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## INTERFACE CANADA Oral Interaction - Levels A and B

Administrator's and Teacher's Guide

***INTERFACE CANADA***

***Oral Interaction***

***Levels A and B***

***Administrator's and Teacher's Guide***

Canada School of Public Service  
Language Training Centre  
Research and Development

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## Oral Interaction – Levels A and B

### INTRODUCTION

#### OVERVIEW

This guide is intended to assist teachers in the administration and evaluation of the two oral interaction interviews presently scheduled in the CEWP after books five and seven or eight. The purpose of these interviews is to assess the progress of students in order to provide them with feedback aimed at overcoming weaknesses and helping them prepare for the SLE.

Ideally, the interviews would also act as predictors of success or failure in the SLE. Up to this point teachers have not had a detailed guide as to how to go about administering and evaluating an interview that targets the A-B and B Levels. This document is designed to fill that gap.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

- The interviews would be approximately 15 to 30 minutes long and would contain a series of open questions as well as a role play appropriate to the level. These would be adapted as much as possible to the individual student.
- The tone of the interviews would be relaxed and informal. The interviewer would assure that the student was as much at ease as possible in order to get the best possible performance from him/her.
- The interviews would be administered by an experienced teacher (preferably someone familiar with interviewing techniques) in a closed, quiet room. Appendices A, B, C, D, and E explain and give examples of what is expected from the student. Appendices F and G are suggested as evaluation and feedback tools respectively. In addition to the interviewer and the student, the student's four and a half hour teacher (T1) would also be present. The interviews would be recorded to be used as part of the feedback process if deemed appropriate by the T1. Should unmitigable circumstances not permit the T1 to be present, the two and a quarter hour teacher (T2) could fill in for the T1.
- Ideally the tape recorder would be turned on just before the student enters the room to avoid the possible stress to the student of turning it on in front of him/her. Many people find this abrupt change from conversation to interview off-putting.

***Note that under no circumstances should the student's T1 be the interviewer as it is extremely difficult for the T1 to abandon the role of teacher, which presupposes helping and correcting, to take on the purely assessment role of the interviewer.***

- The role of the T1 in the interviews would be to take notes of the strengths and weaknesses of the student in order to incorporate these into subsequent feedback to the student. Appendices F and G are suggested as evaluation and feedback tools.
- Immediately after the interviews, the interviewer and T1 would meet to discuss the student's performance. The points discussed would be incorporated into the student feedback. The main purpose of the feedback would be to encourage the student by reason of his/her strengths and to provide a plan of action so that the student could see ways to overcome his/her weaknesses. The emphasis would be positive, consolidating strengths and providing concrete advice and guidelines for eliminating weak points.
- The feedback would be given to the student by the T1. A form would be provided which would outline the performance criteria of the interview. The T1 could note the strengths and weaknesses of the student and provide examples from the notes he/she took during the interview. The form would also be accompanied by an action plan drawn up by the T1 to guide the student in overcoming any weaknesses noted.

**INTERVIEW 1: LEVEL A**

The first oral interaction interview would most likely be given at the end of Book 5. It would be an A – B interview; that is to say, the emphasis would be placed on Level A functions with some exploration to Level B functions (if the interviewer deems it appropriate) based on his/her initial assessment of the student's performance.

**LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS TO BE TESTED**

**NB: See Appendix A for a full list of language functions for books one to eight of the CEWP as well as an overview of the Book Tests.**

The language functions given in the first five books of the CEWP are far too numerous to be individually tested in a 15 to 30 minute interview; therefore, only the most important ones would appear in the interview. They are as follows:

**Essential to Level A**

- making small talk (related to weather, traffic, etc.)
- talking about ones job (main duties and responsibilities, etc.)
- giving simple instructions (job related – a duty, a process, etc.)
- asking questions
- talking about routines (a typical day on the job, etc.)
- handling a simple work-related situation (role play)
- talking about the past

**Exploratory to Level B**

- talking about the future
- giving an explanation (job related – a duty, a process, a task, etc.)
- giving directions
- describing places, people or objects
- handling a work related situation with a complication (role play)

**INTERVIEW FORMAT: LEVEL A ESSENTIAL**

**NB: See Appendix B for specific explanations and examples of questions and role play topics for this interview.**

- Warm-up

The purpose of the warm-up is to put the student at ease. The interviewer introduces him/herself and elicits an introduction from the student and then proceeds to some small talk. Depending on the interviewer's assessment of the student's level of stress or nervousness, the warm-up may take from one minute to several minutes.

- Talking about job

The interviewer asks questions which require the student to talk about some of the duties and responsibilities of his/her job.

- Present tense narration

The interviewer asks questions which require the student to talk about some routine activities of his/her job.

- Past tense narration

The interviewer asks questions which require the student to talk about a former job or experience.

- Role play

The interviewer sets up a role play in which the student, who plays himself/herself handles a simple work related situation. Explanation, present tense narration and/or question asking may form a part of the role play.

- Asking questions

The most natural way of covering the question asking function is to make it a part of the role play as people must frequently ask questions in most work situations.

- Cool-down

Cool-down is the counterpart to the warm-up. It is a way to end the interview on a relaxed note. The interviewer may use his/her imagination or choose a topic that arose in the interview. Sometimes, a subject that came up in the warm-up can be taken up again in the cool-down. This part of the interview should take only a minute, or possibly two.

**INTERVIEW FORMAT: LEVEL A + EXPLORATORY TO B**

Although many language functions and grammar points which typically define a Level B are covered in the first five books of the CEWP, it is unrealistic to expect most students to have mastered them to a point where they appear to be operating at Level B by this stage in their language course.

However, if in the opinion of the interviewer, the student seems very at ease with and competent in the Level A functions, he/she may decide to explore the student's ability further.

The format of the interview would remain essentially the same except that the interviewer would add the following:

- questions requiring an explanation of the student's duties and responsibilities on the job;
- questions requiring use of the present perfect and future tenses;
- questions requiring the student to supply directions;
- questions requiring the student to describe a place, a person or an object;
- a role play dealing with a job situation that includes a complication.

**INTERVIEW 2: LEVEL B**

The second oral interaction interview would most likely be given at the end of Book 7 or Book 8 or at least three weeks before the oral SLE. It would be a B interview; that is to say, the emphasis would be placed on level B functions **without exploration** to level C functions.

**LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS TO BE TESTED: LEVEL B**

**NB: See Appendix A for a full list of language functions for books one to eight of the CEWP as well as an overview of the Book Tests.**

The language functions given in the first eight books of the CEWP are far too numerous to be individually tested in a 30-minute interview; therefore, only the most important ones would appear in the interview. They are as follows:

**Essential to Level B**

- making small talk (related to weather, traffic, etc.)
- explaining the job (main duties, responsibilities, tasks, etc.)
- talking about habits and routines (a typical day on the job, etc.)
- talking about the past
- talking about ongoing situations
- talking about the future
- giving directions
- describing places, people or objects
- handling a job-related situation with a complication (role play)



**INTERVIEW FORMAT: ESSENTIAL TO LEVEL B**

**NB: See Appendix C for specific explanations and examples of questions and role play topics for this interview.**

- Warm-up

The purpose of the warm-up is to put the student at ease. The interviewer introduces himself/herself and elicits an introduction from the student and then proceeds to some small talk. Depending on the interviewer's assessment of the student's level of stress or nervousness, the warm-up may take from one minute to several minutes.

- Explanation/Routines

The interviewer asks questions which require the student to talk about and explain some of the duties and responsibilities of his/her job. The questions should concentrate on the "what", "why" and "how".

- Past tense narration and discussing ongoing situations

The interviewer asks questions which require the student to talk about and explain some former jobs and experiences as well as talk about situations that began in the past and continue into the present.

- Giving directions

The interviewer asks questions which require the student to give directions.

- Talking about the future

The interviewer asks questions which require the student to use future tense verbs.

- Description

The interviewer asks questions which require the student to describe a place, a person or an object.

- Role play

The interviewer sets up a role play in which the student who plays himself/herself handles a work related situation that contains a complication. The role play may contain any of the level B functions already listed.

- Cool-down

The counterpart to the warm-up. It is a way to end the interview on a relaxed note. The interviewer may use his/her imagination or choose a topic that arose in the interview. Sometimes, a subject that came up in the warm – up can be taken up again in the cool-down. This part of the interview should take only a minute, or possibly two.



## **APPENDIX A**

### **OVERVIEW: BOOK TESTS (ORAL COMPONENT)**

#### **BOOKS 1 TO 8 CEWP**

## BOOK TESTS (ORAL COMPONENT) CEWP BOOKS 1 TO 8

**NB:** For each oral component for each book test, **15 minutes** is allotted including the student's preparation time of **5 minutes**.

### Book 1 Objectives

- |                           |                                  |                           |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| - talking about yourself  | - occupations and professions    | - saying what things are  |
| - expressing possession   | - alphabet and spelling          | - social expressions      |
| - saying where things are | - phoning someone                | - getting to know someone |
| - giving addresses        | - introducing people             | - saying the time         |
| - asking about people     | - asking someone to do something |                           |

### Book 1 Oral Evaluation

Functions	Grammar	Tasks
Task 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introducing yourself</li> <li>Talking about yourself</li> <li>Talking about your occupation</li> <li>Giving your address</li> <li>Closing conversation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple present tense</li> <li>to be: affirmative, interrogative, negative</li> <li>prepositions of place: <i>on, in, under, beside,...</i></li> <li>Question forms</li> </ul>	Task 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply for a library card using a form provided</li> </ul> Task 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe an office using a picture provided – ten items</li> </ul> Five minutes preparation time is given.
Task 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe a place</li> <li>Make a request</li> </ul>		

## Book 2 Objectives

- |                                    |                                |                                       |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| - describing job                   | - asking/saying which one      | - asking/saying what someone is doing |
| - talking about leisure activities | - talking about days and dates | - asking whose it is                  |
| - asking for something             | - talking about plans (future) | - talking about the weather           |
| - giving a location                | - making small talk            |                                       |

## Book 2 Oral Evaluation

Functions	Grammar	Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe your job</li> <li>Describe past activities</li> <li>Talk about future plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present tense</li> <li>Present continuous</li> <li>Past tense</li> <li>Future (simple and <i>be going to</i>)</li> </ul>	<p>Conversation 1 (3 minutes) Choice of two</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe your job               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- department/branch/etc.</li> <li>- position</li> <li>- duties- administrative/ supervisory/ other</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe your program               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- name, components of program</li> <li>- duties, obligations as program participant</li> <li>- activities</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Conversation 2 (3 minutes) Choice of two</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What you did yesterday during working hours and what you are going to work on tomorrow on the job.</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What you did during the weekend and what you are going to do tonight.</li> </ul> <p>Five minutes preparation time is given.</p>

### Book 3 Objectives

- |                                     |                               |                                      |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| - directing phone calls             | - asking about language       | - describing people                  |
| - talking about habits and routines | - talking about personal data | - talking about temporary situations |
| - giving directions                 | - talking about past events   | - talking about ability              |
| - making an appointment             |                               |                                      |

### Book 3 Oral evaluation

Functions	Grammar	Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about routines</li> <li>Ask questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present tense</li> <li>Past tense</li> <li>Future (simple and <i>be going to</i>)</li> <li>Question forms</li> </ul>	<p>Conversation 1 Choice of two</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe your routine on a typical workday.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- what you do at home</li> <li>- your trip to work</li> <li>- typical activities at work</li> <li>- lunch hour</li> <li>- activities after work</li> <li>- typical evening</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe a typical staff meeting at work.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- how often</li> <li>- how many people usually attend</li> <li>- usual starting time</li> <li>- typical items discussed</li> <li>- usual finishing time</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Role play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interview an individual to obtain personal information.</li> </ul> <p>(form with points of information required is supplied)</p> <p>Five minutes preparation time is given.</p>

**Book 4 Objectives**

- giving assurance
- giving and refusing permission
- taking and leaving messages

- describing things
- using social expressions
- asking about intentions

- asking permission
- telling what happened
- talking about intentions

**Book 4 Oral Evaluation**

Functions	Grammar	Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give assurance</li> <li>• Narrate in past tense</li> <li>• Talk about intentions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future tense</li> <li>• Modals</li> <li>• Past tense vs. past continuous</li> <li>• Conditionals</li> </ul>	<p>Role play Choice of three</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain to your supervisor why you've been late for three days in a row.</li> </ul> <p>(reasons supplied)</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain to your supervisor why you want to take a computer course and the advantages involved.</li> </ul> <p>(details supplied)</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is trouble with the FAX machine. Describe past problems and explain how the machine works.</li> </ul> <p>(details and diagram supplied)</p> <p>Five minutes preparation time is given.</p>



**Book 5 Objectives**

- |                                  |                                    |                                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| - describing your job            | - making polite requests           | - asking about cost and quantity |
| - saying you have an appointment | - talking about ongoing situations | - asking for instructions        |
| - giving instructions            | - saying you're not well           | - introducing people             |
| - responding to introductions    | - leave taking                     | - talking about recent past      |

