

The University of the State of New York
THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Albany, New York 12234

SECOND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS MODERN LANGUAGES

Teacher's Manual for Administering and Scoring Part 1: Speaking

**Includes rubric for scoring Part 1a and
guidelines for awarding Part 1b quality credit**

OVERVIEW OF EXAMINATION

This overview provides a description of the Second Language Proficiency Examinations in Modern Languages. For additional information, refer to the publication *Second Language Proficiency Examination for Modern Languages: Test Changes and Sampler*, which is accessible on the Department's web site at <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/ciai/pub/publote.html>.

SPEAKING

- Part 1a
(10 credits)
- Students' oral communication performance is assessed in daily classroom activities from April 1 until five calendar days prior to the date of the written examination. Teachers must use the Part 1a rubric to assess student performance. The rubric and guidelines for using the rubric are provided in this manual.
- Part 1b
(20 credits)
- Schools select 20 tasks for each of four language functions from the *Sourcebook of Speaking Tasks for Part 1* provided by the State Education Department. Each student chooses a total of four tasks. The tasks are to be administered from April 1 until five calendar days prior to the date of the written examination. This manual provides the guidelines for administering and rating Part 1b as well as the guidelines for awarding the quality credit.

LISTENING

- Part 2a
(20 credits)
- Ten multiple-choice questions measuring comprehension of oral target-language stimuli; responses provided in English
- Part 2b
(10 credits)
- Five multiple-choice questions measuring comprehension of oral target-language stimuli; responses provided in target language
- Part 2c
(10 credits)
- Five multiple-choice questions measuring comprehension of oral target-language stimuli; responses provided in the form of pictures

READING

- Part 3a
(12 credits)
- Six multiple-choice questions measuring comprehension of written target-language stimuli; responses provided in English
- Part 3b
(8 credits)
- Four multiple-choice questions measuring comprehension of written target-language stimuli; responses provided in target language

WRITING

- Part 4
(10 credits)
- Two writing tasks (chosen from three provided), each requiring a response of at least 30 words in the target language that satisfies the purpose of the task. Each task is worth a maximum of 5 credits. Tasks are scored using the writing rubric provided.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The proficiency examination in each modern language is designed to measure students' attainment of learning outcomes at Checkpoint A of the State syllabus *Modern Languages for Communication*. The examination includes 30 credits for oral communication performance in Part 1 and 70 credits for a written test of listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and writing skills. Part 1 of the examination consists of the following two subparts:

- Part 1a:* Assessment of student performance in daily classroom activities during the period from April 1 until five calendar days prior to the date of the written test [10 credits]
Beginning with the 2000–01 school year, you must use the rubric provided on page 12 of this manual to assess student performance on Part 1a. The rubric was developed to provide more guidance to scorers and to increase consistency in the scoring process across the State. Specific information about using the rubric is provided below.
- Part 1b:* Formal speaking test to be administered at the school's convenience from April 1 until five calendar days prior to the date of the written test [20 credits]
The school must select the 80 tasks in the speaking test for each June administration from the *Sourcebook of Speaking Tasks for Part 1* provided by the State Education Department. Specific information about the selection of the speaking tasks is provided below.
Beginning with the 2000–01 school year, you must use new guidelines for awarding the quality credit. Specific information about awarding the quality credit is provided below.

You must report the students' scores for Part 1 to the building principal *no later than five calendar days prior to the date of the written test*. A sample reporting sheet is provided on page 15.

When students with disabilities take the Second Language Proficiency Examinations, you must provide them with the same specialized/adaptive equipment, instruction/demonstration techniques, and test accommodations specified in their Individualized Educational Program (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan). It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that these accommodations are provided. In addition, when determining who should be tested, administrators must consider those students with disabilities who attend programs operated by the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), as well as any other programs located outside the school.

