

Speaking Part 1 – Social interaction

Overview: A sequence of activities to raise awareness of the purpose of Part 1 (social interaction) of the Advanced Speaking test and to enhance fluency and accuracy.

General relevance:

- Social conversation
- Discussing familiar topics and opinions
- Forming and responding to questions

Part of exam: Advanced Speaking Part 1

Materials: one copy of the worksheet per student

Time: 45–60 minutes, in two sessions

Where possible, encourage them to ask follow-up questions, such as, *Why was that?*, *When did that happen?*, etc.

- Now ask them to write down the 'script' of these mini interview extracts, with the questions and answers they gave.
- They should now start to pass these scripts round, and as they receive another pair's script, they should read it and make any corrections or improvements. Then they pass it on again, and so on. Eventually, every pair will get their script back, with various corrections and comments on it. Monitor silently, perhaps noting some errors, but letting the students work according to their judgment and knowledge. When they have finished, collect the scripts, and assess the situation. At that point, you might want to type up some examples containing interesting errors or communicatively poor or rich responses, and use that as a worksheet in the next lesson. So this may be the best place to stop the lesson.

Procedure

Lesson 1

- If relevant, ask students what they know about the Speaking Test Part 1. Establish that the purpose of this part of the test is to see how well candidates can share personal and social information. During this part of the test, the examiner asks candidates questions about general topics to find out more about them, and that is the focus of this lesson.

- Give this example: *Reasons for studying English*.

As a whole class elicit what some of the questions could be, for example, *Can you tell me the main reason you are learning English?* or *What do you hope to achieve by studying English?*

- Now play a sort of dictation game. You call out a series of prompts, and the students write a question for each one.

Prompts:

- Things you hope to do in the future
- Places you would like to visit
- Memorable events from your childhood
- Your leisure activities

- When they have each written one question for each prompt, get them into pairs. They should then ask and answer each other's questions.

Lesson 2

- Distribute copies of the sheet you have typed up. Student pairs should discuss the examples you have written up, considering whether there are errors for correction, good examples to learn from or examples that could be improved.
- Give out the worksheet, asking students to look at Exercise 1. They work in pairs to put the questions into the correct order. Check the answers when they have finished.

KEY

- How do you think life was different for your parents when they were your age?
- How would you feel about living permanently in another country?
- Is there one teacher you remember in particular?
- What do you think is most difficult about learning languages?

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3. Now they should turn to Exercise 2. The answers are lacking in appropriateness in some way. Pairs should discuss these answers and suggest how to improve them. Go through their possible answers with them. Many variations will be possible.
4. Now students should do Exercise 3. Here, the answers are appropriate but there is an error of some kind in each one. Check the answers with them.

KEY

Suggested possible answers:

1. I think that people were perhaps more relaxed, and that life in general was less stressful than it is today. (A fuller answer.)
2. If it was for a positive reason, such as an interesting job, then I imagine I would enjoy it. (A more natural answer, and less formal.)
3. I had a maths teacher who succeeded in making me see the magic of numbers. (Less confusingly phrased.)
4. The biggest challenge, as far as I'm concerned, is remembering vocabulary. (Clearer, and more concise.)

KEY

1. I'm hoping to **qualify** as an optician.
2. I'm fascinated by the idea **of** going to the Pacific islands.
3. Perhaps my most vivid memory is **of** the day my younger sister was born.
4. I don't think that the Internet will **entirely replace teachers / replace teachers entirely**.
5. Conclusion: you have looked at the aspects of accuracy and fluency in performance in this part of the Advanced Speaking test, and tried to show that both are important.

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Exercise 1

Work in pairs. Put the words in the correct order to make questions.

1. when how do your you think your for parents they were different was age life?
2. living another permanently how you would about in country feel?
3. remember particular one there teacher you is in?
4. difficult learning about you is what think most do languages?

Exercise 2

Below are answers to the questions from Exercise 1. In pairs, discuss how to improve them.

1. More relaxed, less stress.
2. Were it for a positive reason, for example employment, then I would judge this to be satisfactory.
3. My maths teacher. He succeeded and then I could see how numbers were magical.
4. Many things are very difficult, and of these many things, one thing is perhaps the most difficult and this thing is remembering vocabulary.

Exercise 3

These are appropriate answers but each contains an error. In pairs, find the error in each answer.

1. I'm hoping to qualification as an optician.
2. I'm fascinated by the idea to going to the Pacific islands.
3. Perhaps my most vivid memory is by the day my younger sister was born.
4. I don't think that the internet will replace entirely teachers.