**Book 5 Oral Evaluation**

Functions	Grammar	Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talk about recent past</li> <li>Talk about ongoing situations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verb tenses up to and including present perfect and present perfect continuous.</li> </ul>	<p>Role play Choice of three</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tell a colleague what you have accomplished at work this year. (list of possibilities provided)</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Propose a colleague for an award and describe what she has done so far this year. (list of possibilities provided)</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a member of the Safety and Health Committee, tell a new member what the committee has done so far this year. (list of possibilities provided)</li> </ul> <p>Five minutes preparation time is given.</p>

## Book 6 Objectives

- |   |                                  |                                 |
|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| - explaining how to get somewhere         | - making inquiries               | - offering help                 |
| - remembering the past                    | - speculating                    | - looking for people and things |
| - discussing similarities and differences | - arranging to meet with someone |                                 |

## Book 6 Oral Evaluation

Functions	Grammar	Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about past experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verb tenses: simple past and present perfect. <i>Used to, would, could, had to, ....</i></li> </ul>	<p>Conversation Choice of five</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your first week working for the government.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any previous part-time jobs.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Former rules and regulations for taking leave.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A previous business trip.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A past training session.</li> </ul> <p>NB: Three points for possible discussion for each topic are provided to the student.</p> <p>Five minutes preparation time is given.</p>

## Book 7 Objectives

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- referring people</li> <li>- expressing satisfaction</li> <li>- responding to an invitation</li> <li>- talking/asking about skills</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- talking/asking about hypothetical situations</li> <li>- expressing dissatisfaction</li> <li>- expressing/asking for an opinion</li> <li>- relaying requests for information</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- asking about satisfaction</li> <li>- talking about past experience</li> <li>- agreeing and disagreeing</li> </ul> |
|---|---|--|

## Book 7 Oral Evaluation

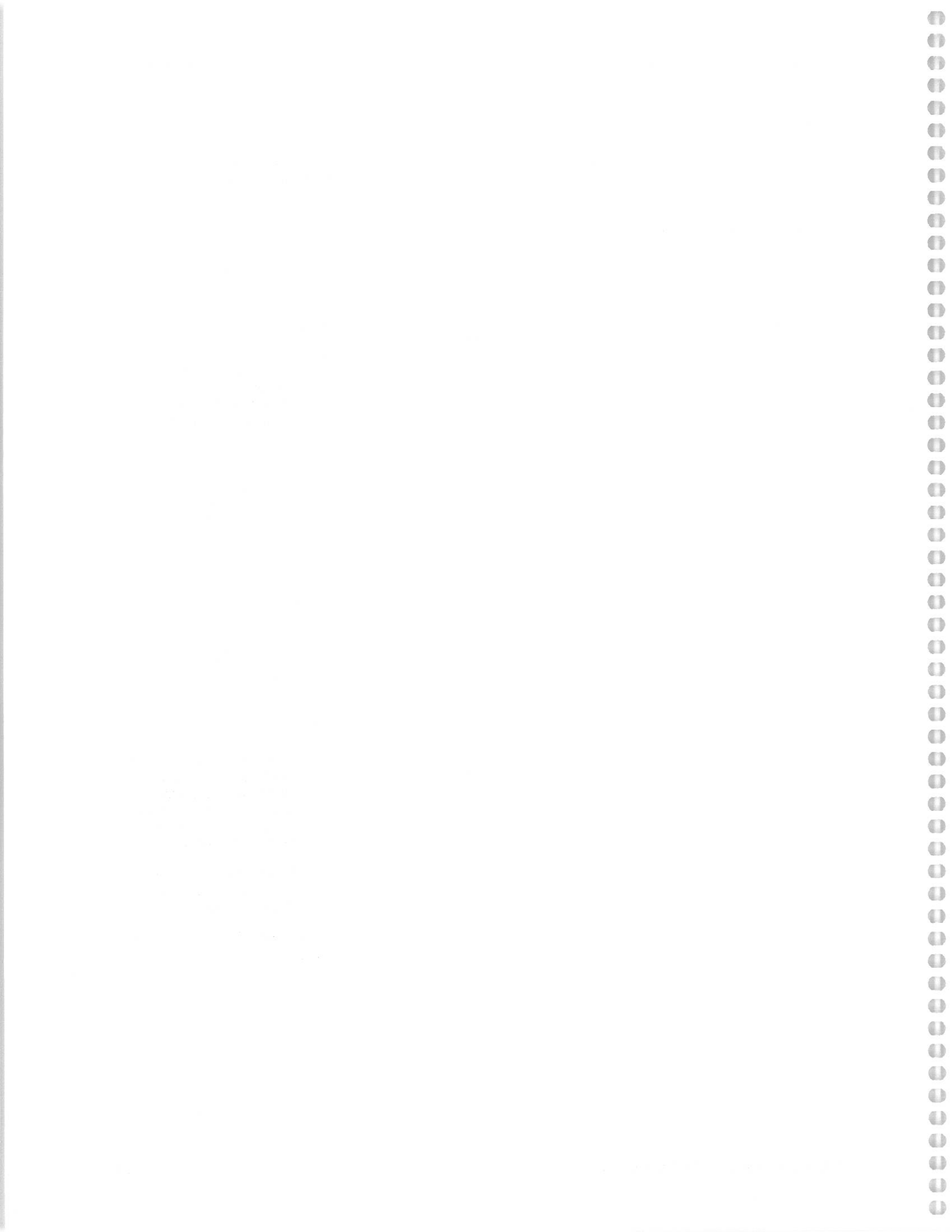
Functions	Grammar	Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about past experience</li> <li>Discuss satisfaction/dissatisfaction</li> <li>Express/Ask for opinion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Verb tenses: simple past and present perfect. <i>Used to, would, could, had to, ....</i></li> <li>Question forms</li> </ul>	<p>Read a memorandum and participate in a role play based upon it.</p> <p>Choice of four</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are a project officer; Compare your old job with your new one.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You were a manager. Express negative opinions diplomatically. Find out how other people feel.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You were the administrative assistant for the Director. Compare your old job with your new one.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You were the secretary for the Director of the Financial Services Directorate. Express your opinion. (You preferred things the way they were.) Find out how other people feel.</li> </ul> <p>NB: Points for possible discussion for each topic are provided to the student.</p> <p>Five minutes preparation time is given.</p>