Section 100.5(d) of the Commissioner's Regulations allows students who have acquired proficiency without completing a unit of study to earn one unit of credit by achieving a score of at least 85% on the examination and by meeting the requirements as stated in the Regulations. Since the speaking skills of such students cannot be evaluated in daily classroom activities (Part 1a), their score for the entire Part 1 will be based solely on their performance on the formal speaking test (Part 1b), which must be administered to them during the period from April 1 until five days prior to the date of the written test in June. To arrive at a total Part 1 score, prorate such students' score for Part 1b by multiplying it by 1.5. Since scores of Part 1 are to be expressed in whole numbers only, you may need to round up the score to the next whole number. *Example:* A student wishes

to take a modern language proficiency examination without having completed a unit of study. If the student achieves a score of 15 on Part 1b, the formal speaking test, this student’s total score for Part 1 is 23 (15 X 1.5 = 22.5 = 23).

PART 1a: INFORMAL CLASSROOM EVALUATION

Description

Scores for Part 1a of the examination are based on the students’ performance in daily classroom activities during the designated assessment period. This assessment presumes that instruction routinely includes frequent opportunities for students to engage in a variety of realistic oral communications. These communications must be consistent with functions, topics, and situations for listening/speaking outcomes at Checkpoint A in the State syllabus. **Reading aloud and recitation of memorized text do not constitute oral communication for the purpose of this assessment.**

You must use the rubric provided on page 12 to assess student performance on Part 1a.

Using the Rubric

The rubric describes a continuum of performance from Level 4 (most proficient) to Level 1 (least proficient) on each of six criteria, called dimensions: initiation, response, conversational strategies, vocabulary, structure, and cultural appropriateness. Determine a student’s raw score on each dimension by evaluating the student’s classroom oral communication in terms of the characteristics for that dimension. The raw score represents the extent to which the student exhibits proficiency on that dimension. Add the student’s raw scores for the six dimensions to determine a total raw score, which is then converted to the total number of credits for Part 1a, using the conversion chart below.

Part 1a Conversion Chart										
Total Raw Score	22–24	19–21	17–18	14–16	12–13	10–11	7–9	5–6	3–4	1–2
Total Credits	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

To facilitate scoring the student’s Part 1a performance, use a score sheet in conjunction with the rubric. A sample score sheet is provided on page 13.

In applying the dimensions initiation and conversational strategies, keep in mind the following explanations and examples:

Dimension	Explanation	Examples
Initiation	Use of attention-getting devices to initiate a conversation	“Hello,” “Excuse me,” “Good morning”
Conversational Strategies	Ways to clarify and continue a conversation; students should use some or all of these strategies, as appropriate to the conversation.	(see below)
• Circumlocution	Use of familiar vocabulary and structures to express meaning beyond the student’s current level of knowledge	Instead of saying “tiger,” student says “a big cat with stripes in the zoo”
• Survival Skills	Use of learned expressions in appropriate situations to sustain conversation Use of nonverbal cues to clarify meaning	“Please explain,” “please repeat,” “how do you say,” “I don’t understand” Facial expression, body language

• Intonation	Use of language-appropriate inflection to indicate purpose of utterance	Rising pitch to show question
• Self-Correction	Use of self-correction to clarify meaning	"You go ... no, I go"
• Response to Verbal Cues	Use of utterances of conversation partner as a clue or resource for unfamiliar vocabulary and structures for correcting, clarifying, or restating the student's own utterances	A—Give me a thing to write with. B—OK. Do you want a pen or a pencil? A—I need a pencil.

PART 1b: FORMAL SPEAKING TEST

Description

Part 1b of the examination, the formal speaking test, consists of communication tasks to be performed by students with their teacher. Each task prescribes a simulated conversation in which the student always plays the role of himself or herself, and you assume the specific role indicated in each task. Each student performs a total of four tasks, one in each of four categories consistent with the four communication functions specified in the State syllabus: (A) socializing, (B) providing/obtaining information, (C) expressing personal feelings, and (D) getting others to adopt a course of action (persuasion). Each task consists of a brief statement in English to indicate the purpose and setting of the communication, the person who is to initiate the conversation, and the role of the teacher. Each task is designed so that it can be completed in four interactions between the student and you. For the purpose of this manual, the student's part in each of these interactions is defined as an *utterance*.

