

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2016

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
in English as a Second Language (4ES0)
Paper 2: Listening

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GCSE in English as a Second Language

Paper 2: Listening

Examiner Report

Background to the paper

The listening paper is divided into three sections. The first part was a monologue by a teacher who talked about the arrangements for the school musical. Candidates were required to complete notes based on the information provided.

In the second part, the candidates listened to an interview with an explorer. Candidates were required to answer questions on what they heard.

In the third part, candidates listened to an extract from a science podcast about robots. They were required to complete summary sentences based on what they heard.

Generally candidates found the paper very demanding.

Detailed comments

There were two types of questions on this paper: note completion and text completion. All questions required answers of no more than three words. Most questions were attempted, although not all candidates adhered to the word limit given in the rubric.

Two issues arose out of both of these question types which require candidates to provide the word or words for the answers themselves.

Spelling

This proved to be a problem for some candidates. The general rule applied during the marking was that if the answer impeded communication, candidates were not awarded a mark. However, candidates were not penalised for misspelling a word if it sounded like the target word.

For example, the answer to Q15 was "hidden gems". If a spelling such as "hidden jems" was used this was accepted. However, if the word sounded like a different word or was a different word, e.g. "hidden germs", candidates were not awarded a mark.

Grammar

In a few questions, e.g. Q8 (wind instruments), candidates were required to complete a sentence using the correct grammatical form. Although these forms were given in the recording, some candidates made errors in their answers. In this instance, if a candidate wrote "wind instrument", this answer was marked as incorrect.

Comments on sections of the paper

The paper is devised to become increasingly difficult. However, in this session, candidates found Part 3 to be the easiest section, Part 2 was the hardest and Part 1 was also challenging.

Part 1

Part 1 required candidates to listen for specific information such as high-frequency vocabulary items e.g. words for places, people or things.

Questions 4, 5 and 10 were particularly challenging for all candidates.

More able candidates scored most of their marks on questions 2, 3, 6, 7, and 8. Less able candidates scored very few marks in this section.

There were a number of candidates who did not adhere to the word limit (a maximum of three words in this instance). It is important for candidates to follow these instructions, otherwise they are not awarded a mark.

Part 2

Part 2 was particularly demanding for all candidates. Only the most able candidates scored well in this section.

Part 3

This section required candidates to complete sentences by providing the correct word or words. Candidates found this to be the least demanding part of the paper even though it required them to process the information they heard in order to provide the answer. All candidates, even the least able one, scored most of their marks in this section.

As mentioned previously, a number of candidates did not adhere to the word limit.

Questions 24 and 30 were well attempted by the least able candidates.

The most able candidates could identify the correct words and provide grammatically correct answers, such as in Questions 23, 27 and 28.

Advice to centres

It is recommended that candidates listen to a wide range of different types of texts such as current affairs, TV and radio programmes in order to familiarise themselves with a wide range of topics.

Centres should prepare candidates for the listening examination by familiarising them with the style of the test and with the types of questions they can expect to find on the paper.

Candidates should make good use of the time before the tape is played to predict possible answers and consider the context when providing their answers.

Candidates should make sure they check their answers carefully when they listen to the recordings a second time.

Candidates should be advised to follow the instructions in the rubric when answering the questions and to adhere strictly to the word limit.

Candidates should consider the grammatical fit of their answers in sentence completion questions.

Candidates should consider the spelling of words when providing their answers.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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