## Book 8 Objectives

- |                      |  |                              |
|----------------------|--|------------------------------|
| - making suggestions | - expressing interests and preferences | - offering encouragement     |
| - giving feedback    | - expressing wishes                    | - making/handling complaints |
| - expressing regret  | - completing tasks                     |                              |

## Book 8 Oral Evaluation

Functions	Grammar	Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making suggestions</li> <li>• Giving feedback</li> <li>• Express/Ask for opinion</li> <li>• Making arrangements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verb tenses: all up to and including present perfect and present perfect progressive</li> <li>• Question forms</li> <li>• Gerunds, modals, conditionals</li> </ul>	<p>Participate in a complex role play.</p> <p>Choice of four</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss improvements that you would like to see implemented in the workplace with a colleague.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With your colleague, discuss a serious problem in meeting deadlines, caused by understaffing. Propose solutions.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the organization of a departmental conference with a colleague. Make suggestions to resolve complaints from participants.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You and your colleague are involved in a project to make your department more accountable to your minister. Discuss what needs to be done.</li> </ul> <p>NB: Detailed points for possible discussion for each topic are provided to the student.</p> <p>Five minutes preparation time is given.</p>



## **APPENDIX B**

EXPLANATIONS AND  
EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS AND ROLE PLAYS

# **LEVEL A INTERVIEW**

Interview 1 (end of Book 5)

## GENERAL COMMENTS

### Characteristics of the Interview

It is important to remember that the interview should resemble a conversation as much as possible. It should be informal and relaxed. It should flow seamlessly, if possible, and this is largely the responsibility of the interviewer.

The interviewer must keep in mind the language functions that he/she is attempting to elicit and decide when he/she has heard enough of a sample to determine if the student has accomplished the function or is incapable of accomplishing it. He/she should then move on to another function. At the same time, the interviewer must attempt to react to the student and adapt the questions used to test the function to the unique situation of the student while maintaining an appearance of relaxation. It is essential that the interviewer appear relaxed or the stress exhibited will immediately be transmitted to the student with negative effect. This means that the interviewer must be flexible and capable of multitasking to a high degree.

Although the functions are listed in a certain order in this appendix, that does not necessarily mean that they will occur in that order in the interview. Sometimes, because of the nature of the interview process and the flexibility required to keep the interview conversation like, one function will spontaneously appear and another will have to be abandoned to be returned to later in order to complete the sample. Naturally by its very nature, the warm-up is the first component of the interview and the cool-down is the last. The role play generally does not come at the beginning of the interview as, hopefully, it will evolve from things that the student says while completing the other functions.

### Questions – General Information

With the exception of the warm-up and cool-down, most questions asked should be open. That is to say, they should not be able to be answered with a “**yes**” or “**no**” response. If a closed question is asked to introduce a topic, it should be followed up immediately with an open question.

Therefore, most questions should be of the information type and should begin with a question word such as *what, where, when, why, how*, etc. This type of question requires that the student provide a significant sample of language in order to answer it.

Examples of closed (yes/no) questions:

***Do you like your job?***  
***Do you have a lot of duties?***  
***Is a computer important in your work?***  
***Is your office open concept?***



Examples of open (information) questions:

***What do you like (dislike) about your job?***

***What are your principal duties?***

***How do you use a computer in your work?***

***What is your office like?***

Because of the flexibility required in the interview process, the questions suggested in this appendix are of necessity generic. Each student is a unique combination of factors: job, education, experience, age, gender, personality, language skill, etc. Therefore, for each language function of an interview, the questions must be adapted to that unique student and interview.

As well, any of the language functions, or mixture of functions, may be incorporated in a role play situation.

### **WARM-UP**

The purpose of the warm-up is to put the student at ease. The interviewer introduces him/herself and elicits an introduction from the student and then proceeds to some small talk. Depending on the interviewer's assessment of the student's level of stress or nervousness, the warm-up may take from one minute to several minutes.

The warm-up is not part of the evaluation process, but it can help the interviewer to establish an impression of the student's level. By the end of the warm-up the interviewer should have an idea of at what level the interview will proceed.

The warm-up should begin with **introductions**:

***Hello, my name is...and I'll be interviewing you today...and you are...?***

The interviewer should check to see if the student has any **questions or concerns** about the interview. This can be a valuable part of the warm-up.

***Do you have any questions about the interview?***

It would then progress to small talk. The number of subjects for small talk is virtually limitless and the interviewer can be as inventive as he/she likes. Some usual topics are:

#### **The weather**

***Beautiful day, isn't it?***

***That was quite a storm we had last night. Did you hear the thunder?***

***We certainly have lots of snow. Do you like winter sports?***

### **Traffic**

***Were you involved in the traffic jam on Main St. (or anywhere) this morning?  
Do you have to cross any of the bridges on your way to work?***

### **Seasonal topics**

***Do you plant flowers in the spring?  
Have you started getting ready for the holidays yet?  
Did you take any holidays this past summer?  
Have you gone for a walk to see the changing leaves yet?  
Are you prepared for winter?***

The interviewer should be sensitive to the student's response and seize upon what he/she says to extend the warm-up as necessary.

Hopefully, the initial questions lead to a small talk conversation. For example a comment about the weather could lead to a discussion of leisure time activities or a comment about traffic could lead to a discussion of the route a student takes to come to class. Any of these topics could provide evidence of the student's degree of competence in a number of language functions.

When the interviewer is satisfied that the student is warmed up and relaxed he/she can proceed to the next phase of the interview.

## **TALKING ABOUT THE JOB**

After the warm up the next phase requires the student to talk about his/her job. The interviewer must react to the student's responses. Questions should be open and in the present tense for this part of the interview. At this level the student is expected to give basic information.

Sample Questions:

### **Introductory**

***Where do you work?  
Which section are you with?  
Which floor is that on?  
How many people work in your section?***

### **Job Specific**

***What are your main duties?  
What's a typical day like for you?  
How do you start a typical day?***

The response to these kinds of questions will determine where the interview goes from here? The idea is to get the student to talk in simple terms about his/her job. Do not expect much detailed information. Some possibilities are:

***What do you do after you check the date and contract number?***

***How do you arrange for a conference room?***

***Where do you get the information you need?***

***How do you receive your job assignments?***

***What information do you enter on the form?***

***What do you like/dislike most about your job?***

***How do you operate the fax machine ( copier, etc.)?***

***Which people do you usually talk to during your workday?***

## **PAST TENSE NARRATION**

Once again these questions will be job related but asked in the past tense. At Level A it is quite likely that the student will run into difficulty with the use of the past tense and will tend to lapse back into the simple present.