Selection of the Part 1b Speaking Tasks

The State Education Department provides a collection of speaking tasks in the publication *Sourcebook of Speaking Tasks for Part 1*. The speaking tasks are grouped in categories by the four communication functions specified in the State syllabus: (A) socializing, (B) providing/obtaining information, (C) expressing personal feelings, and (D) getting others to adopt a course of action (persuasion). For each category, the sourcebook provides 86 to 88 tasks. Schools are to select 20 tasks per category, for a total of 80 speaking tasks that constitute Part 1b of a Second Language Proficiency Examination in a modern language. Since the sourcebook is not revised on an annual basis, it serves as the source of the Part 1b speaking test for current and future administrations of the examinations. **The sourcebook contains secure examination material and must be kept under lock and key when not in use.**

Select speaking tasks for Part 1b of the June examination as early in the school year as possible. For each successive June administration of the speaking test, a new set of 80 tasks must be selected, 20 tasks per category. Each succeeding set of 20 tasks must not have been used in the preceding administration of the speaking test. The selection of the speaking test tasks for the June examination in the current school year must be made before students have the opportunity to practice with the remainder of the speaking tasks in the sourcebook. The principal should take all necessary precautions to ensure that the Part 1b speaking test tasks to be administered in June of the current school year are kept secure.

The following procedures are recommended for the selection of the Part 1b speaking test:

- Select the 20 tasks per communication function category (total of 80 tasks) from the sourcebook, taking care not to select any tasks that were used on the most recent administration of the examination.
- Make a photocopy of each page of the sourcebook containing any of the 80 tasks.
- Remove the 80 speaking tasks from the photocopied pages and mount them on index cards, one task per card. Keep the index cards for the 20 tasks in each category in a separate group.
- At the test administration, the student picks one card from the category that you identify and hands the card to you. You read the task aloud to the student.

OR

- Select the 20 tasks per communication function category (total of 80 tasks) from the sourcebook, taking care not to select any tasks that were used on the most recent administration of the examination.
- Renumber the selected tasks from A1 to A20 (socializing); from B21 to B40 (providing/obtaining information); from C41 to C60 (expressing personal feelings); and from D61 to D80 (getting others to adopt a course of action [persuasion]). Also number small slips of paper from A1 through A20, B21 through B40, C41 through C60, and D61 through D80. Put the numbered slips in four boxes according to the four categories.
- At the test administration, the student picks a number from the box that you identify and hands the number to you. You locate the task that corresponds to the number and read the task aloud to the student.

For any given school year, you may use the tasks not selected for the June examination for instructional purposes. However, be careful to ensure that the complete set of printed speaking tasks in the sourcebook is kept secure at all times.

Administration and Rating

The formal speaking test is to be administered individually to each student, either in the presence of other students or with you alone, at the school's convenience from April 1 until five calendar days prior to the date of the written test. All four tasks need not be administered to each student at one sitting; they may be administered one task at a time over the entire speaking test period. **The Part 1b speaking tasks must be kept secure from the time they are initially selected at the beginning of the school year to the end of the speaking test period.**

Each student may perform only one task in each category. This task is to be selected at random from the tasks previously selected to constitute Part 1b. Depending on the administration method used by you or the school, the student will either:

- Pick an index card from the unnumbered cards in the category identified by you, hand it to you, and you will read the task aloud to the student.

OR

- Pick a numbered slip from the box identified by you and hand it to you. You will then locate the task in the sourcebook that corresponds to that number and will read the task aloud to the student.

Once the student has selected a task, it cannot be substituted for another or done over if the first performance is unsatisfactory.

In administering the test, you have two major responsibilities: (1) to rate the student's performance and (2) to act as the student's conversation partner.

As the rater, you can give a maximum of five credits for each task according to the following criteria:

- One credit for each of the four student utterances that is comprehensible and appropriate. *Comprehensibility* means that the utterance would make sense to native speakers who

know no English but are used to foreigners trying to speak their language. *Appropriateness* means that the utterance contributes to the completion of the task.

