



Pearson

Examiner's Report Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In German (8GN0 02)
Unit 2: Written response to works and
translation

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Summary

There was a smaller cohort this year than last. Overall, the paper was well attempted by most candidates, although it did discriminate across the full range.

The strongest candidates produced careful translations, which focused on accuracy in the grammatical details. They also wrote essays which provided and justified critical opinions in response to the question, which demonstrated good knowledge of the work studied, and which were written in careful, controlled German.

However, there were areas for improvement. In the translation examiners would like to see more evidence of use of capital letters, a more solid grasp of key vocabulary such as Recyclen, accurate gender, stronger subject-verb agreements, subject-verb inversion in a second clause, and greater consistency, for example, du – dein, er – sein etc. Although many candidates showed progression from GCSE, there was evidence of some candidates struggling with GCSE lexis and structures.

In the essays examiners would like to see more evidence of candidates giving opinions and justifying them rather than telling the story or describing scenes and characters. There is also room for candidates across the range to structure their responses more effectively, using short arguments to answer the question. Although some candidates are clearly able to express themselves in complex language, others might be better working with simpler language, rather than trying to memorise and use language which is beyond them, as this latter strategy can lead to a breakdown in language and consequent lack of communication.

The strongest candidates demonstrated excellent use of terminology and essay language: *Froschperspektive, Naheinstellung, Voice over, Rundumschwenkung, Vogelperspektive, Weiteinstellung, Zitat, Perspektive, Schlüsselszene, Katharsis, symbolisiert, tragischer Held, dramatische Ironie, im Laufe des Films/der Geschichte.* The essays were generally structured in essay form and used essay register: *einerseits ... andererseits, meiner Meinung nach, ich denke, zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen* etc. However, in some cases the introduction had very good language and terminology but that was not always maintained throughout the main essay. Successful essays were able to express abstract concepts and were able to use pre-learnt knowledge and link it to the question. Weaker candidates were restricted to *ich denke, ich glaube, das zeigt* and there was repetition. Some candidates used very varied grammatical structures with subordinate clauses, infinitive constructions, use of Passive and Konjunktiv II – these were sometime rather contrived and not always idiomatic expressions. Subordinate clauses were introduced with *obwohl, weil, nachdem* although weaker candidates used *nach*.

The most popular works studied were:

- Das Leben der Anderen
- Das Wunder von Bern
- Die Welle
- Goodbye Lenin.

Overall, this was a pleasing session, and candidates generally seemed to perform at an appropriate level. Some points to bear in mind for the future might be:

In the translation, a focus on:

- Accuracy in key lexis, including gender
- Subject-verb agreement
- Subject-verb inversion
- Consistency.

In the essay, a focus on:

- Answering the question, using every point.
- Giving opinions and justifying them with reference to the text.
- Avoiding narrative and description.
- Using language candidates can confidently manipulate, rather than aiming for too high a level of complexity.

Q1) General:

Generally, the translation was reasonably well done, and there were a number of very successful translations. However, there is a need for some candidates to focus more on accuracy of lexis and grammar, and for some candidates to check their work: capital letters were frequently missing, and a significant minority of candidates forgot to include apparently easy words such as *jetzt* or *noch*.

Section 1. 'The residents of Neustadt...' There were many acceptable translations here, including *Einwohner*, *Bewohner* and *Bürger von Neustadt*, Unacceptable translations included *die Residant/Residenten*, *die Bürger auf/für* or *die Burg* or *das Dorf* instead of *die Stadt*.

Sections 2 and 3. 'Take recycling / very seriously.' These two sections presented a greater challenge than anticipated. The phrase 'take ... very seriously' was usually given as *nehmen ... sehr ernst*, but *finden ... sehr wichtig* or *denken, dass ... sehr wichtig ist*, were also acceptable variants. *Nehmen ... sehr wichtig*, *nehmen ... seriös*, and *nehmen ... sehr streng* were not acceptable translations. Many candidates wrote *Recycling* or *Recycleln*, but a disappointingly high proportion with a lower case 'r'. Instead of *Recycling* candidates occasionally used

Wiederverwerten or *Verwerten von Müll*. A small number of candidates translated recycling *Radfahren*.

