

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
in Chinese(4CN0/03)
Pearson Edexcel Certificate
in Chinese(KCN0/03)

Paper 3: Speaking

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International GCSE Chinese
Paper 3 Speaking
Examiner Report

It was the first year the speaking examination was a compulsory part of the International GCSE Chinese qualification and the first year of the Edexcel Certificate, of which speaking is also compulsory. The whole speaking examination includes two sections and lasts 10 minutes: Section A (4 minutes) and Section B (6 minutes).

Most centres prepared well for this speaking exam, and the majority of candidates gave a high quality performance. However, some centres appeared not to fully understand the assessment procedures and requirements which affected their candidates' performance.

Speaking examination requirements:

This speaking examination covers 5 topic areas and all sub-topic areas can be found on page 11 of Chinese International GCSE/Edexcel Certificate Specification (Issue 3).

Topic A: Home and Abroad

Topic B: Education and Employment

Topic C: House, home and daily routines

Topic D: The modern world and the environment

Topic E: Social activities, fitness and health.

Centres need to choose the exam topics for each student - any three of those five topic areas above, and all three speaking topics must be different. Failure to comply with this rule can lead to no credit awarded to a repeated topics.

Section A: there are two parts to this section, 4 minutes in total:

First part: Picture based presentation (monologue) for 1 minute. Each candidate needs to choose their own picture for this part and speak about the picture for 1 minute. The picture must be attached with the candidate coversheet and sent to the examiner for the external assessment. If it is not possible to send the picture centres should include a description of it.

In this part, if a candidate's presentation exceeds 1 minute, it does not help contribute to a higher mark. However, when candidates' presentation is less than 1 minute, it can lead to a deduction of score for candidates. Centres must take this into account.

Second part: An interactive conversation based on the chosen picture follows the presentation for 3 minutes. Teacher examiners need to ask meaningful and structured questions related to the picture, which can encourage the candidate to demonstrate his/her own speaking and understanding skills. Closed questions are not helpful for candidates, interaction is needed.

Time management is another considerable factor. Excess speaking time cannot benefit candidates' scores, but less speaking time can certainly affect the assessing result. Interviewers should manage the conversation time.

Section B: there are two parts in this section, 6 minutes in total:

Conversation 1: a different topic area from Section A - interactive conversation, 3 minutes.

Conversation 2: another different topic area from Section A and Section B (conversation 1) - interactive conversation is 3 minutes.

In this section, interviewers should ensure that the speaking time for each conversation is equivalent to 3 minutes; and interviewers should also ensure all questions asked should be clear, understandable and well structured.

Time management again is crucial, because excessive speaking time cannot help improve candidates' scores, but less speaking time can certainly have a negative effect on the assessment. Consequently, interviewers need to manage the timing carefully in this section.

Assessment: Section A (Presentation and conversation)

Presentation, conversation and fluency (10 marks)

The majority of candidates prepared and performed to a high standard in their presentation. They also demonstrated their confidence and fluency in their communication. However, some candidates were let down by giving limited information and inadequate responses in this section; and also by some unacceptable questions asked from interviewers. All inappropriate questions from interviewers for the level being tested can lead to lower marks.

Interviewers should follow the exam instructions for the conduct of examinations on page 39 of the Specification.

Knowledge and application of language (5 marks)

Candidates aiming for a high mark should demonstrate good language ability. For example, by using a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures.

Accuracy (5 marks)

Candidates should show strong evidence of word order and correct intonation and pronunciation in order to achieve a top mark for Accuracy.

Assessment: Section B (conversation 1 and conversation 2)

In this section, two conversations are assessed globally.

Communication, interaction and fluency (10 marks)

To achieve a high mark for this criteria candidates should communicate smoothly with their interviewers, showing no difficulties in understanding and responding to various questions as well as confidently express personal opinions to them.

Teacher examiners should follow the Instructions for the conduct of the examination on page 39 of the Specification.

Knowledge and application of language (5 marks)

Candidates aiming for a high mark should demonstrate good language ability, for example, by using a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures.

Accuracy (5 marks)

To be awarded a high mark for Accuracy candidates need to show strong evidence of word order and correct intonation and pronunciation.

Administration

Candidate coversheet

Both the teacher examiner and the candidate must sign the declaration of authentication on the candidate coversheet. Some centres have used old forms without both signatures for this speaking exam. A copy of the up to date coversheet can be found on page 47 of the Specification.

Medias

Centres should ensure all speaking scripts are correctly recorded in CDs or USBs before sending out to examiners; please also ensure all CDs are fully protected to avoid any damage caused in the post. All CDs and USBs must be clearly labelled. It is important that centres keep back-up files of the speaking scripts in the events of loss of originals or damages.

Please also note that audio cassettes will no longer be accepted for assessment after September 2014.

Centres and Teacher examiners

All centres need to understand the meaning of Assessment for speaking exam as detailed on page 7 of the Specification. Candidates of those centres which had prepared well for this speaking exam performed better than those who had not.

Teacher examiners play an important part in this exam. All interviewers should study the Instructions for the conduct of examinations on page 39 of the Specification prior conducting this examination. Clear, structured, appropriate and logical questions are helpful for candidates to achieve their potential.

Please note that this speaking exam is assessed externally. Teacher examiners should not mark this paper.

Centres with larger cohorts should arrange adequate teacher examiners to conduct this speaking examination.

Conclusion

This speaking examination provides an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their speaking and understanding abilities. In order for centres to assist their candidates to achieve a high quality performance, centres should offer adequate and proper practical exercises for them prior to their speaking examination; as well as ensure the teacher examiners, in particular if they are external, are familiar with the requirements and procedures of this speaking examination.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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