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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In English as a Second Language (4ES1) Paper
02R: Listening

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Background to the paper

This was the first examination for the new specification. The listening paper is now composed of 4 sections of increasing complexity and challenge.

Part 1 both sections A and B cover AO3(a), understanding the overall message of a spoken text. Part 1 Section A consisted of 5 short extracts detailing people's professions. Section B was a short extract loosely linked to the previous section in which the speaker talked about visiting an unusual tourist attraction.

Part 2 covers AO3(b), identifying essential and finer points and AO3(d), identifying a speaker's viewpoint or attitude, whether stated or implied. This part consisted of a talk given by a careers officer advising teenagers on how to be a successful blogger.

Part 3 covers AO3(c), understanding a conversation where information is being negotiated and exchanged) and AO3(d), where a speaker's viewpoint and attitude is identified, stated or implied. In this part students listened to an interview with a cross Channel swimmer.

Part 4 covered AO3(b), identifying essential and finer points and AO3(d) identifying a speaker's viewpoint and attitude. In this part students listened to an extract from a recording in which an astronaut is answering questions on space travel .

Students' responses

Generally students responded fairly well to all sections of the paper. Each section presented challenges for all students across the ability range.

Detailed comments

There were three types of responses on this paper: multiple choice, text completion with limited word count and short answers. All three types were attempted, although students did not always adhere to the word limit given in the rubric. In a number of instances, especially in the cluster of Q21 -Q25 students did not write their answer in the correct space provided and so their response was marked as incorrect.

Text completion and short response questions

A number of issues arose out of the questions which required students to provide their own word or words for the answers themselves.

Spelling and word substitution

Where spelling was concerned, the general rule applied during the marking was that if the answer affected communication, students were not awarded a mark. Students were not penalised for misspelling a word if it sounded like the target word and students suggested by their response that they had

understood the text. This applied in particular to Q21-Q25. Also some substitutes were accepted. In Q25, for example, some students wrote that the sea provided a form of physical and mental well-being, rather than using the word therapy.

Comments on sections of the paper

The paper had been devised with increasing complexity and challenge with each part being attempted by most of the students.

Part 1 (A) and Part (B)

In this section students were asked to listen to 5 short passages of people describing their professions and respond to a set of multiple choice style questions. The majority of students appeared to have answered Part 1 (A) successfully. In part B there was a number of questions, especially Q 8, which required more careful listening.

Part 2

This section required students to complete sentences about the text they heard, which consisted of advice on how to be a successful blogger, as well as answer two multiple choice questions. Generally students performed quite well and many appeared to adhere to the three word limit. However, there were questions like, Q12 and Q14 which required more careful listening.

Part 3

In this section, which consisted of an interview, students were required to answer questions by providing the correct word or words to show they understood the text. The second part to this section was a set of multiple choice responses. There was no word limit to Q21 -25 and many students replied in full sentences, whilst others with just one or two words. Q23 and Q25, in particular, proved to be challenging as they required more careful listening.

Part 4

In this section, which was an extract from a recording in which an astronaut is answering questions about space, students were required to complete sentences about the text they heard by providing the relevant word or words. Most of the students who attempted this part replied within the 3 word limit. The cluster of Q 33 – Q37 and Q40 proved to be challenging as these questions required more careful listening.

Advice to centres

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

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

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

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

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