

Sample Tasks of the Oral Component of the BA Language Exam

The following four tasks are released to help DELP students and tutors to familiarize their students with the oral exam format.

This document is to be used in conjunction with the oral specifications, available on the page providing an overview of the BA Language Exam.

Task #1

The task sheet:

3/2

Phase 1:

Think back to your best friend or friends from your school days.
What were they like? Describe him/her/them.
What did you do together? Why were you good friends?

When the test begins, tell your partners about your experiences with them and **listen** to their accounts. Make sure you include **real descriptions** too.

Phase 2 by the interlocutor:

Come to an agreement on the three most important 'ingredients of friendship between adults.

Rescue question:

What kinds of people would you find it difficult to make friends with and why?

ANALYSIS OF TASK #1:

All oral exam items will have been designed around a prototypical structure with different functions as illustrated below. On the left of the table, you can see the content elements from sample task 1 (given on the previous page). On the right, explanations are provided.

DESCRIPTION	FUNCTION/EXPLANATION
<p>Phase 1 (on a slip of paper)</p> <p>Think back to your best friend or friends from your school days.</p>	<p>'Lead-in' part: statements, questions or quotations intended to provide an entry point to the topic, to focus and 'warm up' the candidate through personalization.</p> <p>In terms of the CEF levels, such an entry would typically engage the candidate at level B1 only because it is at this level that speakers are expected to engage what is called the „personal domain” (check CEF, p. 45.). Therefore, performance could not indicate the higher levels</p>

<p>What were they like? Describe him/her/them.</p> <p>What did you do together?"</p> <p>Why were you good friends?</p> <p>When the test begins, tell your partners about your experiences... and listen to their accounts.</p> <p>Phase 2: (Given by examiner)</p> <p>'A friend in need is a friend indeed' is a popular saying.</p> <p>Come to an agreement on the three most important 'ingredients' of friendship between adults.</p> <p>Rescue question</p> <p>What kinds of people would you find it difficult to make friends with and why?</p>	<p>Descriptive and/or narrative part: more open questions and instructions to get each candidate to offer a largely descriptive account of a fairly concrete experience or subject-matter.</p> <p>Note that a simple narrative based on a concrete experience would probably not provide evidence of the candidates' ability at level C1 or above. In order to show that, the candidate needs to take it further:</p> <p>Exploratory part: more reflective as it requires candidates to explore earlier personal, concrete events, experiences, i.e. to move from concrete to more abstract or specific to more general forms of expression.</p> <p>This is sort of a reminder, included in every task sheet.</p> <p>'Phase 2 lead-in': statements, questions or quotations</p> <p>Discussion part: Instructions to express (different) viewpoints and arrive at a negotiated discussion outcome.</p> <p>"Rescue" prompt: Given by an examiner and most likely directed at <i>one</i> of the candidates in order to elicit more contributions/language on the topic if necessary.</p>
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Task #2

The task sheet:

7/2

Phase 1:

Remember a travelling experience in which you started out with great expectations. When was it and where did you go? What were those expectations and what happened?

When the test begins, **describe** your experience and **listen** to your partners' accounts.

Phase 2 by the interlocutor:

What is it that first-time visitors to Hungary ought to know about the country before they travel? Agree on the four most important things you would tell them about.

Rescue question:

What is your favourite 'holiday' country or region and why?

Task #3

The task sheet:

3/3

Phase 1:

What is the best/ worst piece of advice you have ever received? In what ways has it affected you or others?

When the test begins, **describe** your experience and **listen** to your partners' accounts.

Phase 2 by the interlocutor:

What advice would you give an incoming university student? Agree on **four** pieces of advice and rank them in order of importance.

Rescue question:

What helped you most in finding your way through the university system as a first-year student?

Task #4

The task sheet:

7/7

Phase 1:

Have you ever felt homesick, out of place or uncomfortable in any environment either in your country or abroad? Did you manage to cope with the problem? How?

When the test begins, *describe your experiences*, and *listen to your partners' accounts*.

Phase 2 by the interlocutor:

Can you agree on 3 things that you would rather not show a foreign friend visiting Hungary and three things that you definitely would.

Rescue question:

Which country or continent do you think you would find the most difficult to adapt to or feel at home in? Tell us why.