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**prieš egzaminą**  
**Speaking for Exams**



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The Speaking Part of the National School Leaving Exam of English tests the skill of spoken English. Spoken language differs from written language in many ways.<sup>1</sup> Speakers usually do not have much time to think before speaking (unless it is a prepared beforehand speech) which makes speech acts spontaneous and immediate. Following are the main features of spoken language.<sup>2</sup>

#### Spoken language is

- **less structured** than written language: contains incomplete sentences, false starts, repetition or unfinished questions<sup>3</sup>
- **less complex**: uses fewer dependent clauses, more active verbs than written language
- **more flexible** in the use of grammar rules: may use conversational historical present.<sup>4</sup> The speaker may use the present tense while speaking about past events to make the talk more lively
- **more fragmented**: more simple sentences joined with the help of coordinating conjunctions *and*, *but*, *so*, *because*<sup>5</sup>
- **lexically less dense** than written language: more grammatical words than lexical words; fewer complex words and phrases
- **repetitive**: e.g. *Well, I mean, I mean...*

#### Spoken language uses

- **backchannels** (or minimal responses). By using such backchannels (or minimal responses) as *mmm* or *yeah* the listener shows the speaker that he or she is listening and understands what is being said<sup>6</sup>
- **personal pronouns**, especially first person pronoun *I*
- **discourse markers** or speech transitions. A discourse marker or speech transition “is a word or expression which shows the structure of a piece of discourse, whether spoken or written”<sup>7</sup>. The most common discourse markers in spoken language are the following:

<i>anyway</i>	<i>like</i>	<i>right</i>	<i>you know</i>
<i>fine</i>	<i>now</i>	<i>so</i>	<i>I mean</i>
<i>good</i>	<i>oh</i>	<i>well</i>	<i>as I say</i>
<i>great</i>	<i>okay</i>	<i>mind you</i>	<i>for a start</i> <sup>8</sup>



Discourse markers signal when a speaker

- starts and ends a conversation: *O.K.*, *right*<sup>9</sup>
- changes the topic: *um*, *erm*, *anyway*<sup>10</sup>
- shows interest: *yeah*, *right*<sup>11</sup>
- shows attitude: *actually*, *frankly*, *I think*, *(I'm) sorry*, *to tell you the truth*, *really*?<sup>12</sup>
- shows a positive or negative emotional response: *Oh!* *Hooray!* *Oops!* *Ouch!*<sup>13</sup>
- **hedging** in order not to give strong opinions: *may*, *might*, *could*, *quite*, *a bit*, *suppose*, *sort of*, *I guess*<sup>14</sup>
- **hesitation strategies** that give the speaker time to think:
  - pauses: *Well...Um...Er...* (delaying noises)
  - hesitation: *Pardon?* *Sorry?* *Eh?* (to pretend not having heard)
  - fillers: *Don't tell me*, *Wow*, *Well*, *You see*, *To be honest*, *By the way*, *Exactly!* *No way*, *Basically*, *Certainly*<sup>15</sup>
  - repeating the question<sup>16</sup>
- **variation** in speed, tone, loudness or quietness, stress and intonation to add emotional context.<sup>17</sup>

Even though spoken language differs from written language in many ways, speaking for exam is linear (discusses one point at a time), explicit (clear and easy to understand), hedged and responsible and uses standard language.<sup>18</sup>

Units 1 and 2 of Part I will help you build fluency in speaking and improve such aspects of spoken language as pronunciation, stress and intonation.

