

Cambridge IGCSE Chinese as a Second Language 0523

Example Candidate Responses – Speaking 03

Moderator comments

Example candidate response – high

Part 1 Presentation

Conduct of the test

The teacher/examiner announced the candidate information in Chinese which is helpful to set the candidate's mind in the target language. She clearly indicated this was part one of the speaking exam and invited the candidate to start the presentation.

Candidate response

The candidate greeted to the teacher/examiner and started her presentation with a Chinese saying, leading to her topic of the presentation, which was Chinese people's eating habit. It is very clear that the candidate has used a series of conjunctions 首先, 此外, 但是, 不仅...还要, 另一个, 总的来说 to organise the different aspects of the topic to achieve a full coverage. There are lots of ideas and opinions supported by quotations, examples and justifications. The delivery of the presentation was smooth, steady and fully grabbed the teacher/examiner's interest. The timing was about 2 and half minutes which is ideal for the instructed 2 to 3 minutes. This is a good example of a well-prepared, well-organised and lively presented performance at Level 5.

For Vocabulary and Structures, the candidate has used a wide range of precise vocabulary and a variety of complex structures very accurately. There were plenty of sophisticated use of vocabulary such as 摄入充足的, 系统的健康运作, 降低肥胖, 高血压和心脏病的风险的法宝之一, 有助于预防, 改善消化功能, 受益匪浅, 延年益寿, 践行到, etc. Nevertheless, the use of quotations and idioms were very precise. Therefore, both full marks for Vocabulary and Structures in this part.

Mark for Content and presentation = 10 out of 10

Mark for Vocabulary = 5 out of 5

Mark for Structures = 5 out of 5

Total mark awarded = 20 out of 20

Part 2 Topic conversation

Conduct of the test

Again, the teacher/examiner announced clearly Part 2 of the speaking exam, followed closely by the first question which didn't overlap with the content in Part 1, but another aspect of the topic, whether Chinese cuisine is considered healthy in the candidate's opinion. There was a good balance of factual and opinion-based questions that led to a natural and spontaneous conversation.

Candidate response

The candidate continued the discussion on her chosen topic in this part, extending to different aspects and examples to support her ideas, able to defend a point of view, for example, 健康与财富. Most of her responses were at good length which showed sustained ability to maintain the conversation. There was one question about 理想的生活环境 the teacher/examiner interrupted while it could still make sense that living in a city in the UK for university was her ideal living environment. A couple of expressions could have been better, for example, 这就没有关系了(就没有意义了), 减少减肥的风险. Combine all of the above, a mark of 9 at Level 5 is best fit for Comprehension and Responsiveness for the candidate's performance here.

For Vocabulary and Structures used in this part, again, a wide range of vocabulary generally accurately and a variety of complex structures such as 排比句, so full marks for both categories.

Mark for Comprehension and responsiveness = 9 out of 10

Mark for Vocabulary = 5 out of 5

Mark for Structures = 5 out of 5

Total mark awarded = 19 out of 20

Part 3 General conversation

Conduct of the test

The teacher/examiner skilfully picked up from the candidate's previous response the mentioning of going to university in the UK to form the first question, so a natural flow from Part 2 to Part 3. Further searching questions such as 为什么对这个(专业)特别感兴趣 has provided scope for the candidate to talk in detail about her future career option. The second topic area 兴趣爱好 also linked to the future career nicely. The last topic area for this part was again picked up from what the candidate replied in Part 2 你刚刚说到美国加州的环境不是很好, 你认为未来比较理想的城市应该是什么样的? so the question was not abrupt. The timing of this part was 4 and half minutes in line with the stipulated time.

Candidate response

There was no problem of comprehension and the candidate's responses were natural and spontaneous even to those unexpected ones. The candidate continued to present and defend a point of view (我觉得未来的城市应该整合…这样人们不用…) and contributed at some length. Apart from a couple of sentences needed a twist, for example, 为了对未来的大学有更大的吸引力 meant 为了将来上大学时更有竞争力, the overall performance worth Level 5 but the lower mark so 9 is awarded for Comprehension and Responsiveness.

