



Examiner's Report Principal Examiner
Feedback
Summer 2019
Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Chinese (9CN0) Paper 3

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General overview

9CN03 paper 3 speaking assessment requires the candidates to present for a total of **16-18 minutes**, it includes Task 1 and Task 2. Task 1 is based on an assigned stimulus card with two questions/statements. Candidates can choose and prepare a topic in advance by themselves as an Independent Research Project (IRP) for Task 2.

Candidates have **5 minutes** preparation time in which they can make notes, and this may be referred to during the speaking assessment.

There are 8 stimuli cards which cover the following four main themes, and each of them has two sub-themes:

- Theme 1: The changes of modern Chinese society
(Family, Education and Work)
- Theme 2: Chinese Culture
(Traditions and Activities)
- Theme 3: The development of Chinese Society
(Communication & Technology and Economy & Environment)
- Theme 4: The impact of reform since 1978
(Reform and China & UK relationship)

Task 1:

On each stimulus card, there are two questions or statements in Chinese which are relevant to the themes. Candidates should spend 5 minutes preparation time on Task 1 and are expected to speak for **6-7 minutes** including Teacher/Examiner (T/E) follow-up questions which refer to the stimulus (sub-theme) and the main theme to demonstrate that they can communicate effectively in Chinese (either Mandarin or Cantonese). Candidates need to express opinions as well as provide relevant and appropriate information. (*Edexcel GCE Chinese specification page 4*)

Task 2:

This task is based on the choice of the candidates' IRP and the T/E uses the 6-10 key findings listed on the RP form to prepare and ask questions. The total discussion time is **10-11 minutes** and includes a two-minute presentation in which they focus on introducing two

major written resources. Candidates not only demonstrate their research findings but also need to analyse and express personal opinions on the topic of their research. The candidate then has a conversation with the T/E and the exam ends with the candidate conclusion after this conversation.

Assessment

In general, the majority of the candidates were familiar with the requirements of the oral exam, such as presenting for the duration of 6 to 7 minutes for task one and 10-11 minutes for task two. They were able to communicate information about and demonstrate the knowledge of different aspects of Chinese society.

Overall, there was a good coverage of stimuli and elaborate responses to the stimulus and appropriate use of lexis and grammar.

Candidates who scored higher marks took initiative in expanding and elaborating their ideas and opinions within a certain time frame. Candidates showed their knowledge, information collected, selected materials and samples to develop their views, express their opinions and draw good conclusions on their topics.

Candidates who scored lower marks were rather passive, simply described personal experiences or common knowledge and information. They demonstrated limited thoughts without presenting evidence such as figures, numbers or resources, and there was no analysis or conclusion.

Task 1:

In those 8 stimuli, the topics which were relevant to the candidates daily life worked particularly well, such as mobile phones, famous brands and the benefit of exchanging activities between China and UK, etc.

The candidates didn't pay enough attention to some topics. The examples are listed below.

Stimulus 8: In what aspects of Chinese pop music affect a Chinese young person's life? A large number of candidates just talked about Chinese music in general, some even focused on classical traditional Chinese music. Also the question is about "aspects", candidates missed that keyword a lot.

Stimulus 1: The reason why more and more people opt to work and live in a big city in China. A number of candidates either missed the words "big city" rather than just generally talking about the city or focused on differences between a city and village.

Stimulus 7: What are the changes in people's celebrations for Dragon Boat Festival in Chinese society nowadays? Some candidates ignored the key word of "changes" only focusing on telling the story of Duan Wu Festival. It resulted in the following question to become meaningless or to have little content.

In sum, candidates were unable to gain high marks when they:

- struggled to speak for the full time requested 6-7 minutes.
- didn't answer the questions asked for
- answers were too short and too brief without expansion.
- gave limited or irrelevant response to the stimulus.
- became repetitive and disorganised.
- only answered one point to the question and kept talking on it.
- talked freely without focus.

According to the specification on Page 23, there are two parts in Task 1. Part 1 T/E asked 2 compulsory questions with relevant follow up within the sub-themes. After about 4 minutes of candidate starting answer questions, T/E should move on to another sub-theme under the same themed discussions.

Task 2:

There are two parts in Task 2 in the new specification exam.

Part1: 2 minutes presentation.

