



Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Chinese (4CN0) Paper 03

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General Review

The Chinese International GCSE speaking examination is part of Chinese International GCSE qualification. It includes two sections and lasts 10 minutes long: Section A (4 minutes) and Section B (6 minutes). The Chinese International GCSE speaking examination of 2018 was successful; most centres had prepared well, and the majority of candidates showed high quality in their performance providing evidence for being awarded high marks in the assessment.

This speaking examination covers 5 topic areas and all sub-topic areas can be found on page 11 of Chinese International GCSE 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

Candidates need to complete three different topics in the exam.

Section A

4 minutes in total, include picture based presentation (monologue) for 1 minute and 3 minutes follow-up questions.

Presentation: Each candidate needs to choose their own visual stimulus for this part and describe details of the chosen stimulus for 1 minute. The chosen visual stimulus must be attached with the candidate coversheet together for the external assessment. Extended presentation over 1 minutes doesn't help candidates towards receiving a higher score.

Conversation: An interactive conversation based on the chosen stimulus follows the presentation, for 3 minutes. Interviewers must ask meaningful and structured questions related to the chosen visual stimulus, which should include direct and indirect questions to the chosen stimulus first, and then extension questions within the topic area. All three types of questions can encourage candidates to demonstrate his/her own speaking and understanding skills of the language proficiency. Close-ended questions are not helpful for candidates. Time management is another considerable factor. Surpassing time limits cannot benefit candidate's scores, but less speaking time can certainly affect the assessing result. Interviewers should manage the conversation time of 3 minutes in this section.

Section B

There are two conversations in this section, 6 minutes in total: Conversation 1: a different topic area from Section A - interactive conversation's time is 3 minutes. Conversation 2: another different topic area from Section A and Section B (conversation 1) - interactive conversation's time is 3 minutes.

In this section, interviewers should ensure that the speaking time for each conversation is 3 minutes; and interviewers should also ensure all questions asked are clear, understandable and well structured. Please be aware of that time management is crucial. Centres should ensure their candidates have received adequate training and practice prior to taking this speaking examination.

Assessment 2018

Section A (Presentation and conversation)

Presentation, conversation and fluency (10 marks) The majority of candidates appeared to have prepared well and consequently performed to a very high level in their presentation this year.

However, a number of issues of this speaking exam occurred (again) in 2018: 1) Some candidates gave no direct description or inadequate details of the chosen visual prompt, hence receive a low mark for their presentation. For example, if the chosen picture was a basketball player, the candidate did not describe details of the picture itself, instead, talked about his/her hobbies, future plan, friends and school. 2) Interviewers did not ask direct questions to the chosen stimulus. There are three questions types which should be asked by the interviewers in the conversation of Section A: direct questions to the chosen stimulus; indirect questions to the chosen stimulus and extension questions to the chosen topic area. 3) Some irrelevant or inappropriate questions were asked by interviewers, which had let down the exam performance of their candidates. For instance, the chosen stimulus was "Types of home" in Topic area C. The interviewer asked "Which types of families do we have in our society nowadays?" The candidate initially was not sure about the meaning of the question, so the interviewer repeated it with some ideas of single families and normal families. The support from the interviewer is appreciated; however, the "Types of home" topic is about the style of the house. Possible questions might have included "Can you describe your house?" or "Tell me about your house." Such question was neither inappropriate nor far beyond the GCSE level for the candidate to respond.

Time management is extremely important for this speaking exam. Having mentioned the time required for each section above, it is down to the interviewer to control and manage the time of each section for their candidates. In some centres, interviewers did not control the time of each section - often it was too short. Centres and interviewers are kindly reminded that when a presentation's time is less than 1 minute, or a conversation's duration less than 3 minutes in Section A, full marks cannot be achieved by the candidates.

Knowledge and application of language (5 marks) Candidates should have received a high mark if they could demonstrate good language ability, such as by using a wide range vocabulary, complex sentence structures. Accuracy (5 marks) Candidates should have also been awarded a high mark if they could show strong evidence of word order and correct intonation and pronunciation consistently.

Section B (conversation 1 and conversation 2)

In this section, two conversations should be on different topic areas and they are assessed globally. Communication, interaction and fluency (10 marks) Candidates did better in Section B than in Section A, where they demonstrated great improvement within their conversations. Candidates were awarded high marks if they could communicate smoothly with their interviewers, showing no difficulties in response to a wide range of questions as well as confidently express personal opinions to them. Interviewers should follow the Instructions for the conduct of examinations on p39 of International GCSE Chinese Specification (Issue 3), and ask well-structured questions which are suitable to the language proficiency level of candidates.

Knowledge and application of language (5 marks) Candidates should have received a high mark if they could demonstrate their language ability, such as by using a wide range vocabulary, complex sentence structures. Accuracy (5 marks) Candidates should have also been awarded a high mark if they could show strong evidences of word order, agreement and intonation and pronunciation seldom interfered with comprehensibility.

Administration:

Candidate coversheet: Both interviewer and candidate must sign the declaration of authentication on the candidate coversheet. A copy of the said coversheet can be found on p47 of International GCSE Chinese Specification (Issue 3).

Medias: Centres should ensure all speaking scripts are correctly recorded on CDs or USBs before sending out to examiners

Recording: The recording for all sections for each candidate must be continuous. There should be separate recordings for each candidates (i.e. not one continuous file with multiple candidates).

Centres and Interviewers: All interviewers should study the exam instructions for the conduct of examinations on p39 of International GCSE Chinese Specification (Issue 3) prior conducting this examination. Clear, structured, appropriate and logical questions are helpful for candidates to achieve their higher potential.

Conclusion

International GCSE Chinese speaking examination provides an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate their speaking and understanding abilities from a wide range of topics. In order for centres to assist their candidates in achieving their highest quality of performance, centres should offer adequate and proper practical exercises for them prior their actual speaking examination; and also should ensure that interviewers, in particular, external interviewers should fully comprehend and comply with the requirements and procedures set for the exam.

This is the last exam for the current specification. Centres and teachers need to study the new specification and prepare the listening exam accordingly.

Grade Boundaries

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

<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>