Section 4.

'That is why...'
Almost all candidates wrote *Das ist warum* – even strong candidates. Examiners accepted this as it is becoming common usage in Germany, but shed a tear for the German language. A small number of candidates wrote *deswegen*, *darum* or *deshalb*. Unacceptable translations included *wegen dass*.

Sections 5, 6 and 7.

'... the town has held the record for recycling for thirty years.'
A significant proportion of candidates was able to translate the tense accurately here, using the present tense with *seit*. A greater proportion, however, translated directly from the English, using English structures. *Hält* caused a number of problems, and eventually examiners decided to accept 'toddler errors' such as *hältet* as demonstrating understanding of general patterns, and progress from GCSE, but not yet the full mastery of irregular verbs that one might hope for at A Level as opposed to AS. Many candidates were able to translate *den Rekord für Recyceln*, but a significant proportion used the wrong gender *das Rekord*, or *der Rekord*, without recognition of the accusative masculine *den*. *Für dreißig Jahre* was a common, and unacceptable, translation. Examiners noted a number of misspellings and phonetic spellings of *dreißig*, including, *dreizig*, and *dreisisch*, but these were tolerated so long as meaning was clear. Examiners would, however, like to see such basic items of lexis translated and spelled correctly at this level.

Section 8.

'Neustadt's system...'
Candidates only needed to leave out the apostrophe and capitalise the *s*, but only a minority did so. Some offered *Das System von Neustadt* which was acceptable.

Section 9.

'...constantly improves...'
Wird immer besser was the most common acceptable translation, followed by *verbessert sich immer*. However, a significant proportion of the candidates either omitted *sich* which was only just unacceptable, or used a completely unacceptable translation such as, *bekommt besser*.

Section 10.

'...and now offers...'
A significant proportion of candidates was able to access this mark, either with *und es bietet jetzt ...* or *und bietet jetzt ...*. However, there were a number of responses with word order problems, offering, *und jetzt bietet...* Occasionally *jetzt* was missing.

Section 11.

'...financial advantages.' Although most candidates knew the correct lexis here, they were not always able to manipulate it satisfactorily. At times there was an incorrect adjective ending, or even no adjective ending, and the plural *Vorteilen* was not always formed correctly.

Section 12.

'You sort your rubbish...' Candidates found the need for consistency here challenging. Although many were able to produce *du sortierst deinen Müll*, many candidates used *ihren* whatever the subject, leading to, *du sortierst ihren Müll* or *man sortiert ihren Müll*. This left examiners uncertain who was sorting whose waste. An additional challenge in this section was the masculine accusative case. Many candidates wrote, *du sortierst dein Müll*. A very small number used *trennen*. At least one candidate wrote, *du sortierst dein Quatsch*.

Sections 13 and 14.

'The less waste you produce the less you pay.' A small minority managed to find an acceptable translation of this phrase. Most successful responses rephrased to use *wenn man...* although examiners also saw, *umso ... umso...* and occasionally, *je ... desto*. Most often candidates translated word for word and wrote, *die ... die ...*, which was unacceptable. More candidates were able to access marks for the comparative *weniger du produzierst ... weniger du zahlst*. However, the comparative proved problematic, and a significant minority of candidates had subject-verb agreement problems.

Section 15.

'However, there are ...' Many candidates found this accessible and most used *jedoch*, *gibt es*. Other acceptable translations included *aber*, *trotzdem* and *allerdings*. Unacceptable translations usually included incorrect word order or *da sind*.

Section 16.

'... still a few people...' Again, many candidates produced acceptable translations, mainly, *noch ein paar/manche/einige Menschen/Leute/Personen*. A few candidates omitted *noch*, which was a shame.

Section 17.

'...who do not separate their rubbish...' A significant proportion of candidates were unable to find an acceptable translation of 'who', coming up with *wer* or *wo*.

Section 18.

'...but the town cannot do anything...' This section was also accessible to many, but a significant proportion of candidates did not have the correct agreement *die Stadt können* or the correct tense, *die Stadt konnte*. Common answers included, *kann nichts machen* or *gar nichts*

machen, which were acceptable. Unacceptable translations included *nicht etwas machen* or *nicht irgend machen*.

