

# Making Speaking Exam Preparation Authentic & Meaningful



Rachel Appleby  
Moscow: December, 2018

## BASIC DEFINITIONS *(used about testing, and/or in this talk)*

Match a term on the left with its definition on the right.

- |   |                               |   |  |
|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | <i>Backwash</i> – C           | A | tests where the consequences (pass / fail) are very important to the test-taker  |
| 2 | <i>CEFR</i> __                | B | 'the accuracy with which' an assessment measures what it is supposed to measure  |
| 3 | <i>validity</i> __            | C | can be used interchangeably with washback  |
| 4 | <i>impact</i> __              | D | the influence of testing on teaching and learning  |
| 5 | <i>washback</i> __            | E | the harmful consequences of a test, e.g. instruction is based too heavily on test preparation at the expense of content learning   |
| 6 | <i>negative washback</i> __   | F | how test use affects society, an education system, and individuals; <b>macro</b> level: in terms of the societal or educational system; <b>micro</b> level, in terms of the individuals (e.g. teachers, students)            |
| 7 | <i>high-stakes testing</i> __ | G | the Common European Frame of Reference – a proficiency scale from A1 (Basic user) to C2 (Proficient user); includes 'can-do' statements  |
| 8 | <i>positive washback</i> __   | H | the consistency of scores or test results; e.g. if a student took the same test the following day, would the test results be the same?   |
| 9 | <i>reliability</i> __         | I | when a test encourages 'good' teaching practice, e.g. as well as preparing for an oral proficiency test, students also develop improved speaking skills; when a test promotes a connection between standards and instruction |

## Euroexam Level B2 – SPEAKING – Transactional Dialogues, Task Three

"In this part of the test you must say something that is appropriate to say in a situation. Read each card and follow the instructions." [Each candidate receives 3 cards, one by one.]

[Say something to the waiter] > [Response] > [Comment]  
(student) (examiner) (student)

You are in a restaurant. The food is awful. Complain to the waiter.

### Preparation Tasks:

- Audio: Who are the speakers? Where are they?
- Rewrite conversation – more / less formal
- Give just one side of dialogue; students write other side
- Handout 3 x 3-line dialogues, jumbled. Students group, & order.
- Look at the 3-line dialogues: underline stressed words



## Euroexam Level B2 – SPEAKING

### Dialogue, Task Four

What are some of the things you could do to be [more] environmentally friendly?

- e.g. *use less water at home*
- .....
- .....
- ..... etc.

**Preparation Tasks:** (5 ideas, A-E)

**A** Group phrases according to function, e.g. 3 groups:

*inviting / accepting / declining:* “Would you like to...” / “Thanks, I’d love to!” / “Sorry, I’m busy.”

**B** Put useful phrases on cards. Share them out. Students turn them over when they use

**C**

- Make a list of useful phrases on cards.
- In 3s, 2 students have a discussion; a 3<sup>rd</sup> student ticks off phrases, or --Ask a 3<sup>rd</sup> student
- .. indicates who used them during the conversation.

**D** (*re-order*): phrases Jumble in words. them re-order Students.

**E** Ask students to underline which words are stressed.



## Euroexam Level B2 – SPEAKING –

### Picture Story, Task Two

The story starts like this: “As usual on Mondays, Tim’s alarm clock went off at 7 o’clock.”

(+ 6 more pictures, not included here)

### Favourite story-telling / Preparation Tasks:

- Use a series of pictures; sts invent a story
- Before / after stories (1 picture); compare
- Round-the-class stories

- Students ‘draw’ their weekend > develop a story > match texts + pictures
- Re-order jumbled stories

### Bibliography / References

**Bailey, K.M.** (1996). ‘Working for washback: a review of the washback concept in language testing’:

<http://ltj.sagepub.com/content/13/3/257>

**BBC** [http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/radio/specials/1756\\_how\\_to\\_discuss/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/radio/specials/1756_how_to_discuss/index.shtml)

**Common European Framework of Reference**, [www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf)

**Donaghy, K.** Film English: <http://film-english.com/2015/02/18/the-reader>

**English File** 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Pre-Intermediate: Oxendon, Latham-Koenig, & Seligson. (2012) OUP.

**Euroexam** preparation ideas: [www.euroexam.com/exam-preparation-classroom-activities](http://www.euroexam.com/exam-preparation-classroom-activities)

rachel.appleby @ euroexam.org

<http://rachelappleby.edublogs.org>



@rapple18