Sample questions:

***What did you do before you joined the Public Service?***

***How long did you work in your previous job?***

***How did you find out that the position was available?***

***How difficult was the job interview?***

***Tell me about your first day on the job.***

***What kind of training did you receive?***

## **ASKING QUESTIONS**

The easiest way at this level to check the asking questions function is to include it in the role play section of the interview. Another possibility is for the interviewer to tell the student directly to ask him/her some questions. The interviewer can stipulate the subject as seems appropriate; for example, questions about the school or the interviewer's job, or even personal questions.

## **ROLE PLAY**

The role play can be handled in one of two ways:

- It can be presented to the student on a role play card. This has the advantage of clarity for the student as all essential information is written on the card. It has the disadvantage of a lack of spontaneity and flexibility. The interviewer is restricted to a limited number of role plays and cannot seize on a comment made by the student to inspire a role play situation.

- It can be presented spontaneously by the interviewer and may be linked to something that the student has said or a situation he/she has described. In this case the interviewer must be very careful to assure that the student knows exactly what is expected of him/her and has all the necessary information.

**Some essential things to remember about the role play are as follows:**

- specify that it is a role play situation
- explain that the student plays him/herself in the role play
- explain the role of the interviewer in the role play
- explain the situation to be explored in the role play. Be sure that the student knows what is expected of him/her.
- precisely identify the moment that the begins. ***“OK, let’s begin the role play.”***
- stay in character throughout the role play.
- precisely identify the moment that the role play ends. ***“The role play is now over.”***

**Sample Role Play Situations – Level A**

1. To the student

You are yourself on the job. A new employee, who will be doing the same job as you, has just arrived in your section. Introduce yourself and give him/her a tour of the office. Tell him/her about the duties routines of the office.

Ask questions to be sure the person understands.

The interviewer will play the new employee and will begin the role play.

Tell the interviewer when you are ready to begin.

To the interviewer

Begin the role play by saying: ***Excuse me, I’m new here and I’m a bit lost.***

2. To the student

It is your first day on your present job. You have some questions about your duties and the office routine. Ask a colleague, who appears friendly, some questions to help get you started in your job. Questions may be about things like duties, office routine, break times, where things are located, etc.

The interviewer will play your colleague and will begin the role play.

Tell the interviewer when you are ready to begin.

To the interviewer

Play the student's colleague and answer his/her questions. Do not volunteer too much information.

Begin the role play by saying: ***Hi, You must be the new employee; my name's .....***

3. To the student

A new colleague is having trouble with the photocopy machine. Explain the process to follow to copy a document.

Ask questions to be sure that the person understands.

The interviewer will play your colleague and will begin the role play.

Tell the interviewer when you are ready to begin.

To the interviewer

Play the student's colleague. Note that you can substitute some other piece of equipment for the photocopy machine and adjust the role play accordingly.

Begin the role play by saying: ***I can't get this thing to work. Can you tell me what to do?***

4. To the student

You want to arrange for a conference room for a special meeting at a specific time on a specific day. You will need some special equipment like an overhead projector or anything else that seems appropriate to you. You would also like to have coffee and doughnuts for 20 people.

Call the person responsible to make the arrangements. Find out if a room is available and if the other things you require can be provided.

The interviewer will play the person responsible for the conference rooms and will begin the role play.

Tell the interviewer when you are ready to begin.

To the interviewer

Play the person responsible for the conference rooms. You can supply the room as requested and the special equipment, but not the coffee and doughnuts.

Begin the role play by saying: ***Supply and services. How may I help you?***

**COOL-DOWN**

At this point the interview is essentially over and the interviewer wants to finish on a relaxed note. The cool-down takes only a minute. The possibilities are limitless. It is not necessary to stay within the language function and grammar limitations of a level A interview.

- *What are you planning for the rest of the day?*
- *It's almost lunchtime. What do you usually do for lunch?*
- *Are you going to take a break before you go back to class?*
- *It's time for a coffee break. What do you think?*

**NB:** For information on the level B exploratory part of a level A interview, use the information provided in Appendix C.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **EXPLANATIONS AND EXAMPLES OF QUESTIONS AND ROLE PLAYS LEVEL B INTERVIEW**

Interview 2 (after Book 7 or Book 8)



## GENERAL COMMENTS

### Characteristics of the Interview

It is important to remember that the interview should resemble a conversation as much as possible. It should be informal and relaxed. It should flow seamlessly, if possible, and this is largely the responsibility of the interviewer.

The interviewer must keep in mind the language functions that he/she is attempting to elicit and decide when he/she has heard enough of a sample to determine if the student has accomplished the function or is incapable of accomplishing it. He/she should then move on to another function. At the same time, the interviewer must attempt to react to the student and adapt the questions used to test the function to the unique situation of the student while maintaining an appearance of relaxation. It is essential that the interviewer appear relaxed or the stress exhibited will immediately be transmitted to the student with negative effect. This means that the interviewer must be flexible and capable of multitasking to a high degree.

Although the functions are listed in a certain order in this appendix, that does not necessarily mean that they will occur in that order in the interview. Sometimes, because of the nature of the interview process and the flexibility required to keep the interview conversation like, one function will spontaneously appear and another will have to be abandoned to be returned to later to complete the sample. Naturally by their very nature, the warm-up is the first component of the interview and the cool-down is the last. The role play generally does not come at the beginning of the interview as, hopefully, it will evolve from things that the student says while completing the other functions.

### Questions – General Information

With the exception of the warm-up and cool-down, most questions asked should be open. That is to say, they should not be able to be answered with a “**yes**” or “**no**” response. If a closed question is asked to introduce a topic, it should be followed up immediately with an open question.

Therefore, most questions should be of the information type and should begin with a question word such as *what, where, when, why, how*, etc. This type of question requires that the student provide a significant sample of language in order to answer it.

Examples of closed (yes/no) questions:

***Do you like your job?***  
***Do you have a lot of duties?***  
***Is a computer important in your work?***  
***Is your office open concept?***

Examples of open (information) questions:

***What do you like (dislike) about your job?***

***What are your principal duties?***

***How do you use a computer in your work?***

***What is your office like?***

Because of the flexibility required in the interview process, the questions suggested in this appendix are of necessity generic. Each student is a unique combination of factors: job, education, experience, age, gender, personality, language skill, etc. Therefore, for each language function of an interview, the questions must be adapted to that unique student and interview.

As well, any of the language functions, or mixture of functions, may be incorporated in a role play situation.

