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# Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

## Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCE  
In German (8GN0 01)  
Unit 1: Listening, Reading and Translation

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## **Summary**

This paper is designed to assess students' listening comprehension, reading comprehension and translation skills using a variety of authentic sources. Students are required to understand and convey their understanding accurately and also to show their ability to translate accurately from German into English.

All questions on this paper are marked according to a points-based mark scheme which is updated at standardisation to take account of the full range of candidate responses. Certain mark principles are applied by examiners which teachers need to take into account when preparing students for this examination. Examiners assess responses in the order of elements given by the student and consider no more elements than the number of marks available. Thus, in a 2 mark question, only the first two elements can score. However, repeating or paraphrasing the question or a preamble to an acceptable response do not count as elements in the response. Credit is not withheld for irrelevant additions to a correct response but additions which negate will result in students losing the mark for a correct answer.

Many students had clearly made great progress in the year since GCSE and impressed with their ability to manipulate the language of the transcript or text to suit the question asked and also with the breadth of their vocabulary. Gaps in common topic vocabulary and a propensity to use untargeted lifts of material without attempting to check their suitability or relevance to the question were characteristic of some weaker performances.

### **Question 1 Neuer Windpark**

Although Parts (i) and (iv) of this question were well answered by most students, Part (ii) proved more problematic. Students had to make a link between *übernächstes Jahr* and *in zwei Jahren* and between *bauen* and *entstehen*. In Part (iii) only a minority were able to spot the crucial connection between *viele Kritiker* in the listening passage and *zahlreiche Gegner*, the correct answer. Work on common synonyms would help students to prepare effectively for this type of multi-choice question.

### **Question 2 Osterfeuer in Ratzeburg**

This passage was about Easter celebrations in the town of Ratzeburg in Schleswig-Holstein. Quality of language is not assessed in this type of question and therefore misspellings and grammatical errors are tolerated provided that the answer remains comprehensible and unambiguous. Full sentences are not required but sufficient detail must be included in the response to answer the question completely. However, students should not transcribe whole sections of the dialogue in the hope that the transcription may address the question posed.

Most students were able to answer Q2(a) correctly but the other questions discriminated well.

In Q2(b) only the best proved able to turn the passive voice verb in the original into the perfect active. Others who did not recognise the verb *entzündet* in the listening passage nevertheless understood the key concept with answers such as *Er beginnt das Feuer*, which was of course credited.

Although Q2(c) featured many untargeted lifts there were also many attempts at the correct answer. A particularly common answer was *Feuermann*, which was not credited as the meaning would not necessarily be clear to a German speaker.

Q2(d) required students to make a deduction from the information given. Examiners credited a whole range of positive adjectives but not a direct lift from the last sentence of the passage. Students should note that inference questions are often signposted by the inclusion of words such as *wohl*, *wahrscheinlich* or *vielleicht* in the question.

### Question 3 Helene Fischer

This question featured an interview with the singer Helene Fischer about her life and career. The register of language was quite informal and was well answered by many students although there were some questions which discriminated particularly well. Q3(a) allowed students to quote almost word for word from the listening passage as long as they switched from the original first person to the third person for their answer. Answers such as *ich lebe mein Hobby aus* could not be credited. The majority of students coped well with this question.

In Q3(b) a perfect answer would not require a complete sentence. *Dass sie Schlagersängerin bleibt* would be sufficient. Some students were misled by English sentence structure here and produced answers such as *sie wollen Helene Schlagersängerin zu bleiben*, which unfortunately was not acceptable.

Q3(c) required only a short answer *sie lacht* although some students lifted the whole sentence omitting to change the verb to the third person. This issue is likely to occur in most interviews and is worth emphasising to students as part of their preparation for the listening component.

Q3(d) discriminated well between students. Some answered *ihre Stimme* although the required answer was signposted in the listening passage by the introductory phrase *der Schlüssel zu meinem Erfolg?* Inventive but acceptable answers to this question included *ihren Perfektionismus* and *ihren Fleiß*.

For Q3(e) a direct quotation from Helene's grandmother was acceptable as well as the more common answer in the third person. However, a direct quotation could not be lifted verbatim from the listening passage as it would not be clear what *das* referred to. Excellent answers such as *Wenn deine Schuhe und Haare stimmen, ist es egal, was du anhast* were seen quite frequently.

Q3(f) proved accessible to most students. As the answer required two activities it was insufficient just to quote *Meer* or *im Freien*, as sometimes happened. Students using a finite verb also had to avoid any possible confusion between *sie* (she) and *sie* (they).

Q3(g) discriminated well between students. Better answers included *sie möchte Schokolade nicht loswerden/aufgeben*. However, there were also many attempts to transcribe the last sentence of the passage verbatim.

