

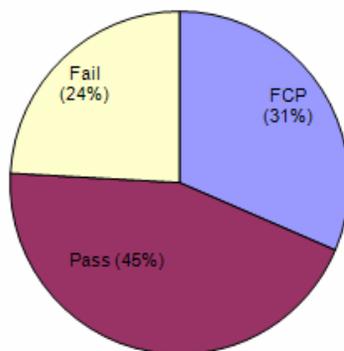
8969 Spoken English for Speakers of Other Languages – Young

General Observations

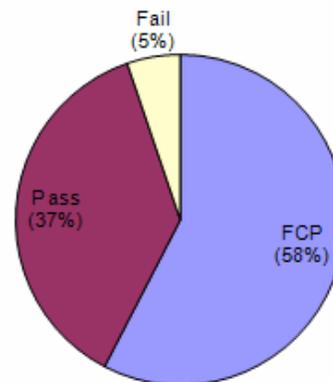
These examinations have been specifically designed for learners aged 8 to 13 and use child-friendly topics such as parties, pen-pals and pets. Testing is by a one-to-one recorded and structured interview with a member of the centre staff – someone who knows the children and can put them at ease. The examinations provide a good medium for rewarding early success in language learning and allow candidates to progress to the adult ESOL examinations with confidence. The majority of candidates at both levels perform very well and are able to demonstrate a sound ability to understand and speak English.

This year, at Basic level, the number of First Class Passes has reduced considerably although 76% candidates still passed the examination. At Elementary level, there was a slight drop in the number of First Class Passes, but a 95% overall pass rate. The vast majority of candidates appear to have been entered for the correct level and overall performance has been highly creditable.

Spoken ESOL for Young Learners - Basic



Spoken ESOL for Young Learners - Elementary



Areas of good performance

In Part 1 most candidates now understand the need to give a reasonably extended response (appropriate to level) to the questions.

In Part 2 most candidates appear well prepared for the role-play. Some very sensibly ask for clarification if they are unsure.

In Part 3 candidates are generally adept at responding to requests for information but many still fail to take the initiative in requesting information themselves.

Candidates who have prepared well for Part 4 speak fluently and engagingly about the object they have brought into the examination room.

Areas for development

In Part 1, candidates are required to spell their family name. Frequently students are unable to distinguish clearly between the vowels (particularly between E and I). Some candidates give very short answers to the questions. It is always better to expand a little, eg rather than reply to a question about how many brothers a candidate has by simply saying 'Two' it would be preferable to say something along

the lines of, 'I have two brothers. Their names are' Candidates need to remember that the marker can only award marks for the sample of language which is recorded, so the more a candidate says, the higher the marks likely to be awarded. Some candidates who do not understand a question tend to say nothing. They should be taught to ask for repetition or clarification.

For Part 2, candidates need to know and be able to pronounce the letters *a, b, c, d* and *e* clearly so that they can be confident in telling the interlocutor which situations they have chosen. Again, as much expansion as possible is desirable when asking and answering questions.

In Part 3 many candidates fail to take the initiative in requesting information themselves. In this part, it is not sufficient simply to answer the interlocutor's questions. Practice in using direct questions would benefit many candidates.

Candidates should take full advantage of the fact that they are able to prepare well in advance for Part 4. It is important to choose the object about which they are going to speak with care, so that they can talk about it for an extended period of time. They should also try to anticipate the questions the interlocutor may ask them about the object.

Recommendations

Practice in speaking into a microphone and listening to themselves on the recording would benefit many candidates.

Candidates should also know how to ask for repetition or clarification.

Part 1 always involves answering personal questions, so candidates should practise spelling their name and answering as many questions about themselves as possible, especially those which involve numerical information (eg height, weight, date of birth etc).

In Part 2, candidates are required to role play, so practice in doing this in a variety of situations would be very useful.

Part 3 requires candidates to ask as well as answer questions, so practice in using common interrogatives is vital. Candidates should also be prepared to take the initiative and not rely on the interlocutor to lead the conversation.

When choosing an object to speak about, candidates should be careful to choose something suitably interesting and about which they know enough vocabulary to speak for an extended period of time. They should practise beforehand, trying to speak for much longer than is necessary in the examination. They should also try to anticipate the questions the interlocutor may ask them about the object, and ensure they can answer all of these with confidence.

Tips

- Prepare well, especially for Part 4.
- Speak as much as you can.
- Speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard on the recording.
- Get lots of practice in speaking into a microphone.

- Make sure you know how to ask for repetition or clarification.
- Use as wide a range of language as you can to make sure the examiner knows how good you are.
- Don't rely on the interlocutor to move the interaction along. Make sure you ask questions too – especially in Part 3.

Additional comments

Interlocutors should encourage candidates to talk as much as possible.

The better the recording equipment used and the quieter the environment in which the examination is recorded, the easier it will be for examiners to hear what candidates say.