### **WARM-UP**

The purpose of the warm-up is to put the student at ease. The interviewer introduces him/herself and elicits an introduction from the student and then proceeds to some small talk. Depending on the interviewer's assessment of the student's level of stress or nervousness, the warm-up may take from one minute to several minutes.

The warm up is not part of the evaluation process, but it can help the interviewer to establish an impression of the student's level. By the end of the warm-up the interviewer should have an idea of at what level the interview will precede.

The warm-up should begin with **introductions**:

***Hello, my name is...and I'll be interviewing you today...and you are...?***

The interviewer should check to see if the student has any **questions or concerns** about the interview. This can be a valuable part of the warm-up.

***Do you have any questions about the interview?***

It would then progress to small talk. The number of subjects for small talk is virtually limitless and the interviewer can be as inventive as he/she likes. Some usual topics are:

#### **The weather**

***Beautiful day, isn't it?***

***That was quite a storm we had last night. Did you hear the thunder?***

***We certainly have lots of snow. Do you like winter sports?***

### **Traffic**

***Were you involved in the traffic jam on Main St. (or anywhere) this morning?***  
***Do you have to cross any of the bridges on your way to work?***  
***How did you come to school this morning?***

### **Seasonal topics**

***Do you plant flowers in the spring?***  
***Have you started getting ready for the holidays yet?***  
***Did you take any holidays this past summer?***  
***Have you gone for a walk to see the changing leaves yet?***  
***Are you prepared for winter?***

The interviewer should be sensitive to the student's response and seize upon what he/she says to extend the warm-up as necessary.

Hopefully, the initial questions lead to a small talk conversation. For example a comment about the weather could lead to a discussion of leisure time activities or a comment about traffic could lead to a discussion of the route a student takes to come to class. Any of these topics could provide evidence of the student's degree of competence in a number of language functions.

When the interviewer is satisfied that the student is warmed up and relaxed he/she can proceed to the next phase of the interview.

### **TALKING ABOUT ONE'S JOB (Explaining and talking about routines)**

After the warm up the next phase requires the student to talk about his or her job and give simple explanations of the duties and responsibilities. The interviewer must react to the student's responses. Questions should be open and in the present tense for this part of the interview. At this level, as for Level A, the student is expected to give basic information.

Sample Questions:

#### **Introductory**

***Where do you work?***  
***Which section are you with?***  
***Which floor is that on?***  
***How many people work in your section?***

#### **Job Specific**

***What are your main duties and responsibilities?***  
***What's a typical day like for you?***  
***How do you start a typical day?***

The response to these kinds of questions will determine where the interview goes from here? The idea is to get a simple explanation of the student's job. Some possibilities are:

***How do you pay an invoice?***

***What do you do after you check the date and contract number?***

***How do you arrange for a conference room?***

***Where do you get the information you need?***

***How do you receive your job assignments?***

***How do you handle a client inquiry?***

***What do you like (dislike) most about your job?***

***What is the most challenging part of your job?***

***Explain the process for posting a job competition (or some other process).***

***Why do you like (dislike) working on a team?***

***When people call you, what kinds of information are they generally looking for?***

***How do you handle a difficult client?***

### **PAST TENSE NARRATION ( Talking about completed and ongoing situations)**

Once again these questions will be job related but asked in the past tense. At Level B the student should be able to use the simple past with very little difficulty. An occasional slip is acceptable. The same will probably not be true of the present perfect; expect significant difficulties.

Sample questions:

***How long have you worked in this job?***

***What did you do before you joined the Public Service?***

***What were your duties and responsibilities in that job?***

***How are your duties different now from when you began your career with the government?***

***Do you travel in your job? (If yes, ask for details.)***

***How did you find out that the position was available?***

***Tell me about your first day on the job.***

***Tell me about an extremely difficult day you have experienced on the job.***

***Have you taken any training courses? (If yes, ask for details.)***

***What are the major things you have accomplished in your career.***

### **TALKING ABOUT THE FUTURE**

The student may use the simple future or the future with "be going to." Questions should be job related.

Sample questions:

***What are your plans for after you complete language training?***

***What new projects are you looking forward to beginning at work?***

***Where do you think you will be in your career five years from now?***

***What other training will you apply for in the future?***

***How much English will you use in your new position?***

***How much travelling are you planning on doing in the next year?***

## GIVING DIRECTIONS

These questions should involve getting from one place to another, either on the job itself or from home to work, etc.

Sample questions:

*How do you get from your office to the cafeteria?*

*What route do you normally take from your home to Asticou?*

*What route do you normally take from your home to your office?*

*What's the easiest way to get to the library (or some other destination) from here (your class)?*

## DESCRIBING PEOPLE, PLACES OR THINGS

Sample questions:

*What's your boss like?*

*What personal touches have you added to your office?*

*What does the building where you work look like?*

*Pretend you lost something. Describe the lost item to me.*

*How is your office set up?*

*Maybe I know your boss; what does he/she look like?*

*Is the cafeteria where you work a nice place to eat. Why/why not?*

*What's the view like from your office?*

*What's your favourite part of the building where you work? Why?*

## ROLE PLAY (Handling a job-related situation with a complication)

The role play can be handled in one of two ways:

- It can be presented to the student on a role play card. This has the advantage of clarity for the student as all essential information is written on the card. It has the disadvantage of a lack of spontaneity and flexibility. The interviewer is restricted to a limited number of role plays and cannot seize on a comment made by the student to inspire a role play situation.
- It can be presented spontaneously by the interviewer and may be linked to something that the student has said or a situation he/she has described. In this case the interviewer must be very careful to assure that the student knows exactly what is expected of him/her and has all the necessary information.

**Some essential things to remember about the role play are as follows:**

- specify that it is a role play situation
- explain that the student plays him/herself in the role play
- explain the role of the interviewer in the role play
- explain the situation to be explored in the role play. Be sure that the student

knows what is expected of him/her.

- precisely identify the moment that the role play begins. ***“OK, let’s begin the role play.”***
- stay in character throughout the role play.
- precisely identify when the role play ends. ***“The role play is now over.”***

### Sample Role Play Situations – Level B

#### 1. To the student

You recently ordered some supplies for your office. When the order arrived, you discovered that it was incomplete. You have a copy of the order form. Talk to the person responsible for filling out the order and tell him/her what is missing and what you want done. You want everything that you ordered. Invent any necessary details. React to any difficulties you encounter.

The interviewer will play the person responsible for filling the order.

You begin the role play when you are ready by saying: ***I have a little problem I’d like to discuss with you.***

#### To the interviewer

At first you are sure that you sent the complete order. Allow yourself to be convinced to check the form again. You will send the items you missed immediately. One of the items is not available and has to be ordered. It will take six weeks to arrive.