### Question 4(a) Deutsche Journalistenschule

This question proved quite challenging for many students as it required them to listen carefully to a complex piece of German, decide on the relevant information for each question and then transcribe the relevant sections sufficiently accurately to be understood without ambiguity. Q4(a)(i) was almost universally well answered, most students proving adept at picking the relevant phrase from a much longer sentence. Q4(a)(ii) was more demanding as it required students to realise that Max wished to study at both the journalism school **and** the local university. It was also necessary to reformulate the original passage substantially to get an acceptable answer. Excellent answers included *Er kann gleichzeitig auf die Uni gehen*. Key to answering this type of question is to determine the key concept and then express it as simply as possible in German.

In Q4(a)(iii) the majority realised that Lisa had previous work experience as a journalist and were able to adapt the passage appropriately. Some knew that she had worked before but missed the vital element that it was work as a journalist. Most students probably included some idea of previous work experience but it is the journalism that counts here. Weaker answers tended to focus on the distractor *...dachte ich, dass ich nie wieder studieren würde*.

Q4(a)(iv) was another question that required students to find the relevant section in the passage and then quote almost verbatim, merely changing verbs from the first to the

third person. It is pleasing to see that most students are able to cope effectively with this type of question.

#### **Question 4(b) Deutsche Journalistenschule**

This question requires students to summarise two main points from the dialogue, making sure to address all the bullet points. No marks are awarded to students who ignore the rubric and write their answer in German. Students who try to transcribe the whole dialogue are penalising themselves as only the first two points for each part question will be credited. Students who fail to address both parts of the question can gain at most one mark. The general level of performance was better this year, perhaps because students are by now more aware of the particular requirements of this question.

Q4(b)(i) Students were expected to give one point of information on each of the two bullet points. Examiners assessed the first two points of information given. Many students interpreted *unsere Jugendzeitschrift, die jungen Leuten Lust auf Politik machen soll* correctly although a significant minority thought it was for young people already interested in politics. It was not uncommon to see *Lust machen* interpreted as meaning funny. The majority realised that Max tweeted the interview questions and awaited answers on Twitter but a few just suggested that there was no time to meet in person, which, while true, does not say how the interview was conducted.

Q4(b)(ii) was answered well by many students. Most knew about unreliable sources of information, possibly because of the frequent mention of fake news in the media today. A common misconception was discussing how much informants should be paid rather than whether they should be paid at all for information.

#### **Question 5 Schule für Schwänzer**

This question caused few difficulties for most students. The most taxing part was Q5(i) which equated *bundesweit einmalig* in the text with *nur in Hennickendorf* in the answer.

#### **Question 6 Rückkehr nach Salzburg**

This question proved accessible to students, partly because of the task type. Most students were able to score 3 marks with a substantial number scoring full marks.

#### **Question 7 Prominente und die Medien.**

As quality of language is not being assessed here, misspellings and grammatical errors are tolerated as long as the answer is comprehensible and unambiguous. Full sentences are not required but sufficient detail must be included in the response to answer the question completely. Targeted lifts are accepted. However, students should not copy whole sections of the text in the hope that they are addressing the question posed. Students should pay attention to the need for the lifted material to answer the question set and should be aware that it may not be possible to lift answers from the text for all questions. Indiscriminate lifts which indicate that students have not understood either the question or what they are including in their response will not be credited.

Most students were able to score on Q7(a) and Q7(d) as they only required a targeted lift from the text. However, the other two parts proved more discriminating.

Q7(b) required students to equate *profitieren* in the question with *ein nützliches Geschäft* in the text, identify the section of text which contained the answer and then manipulate it to answer the question. Only a minority of students managed all these steps successfully. Among common misconceptions was *sie gewähren einen Einblick in ihre Gefühlswelt*, where *sie* cannot possibly refer to the *Medien* in the question. Another answer commonly seen was *sie dienen als effektives Werbematerial*, which again does not refer to *Medien* in the question.

In Q7(c) vorteilhaft was not always understood. Some students quoted the disadvantages of getting on the wrong side of the media, eg *sie werden schnell zur Zielscheibe von Hohn und Spott*.

### **Question 8 Sind die Warenhäuser noch zu retten?**

There were many encouraging answers to this question. Many students proved adept at identifying relevant but deeply embedded text and adapting it to the demands of the particular question. Weaker performance was characterised by untargeted lifting from the text, often with information not relevant to the question posed.

Q8(a) was answered well by most students. As students were expected to infer from the information given why people shop in KaDeWe a wide range of plausible answers was accepted. The inclusion of *vielleicht* in the question is the clue that inference is expected.

In Q8(b) targeted lifts were common and acceptable. There were a few examples of students manipulating the text slightly to produce the better answer *man stellte Frauen ein* or more rarely *Frauen wurden eingestellt*.