- *Quality Credit*: One credit for the *quality* of all four comprehensible and appropriate student utterances. For each task, a student who requires three or more second attempts does not qualify for the quality credit. In addition, responses eligible for the quality credit must contain evidence from *each* of the following categories, as appropriate to Checkpoint A of the State syllabus:
 - Fluency may be demonstrated by, but is not limited to, ability to sustain the conversation, spontaneity, efficiency of task completion, intonation, pronunciation, and exclusive use of the target language.
 - Complexity may be demonstrated by, but is not limited to, ability to initiate and direct conversation, risk taking, creativity, choice and variety of vocabulary, and grammatical structures.
 - Accuracy may be demonstrated by, but is not limited to, correct grammatical structure, use of self-correction strategies, and cultural appropriateness.

As the conversation partner, you apply real-life communication devices in the target language to keep the student on task and to ensure the continuity of the conversation. Communication devices such as “Sorry, I didn’t understand that,” “Would you say that again, please,” or “No, what I meant was ...” could be used in the target language for that purpose. An additional responsibility you have as the conversation partner is to bring the conversation to a natural conclusion.

As the conversation partner and rater, you may make two attempts at eliciting each of the four student utterances. If the student produces no comprehensible and appropriate utterance after your first two eliciting attempts at the very beginning of the conversation, the student receives no credit for the entire task. However, during the conversation, if a student produces no comprehensible and appropriate utterance after your second eliciting attempt, the student receives no credit for that utterance, and you shift to another aspect of the task.

To facilitate rating while acting as the conversation partner, the teacher should use a score sheet to keep track of the student’s comprehensible and appropriate utterances, to record the number of eliciting attempts for each, and to determine whether the quality credit is warranted. A sample score sheet is provided on page 14. Certain teacher-student interactions, although natural in the course of a conversation, do not provide evidence of the student’s ability to produce language. Disregard them for rating purposes. Examples of such interactions include:

- “yes-no” responses,
- restatements of all or essential parts of what you have said,
- proper names used in isolation, and
- socializing devices (“Hello,” “How are you,” etc.) except in socializing tasks where appropriate.

* At times, the task that the student selects may not be appropriate for that student, usually due to a student’s particular disability or religious beliefs. In such cases, that student should be allowed to substitute another task. In order for the student with the disability to be eligible to substitute a task, that student must have been identified by the school district’s Committee on Special Education as having a disability, and the need for the substitution must be consistent with the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). A student is eligible to substitute tasks due to religious beliefs if it can be demonstrated that the student has been excused from participating in similar conversational situations during the school year.

Sample Administration of a Task

The student has randomly selected the following task:

B31. [Student initiates] You say: You are in a store, looking at clothes. I am a salesclerk. You are going to tell me what you are looking for. You will start the conversation.

Presentation of the Task

Teacher Says

English: You are in a store looking at clothes. I am a sales clerk. You are going to tell me what you are looking for. You will start the conversation. Do you understand the situation?

English: All right. Remember that we are in a store, and you are looking at some clothes. I will give you a few seconds to think about what you may want to say in (target language) in this situation. (short pause)

English: All right. Are you ready? From now on, we'll use no more English.

Student Says

English: Yes, I think so.

English: Yes, I think so.

Task Begins

Teacher Says

Student Says

Rating

(1)

(*Target Language*):
Pardon me...

Student initiated conversation.
Socializing device: disregard for rating purposes.
Student has two more opportunities for first utterance.
Teacher should make first eliciting attempt.

(*Target Language*):
Hello. Can I help you find something?

(*T.L.*): I want ...
(unintelligible sounds)

Incomprehensible. Student has one more opportunity for first utterance.
Teacher should make second eliciting attempt.

(*T.L.*): Sorry, I did not understand. Please tell me what you want.

(*T.L.*): I want sweat air.
(mispronunciation of word)

1 credit:
Comprehensible and appropriate.

(2) (*T.L.*): Oh, you would like to see sweaters! — for anyone in particular?

(*T.L.*): For mine ...

