

PAPER 5

SPEAKING

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Paper format	The Speaking test contains three parts.
Timing	19 minutes.
No. of parts	3.
Interaction pattern	Two candidates and two examiners. One examiner acts as both interlocutor and assessor and manages the interaction either by asking questions or setting up the tasks for candidates. The other acts as assessor and does not join in the conversation.
Task types	Short exchanges with the examiner (and with the other candidate); a collaborative task involving both candidates; a 2-minute long turn and follow-up discussion.
Task focus	Using general interactional and social language; speculating, evaluating and making decisions; organising a larger chunk of discourse; expressing and justifying opinions; developing topics.
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 and to express personal opinions.
Focus	General interactional and social language.
Timing	3 minutes.

PART 2

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	Speculating, evaluating, comparing, giving opinions, exchanging information, decision-making, etc.
Timing	4 minutes.

PART 3

Task type and format	Long turn from each candidate followed by a discussion on topics related to the long turns. Each candidate in turn is given a written question to respond to. The interlocutor leads a discussion to explore further the topics of the long turns.
Focus	Organising a larger unit of discourse, expressing and justifying opinions, developing topics.
Timing	12 minutes (2-minute long turn for each candidate and approximately 8 minutes following the long turns).

The three parts of the Speaking test

Format

The paired format of the CPE Speaking test (two examiners and two candidates) offers candidates the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to use their spoken language skills effectively in a range of contexts. The test takes 19 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 takes. 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; 28 minutes instead of 19. A 1:1 test format will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances and emergencies.

The Speaking test consists of three 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 personal opinions on a range of topics.



Sample tasks and assessment criteria: pages 64 and 67.

This part of the test gives candidates the opportunity to show their ability to use general interactional and social language. The interlocutor asks each candidate a series of questions by addressing one question to each candidate in turn. The questions begin by asking candidates for general information about themselves and move on to more open questions requiring speculation or an opinion.

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

■ PART 2 – 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 64–65 and 67.

The candidates are given spoken instructions and are 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.

First, the candidates are asked a question which focuses on their reaction to aspects of one or more pictures, and they are given 1 minute to talk about this. After this, the interlocutor gives the candidates spoken instructions for a decision-making task.

Candidates are expected to work together towards a negotiated completion of the task and are assessed on their speaking skills while doing this; there is no right or wrong answer to the task.

The task gives candidates the opportunity to show their range of language (speculating, evaluating, comparing, giving opinions, eliciting, negotiating, etc.) and their ability to manage a discussion.

■ PART 3 – LONG TURN + DISCUSSION

This part tests the candidates' ability to develop and sustain discourse, and to engage in discussion on the topics of the long turns.



Sample tasks and assessment criteria: pages 66 and 67.

In this part of the test, each candidate is given the opportunity to speak for 2 minutes without interruption. Each candidate in turn is given a card with a question on it, and there are also some ideas on the card which the candidates can make use of if they choose.

Candidates need to pay attention while their partner is speaking, as they are asked to comment (for about 1 minute) after their partner has spoken; a further question on the same topic is then directed to both candidates. Candidates should be aware that they must not speak during their partner's long turn.

In this part, candidates need to be able to organise their thoughts and ideas, and express themselves coherently in appropriate language in the given time.

Following both candidates' long turns and follow-up questions, the interlocutor leads a discussion which further explores the topics of the long turns.

Preparation

General

- Classroom activities which involve students working in pairs and small groups will give them practice in skills such as sensitivity to turn-taking and responding appropriately to their partners, which is essential to success in the Speaking test.
- Ensure students have the opportunity to work with different partners in the class.
- Make sure your students are familiar with the format of each part of the test. They should be aware of the interaction patterns (in Part 1 they speak mainly to the interlocutor, in Part 2 to each other, and in Part 3 to each other and the interlocutor).
- It is helpful for the students to know the timings for each part.
- 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.
- In order to make a fair and accurate assessment of candidates' performance, the examiners must be given a reasonable amount of language to assess. Remind students it is their responsibility to give a good account of themselves.
- Remind students that they can ask for clarification of instructions before they begin a task.
- 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

- Examiners will ask candidates a minimum of three questions each about their everyday life, work experience, interests, travel, etc. Candidates will also have the opportunity to express what they think in some of their answers.
- Encourage students to respond promptly to the questions. Discourage students from preparing rehearsed speeches, however, as these answers are likely to be overlong, unnatural and inappropriate.
- Give students practice with a variety of questions; some which require general information about themselves and which can be answered quite briefly and others which demand a more extended response.

- Encourage students to socialise with others in an English-speaking environment.
- In class, students can practise interviewing each other using questions from the released material.