Section 19.

'...because it costs too much...' Again, there were many acceptable translations here, although sometimes the word order was not correct, as in: *weil es kostet*. Some candidates wrote *weil es zu teuer ist* or *weil es zu viel Geld kostet*, both of which were acceptable.

Section 20.

'to investigate it.' There were many correct answers here, usually *investigieren*, but also some *untersuchen*, *ermitteln*, *prüfen*. A significant minority of candidates either chose a verb which was not close enough, such as *sehen* or *fragen*, or used an incorrect word order *zum es investigieren*. Many used "um ... zu" which was acceptable but the "es" was sometimes omitted which was not.

Q2) There were very few responses to questions on this work.

Q3) There were very few responses to questions on this work.

Q4) There were very few responses to questions on this work.

Q5) There were very few responses to questions on this work.

Q6) There were very few responses to questions on this work.

Q7) There were very few responses to questions on this work.

Q8) There were very few responses to questions on this work.

Q9) The more popular choice for Q9 was a) with far fewer candidates selecting b).

- a) required candidates to explain the importance of the portrayal of Wiesler. However, many candidates simply described Wiesler's changes, without considering how he was portrayed or the significance of this. Stronger essays managed to show the effect and importance of Wiesler's portrayal rather than just describing his character and the plot of the film. Some of these considered

technical aspects of the portrayal, whereas others focused primarily on the conceptual and thematic aspects of the portrayal. Both were acceptable. These stronger responses discussed the importance of Wiesler as the symbol/Verkörperung of the struggle to be a good person and fight evil and the conflicts that this brings. They also mentioned how the viewer reacts to Wiesler.

b) There were too few responses to b) to comment on trends.

Q10) a) was the slightly more popular choice. Candidates were required to explain the theme of 'miracle' or 'wonder'. Candidates often followed the bullet points and linked the concept of miracle to the weather, relationships between characters, Germany's victory and the Wirtschaftswunder – not always successfully. One or two stronger essays did comment on the improbability of the speed of the improvement of Richards and Matthias' relationship, but essays were predominantly descriptive.

Part b) required candidates to examine the effects of Richard's imprisonment. Responses were, however, primarily descriptive. Few questioned, for example, the extent to which Richard's parenting style was the product of his imprisonment, his character or his own upbringing in a certain time and place.

Q11) There were no responses on this work.

Q12) The few essays that dealt with a) were generally strong. At least one was excellent with a consistent focus on the question, explaining and analysing the role of the camera and the effects on the viewer, also addressing the director's intentions and how he shows his intentions through the camera techniques. However, at least one ineffective essay described the plot as in 'what we see through the camera' rather than analysing the techniques.

Part b) was the more popular choice. There were some strong essays analysing the early signs of Karo's rebellion, her independent thinking as a principled and self-assured young person, her role as a resistance fighter, as an Außenseiter. Comparisons to the 3rd Reich and the resistance against it were drawn. On the other hand, there were a number of descriptive essays, telling the parts of the story involving Karo rather than answering the question.

Q13) This was the most popular question and (b) was the more popular choice.

Stronger responses to a) analysed the humour of the visual comedy (Sarkasmus, Ironie, Kontrast), but they also referred to the contrast between funny and sad scenes, the idea that the humour makes the tragedy easier to watch and then linked this to the effectiveness of the portrayal of the contrast between West and East Germany. However,

there were also a number of less successful essays describing the visual comedy rather than the role of it and/or some deeper implications. In these more superficial responses, any analysis focused solely on the entertaining aspect – the humour makes the film lighter (so that the viewer does not get upset about Christiane).

Part b) required candidates to examine the character of Christiane. The more successful responses explored C' motives for her actions - her attitude towards the GDR was a way to protect her children, a way to insure that they do not think or become like their father, the GDR was a way for C to escape but it became also her prison. Many emphasised the importance of C as a Hauptfigur in the film. However, there were again many essays which were too descriptive and required both more depth to their analysis and more examination of Christiane's character – as opposed to her actions or parts of the film where she happens to be present in a coma. Weaker candidates also tended to focus on Alex and his love for Christiane.

Q14) There were very few responses to questions on this work.

Q15) There were very few responses to questions on this work.