Q8(c) proved a good discriminator. Many students merely restated the information in the question eg *das Haus brannte*. It was clear that a number of students did not know the word *Folge* included in the question and interpreted it to mean "cause". A minority were able to produce excellent answers such as *Das Kaufhaus wurde bis 1950 geschlossen*.

Q8(d) required students to manipulate the text to get an acceptable answer. An ideal answer would be *um die Konkurrenz zu bekämpfen*. Many students quoted the current situation according to the boss, ie that *KaDeWe ist nicht bloß ein Kaufhaus, sondern eine große Erlebniswelt*, instead of giving reasons for the redevelopment.

Q8(e) was a demanding question, requiring students to differentiate between different types of shop and what each of them sells. Only a minority were able to express clearly that the middle-range shops were suffering whereas those at the top and bottom of the market were doing better.

Q8(f) proved more accessible as it merely required changing *wir verdienen* from the text into *sie verdienen*, referring to the *Warenhäuser* mentioned in the question.

Q8(g) required candidates to manipulate the information in the text to answer the question set. The best answers such as *weil es an einem ungünstigen Standort liegt* were rarely encountered. More common were untargeted lifts eg *Schwierig bleibt es für die Läden an ungünstigen Standorten*. Another misconception was that it was closing because it was at a station.

### **Q9 Teamarbeit?**

This question featured a literary text and therefore a different register of language; one which students found more difficult to cope with. The same advice as given for previous questions about targeted and untargeted lifts applies equally to this question. The fact that examiners saw many more examples of untargeted lifts here is perhaps an indication that students struggled more to understand the key points. Students should also ensure that they read the question carefully, particularly the question words in order to identify relevant material more easily.

Q9(a) required students to make an assessment of the atmosphere in the workplace and then give a reason for their conclusion. As is usual for this type of question, a wide range of plausible answers was accepted and consequently many students scored well here. A number of students described the atmosphere as *Spaß*, failing to notice the qualifying clause, *aber nur wenn Werner nicht dabei war*.

Q9(b) asked students to make an overall assessment of the narrator's opinion of Werner without giving a readily applicable phrase in the text. Examiners were looking

for the idea that Werner was disliked. Therefore *Werner ärgerte ihn* or even *nicht viel* would have fitted the bill ideally. It is worth informing students that there may well be occasions when they have to provide their own language to answer an inference question.

Q9(c) is a good example where a direct lift from the text *Mehr erzählte er uns nicht* does not answer the question. Students have to adapt the information slightly to *er erzählte/sagte nicht viel*. This proved well within the capabilities of many of the students sitting this paper.

Q9(d) and Q9(e) proved the most accessible on this text and were answered correctly by the majority of students.

In Q9(f) most students were able to convey the idea that Werner was a sick man and that this was his only chance of a job. A few answers eg *ich kenne ihn seit der Ausbildung bei Lidl* failed to adapt the text sufficiently to gain a mark.

### **Question 10**

It is crucial that students allow themselves sufficient time to complete the translation properly. A minimum of 15 minutes is recommended. The passage is sub-divided into 12 sections, each worth one mark. In order to gain the mark students must translate the main nouns, verbs and adjectives correctly although minor omissions are tolerated if they do not affect the essential meaning of the section. Translation is considered to be successful if an English speaker would understand the translation without having understood the text in the original language. Misspelling is tolerated as long as it does not lead to ambiguity.

This question produced the full range of marks. Most students were able to cope with at least parts of the text and translate it into decent English and there were some answers worth full marks. It was pleasing to see that the vast majority of candidates had been taught to translate rather than to summarise or to paraphrase. However, there were a small number of responses where the translation made little sense in English and did not translate accurately any of the original German text.

Most answers conveyed the essential sense of the first sentence although some students to translate *aufgewachsen* successfully. In the second sentence many students struggled to translate *weder... noch* acceptably. Many students changed the word order of the third sentence to make it sound more natural in English although weaker responses tended to retain the original German word order. Many clearly understood what *Bio-Gemüse* is but were unable to translate it into natural English. There were many encouraging versions of *Viele hielten mich für* but acceptable versions of the *als* clause were fewer. *Einmann-Unternehmen* proved a good discriminator; higher performing students worked it out from its constituent parts whereas others had a wild guess. The word order of the final sentence needed to be changed in order for it to be translated effectively but the actual content caused few problems.

### **Advice for future examinations**

- When taking material directly from the texts, students should be aware of the need to manipulate language in order to answer the specific question asked, particularly changing verbs from the first to the third person.
- Students should be aware that Q4b is a summary exercise and that only one point of information will be credited for each bullet point.
- Students must ensure that their translation reads naturally in English. If it does not sound like English it needs to be changed.

- There will probably be unknown words, or even whole sentences, in the translation. Students should translate the words they do know and then make a sensible guess at the unknowns from the context.