Despite minor slips in vocabulary, such as 达到任何需要的设施, 非常支持性的环境,

There was plenty evidence of wide range of precise vocabulary, 经验丰富, 知识渊博 难打理 长途跋涉 轻松快捷地, and a variety of complex structures, 从小就对, 对学习医学有更多的帮助 特别是 我小的时候…, 可是我现在… 并, 通过, etc. Therefore, a mark of 5 is fair for both Vocabulary and Structures in the performance.

Mark for Comprehension and responsiveness = 9 out of 10

Mark for Vocabulary = 5 out of 5

Mark for Structures Mark = 5 out of 5

Total mark awarded = 19 out of 20

Total mark awarded for Speaking test = 58 out of 60

Whole test

How the examiner performance could improve

Sometimes the teacher/examiner interrupted too soon. When there is an ambiguous response, it would be better to ask searching questions to provide the candidate a second chance to clarify their answers.

How the candidate performance could improve

It will be even better if the candidate could distinguish use of the synonyms, for example, 利用 and 使用, 关系 and 意义, 吸引力 and 竞争力, to use advanced vocabulary more precisely.

Example candidate response – middle

Part 1 Presentation

Conduct of the test

The teacher/examiner greeted the candidate in Chinese and indicated the start of the speaking.

Candidate response

The candidate started with a greeting to the teacher/examiner and gave the topic of her presentation, which is 'My favourite Chinese celebrity'. The content included a brief biography of the celebrity, the reasons the candidate liked the celebrity's movies and what she learned from the celebrity and the movies. The timing was just within 3 minutes which is in line with the stipulated 2 to 3 minutes. According to the descriptors of Content and Presentation, this falls in Level 4 as good coverage and sound organisation of the topic, with relevant factual points and some ideas and opinions. The language in the presentation might not always be precise but the meanings were clear. The delivery was fairly fluent. Therefore, a mark of 8 is awarded for Content and Presentation.

For Vocabulary, the candidate has attempted to use some beyond simple ones, however, quite a lot of them were not precise or even ambiguous, for example, 电影制片人, 想当为, 变了周星驰的偶像, 从作为一位无人不知的人变成了全球知道他的名字的人, 跟他有很多的热爱, 拿办法移开困难, 不要跟其他人的话变你, some pronunciation lacks clarity, such as 择业 (职业), 就会自年出域, etc. Therefore, the candidate's Vocabulary is more fit at Level 3.

For Structures, some complex structures have been used successfully, such as 从..变成了, 的时候, 从...可以学到, 像..那样, 因为, 所以, 但是, 把, 如果, etc. The errors in structures do not impede communication. Hence, a mark of 4 is fair for the candidate's performance in the presentation.

Mark for Content and presentation = 8 out of 10

Mark for Vocabulary = 3 out of 5

Mark for Structures = 4 out of 5

Total mark awarded = 15 out of 20

Part 2 Topic conversation

Conduct of the test

The teacher/examiner didn't say 第二部分 but did explain that she will ask some questions based on what the candidate has just said. The questions were all relevant to the celebrity, to movies and actors, all open enough for the candidate to develop, such as both sides of being an actor, 'if you met the celebrity, what would you say to him?', from different movie

genres to whether a fan of someone. The questions were kept clear and short, making them easy for the candidate to understand what was asked. The timing was just 3 minutes which is shorter than 4-5 minutes as noted in the syllabus. This could have disadvantaged the candidate as not enough evidence was found in the shorter timing.

Candidate response

The candidate understood the questions without problem and coped reasonably well with different questions. The responses were all relevant and at a reasonable length which makes frequent prompting unnecessary. Some expressions could have been more precise. The performance in this part is in Level 4 for Comprehension and Responsiveness, with the short timing and some expressions not always precise, the lower mark at Level 4 is best fit.

The vocabulary used in this part was limited, with quite a few ambiguities, for example, 没有做特别的东西让他现在变了这样很有名, 我都喜欢看热爱的电影和年轻的电影, 我会根据周星驰的方面, 跑步人, etc. A mark of 3 is awarded.

The candidate demonstrated correct use of some complex structures, 如果, 就, 让他, 令我, 有没有, 而, 根据, 一样, etc. A mark of 4 is awarded.

