

Moderators' Report /
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2012

GCSE Chinese (5CN02) Paper 2A

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Moderator Report

Three task types are provided for candidates and their teacher/examiners to negotiate and choose from to conduct the GCSE Chinese speaking controlled assessments. *Task Type 1* is Open Interaction, *Task Type 2* is Picture-based Discussion, and *Task Type 3* is Presentation & Follow-up Discussion. The overall mark for the assessment is based on 2A and 2B, though Edexcel only requires centres to submit the sampled 2A recordings and the corresponding paperwork for moderation. Candidates are required to undertake two different types of task for 2A and 2B. For either 2A or 2B, candidates and their teacher/examiners can negotiate and choose from the four prescribed themes – Sports & Leisure, Media & Culture, Travel & Tourism, Business work & Employment. Alternatively centres can devise their own option of theme. The speaking controlled assessment is marked out of 30 with 18 marks for Content & Response, 6 marks for Range of Language and 6 marks for Accuracy.

The tests should last between 4 and 6 minutes. In the live moderation any submission shorter than 3 minutes 30 seconds is considered to be too short and it will be penalized with a deduction of 2 marks for Content and Response. For submissions longer than 6 minutes, moderators will stop listening and assessing at the end of the next sentence once the 6 minutes have elapsed.

As this is the second year of controlled assessment submission, the candidates on the whole performed well. In some respects, their performance was even better than in 2011. For example, the range of language used was wider; the accuracy also improved. This is probably because candidates had preparation time to work on a chosen topic and therefore were able, with practice, to deliver the presentation or the introduction fairly fluently. The responses were also well drilled, as the candidates appeared to be quite familiar with the questions asked by the teacher/examiners. However, this prevented candidates accessing the unpredictable element marks.

Out of the three task types, the Presentation & Follow-up Discussion task type continued to be the most popular one chosen by candidates and teacher/examiners in 2012. The initial presentation should last a minimum of one minute and a maximum of three minutes, but once the three minutes have elapsed, and if the candidate shows no signs of concluding the presentation, the candidate should be interrupted by the teacher/examiner so that the follow-up discussion can take place. In the June 2012 session some teacher/examiners allowed the candidate to use the maximum 3 minutes for the presentation, but spent only about 1 minute on the follow-up discussion. This meant the interaction element was greatly reduced, hence affecting the candidate's performance adversely. However, it is also worth remembering that if a presentation is shorter than 1 minute, 2 marks will be deducted for Content and Response.

The Open Interaction task type continued to cause problems in 2012. The performance of a candidate largely depended on how well the teacher/examiner conducted the test. Some centres conducted this task type in the free conversation format as in the legacy GCSE Speaking exams. Centres are reminded that for this task type the teacher/examiner and the candidate should refer to a stimulus and each should have a role to play and the unscripted role play should be in response to the stimulus. Only for this task type should candidates take the opportunity to ask at least two questions where appropriate, in order to demonstrate their interaction skills. In the live moderation some Open Interaction submissions were deducted 1 mark from the Content and Response because candidates asked only one question. Others were deducted 2 marks because candidates asked no questions at all. It is essential that the stimulus is submitted for moderation of this task type.

The Picture-based Discussion task type was conducted comparably well. However, what turned out to be problematic was that some teacher/examiners led the discussion totally ignoring the chosen picture. This inevitably reduced the overall quality of Content and Response in the assessments. A Picture-based Discussion task is most easily understood as a free-flowing discussion based upon a picture chosen by the candidate. For the moderation purpose, the teacher/examiner must include a copy of the picture in the candidate's paperwork before submitting them with the audio file. If the picture cannot be sent, a brief description of the picture must be attached.

Some individual teacher/examiners asked simple and straightforward questions seeking only factual information throughout the assessment, and candidates as a result did not have the opportunity to develop a wide range of ideas or express any personal opinions. In these cases some teacher/examiners tended to be over generous in the marking solely because they thought the candidates responded with good confidence and fluency in the conversation. Teacher/examiners are reminded that they need to ask more difficult questions and even a few unpredictable ones if candidates are to fulfil the criteria for the higher mark bands under Content and Response.

As in 2011, some teacher/examiners tended to be too harsh when marking the work of native speaker candidates. Teacher/examiners are reminded that it is the universal standard required for learners of Chinese as a foreign language that should be applied when conducting and marking the assessment.

This year's moderation experience has indicated that the teacher/examiner training should be focused on the following three aspects.