#### 2. To the student

You just started using new software at work and you are having difficulty with it. You feel that you could benefit from some training. You know that a one day course is being offered in your building next week. Make an arrangement with your boss so that you can attend the course. Suggest solutions to any problems your boss brings up. Your boss may be a little difficult to make the arrangement with. Invent any necessary details.

The interviewer will play your boss and will begin the role play.

Tell the interviewer when you are ready to begin.

#### To the interviewer

You should put one or two stumbling blocks in front of the student: the heavy workload, nobody else is having problems, etc. Agree to request after student deals with these difficulties.

Begin the role play by saying: ***Yes, (name) did you want to speak with me?***

## 3. To the student

You want to make an appointment to talk to your pay and benefits officer about some overtime pay that you have not received. Apparently there is some confusion about the dates and number of hours worked. You have the necessary paperwork to prove your claim. Call him/her to arrange an appointment. (You really want to do this face to face.) It would be convenient for you to see him/her first thing in the morning, any morning next week. Invent any necessary details.

The interviewer will play the pay and benefits officer and will begin the role play.

Tell the interviewer when you are ready to begin.

## To the interviewer

You are the pay and benefits officer. You have conflicting information about the overtime claim. You will be busy in meetings every morning next week, but you are available to meet the employee late in the afternoon. Offer to discuss the problem on the phone.

Begin the role play by saying: **Pay and Benefits. Can I help you?**

## 4. To the student

You work in an open-concept office. Your workstation is right next to the photocopy and fax machines. It is a noisy area and you would like to move because you think it is affecting your work. You think that there is enough room for you at the other end of the office near the windows. If that doesn't work, perhaps the equipment could be moved into a closed office space.

Make an arrangement with your boss so that you will have a quieter place to work. Invent reasons why it would be good for all concerned. He/she may be a bit difficult but you can convince him/her that it's a good idea.

The interviewer will play your boss and will begin the role play.

Tell the interviewer when you are ready to begin.

## To the interviewer

You play the student's boss. You do not think there is enough room to move the student where he/she suggests; as well there could be difficulty wiring the phone, computer, etc. Allow yourself to be convinced if the student provides a couple of reasons.

Begin the role play by saying: **Yes, (name) why are you looking so stressed?**

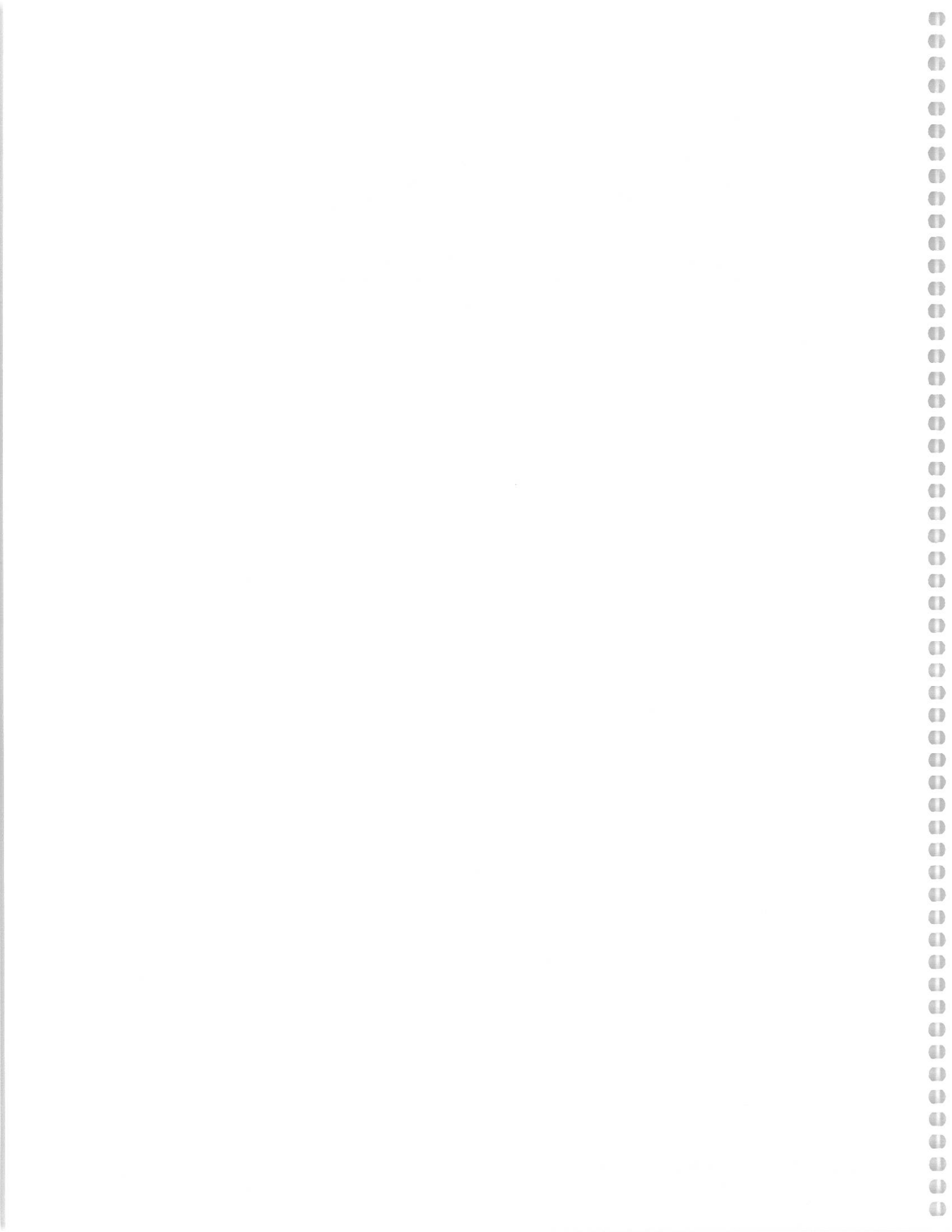


**COOL-DOWN**

At this point the interview is essentially over and the interviewer wants to finish on a relaxed note. The cool-down takes only a minute. The possibilities are limitless. It is not necessary to stay within the language functions and grammar limitations of a level B interview.

