
AP German Language and Culture

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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2017 SCORING GUIDELINES

Identical to Scoring Guidelines used for French, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture Exams

Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation (Task 3)

5: STRONG performance in Interpersonal Speaking

- Maintains the exchange with a series of responses that is clearly appropriate within the context of the task
- Provides required information (e.g., responses to questions, statement and support of opinion) with frequent elaboration
- Fully understandable, with ease and clarity of expression; occasional errors do not impede comprehensibility
- Varied and appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language
- Accuracy and variety in grammar, syntax, and usage, with few errors
- Mostly consistent use of register appropriate for the conversation
- Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response comprehensible; errors do not impede comprehensibility
- Clarification or self-correction (if present) improves comprehensibility

4: GOOD performance in Interpersonal Speaking

- Maintains the exchange with a series of responses that is generally appropriate within the context of the task
- Provides most required information (e.g., responses to questions, statement and support of opinion) with some elaboration
- Fully understandable, with some errors that do not impede comprehensibility
- Varied and generally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language
- General control of grammar, syntax, and usage
- Generally consistent use of register appropriate for the conversation, except for occasional shifts
- Pronunciation, intonation and pacing make the response mostly comprehensible; errors do not impede comprehensibility
- Clarification or self-correction (if present) usually improves comprehensibility

3: FAIR performance in Interpersonal Speaking

- Maintains the exchange with a series of responses that is somewhat appropriate within the context of the task
- Provides most required information (e.g., responses to questions, statement and support of opinion)
- Generally understandable, with errors that may impede comprehensibility
- Appropriate but basic vocabulary and idiomatic language
- Some control of grammar, syntax, and usage
- Use of register may be inappropriate for the conversation with several shifts
- Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response generally comprehensible; errors occasionally impede comprehensibility
- Clarification or self-correction (if present) sometimes improves comprehensibility

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2: WEAK performance in Interpersonal Speaking

- Partially maintains the exchange with a series of responses that is minimally appropriate within the context of the task
- Provides some required information (e.g., responses to questions, statement and support of opinion)
- Partially understandable, with errors that force interpretation and cause confusion for the listener
- Limited vocabulary and idiomatic language
- Limited control of grammar, syntax, and usage
- Use of register is generally inappropriate for the conversation
- Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response difficult to comprehend at times; errors impede comprehensibility
- Clarification or self-correction (if present) usually does not improve comprehensibility

1: POOR performance in Interpersonal Speaking

- Unsuccessfully attempts to maintain the exchange by providing a series of responses that is inappropriate within the context of the task
- Provides little required information (e.g., responses to questions, statement and support of opinion)
- Barely understandable, with frequent or significant errors that impede comprehensibility
- Very few vocabulary resources
- Little or no control of grammar, syntax, and usage
- Minimal or no attention to register
- Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response difficult to comprehend; errors impede comprehensibility
- Clarification or self-correction (if present) does not improve comprehensibility

0: UNACCEPTABLE performance in Interpersonal Speaking

- Mere restatement of language from the prompts
- Clearly does not respond to the prompts; completely irrelevant to the topic
- “I don’t know,” “I don’t understand,” or equivalent in English
- Clearly responds to the prompts in English

NR (No Response): BLANK (no response although recording equipment is functioning)

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Task 3: Conversation

Note: Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain grammatical errors. In the transcripts of student speech quoted in commentaries, a three dot ellipsis indicates that the sample has been excerpted. Two dots indicate the student paused while speaking.

Overview

This task assessed speaking in the interpersonal communicative mode by having students respond as part of a simulated oral conversation. Students were first allotted 1 minute to read a preview of the conversation, including an outline of each turn in the conversation. Then the conversation proceeded, including 20 seconds for students to speak at each of five turns in the conversation. The series of five responses received a single, holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task. The responses had to appropriately address each turn in the conversation, according to the outline as well as the simulated interlocutor's utterance.

In this exam, within the theme of Beauty and Aesthetics (*Schönheit und Ästhetik*), the interlocutor (Hannah) opens the conversation by greeting the student and noting that she had intended to send the student a text message that day. She then asks the student about the student's plans for the weekend. The directions contained in the outline of the conversation tell the student to respond by answering Hannah's question. In the second turn Hannah describes a problem that she has: she has to play in a piano recital on Saturday and is very nervous and stressed about it. Hannah comments that music *ought* to be fun, regardless of whether one plays or listens, and asks the student for confirmation of this point of view (*Findest du nicht?*). The student is directed to react to this question. In the third turn Hannah asks for advice: she would like to stop taking piano lessons, but she feels that she cannot do so because her mother would be very disappointed. Hannah asks what the student would do in her position, and the student is directed to give a piece of advice. In the fourth turn Hannah considers the advice and notes that it would be nice not to have to sit at the piano every day. She then asserts that young people should be the ones who decide what activities they participate in (such as music or sports), not their parents (*NICHT unsere Eltern*), and asks the student's opinion of this perspective. The student is supposed to both state an opinion and back it up with a rationale. In the final turn Hannah mentions that she might talk to her mother. She then sees that her bus is coming and, before leaving, asks the student whether the student would like to do something later. The directions tell the student to answer the question.

Sample: 3A

Score: 5

Transcription of Student Response

1. Ah, ich hab' Arbeit dieses Wochenende. Ah ich ah arbeite jetzt bei Panera. Es ist ah und ich bin eine ich glaube ich ah muss ah Geschirr spülen. Aber ah das ist nur an Samstag, an Sonntag bin ich ah gar frei. Und ah ja, vielleicht können wir uns treffen und ah.

