

Examiners' Report
June 2013

GCE Italian 6IN04 01

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Introduction

This paper is made up of three sections.

Section A is the translation: candidates are required to translate a text of approximately 80 words from English into Italian. 10 marks are awarded for this section. For marking purposes the text is divided into 30 assessable items and points are awarded for each item that is 100% correct in terms of grammar and spelling. Therefore candidates will be rewarded for their accurate handling of grammar and structures and their lexical knowledge.

Section B is the Creative or Discursive Essay: candidates are required to write one piece of 240-270 words in Italian choosing from three creative titles and four discursive essays. They will be rewarded for their ability to organise arguments and ideas and to make relevant points in response to a general issue. They will be rewarded for their understanding and response to their chosen question, and for the ability to organise their ideas. Almost three quarters of the available marks (30 out of 45) are awarded for content (up to 15 for understanding and response and up to 15 for organisation and development) whilst up to 15 are awarded for language (up to 10 for range and application of language, i.e. lexis and structures, and up to 5 for accuracy).

Section C is the Research Based Essay: candidates are required to write one piece of 240-270 words on a topic that relates to one of the four main areas of research (geographical area, historical study, aspects of modern society, literature and the arts). Their chosen topic must also relate to Italian culture and society. Essays referring to non-Italian themes will score no marks.

Candidates will be rewarded for their knowledge and understanding of their chosen topic and their ability to organise ideas. Up to 30 marks are awarded for reading, research and understanding (i.e. their knowledge but more importantly their analysis and evaluation of the chosen topic), up to 9 for organisation and development and up to 6 for quality of language.

Question 1

For marking purposes the text is divided into 30 assessable items and a point is awarded for each item that is 100% correct in terms of grammar and spelling.

Many items were accessible to the vast majority of candidates, for example "giovani italiani", "l'idea che", "comunque", "molti genitori", "disoccupazione", "una legge", "sono contenti" while other parts required a knowledge of more advanced grammar structures requiring the use of the subjunctive, such as "che i figli continuino a vivere con loro" or more complex structures like "costringerebbe i giovani ad andar via da casa".

However, this question was often not tackled well. Whilst there were some candidates who showed a good knowledge of grammatical principles and vocabulary, there were many instances of inconsistency. Common errors included missed accents and spelling mistakes, for example "confirmare", "soprattutto", "troppo", "dependenti", "pero", "comunque", "dissocupazione" or "disocupazione" "piu".

Some candidates found certain sections more difficult than others. Very few candidates knew "sempre più" for 'more and more' and many struggled to render 'until they are 30' correctly. Many candidates were very careless with adjectival agreement in items such as "sono contenti" and while most candidates rendered 'parents' correctly, a significant number mistranslated this as "i parenti" or misspelled the word "genitori".

Very few candidates were able to render 'are happy for their children to continue to live with them' and the subjunctive here was rarely used. Some translated 'children' incorrectly as "i loro bambini".

A surprising number of candidates did not know how to translate the word 'graduates' ("graduati" or "diplomati" instead of "laureati").

Very few knew the phrase "il costo della vita" (generally rendered literally as "il costo di vivere") and the correct formation of 'has increased' was rare as many used incorrectly "avere" ("ha aumentato").

'Minister' was very often misspelt as "ministero".

Very few candidates rendered 'would force' correctly (often using the anglicised "forzerebbe") and surprisingly few could translate 'to leave home' although this is commonly-taught vocabulary at A level. There were also errors with prepositions: "dipendono da" (many candidates incorrectly used "su"), "continuino a", "sembra" (often followed by "di" and "a"), "costringerebbe/forzerebbe di".

Overall, the standard of the translation was much lower than in recent years and candidates seemed to lack the grammatical knowledge and the attention to detail that could be reasonably expected at this level of study.

This is a very high scoring translation (9/10).

The image shows a handwritten translation of the text from the question into Italian. The text is written in black ink on a white background. The translation is as follows:

Question 1
Translate the following passage **into Italian.**
Sempre più giovani italiani vivono fino a 30 anni. Questo sembra confermare l'idea che i figli italiani sono troppo dipendenti sulle loro madri. Tuttavia, molti genitori sono contenti che i loro figli continuino a vivere con loro. In Italia ha un tasso di disoccupazione alto. Un ministro ha suggerito una soluzione estrema per risolvere il problema dei laureati proponendo una legge che costringerebbe i giovani ad andar via da casa.

Sempre più ~~padani~~ ^{italiani} giovani vivono con i loro genitori fino a ~~1000~~ ³⁰ anni. Questo sembra confermare l'idea che i ragazzi italiani ~~soprattutto~~ ^{in particolare} sono troppo dipendenti sulle loro madri. Tuttavia, molti genitori sono contenti che i loro figli continuano a ~~vive~~ vivere con loro. Inoltre, l'Italia ha un tasso di disoccupazione alto per quanto riguarda i laureati e il carovita è aumentato. Un ministro ha suggerito una soluzione estrema per il problema, proponendo una legge che ~~costringerebbe~~ ~~costringerebbe~~ ^{costringerebbe} i giovani a lasciare casa quando diventano adulti.



