

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2016

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE in
English as a Second Language (4ES0)
Paper 02R: Listening

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GCSE in English as a Second Language
Paper 02R: Listening
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Background to the paper

The listening paper is divided into three sections.

The first part was a monologue by the principal of a school who talked about the arrangements for prize day. Candidates were required to complete notes based on the information provided.

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

In the third part, candidates listened to an extract from a radio programme on the history of timekeeping. They were required to complete summary sentences based on what they heard.

Candidate's responses

Generally candidates found the paper very demanding this session.

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.

Candidates were not penalised for misspelling a word if it sounded like the target word. For example, the answer to Q5 was "medals". As such, a spelling such as "medles" was accepted. However, if the word sounded like a different word or was a different word, e.g. "metals", candidates were not awarded a mark.

Grammar

In a few questions, e.g. Q30 (power grids), 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 'power grid', this answer was marked as incorrect.

Comments on sections of the paper

The paper is devised to become increasingly difficult.

Part 1

Part 1 required candidates to listen for specific information such as high-frequency vocabulary items e.g. items of clothing. The most able candidates generally found this section straightforward. Less able candidates had some difficulty with some of the questions in this section, particularly questions 5 and 6. 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 more demanding than the previous section as it required candidates to follow an interview and identify the attitudes and opinions of the speaker. Candidates generally performed well on the first two questions in this section. Question 15 was particularly challenging for all candidates. Less able ones struggled with this part, particularly questions 16 to 19.

Part 3

This section required candidates to complete sentences by providing the correct word or words. This was the most demanding part of the paper as candidates needed to process the information they heard in order to provide the answer.

As mentioned previously, a number of candidates did not adhere to the word limit. Questions 25 and 30 were challenging for all candidates. Less able candidates had the most difficulty with this section and tended to score very few marks, although question 29 was well attempted. The most able candidates could identify the correct words and provide grammatically correct answers.

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

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