## Key points

## Monologue focus

- Monologue structure and organisation
- Monologue assessment criteria
- Vocabulary bank
- Monologue analysis and practice

## Evaluation focus

- Self-analysis
- Progress evaluation

## Monologue focus



## How to organise a monologue

Monologue is a structured short talk given by a student on a particular topic. In Task 1 of the Speaking Part of the Exam (the Monologue), you will be required to give an individual talk on a particular topic. As mentioned in the Preface (p. 4), the monologue task may be of the following types:

- a talk on a given topic by answering provided questions
- a talk on a given topic by answering provided questions based on a stimulus (a short text)
- a talk on a given topic by answering provided questions based on a stimulus (a diagram or picture).<sup>1</sup>

No matter which task type you receive during the exam, your talk should include the **introduction**, the **main body** and the **conclusion**.<sup>2</sup> The use of appropriate signposting and transitions<sup>3</sup> adds **coherence**<sup>✓</sup> to your speech and is the fourth element of an effective exam monologue (Figure 1). The **language / style** of an exam talk should be neutral/semi-formal.<sup>4</sup>

✓ Signposting,  
<http://www.effective-public-speaking.com/signposting/menu.php>

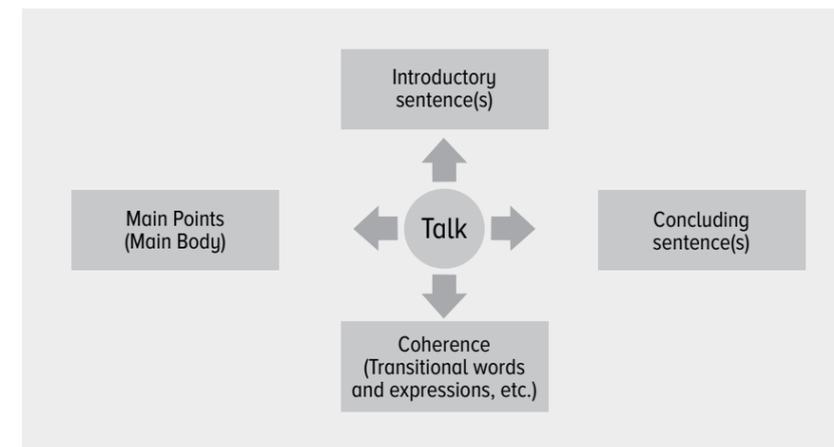


Figure 1. Four components in a speech<sup>5</sup>

**In the introductory or the opening part of your monologue**

- Introduce your topic in a sentence or two (see Vocabulary Bank).
- Make a transition to the first question<sup>6</sup> (see sample monologue in Activity 7).
- Try to make the best first impression possible.
- Try to stay calm.
- Be assertive: show confidence in what you are saying.

**In the main body of your monologue**

- Answer all of the provided questions.
- Discuss one question at a time.
- Give approximately equal attention to each question or provide more detailed background information on a particular point and then discuss the subsequent points in less detail.
- Discuss one point at a time for each of the questions.
- Support your points/ideas with details/examples.<sup>7</sup>

**Closing your talk**

- Signal that you are finishing using appropriate transitions (see Vocabulary Bank).
- Create a sense of finality by using a strong statement.<sup>8</sup>
- Don't introduce new points.

**Coherence**

- Use transitions to link details to the points/ideas.
- Use transitional words and expressions to show links between points/ideas.
- Use verbal bridges:
  - repetition of key words
  - use of synonyms
  - use of pronouns
- Use a clear principle of organisation (time order or order of importance).<sup>9</sup>!

! When answering a particular question, use logical flow of ideas: the ideas should be organised in such a way that each point develops out of the previous one. This will make your talk more coherent.

**Style**

- Use neutral/semi-formal language.<sup>10</sup>
- Avoid using colloquialisms (e.g. *wanna, gonna, dump, etc.*)<sup>11</sup> and slang (e.g. *frenemy, greycation, iceman, etc.*)<sup>12</sup> in your talk.
- Try to avoid overusing 'you' when generalising. For example, instead of saying '*You feel desperate when approached by a bully*,' say '*People feel/one feels desperate when approached by a bully.*'
- Use hedging:
  - try to be cautious and tentative when you discuss debatable issues<sup>13</sup>
  - avoid words and expressions such as *always, every, definitely, absolutely, there is no doubt, etc.*<sup>14</sup>
  - choose words to express a medium level of certainty such as *probably, should, usually, or likely*<sup>15</sup>

Compare the statements below:

*Solar energy may become the main source of energy in the future.* (Hedged)

*Solar energy will definitely become the main source of energy in the future.* (Too assertive and categorical)

**Helpful tips: how to approach Task 1 (the Monologue)****Before the monologue**

- Read the task attentively.
- Rewrite key words on your exam prep sheet. In the exam task 'What categories of information does the bar chart include? Describe the statistical data in the bar chart,' the key words are:
  - 'categories of information'
  - 'statistical data'

- Use the **key words** of the exam task as the **main points** of your talk. In other words, the talk illustrated by the previous example should focus on two points:
  - (1) categories of information
  - (2) description of the statistical data
- Make an outline of the main points for each of the questions.
- Manage your time effectively.
- Don't write the entire text of your talk.
- Don't start with words like '*I am not sure*,' '*okay*' or '*um*.'
- Don't apologise for not being very knowledgeable on the topic.
- Don't apologise for your poor language skills.
- Don't complain about the difficulty of the task or topic.

**During the monologue**

- Make the answers concise and to the point.
- Use relevant vocabulary.
- Use appropriate introduction and relevant conclusion.
- Use appropriate eye contact. Typically you form eye contact with someone when you pause. This allows you to see the examiner's reaction to the talk. In any case, it is important that you make eye contact in a way that is natural to you.<sup>16</sup>
- Be respectful and responsible for what you are saying.
- Don't make statements that are unclear or debatable.
- Don't invent facts or statistics: if you do not know something for sure, use phrases showing uncertainty.
- Don't change the topic.<sup>17</sup>
- Don't keep silent if you do not remember a particular word: try to rephrase.

**At the end of the monologue**

- Don't use weak phrases like '*That's all I have to say.*'

**Monologue assessment criteria**

During Part 1 of the Speaking Exam (the Monologue), the examiner will assess your talk on such areas as the **content, fluency and coherence, vocabulary range and accuracy, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation/intonation**. Assessment criteria for an exam monologue are provided in the table below.

Assessment criteria <sup>18</sup>	Skills and strategies <sup>19</sup>
Content	Fully develops position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well supported ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ is able to talk on the topic</li> <li>■ develops ideas and gives examples</li> </ul>
Fluency and coherence	Uses smooth, forward-moving, unhesitant and effortless speech <sup>20</sup> ; sequences information and ideas logically; supports generalizations using specific examples and details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ keeps going and talks on the topic</li> <li>■ says something even though the student does not have the right word</li> <li>■ joins ideas using linking words and expressions</li> <li>■ adds relevant details to explain or illustrate the answer</li> <li>■ emphasises words to convey meaning</li> <li>■ pauses correctly<sup>21</sup></li> <li>■ corrects oneself</li> </ul>

Assessment criteria <sup>18</sup>	Skills and strategies <sup>19</sup>
Vocabulary range and accuracy	Uses a wide range of vocabulary and lexical structures with accuracy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ chooses appropriate words and expressions</li> <li>■ uses a variety of words and expressions</li> <li>■ chooses collocations (words that go well together)</li> <li>■ uses idiomatic language</li> <li>■ uses synonyms and antonyms</li> </ul>
Grammatical range and accuracy	Uses a wide range of grammatical structures with full flexibility and accuracy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ uses grammatical structures correctly, e.g. right verb tenses, conditionals, articles, modals, etc.</li> <li>■ uses different sentence types (simple, complex, compound)</li> <li>■ uses correct word order</li> <li>■ uses sentence variety, e.g. use different sentence openings</li> <li>■ corrects oneself</li> </ul>
Pronunciation and intonation	Uses correct pronunciation and intonation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ produces sounds clearly</li> <li>■ stresses words correctly</li> <li>■ uses correct intonation</li> </ul>