■ PART 2

- Teach your students to listen carefully to the instructions and to carry them out. Students should be aware that their response to the first 1-minute focus question that accompanies the visuals sheet needs to go beyond the level of pure description and contain a speculative element.
- Train your students to take notice of the title on the visuals sheet. First of all, it is very useful in helping them remember the examiner's instructions. Secondly, information given in the title about the context or audience (e.g. College debate) will help students to keep their discussion focused, and to ensure that the outcome is appropriate.
- It is very important that the students interact with each other in this task. All classroom discussion in pairs and small groups provides excellent preparation. Students should know how to make positive contributions to move a discussion forward, and show a willingness to take turns, inviting others to speak, listening and responding, as well as initiating discussion themselves.
- Encourage students to be good listeners. They should be able to pick up on their partner's points.
- Set up classroom activities that allow students to express their reactions to and opinions about pictures.
- Encourage students to discuss the messages portrayed in visuals. Choose two or three thematically-linked pictures from your coursebook, or cut them out of a magazine (or get students to bring in some); ask students to talk about the *aspects* of the theme that the pictures illustrate.
- Equip students with the functional language needed to manage a discussion, i.e. how to move forward, re-direct if necessary, manage the conclusion, etc.

■ PART 3

- Remind students they can allow themselves up to ten seconds before they need to speak. Some students find it helpful to read the question out loud as a way of getting started.
- Brainstorming activities in class will give students practice in getting ideas quickly.
- After the question on the card, there are three bulleted points; these are ideas which support the question. Remind students that they do not need to use these points if they don't want to. As a classroom activity, remove the bullet points. This focuses the students' attention on the main question.

- Encourage students to focus on structuring extended contributions, for example by using linking, counter-argument and summing up.
- In order to give students practice in getting the feel of how long 2 minutes is, put students in pairs – one as a speaker and one as a time-keeper.
- In the discussion that follows the long turns, the interlocutor will ask questions addressed to both candidates. He/she might not use the candidates' names so students must be prepared to take it in turns to be the initial responder and the one who reacts to that response. In class, make sure paired students get practice in being both the first speaker to react to a question, and the second.
- 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 in order to provide a large enough sample of language for assessment.
- After your students have both done their long turns, read them the rubric that introduces the discussion phase ('Now, to finish the test, we're going to talk about ... in general'). Ask pairs of students to write five or six discussion questions on the topic. These sets can be exchanged within the class and discussed.

PAPER 5: SPEAKING

Parts 1 and 2

For Oral Examiners' Use Only

Certificate of Proficiency in English
Speaking Test

Part 2 (approximately 4 minutes / 6 minutes for groups of three)

1 Poster campaign – Insurance protection

Interlocutor

Now, in this part of the test you're going to do something together. Here are some pictures of people in different situations.

Place Part 2 booklet, open at Task 1, in front of the candidates.
Select two of the pictures for the candidates to look at.*

First, I'd like you to look at pictures * and * and talk together about why these photographs might have been taken.

You have about a minute for this, so don't worry if I interrupt you.
(2 minutes for groups of three)

.....

Candidates
ⓐ 1 minute
(2 minutes for groups of three)

Interlocutor

Thank you. Now look at all the pictures.

I'd like you to imagine that an insurance company is launching a poster campaign to attract more clients. The picture on the left was used for last year's poster.

Talk together about the aspects of protection shown in all the pictures. Then decide which of the four pictures on the right would have the most impact for this year's poster.

You have about three minutes to talk about this. *(4 minutes for groups of three)*

.....

Candidates
ⓐ 3 minutes
(4 minutes for groups of three)

Interlocutor

Thank you. Can I have the booklet please? *Retrieve Part 2 booklet.*

For Oral Examiners' Use Only

Certificate of Proficiency in English
Speaking Test

Part 1 (3 minutes / 4 minutes for groups of three)

Interlocutor

Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is and this is my colleague And your names are? Could I have your mark sheets, please?

Thank you.

First of all, we'd like to know something about you.

Where are you from *(Candidate A)*? And you *(Candidate B)*?

Select a further question for each candidate:

- Is English your main subject of study?
- Do you spend more time studying alone or with friends?
- *(You said you're from)* Have you lived there for a long time?
- *(You said you're from)* What is the most interesting place for visitors to see there?
- Do many tourists visit your area *(in candidate's own country)*?

.....

Candidates

Interlocutor

Select a further question for each candidate:

- Can you tell us something about housing in your area?
- What do you look forward to most when you go home at the end of the day?
- How important do you think it is to have a routine when working or studying?
- Could you tell us about some of your favourite foods?
- What opportunities are there for doing sports in your area?
- How important is it to speak a foreign language in your country?

.....

Candidates

Interlocutor

Thank you. Now, we'd like to ask you what you think about one or two things.

Select one or more questions for each candidate, as appropriate:

- If you could live in any country, apart from your own, which would it be? Why?
- What do you find is changing most in your country?
- Do you think that communications are better now than they used to be?
- With more shopping being done over the internet, what future is there for ordinary shops?
- Do you think people will still go to the cinema in 10 years' time? Why *(not)*?
- If you could afford to, would you take a trip in space?

