Cambridge English Qualifications

B1 Preliminary Speaking Part 1 – Teacher's notes

Description

In this activity, students watch or listen to a Part 1 performance and reflect on the format and function of this part of the Speaking test. They also consider what makes a good answer and practise doing Part 1 together.

Time required:	50 minutes
Materials required:	▪ Audio or video recording of Part 1 of the **Speaking test** ▪ Sample task ▪ Student handout ▪ Projection/PowerPoint of step 2 questions
Aims:	▪ to introduce Part 1 and its place in the Speaking test ▪ to give practice asking and answering Part 1-type questions ▪ to raise awareness of what examiners and candidates have to do in Part 1

Procedure

1. Ask students to discuss with their partner what they know about the Speaking test, then elicit some basic information:

- **Are you tested alone or in pairs/threes?** (pairs, unless there is an odd number of candidates)
- **How many examiners are there?** (2, the interlocutor and the assessor)
- **How many parts are there?** (4)
- **How important is the Speaking test?** (it is equal to the other parts as it is worth 25% of the total marks)

2. Project/print or dictate the following questions and explain that they are going to watch/listen to a sample Part 1 to find out the answers.

- **Do we find out the names of the examiners? Why do you think this is?** (yes, it is natural and polite, it will make you feel more comfortable)
- **Have you ever been asked questions in English like these in real life?** (answers may vary but they will probably all have been asked similar questions in English)
- **Are the questions about your daily life or about unusual topics?** (daily life)

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- **Do you have to spell anything?** (no)
- **How long do you think this part lasts**? (2–3 minutes)
- **Do the candidates give one-word answers?** (no, they answer in sentences most of the time e.g. Where do you come from? 'I'm from Algeria' instead of just 'Algeria')
- **What effect does this have?** (their answers sound natural and friendly and they use more varied language)
- **Do you think the candidates learn and practise their answers?** (no, they sound natural which is very important, examiners will not give you marks if they feel your answers have been rehearsed)
- **How do the candidates seem to feel: nervous or relaxed? Why?** (they seem nervous at the beginning but they start to relax once the test has started. It is normal to feel nervous in the Speaking test but the first part is designed to settle you into the test and to find out some general personal information using simple social interaction)

3. Explain that students are going to listen to a good example of a full answer given by a candidate. Replay the following part of the recording/video or focus students on it in the transcript.

'What did you do yesterday evening, Mohamed?'

'I've been gathering with my friends and we going to one Middle-East restaurant here in Cambridge'

Students answer the following questions projected or written on board:

• **How many activities did he talk about?** two: gathering with friends, going to a restaurant

• **What other information did he add?** where the restaurant is ('here in Cambridge')

4. Give out the **student handout**. Explain that these are the questions from a sample Part 1. Allow students a few minutes to work in pairs to discuss ideas of what candidates could talk about in their answers before taking feedback of a few ideas with the whole class.

5. Explain that they are going to practise Part 1 in pairs, with one student asking the questions and the other one answering. Divide the class in half; one half will be the examiners, and ask them to find a partner to be their candidate. Start the activity and monitor the length and content of answers given.

6. Stop the activity after a few minutes and comment on some good full answers you heard and some weaker shorter answers.

7. Students swap roles and repeat the activity. Monitor and give feedback.

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8. Hand out the **sample task**. Put students in pairs to look through it and answer the following questions:

• **What do you think the back-up prompts are for**? (They are used when a candidate hasn't understood the question, so the examiner asks the same question using different words. Candidates are not penalised for asking for repetition or clarification as long as they can form the appropriate question to ask for them.)

• **Do both candidates have to answer the same questions in phase 1?** (Yes, first candidate A answers them and then candidate B answers them.)

• **What are the differences between Phase 1 and Phase 2?** (In phase 2, candidates A and B may have to answer different questions, the questions are chosen from a list of possible questions so there is more variation, candidate B starts. Point out here that in phase 1, in comparison, the questions always ask the candidate's name, hometown, work/study.)

9. Brainstorm a list of possible topics that could be covered in phase 2 with the class and write them on the board. Examples are: family, home life, daily routine, likes/dislikes, education, job, travel, hobbies, holidays/weekends.

Suggested follow-up activities

1. Teach questions for asking for clarification or repetition.
2. Use activities such as Just a Minute where students have to speak on a familiar but random topic for a minute without preparation.
3. Ask students to expand their answers when speaking in class by giving reasons and examples.
4. Use the questions from Part 1 as regular warmers e.g. chatting to your partner about what you did last night.

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English Qualifications

B1 Preliminary Speaking Part 1

Questions for projection

- Do we find out the names of the examiners? Why do you think this is?

- Have you ever been asked questions in English like these in real life?

- Are the questions about your daily life or about unusual topics?

- Do you have to spell anything?

- How long do you think this part lasts?

- Do the candidates give one-word answers?

- What effect does this have?

- Do you think the candidates have learnt their answers?

- How do the candidates seem to feel – nervous or relaxed? Why?

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Cambridge English Qualifications

B1 Preliminary Speaking Part 1

Student handout

1. What's your surname?

2. Where do you live?

3. Do you work or are you a student in …?/ What do you do/study?

4. Do you enjoy studying English? Why (not)?

5. Do you think that English will be useful for you in the future?

6. What did you do yesterday evening/last weekend?

7. What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

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Cambridge English Qualifications

B1 Preliminary Speaking Part 1

Sample task

Phase 1

Interlocutor's questions

To both candidates: Good morning/afternoon/evening.

Can I have your mark sheets, please?

Hand over the mark sheets to the Assessor.

I'm …… and this is ……

To Candidate A: What's your name? Where do you live?

Thank you.

To Candidate B: And what's your name? Where do you live?

Thank you.

Back-up prompts:

Do you work or are you a student?

Do you have a job?

Do you study?

What do you do/study? What job do you do?

What subject do you study?

Thank you.

And A, do you work or are you a student?

Do you have a job?

Do you study?

What do you do/study? What job do you do?

What subject do you study?

Thank you.

Phase 2

Interlocutor: select one or more questions from the list to ask each candidate.

Ask Candidate A first. Back-up prompts are in brackets.

How do you get to work/school/university every day? (Do you usually travel by car? Why/Why not?)

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Cambridge English Qualifications

What did you do yesterday evening/last weekend? (Did you do anything yesterday evening/last weekend? What?)

Do you think that English will be useful for you in the future? Why/Why not? (Will you use English in the future? Why?/Why not?)

Tell us about the people you live with. (Do you live with friends/your family?)

Thank you.

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