Vocabulary bank

Signalling introduction <sup>22</sup>	Referring to points under discussion and generalising
I'm going to talk about ... I'd like to talk about ... <sup>23</sup> I am going to talk about an issue which concerns everyone ... My topic is ... My/this talk focuses on the issue of ... The theme of my talk is ... What I'm going to cover is ... <sup>24</sup>	Regarding ... As to ... As a rule, As usual, For the most part, Generally, Generally speaking, Ordinarily, Usually,
Highlighting priority/importance <sup>25</sup>	Giving emphasis <sup>26</sup>
Primarily, Of primary importance ... Most importantly,	In fact, Actually, Indeed, Not only ... but also ... Above all, Indeed, Truly,
Getting to the point <sup>27</sup>	Giving an opinion <sup>28</sup>
Anyway, to get to the point, Anyway, the main point I want to make is that ...	Well, I think/suppose/would say ... I think most people would agree that ... ... for two/several reasons.
Self-correcting <sup>29</sup>	Giving an example <sup>30</sup>
Or rather ... I mean ... Or, should I say ...	Take ..., for example. Look at ..., for instance. A good example of this is ...
Rephrasing <sup>31</sup>	Introducing alternative views <sup>32</sup>
What I mean is ... What I want to say is ... What I'm trying to say is ... In essence, In other words, Namely, That is, That is to say, To put it differently, <sup>33</sup>	On the other hand, Or, to look at it another way, Then again, Alternatively, Conversely, Instead, <sup>34</sup>

Moving on to another point <sup>35</sup>	Concluding <sup>36</sup>
I'd like now to move on to ... Turning now to! ... Now, let's turn to ... I now want to turn to ... Moving on now to ... Having looked at ..., I'd now like to consider ... The next point is ... Another interesting point is ... The next aspect I'd like to consider is ... I'd now like to turn to ...	So, that's why I think ... Anyway, that's why... So, to return to my original point, So, to sum up... In conclusion (we can say that)... <sup>37</sup> As can be seen, Generally speaking, Given these points, All things considered, In the long run, As has been noted, In a word, In summary/ To summarize, In short/in brief, In essence, Overall,

**!** You 'move on' when you want to make your next point:

- Moving on to the next point.
- I'd like to move on to the next point if there are no further questions

You 'turn to' when you want to change to a completely different topic:

- I'd like to turn to something completely different.
- Let's turn now to our plans for next year.

(Signposting, <http://www.effective-public-speaking.com/signposting/menu.php>)

Monologue analysis and practice

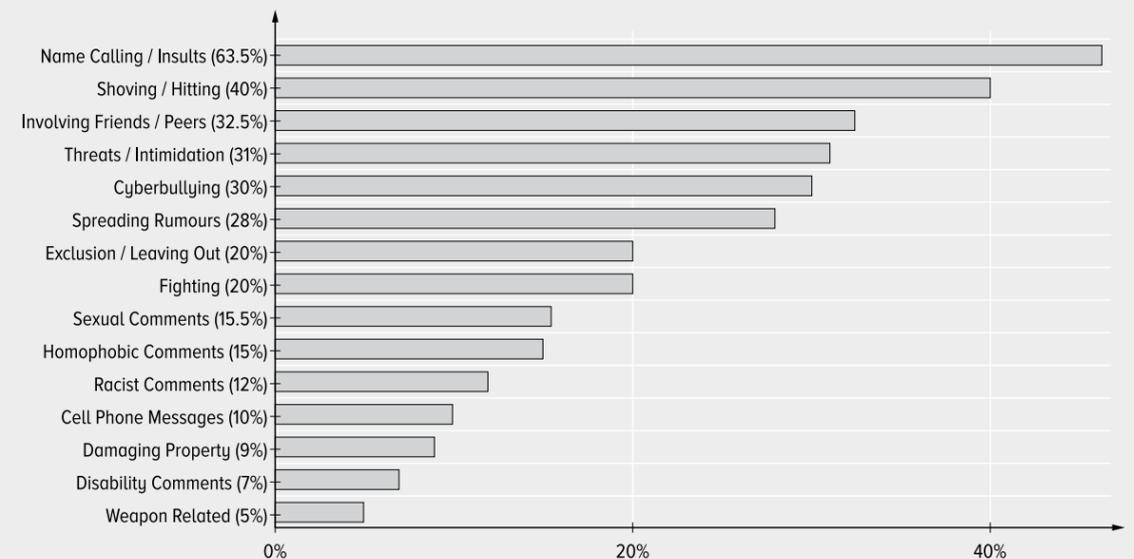
**Activity 1** Read the provided task on the topic 'Fighting Bullying'. Pay attention to the key words.

