5 E N I NS

Individual Component Checklist

ENGLISH VERSION



INTRODUCTION

This checklist has been designed for use as a practical tool for describing **ONE VERSION** of a particular component of a language test, for the purpose of evaluation or comparison. This checklist is for use only with tests of listening.

General Notes

In this checklist the following terminology is used:

• Component

One subtest in an examination. Usually an examination is made up of subtests in the different skills, and components are normally called by the names of skills. This checklist concerns the listening component of an examination. Components are also referred to as 'papers'.

• Input

The material provided for the candidate to use in order to produce an appropriate response. In a test of listening it is likely to take the form of a recorded oral text plus written items.

• Item

Each testing point which is given a separate mark or marks. It may consist of, for example, one gap in a written text, or one multiple choice question with three or four options.

• Response

The candidate's written or spoken response to a task. The term 'answer' is often used in this context. However, for reasons of precision, it is not used here.

• Rubric

The instructions given to a candidate on how to respond to a particular input. In a test of listening with multiple choice questions, the rubric might be: *Put a tick in the box you think is the most suitable*.

• Section

The parts each component can be subdivided into. Each may be testing a different area of skill or usage.

• Task

A task is defined precisely as a combination of rubric, input and response. For example, a reading text with several multiple choice items, all of which can be answered by referring to a single rubric, can be classified as a single task. If another set of items relates to the same text, but requires a different rubric in order for a response to be produced, then that combination of text, rubric and items constitutes a separate task. Thus the same text can form part of the input to one or more tasks.

The term 'question', which is often used in referring to test tasks, whether or not they are presented as grammatical questions, is avoided here because of its ambiguity.

• Text

In the context of a listening component of an examination, a text is a piece of spoken language, used as input to a task, or the term could be used to refer to a piece of written language which the candidate is asked to produce.

Please note

Some of the questions in this checklist are to be answered with a couple of words or numbers, and some have boxes to tick for 'yes' or 'no'. Others, which involve making some qualitative judgement, ask for an assessment on a scale of 1 - 4. where 1 represents the most negative judgement and 5 the most positive.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS

A GENERAL DESCRIPTION

A Weighting

Sometimes one section of a component is given more or less importance than the others by weighting it differently from the others – assigning a higher or lower percentage of the total mark to it.

B PRESENTATION AND LAYOUT

7 How realistic is the presentation of the text?

If, for example, a task used in an examination involves listening to information and filling in details on a form or questionnaire based on authentic source materials, an attempt may be made to present it on the answer sheet in such a way as to make this source clear to the candidate, by means of typography, layout etc.

D LISTENING TEXTS AND TASKS

3 INPUT TEXTS

As the number of texts varies very widely – some being composed of as few as two or three, while others consist of a large number of very short texts – text numbers have been left out of headings, and it is assumed that pages will be photocopied when necessary, and text numbers written in.

7 Type of text

Texts for use in tests of listening are often taken from sources such as public announcements and radio broadcasts, or recorded from scripts written specially for the examination. Where authentic texts are used, they are often adapted. In this question box 1 = an unadapted text; box 2 = an adapted text; box 3 = specially written for the test.

Many of the possible sources given here are taken from **Threshold Level 1990**.

8 Speaker's overall intention

It is often the case that there may be several intentions associated with any text. However, an *overall* intention should be identified.

9 Target listener (to original)

It would, of course, be possible to break this down much further, but for the purposes of this checklist it has been decided to give only these limited categories, with the possibility of specifying more accurately under category d).

10 Topic of the text

The likely extent of the topic areas used in tests of listening is covered by the 'notions' in **Threshold Level 1990**.

2 LANGUAGE ABILITY TESTED

3 Main focus of testing

By this it is meant the **main focus** of what is being tested in language terms, although it may also touch on other areas. It is also taken as understood that there is a great deal of ambiguity in this area. This area of the checklist operates at item level. Again, it is assumed that this page will be photocopied and the text and item numbers written in.

Some of the categories used here need no explanation, but the following notes on some of them may be useful.

a) Demonstrating understanding of text as a whole

This may be done, for example, by writing a short summary of the main events or points discussed in the text.

b) Identifying topic of the text.

A fragment of conversation could be given, during which the topic is not directly referred to. The candidate then has to answer the question, 'What are they talking about?'

c) Identifying function of the text

An example would be part of a message left on an answer-phone. The candidate then has to decide whether the speaker was telephoning to apologise, complain, ask for information or change an arrangement.

d) Retrieving factual information

An example is text taken from a recorded announcement of the forthcoming programme at a theatre. Items relate to times of performances, ticket prices, etc.

f) Following instructions and directions

An example is a text which gives a description of where a house is situated on a map. The candidate has to draw the house in the correct place on a map.

g) Identifying roles of speakers

An example would be checking understanding of the degree of formality between speakers, as signalled by their way of addressing each other.

h) Recognising numbers, letters, etc.