.....

Candidates

Interlocutor

Thank you.

1

Poster campaign – Insurance protection

A



B



C



D



E



PAPER 5: SPEAKING

Part 3

For Oral Examiners' Use Only

Certificate of Proficiency in English Speaking Test

Part 3 (approximately 12 minutes)

15 Sound

Interlocutor

Now, in this part of the test you're each going to talk on your own for about two minutes. You need to listen while your partner is speaking because you'll be asked to comment afterwards.

So (Candidate A), I'm going to give you a card with a question written on it and I'd like you to tell us what you think. There are also some ideas on the card for you to use if you like.

All right? Here is your card.

Place Part 3 booklet, open at Task 15(a), in front of Candidate A.

Please let (Candidate B) see your card. Remember (Candidate A), you have about two minutes to talk before we join in.

[Allow up to 10 seconds before saying, if necessary: Would you like to begin now?]

Candidate A

⌚ 2 minutes

Interlocutor

Thank you.

Select one appropriate response question for Candidate B:

- What do you think?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Is there anything you don't agree with?
- How does this differ from your experience?

Candidate B

⌚ up to 1 minute

Interlocutor

Address one of the following follow-up questions to both candidates:

- Do you think everyone has musical ability?
- What kinds of music do you strongly dislike?
- How has your taste in music changed?

Candidates

⌚ 1 minute

Interlocutor

Thank you. Can I have the booklet please? Retrieve Part 3 booklet.

Task 15(a)

Why is music important to people around the world?

- traditions
- entertainment
- emotions

For Oral Examiners' Use Only

15 Sound (cont.)

Interlocutor

Now (Candidate B), it's your turn to be given a question. Here is your card.

Place Part 3 booklet, open at Task 15(b), in front of Candidate B.

Please let (Candidate A) see your card. Remember (Candidate B), you have about two minutes to tell us what you think, and there are some ideas on the card for you to use if you like. All right?

[Allow up to 10 seconds before saying, if necessary: Would you like to begin now?]

B

Candidate B

⌚ 2 minutes

Interlocutor

Thank you.

Select one appropriate response question for Candidate A:

- What do you think?
- Is there anything you would like to add?
- Is there anything you don't agree with?
- How does this differ from your experience?

Candidate A

⌚ up to 1 minute

Interlocutor

Address one of the following follow-up questions to both candidates:

- Are most of your friends quiet or loud people?
- Why do people react differently to noise?
- Do you think noise levels in public places should be controlled?

Candidates

⌚ 1 minute

Interlocutor

Thank you. Can I have the booklet please? Retrieve Part 3 booklet.

Task 15(b)

When is it preferable to be in a quiet place or a noisy place?

- age
- activity
- time of day

Interlocutor

Now, to finish the test, we're going to talk about 'sound' in general.

Address a selection of the following questions to both candidates:

- Do you find the sounds of nature relaxing? Why (not)?
- What makes a person's voice pleasant or unpleasant?
- Why do you think some people dislike complete silence?
- It is said that some nationalities are louder than others. How true is this?
- "A great film needs a great soundtrack." Do you agree? Why (not)?
- Do you think that children are noisier than adults? (In what circumstances?)

Interlocutor

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

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 CPE level. The assessor awards marks according to five analytical criteria:

- Grammatical Resource
- Lexical Resource
- 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 68, where CPE is at Level C2.

■ Grammatical Resource

This scale refers to the accurate application of grammatical rules and the effective arrangement of words in utterances. At CPE level a wide range of grammatical forms should be used appropriately and competently. Performance should be viewed in terms of the overall effectiveness of the language used.

RANGE AND FLEXIBILITY: The active and appropriate use of a range of grammatical forms.

ACCURACY: The accurate use of grammatical forms and syntax.

■ Lexical Resource

This scale refers to the candidate's ability to use a wide and appropriate range of vocabulary to meet task requirements. At CPE level the tasks require candidates to express precise meanings, attitudes and opinions and to be able to convey abstract ideas. Although candidates may lack specialised vocabulary when dealing with unfamiliar topics, it should not, in general terms, be necessary to resort to simplification. Performance should be viewed in terms of the overall effectiveness of the language used.

RANGE: The active use of a range of vocabulary.

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 CPE 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-ESOL 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 CPE 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

The candidate develops the interaction with contributions which are relevant, coherent and of an appropriate length. The range of grammatical forms and vocabulary is appropriate and used with sufficient accuracy and precision to deal with the CPE level tasks. Utterances are conveyed effectively and understood with very little strain on the listener.

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 MASTERY

C2 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 EFFECTIVE OPERATIONAL PROFICIENCY

C1 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 VANTAGE

B2 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 THRESHOLD

B1 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 WAYSTAGE

A2 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.