Monologue Task: Fighting Bullying

Time: 3–4 minutes

Topic: **Fighting Bullying**

Task: Study the statistics in the bar chart and answer the questions based on it.



Source: STOP A BULLY, Canada Bullying Statistics, <http://www.stopabully.ca/bullying-statistics.html>

- What categories of information does the bar chart include? Describe the statistical data in the bar chart.
- Define what you think each type of bullying means. In your view, do similar types of bullying occur in Lithuanian schools? How does the statistics on bullying in Canada compare to the situation of bullying in Lithuania?
- How can parents, teachers and children take action to prevent bullying? What can you do about bullying?

## Key points

## Dialogue focus

- Dialogue structure and organisation
- Dialogue assessment criteria
- Vocabulary bank
- Dialogue analysis and practice

## Evaluation focus

- Self-analysis
- Progress evaluation

## Dialogue focus



## How to organise a dialogue

In Task 2 of the Speaking Part of the Exam (the Dialogue), you and your partner are given a situation or a topic that you are asked to discuss and come to an agreement. Your conversation should have a clear **beginning, the discussion part and the closing**.

## At the beginning of your discussion

- Signal the start of the discussion using opening phrases (see phrases in Vocabulary Bank).
- Introduce the topic/situation you are going to discuss.
- Don't engage in small talk (e.g. the weather, summer holidays etc. if that is not the topic of your exam task).

## During the discussion

- Discuss one point/suggestion/option at a time. This will make your conversation more logical, structured and goal oriented.
- answer in full sentences, elaborate; avoid giving a one-word Answer<sup>1</sup>.
- Understand each other<sup>2</sup>. If you don't understand what the other student means, ask for clarification (see phrases in Vocabulary Bank).
- Take **equal turns**<sup>✓</sup> and make sure that both of you speak for equal periods of time<sup>!</sup>. The order and the length of the turn are flexible<sup>3</sup> (see Table 6).
- All points of the exam task have to be discussed.
- Show that you are interested in what the other student says<sup>4</sup> (see phrases in Vocabulary Bank).
- Carry on with a conversation by inviting the other student to speak (see phrases in Vocabulary Bank).
- Use different question types: yes/no questions, *Wh*-questions, tag questions and choice questions<sup>5</sup> (see Unit 6.1, p. 85–86).

✓ Taking Turns in Conversations, *Englishpond.com*, <http://englishpond.com/speaking/Communication%20and%20daily%20English/turntaking/index.html>

! If you feel that you are not given enough space,

- interrupt politely (see phrases in Vocabulary Bank)
- use body language to signal you would like to have your say:
  - use a hand gesture to signal that you want to say something
  - lean into the conversation
  - lightly touch partner's arm.

(Haase, *Getting your voice heard in the Speaking Exam*, [teftalk.net](http://teftalk.net/2015/05/25/940/), <http://teftalk.net/2015/05/25/940/>; Thaine. C. *Cambridge Academic English. An Integrated Skills Course for EAP. Student's Book. Intermediate*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, 107)

- Listen to the other student's opinion/argument and **respond to it** by adding to something the other student says.<sup>6</sup> Don't just say "That's a good idea" or "I agree."
- Justify your opinion and provide arguments. For example, you can say "I agree because I think that..." (give your arguments).
- Disagree politely (see phrases in Vocabulary Bank).

**At the end of your discussion**

- Signal the end of the conversation by using closing phrases (see phrases in Vocabulary Bank).
- Give a short summary of the points you have agreed upon during the discussion.
- Close the conversation politely (see phrases in Vocabulary Bank).