Mark for Comprehension and responsiveness = 7 out of 10

Mark for Vocabulary = 3 out of 5

Mark for Structures = 4 out of 5

Total mark awarded = 14 out of 20

Part 3 General conversation

Conduct of the test

The teacher/examiner didn't announce 第三部分 but said 'now we move on to next part'. Ideally, the teacher/examiner mentions the topic area before starting the actual questions which will give the candidate some direction of the conversation ahead. In this part, the teacher/examiner covered two topic areas, Area A 学校 and Area C 旅行和环境保护. The questions were mostly open style, for example, to invite the candidate to introduce her school, 'Tell me about an unforgettable travel', 'how should we protect the environment?', etc, so it is easy for the candidate to give an extended answer. The timing of this part was about 5 minutes which is in line with the 4-5 minutes requirement.

Candidate response

The candidate had no problems understanding the questions and responded thoughtfully for each question and was reasonably forthcoming but tended to follow the teacher/examiner's lead. The responses were all relevant to the questions at a good length. Some expressions could have been more precise, 你如果出门的时候要把防晒, 他

们的屋子被热的天气就没了. As whole, the Comprehension and Responsiveness in this part is awarded the top mark of Level 4 so 8.

For Vocabulary and Structures, the candidate has used a sufficient range of good vocabulary and structures, such as 善良, 耐心, 堵车, 冰川暖化, 一次用的袋子, 太阳能, as well as 不会太..但是, 热到.., 虽然, 用了一次就丢了, etc. Both marks achieve Level 4 in this part of the performance.

Mark for Comprehension and responsiveness = 8 out of 10

Mark for Vocabulary = 4 out of 5

Mark for Structures = 4 out of 5

Total mark awarded = 16 out of 20

Total mark awarded for Speaking test = 45 out of 60

Whole test

How the examiner performance could improve

The teacher/examiner could have asked the candidate to clarify some ambiguous words in the performance to provide a second chance. It is also important to keep the timings as set in the syllabus so as not to disadvantage the candidate.

How the candidate performance could improve

The candidate could improve the performance by improving the pronunciation of some vocabulary as well as to try to be more precise when expressing ideas. Reading authentic materials more often will also help to build up vocabulary and learn accurate expressions.

Note re. marking: The same error should not be penalised repeatedly, for example, the candidate used 和 to link two sentences which was wrong. This will be considered when give a mark for Structures when it first happens but should not be counted again in later performance.

Example candidate response – low

Part 1 Presentation

Conduct of the test

The teacher/examiner announced the candidate's information and 'Part one' in English before asking the candidate 你今天想说什么话题? which is brief and clear. It would be even better to include a short greeting in Chinese. For example, 你好, 我们开始口语考试, 第一部分, 你今天想说什么话题?

Candidate response

The candidate greeted to the teacher/examiner and gave the topic of her presentation, which is always recommended as it shows the focus of the presentation. The candidate has recited the story of Qu Yuan, fairly fluently with a couple of pauses over about 2-minutes. The main issue about the content here is that there are few ideas or opinions, just narration of the story, without mentioning other factual points such as different food, other ways of celebrating, etc. Therefore, the content only fits the description of 'Adequate coverage of the topic, generally organised', 'Includes some factual points with few ideas or opinions' at Level 3.

For Vocabulary and Structures, the candidate has used a sufficient range of vocabulary to recite the story, sometimes lacks precision, for example, 为了 and 为的是。Pronunciation and intonation are generally clear, apart from 屈原, 吞并。Some complex structures such as 不仅如此, 所以, 为了, 被, 就, etc. with a range of simple structures have been used successfully. This indicates a mark of Level 4 for both Vocabulary, pronunciation & Intonation and Structures.

Mark for Content and presentation = 6 out of 10

Mark for Vocabulary = 4 out of 5

Mark for Structures = 4 out of 5

Total mark awarded = 14 out of 20

Part 2 Topic conversation

Conduct of the test

The teacher/examiner has announced the second part of the speaking exam in which she will ask some questions based on the presentation. The timing of this part was in line with the suggested 4-5 minutes and the teacher/examiner worked hard trying to get the most out of the candidate. However, the first handful of questions were asking what the candidate has already said in the presentation, as a result, the candidate had to repeat the vocabulary and sentences from the presentation which will not gain further merit.