The is most likely to occur in a test of listening at a low level. A name is spelled out or a telephone number given, and the candidate has to write it correctly.

j) Making use of clues given by use of emphasis, tone of voice, stress and intonation.

An example would be a fragment of conversation in which someone agrees to do something, using a reluctant or doubtful tone of voice. The candidate would need to used understanding of the tone to answer a question on the speaker's attitude towards what he has been asked to do.

3 SPEAKERS

5 Number of spoken turns

A 'turn' refers to each period of speech by one speaker; for example, a monologue consists of only one turn, while a discussion may consist of many.

8 What relationship do the speakers have to one another?

It is likely to be appropriate that more than one of these boxes will be ticked.

9 Are the speakers reading a script, speaking with some preparation or speaking without preparation?

'With some preparation' would refer to a situation where speakers have rehearsed a conversation or are speaking with the aid of notes.

4 QUALITY OF RECORDING

3 Is background noise used to provide context for the recording?

This refers to the use of sounds such as bird-song to provide context for an outdoor scene, or sounds of conversation and office machinery for a workplace situation.

7 EXPECTED RESPONSE

1 To what extent are non-linguistic skills being tested?

This question attempts to gauge the extent to which skills other than language ability are required in order to provide a response. An example of this would be an item which demands cone type of mathematical calculation in order to get the correct answer, or an item which involves the candidate reading a map or interpreting a plan.

12 To what extent is there an overlap with testing another area of linguistic skill?

This question attempts to gauge the extent to which testing one area of language skill also involves the candidate's ability in another area of skill. It is difficult to separate the skills completely from one another. For example, it is likely that any test of listening will also involve candidate reading instruction and rubrics, and in writing responses, and tests of structural competence and reading will also involve candidates in writing.

8 MARKING

5 What type of marking is used?

These can characterised as follows:

a) **Examiner marking:** marking carried out by experts, who are often referred to as examiners. They are required to make used of professional judgement in awarding marks.

- **b) Clerical marking:** marking carried out by non-experts, who have to deal with letters, numbers or words. They are generally required to exercise only very limited judgement, of a non-expert type.
- c) Computerised marking: marking carried out by a machine such as an optical mark reader. Multiple choice tests are often marked in this way.

The term 'marking' as it is used here refers to the process of assigning a mark to an item, and not to the way in which the mark is recorded or read. Computerised marking mean that the candidate's response goes directly to the computer for the mark to be assigned, and no human marker is involved.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

NAME OF EXAMINATION	
NAME OF COMPONENT	
NAME / NUMBER OF TASK	

A. GENERAL DESCRIPTION

		Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Total for Component
1	Name of section (if any)				
2	Number of tasks				
3	Number of items				
4	Suggested time allocated for section				
5	Preparation time allocated (if any)				
6	Total number of marks achievable (as percentage)				100%
7	Is percentage of marks available for section indicated to candidate?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
8	Is percentage of marks available for each task indicated to candidate?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
9	Is suggested time allocation for each section indicated to candidate?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
10	Is suggested time allocation for each task indicated to candidate?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
11	Weighting				100%

B PRESENTATION & LAYOUT

	Name of component								
1	How is the component presented?	As a separate boo	klet			s part of a l	ooklet		
2	How is the beginning of the component indicated?	by a front page by a title			b	y a title pag	e in a bookle	et	
3	What information is given at the beginning of the component?	title of component candidate number name of institution total number of m instructions to exa	n narks for co	omponent	d ti	andidate nation ex of candid ate of exam me allocate astructions t	late ination		
4	How many pages long is the component?								
5	How well is the component spaced out?	1		2		3		4	
6	How much space is allowed for the responses?	1		2		3		4	
7	How realistic is presentation of the text?	1		2		3		4	
8	What size is the booklet?]						
9	Is colour printing used?	Yes		No					
10	Are drawings used?	Yes		No					
11	Are photographs used?	Yes		No					

C GUIDANCE TO CANDIDATES (INSTRUCTIONS AND RUBRICS)

	Name of component					
1	How clear are instructions?	1	2	3	4	
2	How easy to understand are instructions?	1	2	3	4	
3	How adequate are instructions?	1	2	3	4	
4	How relevant are instructions?	1	2	3	4	
5	How consistent are instructions?	1	2	3	4	
6	How clear are rubrics?	1	2	3	4	
7	How easy to understand are rubrics?	1	2	3	4	
8	How adequate are rubrics?	1	2	3	4	
9	How relevant are rubrics?	1	2	3	4	
10	How consistent are rubrics?	1	2	3	4	