Incomprehensible. Student has one more opportunity for this utterance.
Teacher should make second eliciting attempt.

(*T.L.*): For whom did you say?

(*T.L.*): For mineself.
(pointing to himself/herself)

1 credit:
Comprehensible and appropriate.

(3) (*T.L.*): I see — for yourself. What color would you like?

(*T.L.*): I like cheap.

Comprehensible but inappropriate. Student has one more opportunity for this utterance.
Teacher should make second eliciting attempt.

(*T.L.*): All these sweaters are inexpensive. Do you like dark colors or bright colors?

(*T.L.*): Bright.

Restatement.
Disregard. Teacher should make second eliciting attempt again.

(*T.L.*): Which bright colors?

Shrugs shoulders, says nothing.

0 credit: No utterance.

(4) (*T.L.*): H m m ...
I guess you don't know.
How about this sweater?

(*T.L.*): Yes, I buy.

1 credit: Comprehensible and appropriate.

Task Ends

NOTE: This student will not receive the quality credit for the following reasons:

Although the student required less than three second attempts for the task, the student did not demonstrate evidence of fluency, completeness, and accuracy, as appropriate to Checkpoint A of the State syllabus.

In terms of fluency, the student's utterances did not demonstrate evidence of the ability to sustain the conversation and lacked spontaneity and efficiency of task completion. In terms of complexity, the student's utterances did not demonstrate evidence of the ability to initiate/direct conversation and showed little risk taking, creativity, or choice and variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures relevant to Checkpoint A. In terms of accuracy, the student's utterances did not demonstrate evidence of the ability to use correct grammatical structures or to use self-correction strategies consistent with Checkpoint A.

The following score sheet illustrates the rating of this task.

You must write all scores for Part 1 of the Second Language Proficiency Examinations in modern languages **in ink** and submit completed score sheets to the principal's office no later than five calendar days before the date of the written test.

SECOND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS: MODERN LANGUAGES

Part 1b: Formal Speaking Test

Sample Score Sheet

Student's Name: Jason Talloway

Date: _____

	<u>Utterance</u>		<u>First Attempt</u>	<u>Second Attempt</u>	
Task: A	1.	(_____)	_____	_____	
	2.	*	_____	_____	
	3.		_____	_____	
	4.		_____	_____	
					Total: _____
<hr/>					
Task: B	1.	(<u>✓</u>)	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	
	2.	*	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	
	3.		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	
	4.		<u>1</u>	_____	
					Total: <u>3</u>
<hr/>					
Task: C	1.	(_____)	_____	_____	
	2.	*	_____	_____	
	3.		_____	_____	
	4.		_____	_____	
					Total: _____
<hr/>					
Task: D	1.	(_____)	_____	_____	
	2.	*	_____	_____	
	3.		_____	_____	
	4.		_____	_____	
					Total: _____

* Use a checkmark to indicate student's initiation of the conversation, if required.