- *What are you planning for the rest of the day?*
- *It's almost lunchtime. What do you usually do for lunch?*
- *Are you going to take a break before you go back to class?*
- *It's time for a coffee break. What do you think?*





## **APPENDIX D**

### **EXAMPLES OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF PERFORMANCE AT LEVELS A AND B**

## Examples of the characteristics of performance at levels A and B

Level	A	B
<b>Ability to converse</b>	can sustain a simple question and answer exchange	can sustain an informal conversation on concrete topics
	can produce new sentences (not simply repeat memorized material)	is able to paraphrase when lacking the exact vocabulary
<b>Ease in using the language</b>	delivery may be slow or hesitant	speaks with some spontaneity
	can form sentences with some hesitations	may hesitate when using more complex sentences
<b>Clarity of communication</b>	has basic vocabulary for routine work-related topics	has extensive vocabulary for work-related topics
	can talk about facts in the present	can situate facts and events in time (i.e. has good mastery of simple verb tenses)
	can link words to form simple sentences	can link sentences together into longer passages
	may ask for repetition or rephrasing of some questions	has few difficulties understanding the assessor
	can generally be understood if the listener pays close attention	can be understood by most people, but repetition may sometimes be required

## **APPENDIX E**

### **EXPECTATION OF PERFORMANCE LEVELS FOR BOOK 5 AND BOOK 8 CEWP**

## Performance Expectations in Relation to Book Levels

	Book 5: Level A - B	Book 8: Level B
<b>Comprehension</b>	Fair – good. Understands most simple questions even at a rapid pace. May ask for repetition.	Good – very good. Can follow discussion without difficulty.
<b>Comprehensibility</b>	Poor – fair. Marked by errors in pronunciation and first language interference. Tends to drop many final consonants and has difficulty with “th” and “h” sounds. May be difficult to understand at times	Good – very good. Generally quite clear. Little first language interference. Pronunciation does not interfere with communication. Some fossilized errors may persist.
<b>Fluency</b>	Poor - fair. Frequent hesitations to look for words and decide on verb tense. Has basic vocabulary for the work place.	Good. Conversation flows. Few hesitations. Has solid vocabulary for the workplace.
<b>Grammar</b>	Speaks mostly in the present tense. Can use simple past but has difficulty with ‘ed’ endings and being consistent.	Good. Has solid mastery of the basic verb tenses and is consistent in their application. Some fossilized errors may persist.
<b>Organization</b>	Difficulty putting paragraphs together. Speaks in simple sentences. Has trouble with linking words.	Good – very good. Has ability to speak in paragraphs. Uses linking words efficiently.
<b>Functions</b>	Can accomplish the functions for Level A, and some level B functions but with difficulty.	Can accomplish the functions for Level B without difficulty.

## **APPENDIX F**

### **INTERVIEW EVALUATION GUIDE FOR TEACHERS**

## Interview Evaluation

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Check the appropriate box.

No  
1

Sometimes  
2

Usually  
3

Always  
4

### 1. Comprehension

- understands message/task

☐
☐
☐
☐

### 2. Comprehensibility

- conveys message

☐
☐
☐
☐

### 3. Fluency

- speech flow is continuous

☐
☐
☐
☐

### 4. Grammar

- follows accepted rules  
of grammar and usage

☐
☐
☐
☐

### 5. Socio-linguistic

- adapts to situation

☐
☐
☐
☐

### 6. Organization

- presents message in  
an organized way

☐
☐
☐
☐

### 7. Vocabulary

- uses appropriate vocabulary

☐
☐
☐
☐

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Total 28

NB: Generally speaking a score of 14 or less would indicate Level A, while a score of 19 or above would indicate Level B (assuming that there are no scores of 1). A score of 25 – 28 would be extremely unusual for students doing this interview and would indicate a Level C performance.

## **APPENDIX G**

### **INTERVIEW FEEDBACK FOR STUDENTS**



**Level A / Level B Interview****Feedback****Student** \_\_\_\_\_**Group** \_\_\_\_\_

-----comments-----

**Vocabulary**

has basic vocabulary

☐ yes ☐ no

has solid work vocabulary

☐ yes ☐ nouses non-English  
vocabulary☐ yes ☐ no**Verb Tenses**Uses the following  
verb tenses correctly:

simple present

☐ yes ☐ no

present progressive

☐ yes ☐ no

simple past

☐ yes ☐ no

past progressive

☐ yes ☐ no

simple future

☐ yes ☐ no

future with "be going to"

☐ yes ☐ no

present perfect

☐ yes ☐ no

**Grammar/Usage**

-----comments-----

Uses the following correctly:

negatives  
☐ yes      ☐ no

“yes/no” questions  
☐ yes      ☐ no

information questions  
☐ yes      ☐ no

third person singular “s”  
☐ yes      ☐ no

prepositions of time/place  
☐ yes      ☐ no

linking words  
☐ yes      ☐ no

pronouns  
☐ yes      ☐ no

possessives  
☐ yes      ☐ no

**Pronunciation**

-----comments-----

Uses non-English  
pronunciation  
for English words

☐ yes ☐ no

Drops final consonant

☐ yes ☐ no

Mispronounces or  
drops “ed” endings

☐ yes ☐ no

Drops aspirated “h”

☐ yes ☐ no

Inserts aspirated “h”  
in inappropriate places

☐ yes ☐ no

Mispronounces  
“th” sound

☐ yes ☐ no

Mispronounces the  
long English “i”

☐ yes ☐ no

OTHER- specify

☐ yes

**Intonation**

-----comments-----

Uses French  
intonation patterns

☐ yes      ☐ no

**Stress**

-----comments-----

Uses appropriate word  
stress

☐ yes      ☐ no

**Fluency**

-----comments-----

Rate of speech is  
acceptable

☐ yes      ☐ no

Speaks in complete  
sentences

☐ yes      ☐ no

Speaks in paragraphs

☐ yes      ☐ no

Uses coping strategies,  
does not block  
for want of specific  
vocabulary

☐ yes      ☐ no

**Functions**

-----comments-----

Completed the following  
functions:

**NA = not applicable**

small talk

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

talking about job

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

giving simple instructions

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

asking questions

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

talking about routines

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

handling simple  
work-related situation

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

talking about past

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

talking about future

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

giving explanation

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

giving directions

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

describing people/places

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

work related situation  
with a complication

☐ yes ☐ no ☐ NA

**Adjectives and Adverbs**

-----comments-----

Uses comparative form of  
adjectives correctly

☐ yes      ☐ no

Uses superlative form of  
adjectives correctly

☐ yes      ☐ no

Uses comparative form of  
adverbs correctly

☐ yes      ☐ no

Uses superlative form of  
adverbs correctly

☐ yes      ☐ no

Uses adverbs of  
frequency correctly

☐ yes      ☐ no

