

Characteristics of speech

- like listening, speaking occurs in real time, little time for preparation;
controlled vs. automatic:
controlled: Due to the lack of knowledge about the target language, the speaker focuses on language production, which has a negative influence on the content.
automatic: The competent language user wholly concentrates on the content.
- shared social activity: each participant is both a speaker and a listener
- planned (e.g. presentation, prepared)
- unplanned (e.g. conversation, informal, spontaneous)
- contains words and phrases like “thing, thingy, you know, you see, let’s not go there”

Information related speech

- transferring information on a particular topic
- importance lies in getting the message across and confirming that the listener has understood it
- establishing common ground, giving information in bite-size chunks, logical progression, questions, repetition and comprehension checks, turn taking
specific purposes:
 - expressing – thanks, advice, opinions, attitudes, complaints, reasons, ...
 - requesting – advice, information, permission, reasons, ...
 - describing – people, places, objects
 - agreeing/disagreeing, making a decision
 - persuading, advising, warning, making suggestions
 - inviting, accepting, refusing
 - analysing, criticising, arguing for/against

Speaking tests

- general purpose of a speaking test to determine a test taker's level for different purposes:
 - diagnostic
 - achievement
 - proficiency

Criteria of assessment

- holistic scale (“express an overall impression of an examinee’s ability in one score”, Luoma, p. 60/61)
- analytic scale e.g.
 - task fulfilment
 - pronunciation
 - fluency
 - coherence/cohesion
 - range/accuracy of grammatical structures
 - range/accuracy of vocabulary
 - interaction

Bibliography

- Csépes, I & Együd, G. *Into Europe – Prepare for Modern English Exams, The Speaking Handbook*, British Council – Teleki László Foundation (2003)
- Luoma, S. *Assessing Speaking*, CUP (2004)