**Table 6.** Possible structure of the dialogue

Dialogue Structure A	Dialogue Structure B
<p><b>Beginning of discussion</b></p> <p><b>Discussion</b>  <b>Student A: request re* point 1</b> → Student B                      Student B: response to request re point 1 and follow up                      Student A: response re point 1</p> <p><b>Student B: request re point 2</b> → Student A                      Student A: response to request re point 2 and follow up                      Student B: response re point 2</p> <p><b>Student A: request re point 3</b> → Student B                      Student B: response to request re point 3 and follow up                      Student A: response re point 3</p> <p><b>Student B: request re point 4</b> → Student A                      Student A: response to request re point 4 and follow up                      Student B: response re point 4</p> <p><i>(Discussion continues following the same scheme till all the points are discussed and the consensus is reached)</i></p> <p><b>Closing</b></p>	<p><b>Beginning of discussion</b></p> <p><b>Discussion</b>  <b>Student A: request re point 1</b> → Student B                      Student B: response to request re point 1                      Student A: response re point 1</p> <p><b>Student A: request re point 2</b> → Student B                      Student B: response to request re point 2                      Student A: response re point 2</p> <p><b>Student B: request re point 3</b> → Student A                      Student A: response to request re point 3                      Student B: response re point 3</p> <p><b>Student B: request re point 4</b> → Student A                      Student A: response to request re point 4                      Student B: response re point 4</p> <p><i>(Discussion continues following the same scheme till all the points are discussed and the consensus is reached)</i></p> <p><b>Closing</b></p>

\*re means regarding



**Helpful tips: how to approach Task 2 (the Dialogue)**

**Before the dialogue**

- Read the task attentively.
- Write the points you need to discuss on your exam prep sheet.<sup>7</sup>
- Write down your ideas for each of the points you have to discuss.
- Manage your time effectively.

**During the dialogue**

- Make eye contact with the other student and make sure your partner understands you. If you see that the other student does not understand you, rephrase your idea in other words.<sup>8</sup>
- Make sure your response to your partner's request is to the point.
- Try to paraphrase the dialogue task in your own words.<sup>9</sup>
- Use gap fillers if you don't know what to say (see phrases in Vocabulary Bank, p. 79).
- Correct yourself if you make a mistake.<sup>10</sup>
- Try to speak slower than you normally do because people tend to speak very fast when they are nervous.<sup>11</sup>
- Speak clearly and loudly enough so that the examiner can hear you.

**After the dialogue**

- Say goodbye to the examiners.

**Dialogue assessment criteria**

During Part 2 of the Speaking Exam (the Dialogue), the examiner will assess your talk with the student you are paired with (the dialogue) on such areas as the **realisation of communicative intentions, interaction and flexibility, vocabulary range and accuracy, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation and intonation**. Assessment criteria for an exam dialogue are provided in the table below.

Assessment criteria <sup>12</sup>	Skills and strategies <sup>13</sup>
Realisation of communicative intentions	Achieves communication goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ communicates and exchanges information</li> <li>■ discusses the point and provides examples</li> <li>■ adds relevant detail to explain or illustrate the answers</li> </ul>
Interaction and flexibility	Manages conversation by turn-taking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ carries on the conversation</li> <li>■ adds to something the partner said</li> <li>■ interrupts politely</li> <li>■ invites the partner to speak</li> <li>■ shows interest in what the partner says</li> <li>■ adds to something the partner said<sup>14</sup></li> </ul>
Vocabulary range and accuracy	Uses a wide range of vocabulary and lexical structures with accuracy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ chooses suitable words and expressions</li> <li>■ uses a variety of words and expressions</li> <li>■ chooses collocations (words that go well together)</li> <li>■ uses idiomatic language</li> <li>■ uses synonyms and antonyms</li> </ul>
Grammatical range and accuracy	Uses a wide range of grammatical structures with full flexibility and accuracy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ uses grammatical structures correctly, e.g. correct verb tenses, conditionals, articles, modals, etc.</li> <li>■ uses different sentence types (simple, complex, compound)</li> <li>■ uses correct word order</li> <li>■ uses sentence variety, e.g. uses different sentence openings</li> <li>■ corrects oneself</li> </ul>
Pronunciation and intonation	Uses correct pronunciation and intonation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ produces sounds clearly</li> <li>■ stresses words correctly</li> <li>■ uses correct intonation (rising, falling, fall-rise)<sup>15</sup></li> </ul>

