

# FCE Use of English part 3: Key Word Transformation

## Teachers' notes

Candidates taking the FCE exam can underperform in the **key word transformation** paper (part 3, Use of English paper) because they make non-language mistakes in their answers. This activity raises students' awareness of these types of mistakes, so as to avoid them in the future.

**Aim:** To raise students' awareness of typical 'non-language' mistakes for key word transformations.

**Sub aim:** To raise students' confidence in attempting key word transformations by providing them with an exam technique for checking their answers.

**Level and age:** Anyone preparing for the FCE exam (upper-intermediate).

**Materials:** One copy of each worksheet for each learner.

### STAGE ONE

Handout the first worksheet and ask your students (in pairs or small groups) to try to spot any mistakes in the candidate's answers in **TASK 1**. Point out that there are no grammar mistakes. Do the first one together as a class, eliciting the correct answer and the **reason why** the candidate's answer would not get full marks. You might like to set a time limit for the rest of the task. The amount of time you allocate will depend on how familiar your students are with doing key word transformations.

### STAGE TWO

Students will probably have difficulty spotting all the mistakes, so draw their attention to **TASK 2**. Do the first one together (there are answers with comments in the box below) and then set a time limit for them to finish the two tasks. When they've finished, elicit the answers. Point out that these mistakes can be avoided by using the advice as a checklist.

### STAGE THREE

The final task, **TASK 3**, is basically the same as the **TASK 1** and **TASK 2**, but whereas the first two tasks were aimed at learning about the exam technique of typical non-language mistakes, **TASK 3** provides an opportunity to apply the technique. Handout the second worksheet and tell your students to spot the mistakes again, but this time on their own. When they have finished, let the students compare their ideas and then elicit the answers. Tell students to keep hold of the advice and to refer to it when they do other key word transformations tasks in the future.

## Answers with comments

### TASK 1

Note that candidates are awarded 2 marks for fully correct answers and one mark for partially correct answers in the **key word transformation** part of the test. While some of the candidate's answers in **TASK 1** would certainly get 1 mark, they would not get full marks.

1. I **have no objection to** people smoking in public.(c) - The candidate's answer has six words (haven't = two words). Five words is the maximum. Encourage your students to count how many words they have used.
2. Valentina doesn't **speak English as WELL as** Johann. (a) – The candidate's answer is grammatically correct but did not use the key word.
3. Maria didn't **pay any attention** to her teacher's advice. (d) - The candidate has given two answers and 'pay the attention' is wrong. If a candidate gives two answers, both must be correct, so encourage your students to give only one answer.
4. They **didn't SEEM to be** having a very good time. (b) - The candidate has changed the key word.
5. Susan was **so EXCITED that she could** not sleep. (e) - The candidate has misspelled 'excited' which is given in the first sentence.
6. Karen **still hasn't sent ME** an invite. (g) - The candidate has missed the word 'I' from the first sentence.
7. How long **DID it take to** fly from London to Paris? (f) – The candidate has changed from talking about the past to talking about the future.

## FCE Use of English part 3: Key Word Transformation

### TASK 2

- a) = 2
- b) = 4
- c) = 1
- d) = 3
- e) = 5
- f) = 7
- g) = 6

### TASK 3

- 8. Jon **hasn't smoked for** over ten years. (d)
- 9. I've **never seen a [better movie / movie better]** than Casablanca (c)
- 10. Ivana **is being taught GERMAN** by her uncle. (g)
- 11. Thomas said that he **PREFERRED watching sport to** playing it. (e)
- 12. Maxine was **so busy THAT she could** not help me. (a)
- 13. Spain **is supposed to be** a beautiful country. (b)
- 14. We could go for a picnic **if it wasn't SO** cold today. (f)

- a) = 12
- b) = 13
- c) = 9
- d) = 8
- e) = 11
- f) = 14
- g) = 10

### Note:

These activities are based on information provided in the **Examination Reports** released by University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate and aimed at teachers preparing candidates for FCE. You can download copies of Examination Reports from <http://www.cambridge-efl.org/>. The information is very useful, but quite dense and not very student friendly. You may find it useful to turn the information into activities, as in the ones above, to make it usable with your students.