SECOND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS: MODERN LANGUAGES

Part 1a: Informal Speaking Evaluation

Rubric

Dimension	Performance Levels			
	4	3	2	1
Initiation	Eagerly initiates speech, using appropriate attention-getting devices. Easily asks questions and speaks spontaneously.	Is willing to initiate speech, using appropriate attention-getting devices. Asks questions and speaks evenly.	Sometimes initiates speech, using attention-getting devices. Sometimes asks questions and speaks hesitantly.	Is reluctant to initiate speech and struggles to ask questions. Speech is halting.
Response	Almost always responds appropriately to questions/statements.	Frequently responds appropriately to questions/statements.	Sometimes responds appropriately to questions/statements.	Rarely responds appropriately to questions/statements.
Conversational Strategies	Clarifies and continues conversation, using all or some of the following strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • circumlocution • survival strategies • intonation • self-correction • verbal cues 	Uses all or some strategies, but may need occasional prompting.	Uses some strategies and needs frequent prompting to further the conversation.	Uses few strategies. Relies heavily on conversation partner to sustain conversation. Rarely responds, even with frequent prompting.
Vocabulary	Incorporates a variety of old and new vocabulary. Uses idiomatic expressions appropriate to topic. Speaks clearly and imitates accurate pronunciation.	Uses a variety of old and limited new vocabulary. Attempts to use idiomatic expressions appropriate to topic. Speaks clearly and attempts accurate pronunciation.	Relies on basic vocabulary. Speech is comprehensible in spite of mispronunciations.	Uses limited vocabulary. Mispronunciations impede comprehensibility.
Structure	Makes few errors in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • verbs in utterances, when necessary, with appropriate subject/verb agreement • noun and adjective agreement • correct word order and article adjectives Errors do not hinder comprehensibility.	Makes several errors in structure that do not affect overall comprehensibility.	Makes several errors that may interfere with comprehensibility.	Makes utterances that are so brief that there is little evidence of structure, and comprehensibility is impeded.
Cultural Appropriateness	Almost always uses/interprets cultural manifestations when appropriate to the task (e.g., greeting, leave taking, gestures, proximity, etc.).	Frequently uses/interprets cultural manifestations when appropriate to the task.	Sometimes uses/interprets cultural manifestations when appropriate to the task.	Rarely uses/interprets cultural manifestations when appropriate to the task.

- A score of zero may be given for any of the dimensions if the student’s performance falls below the criteria for Level 1.
- The student’s total raw score is converted to the total number of credits for Part 1a using the conversion chart provided on page 4.

SECOND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS: MODERN LANGUAGES

Part 1a: Informal Speaking Evaluation

Sample Score Sheet

Student's Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Evaluate the student's classroom oral communication on each dimension according to the Part 1a rubric. For each dimension, determine the appropriate performance level (4, 3, 2, 1, or 0) and place a check mark in the appropriate column. Add these scores to determine the total raw score. Using the conversion chart below, convert the student's total raw score to the total number of credits for Part 1a.

Dimension	Performance Level				
	4	3	2	1	0
Initiation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiates speech and asks questions • Uses appropriate attention-getting devices • Speaks spontaneously 					
Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds appropriately to questions/statements 					
Conversational Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circumlocution • Survival strategies • Intonation • Self-correction • Verbal Cues 					
Vocabulary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporates variety of old and new vocabulary • Uses idiomatic expressions appropriate to topic • Speaks clearly and imitates accurate pronunciation 					
Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses verbs in utterances when necessary with appropriate subject/verb agreement • Makes nouns and adjectives agree • Uses correct word order and article adjectives 					
Cultural Appropriateness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses/interprets cultural manifestations appropriate to the task (e.g., greeting, leave taking, gestures, proximity, etc.) 					

Total Raw Score _____
Total Number of Credits _____

Part 1a Conversion Chart										
Total Raw Score	22-24	19-21	17-18	14-16	12-13	10-11	7-9	5-6	3-4	1-2
Total Credits	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

SECOND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS: MODERN LANGUAGES

Part 1b: Formal Speaking Test

Sample Score Sheet

Student's Name: _____ **Date:** _____

	<u>Utterance</u>		First Attempt	Second Attempt	
Task: A <hr style="width: 100px; margin-left: 0;"/> Task No.	1.	(_____)	_____	_____	
	2.	*	_____	_____	
	3.		_____	_____	
	4.		_____	_____	
					Total: _____

Task: B <hr style="width: 100px; margin-left: 0;"/> Task No.	1.	(_____)	_____	_____	
	2.	*	_____	_____	
	3.		_____	_____	
	4.		_____	_____	
					Total: _____

Task: C <hr style="width: 100px; margin-left: 0;"/> Task No.	1.	(_____)	_____	_____	
	2.	*	_____	_____	
	3.		_____	_____	
	4.		_____	_____	
					Total: _____

Task: D <hr style="width: 100px; margin-left: 0;"/> Task No.	1.	(_____)	_____	_____	
	2.	*	_____	_____	
	3.		_____	_____	
	4.		_____	_____	
					Total: _____

* Use a checkmark to indicate student's initiation of the conversation, if required.

