal with the tasks.

■ Discourse Management

This refers to the candidate's ability to link utterances together to form coherent monologue and contributions to dialogue. The utterances should be relevant to the tasks and to preceding utterances in the discourse. The discourse produced should be at a level of complexity appropriate to FCE level and the utterances should be arranged logically to develop the themes or arguments required by the tasks. The extent of the contributions should be appropriate, i.e. long or short as required at a particular point in the dynamic development of the discourse in order to achieve the task.

COHERENCE: The logical arrangement of utterances to form spoken discourse and to develop arguments or themes.

EXTENT: The appropriate length of individual contributions (long or short) to develop the discourse and deal with the tasks.

RELEVANCE: The relevance of contributions to the tasks and to preceding contributions in the discourse.

■ Pronunciation

This refers to the candidate's ability to produce comprehensible utterances to fulfil the task requirements. This includes stress, rhythm and intonation as well as individual sounds. Examiners put themselves in the position of the non-EFL specialist and assess the overall impact of the pronunciation and the degree of effort required to understand the candidate.

STRESS AND RHYTHM: The appropriate use of strong and weak syllables in words and connected speech, the linking of words, and the effective highlighting of information-bearing words in utterances.

INTONATION: The use of a sufficiently wide pitch range and the appropriate use of intonation to convey intended meanings.

INDIVIDUAL SOUNDS: The effective articulation of individual sounds to facilitate understanding.

Different varieties of English, e.g. British, North American, Australian etc., are acceptable, provided they are used consistently throughout the test.

■ Interactive Communication

This refers to the candidate's ability to take an active part in the development of the discourse, showing sensitivity to turn-taking and without undue hesitation. It requires the ability to participate in the range of interactive situations in the test and to develop discussions on a range of topics by initiating and responding appropriately. It also refers to the deployment of strategies to maintain and repair interaction at an appropriate level throughout the test so that the tasks can be fulfilled.

INITIATING AND RESPONDING: The ability to participate in a range of situations and to develop the interaction by initiating and responding appropriately.

HESITATION: The ability to participate in the development of the interaction without undue hesitation.

TURN-TAKING: The sensitivity to listen, speak, and allow others to speak, as appropriate.

■ Global Achievement Scale

This scale refers to the candidate's overall effectiveness in dealing with the tasks in the four separate parts of the FCE Speaking test. The global mark is an independent, impression mark which reflects the assessment of the candidate's performance from the interlocutor's perspective.

■ Typical minimum adequate performance

Although there are some inaccuracies, the candidate's control of grammar and vocabulary is sufficiently accurate to deal with the tasks. Contributions are mostly coherent, with some extended discourse. Candidates at this level can generally be understood and are able to maintain the interaction and deal with the tasks without major prompting.

Marking

Assessment is based on performance in the whole test, and is not related to performance in particular parts of the test.

In many countries, Oral Examiners are assigned to teams, each of which is led by a Team Leader who may be responsible for approximately fifteen Oral Examiners. Team Leaders give advice and support to Oral Examiners, as required.

The Team Leaders are responsible to a Senior Team Leader, who is the professional representative of Cambridge ESOL for the Speaking tests. Senior Team Leaders are appointed by Cambridge ESOL and attend an annual co-ordination and development session in the UK. Team Leaders are appointed by the Senior Team Leader in consultation with the local administration.

After initial training of examiners, standardisation of marking is maintained by both annual examiner co-ordination sessions and by monitoring visits to centres by Team Leaders. During co-ordination sessions, examiners watch and discuss sample Speaking tests recorded on video and then conduct practice tests with volunteer candidates in order to establish a common standard of assessment.

The sample tests on video are selected to demonstrate a range of nationalities and different levels of competence, and are pre-marked by a team of experienced assessors.

Cambridge ESOL Common Scale for Speaking

The Cambridge ESOL Common Scale for Speaking has been developed to help users to:

- interpret levels of performance in the Cambridge Tests from beginner to advanced
- identify typical performance qualities at particular levels
- locate performance in one examination against performance in another.

The Common Scale is designed to be useful to test candidates and other test users (e.g. admissions officers or employers). The description at each level of the Common Scale aims to provide a brief, general description of the nature of spoken language ability at a particular level in real-world contexts. In this way the wording offers an easily understandable description of performance which can be used, for example, in specifying requirements to language trainers, formulating job descriptions and specifying language requirements for new posts.

LEVEL C2 MASTERY CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH:

Fully operational command of the spoken language

- Able to handle communication in most situations, including unfamiliar or unexpected ones.
- Able to use accurate and appropriate linguistic resources to express complex ideas and concepts and produce extended discourse that is coherent and always easy to follow.
- Rarely produces inaccuracies and inappropriacies.
- Pronunciation is easily understood and prosodic features are used effectively; many features, including pausing and hesitation, are 'native-like'.

LEVEL C1 EFFECTIVE OPERATIONAL PROFICIENCY CERTIFICATE IN ADVANCED ENGLISH:

Good operational command of the spoken language

- Able to handle communication in most situations.
- Able to use accurate and appropriate linguistic resources to express ideas and produce discourse that is generally coherent.
- Occasionally produces inaccuracies and inappropriacies.
- Maintains a flow of language with only natural hesitation resulting from considerations of appropriacy or expression.
- L1 accent may be evident but does not affect the clarity of the message.

LEVEL B2 VANTAGE FIRST CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH:

Generally effective command of the spoken language

- Able to handle communication in familiar situations.
- Able to organise extended discourse but occasionally produces utterances that lack coherence and some inaccuracies and inappropriate usage occur.
- Maintains a flow of language, although hesitation may occur whilst searching for language resources.
- Although pronunciation is easily understood, L1 features may be intrusive.
- Does not require major assistance or prompting by an interlocutor.

LEVEL B1 THRESHOLD PRELIMINARY ENGLISH TEST:

Limited but effective command of the spoken language

- Able to handle communication in most familiar situations.
- Able to construct longer utterances but is not able to use complex language except in well-rehearsed utterances.
- Has problems searching for language resources to express ideas and concepts resulting in pauses and hesitation.
- Pronunciation is generally intelligible, but L1 features may put a strain on the listener.
- Has some ability to compensate for communication difficulties using repair strategies but may require prompting and assistance by an interlocutor.

LEVEL A2 WAYSTAGE KEY ENGLISH TEST:

Basic command of the spoken language

- Able to convey basic meaning in very familiar or highly predictable situations.
- Produces utterances which tend to be very short – words or phrases – with frequent hesitations and pauses.
- Dependent on rehearsed or formulaic phrases with limited generative capacity.
- Only able to produce limited extended discourse.
- Pronunciation is heavily influenced by L1 features and may at times be difficult to understand.
- Requires prompting and assistance by an interlocutor to prevent communication from breaking down.