2. Ja, ah ich . . . ich verstehen, was du, was du meinst. Es ist . . . es kann ah ganz ah man kann ganz nervös werden ahm von dieser ah zum zum Spielen. Es macht immer Spaß ah es zu hören aber vielleicht es da Spielen eine ein bisschen ah schwer.

3. Also ich, ich würde ehrlich mit meiner Mutter sein, weil, wenn du ah keine Lust das zu machen hast, ah wird sie ahm hochwahrscheinlich verstehen, und vielleicht kannst du etwas anderes machen, also vielleicht kannst du ah schwimmen oder ah Basketball spielen oder was weiss ich.

4. Also ich glaub' unsere Eltern ah wiss oder ja wissen ah manchmal, was am besten ist aber, wenn wir etwas oder keine Lust, etwas zu machen haben, sollen wir das nicht machen müssen. Und ah es ist ah für Klavierspielen ahm etwas, das uh die nicht so wichtig ist, ah sollen wir entscheiden.

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Task 3: Conversation (continued)

5. *Tja, das wäre schön! Ahm ich ah, ja. Vielleicht kö können wir später ah Eis essen oder etwas wie das an ah Samstag oder Sonntag meine ich. Und ja, das wäre schön. Also, tschüss. Auf Wiedersehen!*

Commentary

This response communicates a series of particulars drawn from the student's personal life in a conversational, flowing manner that is clearly appropriate within the context of the task. There is a compelling ease in the candor and accuracy with which the student reacts to each of the interlocutor's utterances, for instance in the second turn, where the student empathizes with Hannah, suggests that she and her mother can solve their differences through discussion, and advises her to stand up for her desires while simultaneously accepting that her parents might have a more informed perspective. The student uses varied and appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic usage with few errors ("*ich würde ehrlich mit meiner Mutter sein*"; "*hochwahrscheinlich*"; "*ich glaub' unsere Eltern ... wissen ah manchmal, was am besten ist.*"). There is frequent elaboration throughout the candidate's response. The student's self-correction also improves comprehensibility. This response demonstrated an overall strong performance in Interpersonal Speaking and accordingly received a score of 5.

Sample: 3B

Score: 3

Transcription of Student Response

1. Ahm hallo ahm, am Wochenende ah hab ich ah ein Fußball ah ah spiel ahm, aber ah nach ah Samstag, ah vielleicht am . .
2. Ja, ah Musik ist sehr schön und du bist eine ah sehr gute Klavierspieler. Ja, ich hab dich hören. Ah also ah ja ich .. Musik ist sehr gut und ah ick . .
3. Ja, also ah ich glaube, dass du soll Klavier ah spielen. Ah ja, Musik ist sehr gut und sie müss auf verstanden, dass das ist was du ah möchtest machen.
4. Ja, meine Meinung nach dass ah du muss ah was du ah will machen. Ah ahm du kannst ah sie ah dast ah . . sprechen und . . Ja, du kannst ah Sport machen oder . .
5. Ja ah toll ah, vielleicht ah können wir ins Kino gehen. Ahm ja, ich bin ah sehr frei am heute Abend . . oder am Sostag bist du, bist du frei Sostag? Wir kö . .

Commentary

This response constitutes a fair performance in Interpersonal Speaking. The student maintains the exchange with somewhat appropriate responses within the context of the task. The student provides most required information with some elaboration, but repetition underscores the fact that not a lot is being said ("*Musik ist sehr gut*"). The pace and intonation make the response only generally comprehensible. The student uses basic vocabulary and structures ("*ich hab dich hören*"). Some errors impede comprehensibility ("*sie müss auf verstanden*"; "*du kannst ah sie ah dast ah . . sprechen*"). The response received a score of 3.

Sample: 3C

Score: 2

Transcription of Student Response

1. *Hallo, Hannah. Ah am Freitag und Sonntag und Samstag ich bin frei. Ahm, machst du und ich eine Kaufen-Trip? Ich vermisse dich sehr.*
2. *Es tut mir Leid zu vielen nervös nicht. Du hörst gern. Ja, ich mag das ich ah möchte hören sich, hören dich.*

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Task 3: Conversation (continued)

3. *Du sollst . . du sollst eine gutes Tochter. Du sollst deine Mutter . . hören. I es tut mir Leid, dass du*
4. *Meine Meinung ist, dass du Klavier . . Klavier spielen. Das ist sehr wichtig. Deine Mutter would sollst*
rather, sondern dass du
5. *Ja, ich möchte, dass du sprechen die Klavier . . Ja, ich hoffe, dass du ist ok.*

Commentary

This is a weak performance in Interpersonal Speaking. The response is characterized by minimally appropriate responses within the context of the task (for example, *“Ich vermisse dich sehr”*). The student is only able to partially maintain the exchange as a result of limited vocabulary and limited control of grammar (*“Kaufen-Trip”*; *Deine Mutter would sollst rather*). The brevity of the responses is also evidence of limited vocabulary and grammar. Frequent errors make the exchange partially understandable, creating confusion for the listener (*“Es tut mir Leid zu vielen nervös nicht”*; *“ich möchte, dass du sprechen die Klavier”*). The response accordingly received a score of 2.