**Vocabulary bank**

Starting the conversation	Interrupting to take turns
Hello. How are you? Hi there. How are you doing? Have you got a minute to discuss...? Do you have a minute to talk about...? Shall I go first? Would you like to begin? Shall I go first? <sup>16</sup> Have you heard that...?	Wait a minute! Sorry to interrupt, but... Before you go on... Could I just say something here? May I interrupt? Sorry to interrupt, but... <sup>17</sup> If I could just come in here. I'd just like to say that... <sup>18</sup> May/Can I just come in here? May/Can I just make a point here? May/Can I just pick you up on a point you made a while ago? May/Can I just come back to what you said earlier? May/Can I go back to something you said earlier? <sup>19</sup> I'd just like to say that. May I say something here? Excuse me. May/Can I interrupt you for a moment? <sup>20</sup>

Asking for clarification	Giving clarification
<p>Could you say that again, please?            What do you mean, exactly?            Can you explain that, please?            I didn't understand what you said about...            I'm sorry, I didn't catch what you said about...            I'm sorry, could you repeat what you said about...            What does ... mean?            I'm not sure what you mean.            I don't see what you mean.            Could we come back to that?            I'd like to ask you about...            What did you mean when you said...?            Could you be more specific about...?            Could you expand a little on what you said about ...?            Could you give an example of...?            Could you explain in more detail?            So you're telling me that I can't...?            Are you saying that...?<sup>21</sup></p>	<p>The point I am trying to make is that...            I'd like to explain that...            I'm sure you'll understand that what I'm trying to say is...            What I mean is...            All I am saying is...            What I am getting at is...<sup>22</sup>            That's not really what I was asking. My question is about            Perhaps I didn't make my question clear. In fact what I asked was...            I think you've answered a slightly different question.            What I would like to know is...            I understand that, but what I actually had in mind was...            Sorry, I'm still not clear about...<sup>23</sup>            In other words...<sup>24</sup></p>
Making sure you have understood	Asking for opinions
<p>So what you're saying is that...?            So you mean that...?            I just want to be sure that I have understood you correctly.            So am I right in thinking that...?            Another thing I'd like to check is...<sup>25</sup>            Am I correct in assuming that...?            Let me just make sure, your point is that...            If I have understood you correctly, your point is that...</p>	<p>What do you think about...?            What are your views...?            What do you feel about...?            What's your opinion of...?            What are your feelings about...?            Have you got any comments on...?            May/Could I have your reaction to...?            Do you have any particular views on...?<sup>26</sup>            Do you have any thoughts on that?</p>
Inviting the other student to speak	Showing interest
<p>How about you?            How do you feel about that?            What do you reckon?            What's your opinion?            Do you want to add anything?</p>	<p>Uh-huh.            Oh, I see.            Right.            That's interesting.            Yeah, that's true.            You are right.            Really?            Good point!            Hmm, that's an excellent point!            Wow! That's amazing!            That's incredible!            No way!</p>
Continuing the conversation	Changing the subject
<p>Shall I carry on?            May I continue?            Shall we continue?            Would you like me to start?            Let me finish.            Let's go back to the point.            Well, not only that but also...            The thing we really need to talk about is...</p>	<p>Can we turn to another point?            Now we can turn to another point, can't we?            Let's discuss the next point.            Another point we need to discuss is...            Moving on to the next point of our discussion...            That reminds me (of)            Speaking about /of            Before I forget            Oh, while I remember            I have just thought of something            Oh, there's something else I wanted to say<sup>27</sup></p>