It is important to understand that the presentation requires candidates to summarise 2 named major resources which will be written in Chinese, Candidates should give an outline of the author's main points and express their personal opinions. It is not about the topic itself.

There were quite a large number of candidates who didn't do this presentation accordingly. The common mistakes are listed below.

1. Misunderstood presentation without mentioning any resources
2. Described 2 sources in detail rather than summary of author's main ideas.

3. Using films and videos. They are not written sources, so they cannot be used in the presentation. But they can be used in the afterward IRP discussion.
4. Only one source mentioned (which only scores 3 of 12)
5. Without personal opinion.
6. Timing is over 2 minutes.

A model presentation could look like this:

- confirming the IRP title;
- introducing both sources – which must be written -precisely:- book, article, website; Authors' names, when and where they were found;
- giving the main points of each source;
- providing a personal opinion on each source.
- brief concluding summation.

Part 2: Discussion on IRP

Most candidates could hold this part of the discussion with their T/E well, they introduced their main topic and described clearly what they had. The conversation time reached the requirement. However, there are some common issues:

1. Topic:

The specification states that the independent research project must relate to the cultural or social context of the Chinese-speaking world. It may be based on any of the four themes of study. But some candidates' topics were relatively off line. Some topics were just one word or phrase, without focus on points.

2. Research:

Candidates did the research by demonstrating some information, however there was no evidence showed, such as numbers, figures or even sources.

Candidates only stated narrative facts but without any analysis and opinions.

No research elements could be seen, candidates simply stated personal knowledge and life experiences.

Free talk and chatting.

No conclusion at all.

3. 6-10 key finding:

Some lists were too simple with only 1-2 words, or some were far too much with 5-6 lines making a whole paragraph. It should be one sentence in each box with a statement or question.

All key points should be logical and convincing. It should not be a simple list with some relevant wording.

Some candidates had 6-10 lists in RP form and those did not match what candidates were speaking about in the CD/USB.

Quality of language

Quality of language marks were awarded based on the pronunciation and grammatical accuracy, as well as the range of lexical items and variety of structures and expressions related to all points.

The majority of candidates received good marks for quality of language. High marks were often awarded for performances, which were not faultless, but definitely showed clear pronunciation and good control of complex language structures.

The weaker candidates tended to have problems with the use of lexical items and sentence structures, and tones which sometimes caused misunderstanding, and hesitation which stemmed from uncertainty. Some candidates spoke fluently, but simplicity of language expressions and structures or limited vocabulary affected their quality of language marks.

Administration:

1. Forms: There are three forms in this exam: RP form, OR4AL form. Candidates authorised form.

Particularly RP form with candidates' research of 6-10 key findings is crucially important for the examiner to mark.

Some centres missed the OR4AL form.

2. Recording: Both Task 1 and Task 2 should be recorded continuously without stopping.
3. The centre name/number, candidate name, candidate number and stimulus card number should be announced at the start of each and every recording.
4. The test should be conducted in a quiet environment. T/E mobile should not be in the room or switched off.
5. Each centre should give the exam order of candidates so that the examiner can check whether the right stimulus is given to each candidate.
6. All centres should make sure that the proper equipment is being used for recording the oral exam and the centres are reminded to check thoroughly that the recordings on CD and USB are complete and has a good audible quality before sending the assessment to the Edexcel examiner.

Invigilation/Teacher/Examiner:

1. It is very important for the integrity and fairness of the examination to be in place. Invigilators accurately follow the sequence of oral stimuli, as specified in the exam oral booklet. Candidates must NOT be allowed to choose their own stimulus card.

2. Teacher/Examiner(T/E)

In the new speaking exam, T/E are playing a very important role in which they are heavily involved in the candidates' performance by asking several relative questions in both Task 1 and Task 2.

T/E should be familiar with the exam requirement so as to be prepared to ask the relevant questions within the themes and their research area for every candidate.

In some centres Mandarin candidates could not understand the T/E who only speaks Cantonese or vice versa where the Cantonese students didn't understand Mandarin of the T/E.

Conclusion

The stimulus material in this assessment has proved accessible to all candidates. The examination requires students to give complex, well-structured and extended answers based on the stimulus material provided by the examination board. In preparation for this assessment, teachers/examiners should study the new specification so they can ensure that candidates are given proper training and experience of the expectations of the assessment prior to the examination (such as time management, covering the stimulus and designing and discussing/ follow up questions).