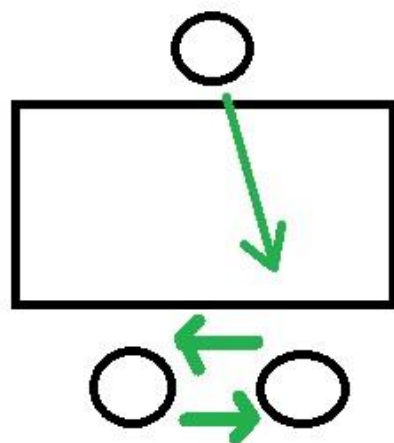


2. ESSENTIAL CAE SPEAKING TEST PART 4 TIPS

1. INTERACTION DIAGRAM



* You should consider this part of the exam as a continuation of part 3. You don't have to reach a decision together or talk about keywords, but you do have to use the same techniques - ask your speaking partner questions, organise your responses with linking words etc. Your replies in this section can be longer than in part 3.

* The biggest mistake students make in this section is thinking they should talk to the examiner. Yes, the examiner starts by asking you a question, but after you've answered it you should bring your partner into the discussion ("What do you think?"). When the discussion runs its course, the examiner will ask a new question (still on the same general theme). Remember, if you take the lead and ask your partner what he thinks, that's more speaking time for YOU.

* When has a discussion run its course? It could be that on one question you both instantly agree and the conversation ends quickly. It could be that on the next question you have an interesting discussion with two or three responses each. It might be hard to judge under exam conditions, but try to be natural - if you followed these tips and made good eye contact from the very start of the CAE Speaking test, you will have good rapport with your partner by now and the discussion will be more relaxed and you'll know when to continue and when to stop.

3. WHICH QUESTIONS SHOULD YOU PREPARE FOR?

Questions in part 4 can be extremely varied from one exam to the next. Take a look at these:

- Are we too obsessed with healthy eating and physical fitness nowadays?
- Do you agree that experience is the best teacher?
- What is the best age to retire?

Clearly it would be hard to rehearse an answer for every question they might ask you! So it's more rational to think in terms of what topics frequently appear in the exam, and then sit and work on your vocabulary for those topics.

Common topics are:

-HEALTH- -THE ENVIRONMENT- -SOCIAL ISSUES- -JOBS- -TECHNOLOGY- -RELATIONSHIPS- -MONEY-

4. SIMPLE WAYS TO INCLUDE YOUR PARTNER IN THE DISCUSSION

Questions. Ask lots of questions. Always start part 3 by saying, 'What do you think?' and in part 4 ask for feedback after you've given your opinion. Say what you think about the topic and finish with

- ... don't you agree?
- ... or do you have a different opinion?
- ... or maybe you know more about it?
- What's your idea?
- What do you think?
- What are your thoughts on all of this?
- Wouldn't you say?
- How do you feel about that?

It would be quite impressive to refer to something your partner said earlier in the exam. For example, if she is a dentist and the topic in part 4 is health, you could say, 'You're an expert in this area - what do YOU think?'

5. HOW TO AGREE OR DISAGREE

While candidates tend to agree on most topics, a certain amount of disagreement is good - it makes the discussion more interesting. Disagreement also prolongs a discussion, and can be done in a friendly way. Give reasons why you are agreeing or disagreeing.

- I fully agree because...
- Yes, that's right. And...
- I agree with you 100 percent.
- You're partly right, but...
- I couldn't agree with you more.
- I see exactly what you mean!
- Tell me about it! (informal)
- I'm not so sure about that, because...
- I think we're going to have to agree to disagree.
- I must take issue with you on that.
- It's unjustifiable to say that...

6. DELAYING TACTICS/STALLING FOR TIME

There will be times in the exam where you don't have anything to say right away. You need a second to think, but you want to avoid dead air. So you need to 'buy time' with phrases such as these:

- Well, now, let me see
- Let me think ...
- Oh, what a great question!
- Well that's something I've never really thought about but, on reflection, I'd say that...

7. IF YOU NEED TO INTERRUPT

If your partner talks a bit too long, it's okay for you to politely stop the flow of words.

- Can I add something here?
- Is it okay if I jump in for a second?
- If I might add something...
- Can I throw my two cents in?
- Sorry to interrupt, but...



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Q - What if I don't understand something the examiner says to me?

A - You can ask them to repeat it. You can even ask them to explain a word if you don't understand it. If you do that 6 or 7 times they might think your English is not so good, but if you do it once that's totally okay.

Q - What is an interlocutor?

A - That's the examiner.

Q - Do I need to have a British accent? Cambridge is in Britain, right?

A - Cambridge is in Britain but an American accent is just fine. ANY accent is fine as long as you speak clearly and your words are understandable.

