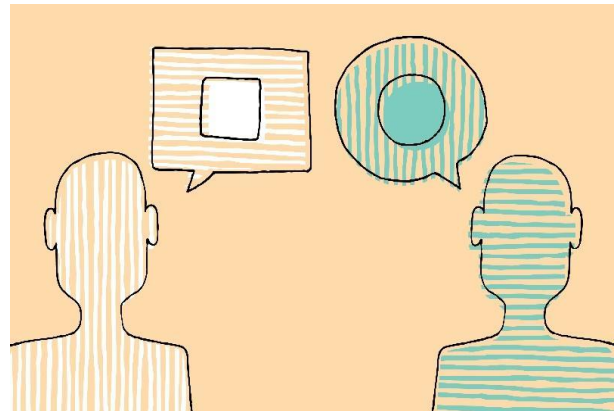


## Spoken English oral exam preparation

### Main topics: key terms & questions

- This document lists **three main topics** that have been covered in the course. Each topic comes with a set of key terms and questions that you can use as you prepare for the oral exam in December.
- You should be able to respond to the questions, define and discuss the key terms, and discuss the main topics in relation to a short text/texts that you will receive Wednesday 02.12. See also the course description and look at the learning aims of the course and the assessment criteria.
- As Part 2 of your exam (after your oral presentation), you will be asked questions mainly relating to one of these three topics. The topic will be drawn for you at the exam and you will have a couple of minutes to prepare before we discuss the topic in relation to the text you received in advance. In our discussion, you may also be asked questions relating to the other two topics.
- Good luck!




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### 1. *The spoken-written continuum and developing oral communication skills*

How can we investigate topics within pragmatics and spoken communication? What are some of the benefits and limitations (pros and cons) of each method?

- Introspection
- Attestation
- Elicitation
  - DCTs, role plays, interviews, questionnaires
- Recording
  - Corpus data
    - What is a language corpus?
    - What are some important concerns and limitations to be aware of when using a corpus to explore language?
    - What are some concerns that relate to spoken language corpora in particular?

What are some important characteristics of spoken and written communication? What are some important differences between the acts of speaking and writing, according to Chafe (1994)?

What can we find out about language in general through investigating spoken communication, and why? What is Halliday's (2004) stance on this?

Halliday (2004) says that the spoken/written distinction is "increasingly blurred". What do you think is meant by this?

Explain the following terms related to specific discourse domains:

- Field, tenor and mode
- Register

Explain what characteristics are typically associated with spoken *conversation* (e.g. shared context, on-line production), and give some specific examples of linguistic manifestations of these features (e.g. deixis, ellipsis, paralinguistic features).

What are some possible reasons for the use of deictic expressions?

What does it mean to be 'fluent' in a language? Which features of a learner's English speech may contribute to the speaker being perceived as fluent and/or disfluent?

What are some contextual and individual factors that may affect a speaker's fluency level?

Why can oral communication skills and pragmatic skills be difficult to acquire?

How can we promote the learning of specific pragmatic features of English?

What might a "pragmatically friendly" approach to teaching look like? Explain and give reasons for your answer.

Nacey & Graedler (2013):

- Explain what a communication strategy is.
  - Describe three specific communication strategies, and give examples.
  - Explain how the field, tenor and mode of a text can influence a speaker's choice of communication strategy.
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## 2. Politeness in context and developing oral communication skills

What do we mean by 'politeness' in linguistics?

How can we investigate linguistic politeness in spoken English? What are some of the benefits and limitations (pros and cons) of each method?

- Introspection
- Attestation
- Elicitation
  - DCTs, role plays, interviews, questionnaires
- Recording
  - Corpus data
    - What is a language corpus?
    - What are some important concerns and limitations to be aware of when using a corpus to explore language?
    - What are some concerns that relate to spoken language corpora in particular?

Give an account of Grice's four maxims for communication (the Co-operative Principle).

How may speakers show that they are observing the maxims?

- Quantity (be brief)
- Quality (be true)
- Relation (be relevant)
- Manner (be clear)

Explain the concept of negative and positive face.

Describe Brown and Levinson's (1987) strategies for performing face threatening acts.

How do different politeness strategies address positive and negative face?

Explain what is meant by impoliteness and how impoliteness relates to face.

Give some examples of linguistic manifestations of politeness.

- Hedging
- Vague language
- Greetings
- Terms of address

How does context influence linguistic politeness/impoliteness?

Explain what is meant by the terms *pragmalinguistic features* and *sociopragmatic choices* in relation to teaching and learning politeness in English.

What are some reasons for the use of hedging in English? Give some examples of English hedging forms.

What are some reasons for the use of vague language in English? Give some examples of vague expressions in English.

What are some reasons for the use of pragmatic markers in English? Give some examples of English pragmatic markers.

Why can oral communication skills and pragmatic skills be difficult to acquire?

How can we promote the learning of specific pragmatic features of English?

What might a “pragmatically friendly” approach to teaching look like? Explain and give reasons for your answer.

Nacey & Graedler (2013):

- Explain what a communication strategy is.
  - Describe three specific communication strategies, and give examples.
  - Explain how the field, tenor and mode of a text can influence a speaker’s choice of communication strategy.
-

### 3. Speech acts in context and developing oral communication skills

What do we mean by 'speech acts'?

How can we investigate speech acts in spoken English? What are some of the benefits and limitations (pros and cons) of each method?

- Introspection
- Attestation
- Elicitation
  - DCTs, role plays, interviews, questionnaires
- Recording
  - Corpus data
    - What is a language corpus?
    - What are some important concerns and limitations to be aware of when using a corpus to explore language?
    - What are some concerns that relate to spoken language corpora in particular?

Explain and give examples of the three kinds of action within an utterance, according to Speech Act Theory (locution, illocution and perlocution).

What are felicity conditions? How are they related to whether a speech act is successful or not?

Describe and give examples of Searle's classification of speech acts (e.g.. representatives, commissives, declarations).

What are direct/indirect speech acts?

Give some examples of conventional indirect speech acts in English.

Explain the notion of conversational implicature (flouting the Gricean maxims) in relation to indirect speech acts.

How may context influence our interpretation of speech acts?

Wolfson (1983):

- What are the main categories of speaking rules that Wolfson focuses on?
- What are some limitations to Wolfson's approach, and in what ways may Wolfson's "rules of speaking" be useful?

Explain the issue of *universality* of pragmatic norms (value differences), and how this relates to Grice's Co-operative Principle, politeness theory and speech act theory.

- Pragmatic variation
  - *Pragmalinguistic* and *sociopragmatic* variation
  - Macro- and micro-social factors influencing variation
- Consequences for intercultural communication

Why can oral communication skills and pragmatic skills be difficult to acquire?

How can we promote the learning of specific pragmatic features of English?

What might a “pragmatically friendly” approach to teaching look like? Explain and give reasons for your answer.

Nacey & Graedler (2013):

- Explain what a communication strategy is.
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