D LISTENING TEXTS AND TASKS

Name of examination	
Number of texts in listening component	

		Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4
1	Number of texts				
2	Length of pauses between sections				
		Text	Text	Text	Text
3	Length of text a) in words b) in minutes	a b	a b	a b	a b
4	How many times is the text heard?				
5	Do the candidates answer a) while listening b) after listening	a b	a b	a b	a b
6	Is text: a) specially scripted for the test b) unscripted	a b	a b	a b	a b

1

7	Type of text	Text	Text	Text
, a)	public announcements	a 2 3	a 2 3	a 2 3
b)	recorded messages	b	b	b
c)	weather forecasts	c	c	c
d)	traffic information	d	d	d
e)	tourist information	e	e 📃	e 📃
f)	publicity texts	f	f	f
g)	routine commands and instructions	g	g	g
h)	radio reports	h	h	h
i)	radio interviews	i	i	i 🔄 🗌
j)	vox pop	j	j	j 🔄
k)	conversations	k	k	k 📃
l)	unknown	1	1	1
m)	other (please specify)	m	m	m
]		

• 1 = unadapted text; 2 = adapted text; 3 = specially written

		Text	Text	Text	
8	Speaker's overall intention				
 a) b) c) d) e) f) g) h) i) j) k) l) 	to provide information to obtain information to explain to describe to narrate to complain to persuade / convince to argue (for / against) to instruct / teach to report back to express feelings other (please specify)	a b c d e f g h I j k l	a b c d e f g h I j k l	a b c d e f g h I j k l	
m) n)	unknown indeterminate	m n	m n	m n	
9	Target listener (to original) general public	3	a	2	
a) b) c) d)	young learners L2 learners specialist group (please specify)	a b c d	a b c d	a b c d	

		Text	Text	Text
8	Speaker's overall intention			
 a) b) c) d) e) f) g) h) i) j) k) l) 	to provide information to obtain information to explain to describe to narrate to complain to persuade / convince to argue (for / against) to instruct / teach to report back to express feelings other (please specify)	a b d f f f h j k	a b c d e f f g h j k l	a b c d e f g h j k l
m) n) 9	unknown indeterminate Target listener (to original)	mn		m n
a) b) c) d)	general public young learners L2 learners specialist group (please specify)	a b c d	a b c d d	a b c d d

10	Topic of text	Text	Text	Text	Text
 a) b) c) d) e) f) g) h) i) j) k) l) m) n) o) p) q) 	personal identification house and home, environment daily life free time / entertainment travel relations with other people health and body care education science and scholarship current affairs shopping food and drink services places language weather other (please specify)	a b c d e f g h j k l n o p q	a b c d e f f g h j k j k l n o p q	a b c d e f g h j k l n n p q	a
11 a) b)	Is text complete? extract from longer text?	a b	a b	a b	a b
12 a) b) c) d)	What details of text source are given? none type of text (e.g. radio programme) title, name of speaker date	a b c d	a b c d d	a b c d	a b c d d

2. LANGUAGE ABILITY TESTED

	Text					
	Main focus of testing	Item	Item	Item	Item	Item
a)	demonstrating understanding of text as a whole	a	a	a	a	a
b)	identifying topic of text	b 📃	b	b	b	b
c)	identifying function of text	c	c	c	c	c
d)	retrieving factual information	d	d	d	d	d
e)	distinguishing fact from opinion	e 📃	e 📃	e	e	e
f)	following instructions and directions	f	f	f	f	f
g)	recognising roles of speakers	g	g	g	g	g
h)	recognising numbers, letters etc.	h	h	h	h	h 🔄
i)	recognising and responding to social formulae	Ι	I	Ι	Ι	Ι
j)	making use of clues given by use of emphasis, tone of voice, stress and intonation	j 🛄	j	j	j	j 📃
k)	identifying speakers' attitudes	k 📃	k	k 📃	k	k 📃
l)	other (please specify)	1	1	1	1	1