Furthermore, many of the questions are closed questions that the candidate could answer

with one word or short phrase. A couple of the questions could have been tidied up and kept brief and accurate so as not to confuse the candidate.

Candidate response

The candidate understood the questions but mainly gave short answers, sometimes one word answer, needed prompting and encouragement to develop topics, such as how people celebrate the festival and in different regions. There was some delay in response for more complex ideas, for example, thoughts on Qu Yuan's action, etc. There was not much contribution from the candidate in the conversation. Therefore, for Comprehension and Responsiveness, a mark at Level 3 is best fit.

For Vocabulary and Structures, apart from those repeated from Part 1 Presentation, there was a limited range of vocabulary and structures that could be considered as new evidence. A mark at Level 3 is fair for the candidate's performance in this part.

Mark for Comprehension and responsiveness = 6 out of 10

Mark for Vocabulary = 3 out of 5

Mark for Structures = 3 out of 5

Total mark awarded = 12 out of 20

Part 3 General conversation

Conduct of the test

The timing of this part was about 5 minutes so again was in line with the required time. The teacher/examiner announced this is Part 3 which will include two topic areas as well as the name of the first topic before starting the first question. This will give candidates some direction of the conversation ahead which is recommended. The first question to invite the candidate to introduce her school was an open question, as desired, the candidate produced an extended answer in good length. Some information from this answer helped the teacher/examiner to form some good questions for further discussion later, 不同种族的老师 and 同学是怎么相处的? The questions in this part were a mixture of closed and open questions, factual based and opinion based, which led to a natural conversation.

Candidate response

There was one question on school subjects that the candidate got confused with and asked for clarification. There were some hesitations and delay in response, especially in more complex ideas such as 如何相处. The length of responses is better than one word, however, still short and needed prompting and encouragement to develop the answers. Looking at the descriptors in the Mark Scheme for Comprehension and Responsiveness, the candidate's performance hasn't quite reach Level 4 descriptors yet and so the top mark in Level 3 is awarded.

The vocabulary that the candidate has used to answer the questions in this part is mainly basic and simple, so more of a limited range than a sufficient range. Some vocabulary lacks precision, for example, 生意 as a subject, 集合空间 as a place. There were hesitations when going beyond simple expressions when attempting the question of 不同种族的老师和同学怎么相处. The Vocabulary mark is at Level 3 instead of Level 4.

For Structures, while many of the answers were one sentence or short phrases, generally simple structures were used accurately. A mark of 3 is awarded.

Mark for Comprehension and responsiveness = 6 out of 10

Mark for Vocabulary = 3 out of 5

Mark for Structures = 3 out of 5

Total mark awarded = 12 out of 20

Total mark awarded for Speaking test = 38 out of 60

Whole test

How the examiner performance could improve

The teacher/examiner could have asked more open questions, avoid closed ones such as 对吗, 是吗, 是什么, 什么时候, etc. To have a list of possible questions or aspects on each topic to hand will help to prepare for conducting the speaking exam. Remembering to keep questions brief and clear will certainly help candidates to get the most out of themselves.

How the candidate performance could improve

The candidate needs to be reminded to develop their responses wherever possible, by giving examples and detailed information, clarifying reasons and justifications, providing opposite views, etc., so that they can show the maximum of what they can do within the time.

Common mistakes, misconceptions and guidance

- One of the general marking principles at Cambridge is positive marking. Candidates are awarded a certain mark as long as there is enough evidence as described in the Mark Scheme to approve what they can do and should not deduce marks based on what they cannot do. Therefore, candidates should be encouraged to show the best of what they can do and do not worry too much about making mistakes.
- Wrong timings will have an impact on the performance of a candidate and so will affect relevant marks. Centres are reminded to keep to the stipulated timings for each part of the speaking exam.
- Candidates who have a reasonably good level of language still need to be guided on how to perform in their speaking exam. It is recommended that teachers share the Mark Scheme and discuss the descriptors in each level with their learners in the early stage of the course.

For further details about how candidates performed in this particular examination series please refer to the **Principal Examiner Report for Teachers (PERT)**.

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