1. Develop understanding of the specification; learn how to conduct different task types accordingly.

For the Open Interaction task type, candidates should receive guidance during the preparation time that they should practise their role for the given stimulus and predict what questions may be asked that are appropriate to that role. They should also prepare to ask at least two questions, again appropriate to the role. An Open Interaction is not a free conversation as in the legacy GCSE Speaking exams. As for Picture-based Discussion, candidates should have predicted and

prepared at least three types of questions during the preparation time - firstly, straightforward questions related to the picture; secondly, questions not directly related, but relevant to the picture; thirdly, extended questions that are related to the wider topic area. In terms of Presentation & Follow-up Discussion, candidates should be advised not to spend too long on the presentation as this may mean there is less time for the more interactive part of the task. The initial presentation should last a minimum of one minute and a maximum of three minutes. During the preparation time, candidates should predict and prepare what follow-up questions may be asked after the presentation.

2. Improve the questioning and delivery of the speaking exam

A good teacher/examiner should make every effort to put candidates at ease.

Teacher/examiners are advised to start an Open Interaction with more straightforward questions. For Picture-based Discussion teacher/examiners are advised to start with questions such as 'why did you choose this photo' or 'please could you give a brief introduction to the photo you have chosen'; and for Presentation & Follow-up Discussion, candidates should start with a prepared presentation.

Teacher/examiners should also be ready to vary the level of questioning according to the ability of each candidate. Teacher/examiners may have a view about what level of questioning a certain candidate is able to cope with, but once they have put a candidate at ease, they should move up and ask sufficiently challenging questions in order for candidates to score higher marks.

In all cases, teacher/examiners should try to ask open-ended questions to which the candidate can respond on a variety of levels, depending on ability. Teacher/examiners should not make any correction of what a candidate has said. Teacher/examiners should try to give candidates time to develop their answers, rather than filling any slight pause with their next question.

The speaking controlled assessment is led by the teacher/examiner, but the candidate should be doing most of the speaking. The questions asked should be more or less in response to the candidate's answer to the previous question so that a genuine conversation ensues. For this reason, teacher/examiners are advised to stay alert and flexible so that they can adapt questioning to a candidate's line of thought.

For the task type of Presentation & Follow-up Discussion, teacher/examiners should read candidates' presentation in advance, if possible, so that they can plan what follow-up questions to ask.

3. Ensure the timely submission of the audio files and all appropriate corresponding paperwork for moderation

CM2

Centres are expected to use the most updated version of the CM2 form - 'Candidate Mark Sheet for Unit 2: Speaking' (<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/mfl/chinese/pages/default.aspx>). On the CM2 signatures are required from both the candidate and the teacher/examiner. These procedures are signposted in the specification and without these signatures the work cannot be moderated.

OPTEMS

The top copies (white) of the OPTEMS for both 2A and 2B should be sent to Edexcel. The second copies (yellow) should be sent to the Moderator and the third copies (green) should be retained by the centre. OPTEMS 2A should contain the mark of the recorded task that each candidate has undertaken. OPTEMS 2B should contain the mark of the non recorded task. Each task, 2A and 2B, is marked out of 30 in its own right. The marks must not be added to each other. **Edexcel cannot issue results to candidates without marks from the centre.**

CA2

The use of CA2 is not compulsory. If candidates decide not to take the advantage, they do not have to use the form. Centres should indicate on CM2 whether or not a CA2 form has been used. If candidates do want to use CA2, they should be reminded that the format is bullet points or a mind map, not full sentences or paragraphs as some centres did this year. The permissible amount to put down on the form is up to 30 English words (or up to 50 Chinese characters, which can be put in pinyin if candidates prefer, or up to 30 Chinese characters + 20 English words / pinyin). They can also draw up to 5 small pictures if they think they will be helpful during the task. The pro-forma is available to download via the website <http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse09/mfl/chinese/Pages/ControlledAssessment.aspx>.

Audio files

At the beginning of each recording, teacher/examiners should announce the syllabus code, language and level and session (5CN02, Chinese GCSE Controlled Assessment, June 2012), centre number and name, candidate number and name, task type and task title. The recording volume needs to be checked in advance to ensure good sound quality. The microphone should be placed nearer to the candidate than to the teacher/examiner as candidates' voices tend to be fainter. There should be no significant background noise on the recording. Centres are encouraged to use CD or MP3 for recording samples. Preferably these are recorded as audio CDs so they may be played on CD players as well as computers. The track number for each candidate should be notified in the box of 'side/track' on the CM2 form.

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