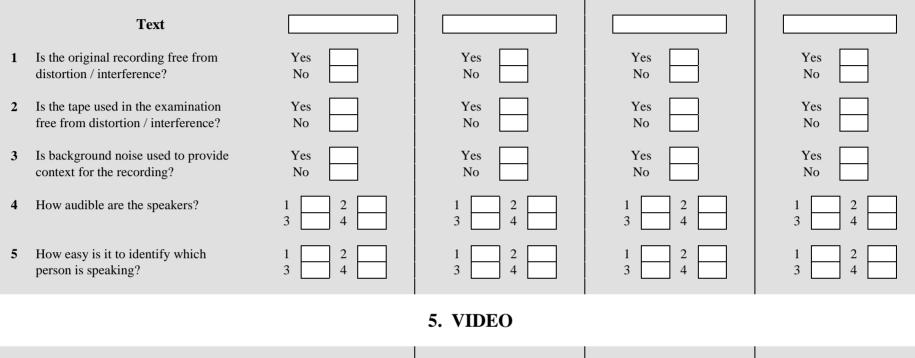
2. LANGUAGE ABILITY TESTED

	Text	Item	Item	Item	Item	Item
a)	multiple choice (discrete)	a 📃	a	a	a	a
b)	multiple choice (text based)	b 📃	b 📃	b 📃	b 📃	b 📃
c)	gap filling	c	c	c 📃	c 📃	c
d)	matching	d	d	d	d	d
e)	short answer (word / short phrase)	e 📃	e 📃	e 📃	e 📃	e 📃
f)	short answer $(1 - 3 \text{ sentences})$	f 📃	f	f	f	f
g)	sentence completion	g 📃	g	g	g	g
h)	true / false	h	h 📃	h 📃	h 📃	h
i)	ordering	I 🗌	Ι	I	Ι	Ι
j)	other (please specify)	k 📃	k 📃	k 📃	k 📃	k

3. SPEAKERS

	Text					
1	Number of speakers					
2	Type of interaction: a) monologue b) interview c) conversation	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c
3	Register of interaction: a) formal b) informal	a b	a b	a b	a b	a b
4	What is the first language of the speakers?					
5	Number of spoken turns					
6	Average length of turn for each speaker (in words)					
7	Average speed of turn for each speaker (words per minute)					
8	What relationship do the speakers have to each other?					
	 a) intimate b) friends c) acquaintances d) strangers e) enemies or competitors f) same age g) different age h) same status i) different status 	a b c d e f f g h i	a b c d e f f g h i	a b c d e f f g h i	a b c d e f g h i	a b c d e f g h i
9	Are speakersa) reading a script?b) speaking with some preparationc) speaking without preparation	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c

4. QUALITY OF RECORDING



1 How essential is the video to the understanding of the text.

Text

2 How essential is the video to the candidates' ability to answer questions?

1 3	
1 3	

1 3
13

$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	
1 2 3 4 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1	

6. TASKS

	Task				
1	How many tasks are there in relation to the text?				
2	How many items are there per task?				
3	How clear and unambiguous are the tasks?	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$
4	Is the language of the text at an appropriate level?	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$
5	Is the language of the rubric(s) at an appropriate level?	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c c}1 & 2 \\3 & 4 \end{array}$
6	Is the language of the items at an appropriate level?	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1 & 2 \\3 & 4 \end{array}$
7	How are the items sequenced in relation to the text?				
	a) as in the textb) in a different order from the textc) apparently random	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c
8	Are the items				
	a) writtenb) recorded on tape	a b	a b	a b	a b
9	Are items read				
	a) beforeb) after listening to the text?	a b	a b	a b	a b

7. EXPECTED RESPONSE

	Task Item				
1	What type of response is required?				
	a) choice from a listb) one or two word answerc) longer answer	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c
2	Is the type and length of response required indicated to the candidate?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
3	How limited is the acceptable list of responses?	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$
4	How often is it possible to respond correctly without reference to the text?				
	a) neverb) sometimesc) always	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c
5	To what extent is specialist knowledge assumed?	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1&&&2\\3&&&4\end{array}$

7. EXPECTED RESPONSE

	Task Item				
6	To what extent is cultural knowledge assumed?	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$
7	Is information required to answer a particular item?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
	a) localised in only one are a of textb) in several areas of the textc) spread throughout the whole text	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c
8	Are candidates referred to specific areas of the text?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
9	Do the words in the item repeat exactly the words in the text?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
10	Can items be answered by:				
	a) taking words and phrases directly from the text?b) modifying words in text slightlyc) rephrasing text to a significant extent	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c
11	To what extent are non-linguistic skills being tested?	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$
12	To what extent is there an overlap with testing another area of linguistic skill?	$\begin{array}{c c}1&&2\\3&&&4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$\begin{array}{c c}1& & 2\\3& & 4\end{array}$	$\begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$

8. MARKING

	Task Item					
1	How many marks are available?					
2	Is the number of marks available indicated to the candidate?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
3	What are the criteria for marking?					
	 a) correct meaning b) correct choice of option c) accurate reproduction of phrases numbers etc. d) accurate spelling e) other (please specify) 	a b c d d e d	a b c d e d	a b c d e d	a b c d c d c c c c c c c c c c c c c c c	a b c d e
4	Are marking criteria indicated to the candidate?	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
5	What type of marking is used?					
	a) examiner markingb) clerical markingc) computerised marking	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c	a b c