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Examiner Comments

This candidate performed extremely well with only a couple of mistakes: incorrect preposition "*sulle loro madri*" and incorrect vocabulary "*carovita*". 'for graduates' was translated in a complex manner ("*per quanto riguarda i laureati*"), which was accepted.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

This candidate has performed so well thanks to their meticulous preparation work and attention to detail. The candidate has gone back to change some phrases, for example, changing the position of the adjective at the beginning (although "*italiani giovani*" was also accepted in the mark scheme), changing "*soprattutto*" (which was misspelt) with "*in particolare*" and correcting the spelling of "*confermare*". This preparation work ensured that no items would be missed.

Question 2 (a)

This was the most popular of the three creative titles. Candidates were required to write an account of what has happened stemming from a stimulus (the writer's life being changed by an encounter in a bar/café). The response had to be written in the first person.

Most candidates showed a good understanding of the requirements of this question and managed to write a continuation of the story in the first person. Dream job, long-lost relative, 'love of their life' scenarios were common. Some responses were more highly imaginative and others followed a much sadder tale.

Candidates were generally able to set the scene but many did not sufficiently develop the story to explain how life was changed as a result of this meeting. A few candidates provided rambling responses, and some responses that were rather immature and not at all well-developed. These candidates did not score highly as a result.

Generally candidates who chose this essay question were well-prepared, showing evidence of narrative techniques required.

Some stories were good but far too long. It must be said that those who opt for this style of essay should be aware that they need to respect the word limit as this was frequently exceeded.

Question 2 (b)

The journalistic option invited candidates to write an article about two Italian teenagers who ran away from home together after meeting on Facebook.

Candidates generally understood the requirements of the question and responded appropriately. Responses were generally developed to a reasonable level with candidates talking about how the two young people started chatting on Facebook and how this contact had led to them developing a friendship and then deciding to escape for whatever reason. Some candidates talked about how the police were looking for the young people at present.

There was generally a good level of descriptive language in these responses and candidates who answered this question generally used the journalistic style that was expected in this question.

Question 2 (c)

This question produced very few responses. It required candidates to write a dialogue between two students taking part in a demonstration.

The better responses based their conversation on student issues, such as the increase in student fees and the lack of suitable facilities in some school/universities. The weaker responses did not take into consideration the fact that the demonstrators were students and wrote about more topical issues such as gay marriage. However, all candidates who opted for this question wrote appropriately in the form of a dialogue.

Question 2 (d)

This was the most popular of the essay questions and the vast majority of the candidates showed a good understanding of the question.

The best responses focused on major advantages such as better chances for a good and well paid job, globalisation, travelling and the cultural benefits of studying a language.

Some candidates added the concession that perhaps learning a foreign language is not a vital requirement for everyone, citing the older generations or even English speakers as examples, especially as technology is readily available, (online translators). Most candidates concluded that although it might not be essential, it is extremely important to know at least one foreign language.

Weaker candidates took a very simplistic view of the issue and restricted their answers to languages in school only. A few candidates had a personal rant about their own opinions and experiences of learning languages and their responses were generally inappropriate and often irrelevant.

This is a very good response which scored quite highly for both language and content, reaching the top box in all categories:

Range: 9-10

Accuracy: 5

Understanding and response: 13-15

Organisation and development: 13-15

Si noti che ^{con} l'avanzata della globalizzazione è aumentato anche il numero di persone bilingue. La maggior ~~parte~~ parte di europei e cinesi parla ~~di~~ almeno due lingue, che insieme costituiscono circa un quarto del popolo mondiale. La maggioranza di governi ~~insistono~~ ~~ha messo~~ l'insegnamento delle lingue come priorità nell'~~istruzioni~~ ~~istruzione~~ istruzione scolastica perché sanno che oggi sapere una seconda lingua è ~~importantissimo~~ importantissimo.

Consideriamo che la maggior parte di ~~lavoratori~~ ~~lavoratori~~ ^{occupazioni} nel settore privato sono per aziende multinazionali. ~~Un ruolo importante~~ ~~è~~ ~~in~~ in un'impresa come il ~~Google~~ Google o l'Apple ~~richiede~~ ~~di~~ ~~parlare~~ ^{richiede} ~~di~~ ~~parlare~~ ^{la conoscenza di} ~~almeno~~ almeno due lingue, preferibilmente l'inglese e il cinese. Inoltre, chi lavora

nel settore pubblico probabilmente dovrà occuparsi spesso di persone che non parlano la loro lingua. In più, gli Stati Uniti fra poco diventerà una nazione ~~bi~~ bilingua a causa della crescita di immigrati e famiglie di origine latinoamericana. Chi vuole vivere ~~nell~~ nell'America dovrà saper parlare sia l'inglese che lo spagnolo.

Inoltre, parlare una lingua straniera può essere anche un'esperienza culturale, perché permette di leggere la letteratura di quel paese, tra altre cose. C'è chi dice che leggere, per esempio, Cervantes è molto in spagnolo. Si dice la stessa cosa ~~per~~ ~~della~~ 'La Divina Commedia'.

Dall'altro lato, tuttavia, si potrebbe dire che l'unica lingua che bisogna veramente sapere è l'inglese. La maggioranza di persone nell'Europa continentale, nella Scandinavia, nell'Africa, nella Cina e nell'India parla inglese. L'inglese è anche la lingua ~~della~~ dell'informatica e dei computer.

Imparare una lingua straniera è un'esperienza davvero illuminante e chi abbia l'opportunità dovrebbe farlo. La realtà, tuttavia, è che ~~esistono~~ per gli inglesi, gli americani, gli australiani,

gli irlandesi e i canadesi ~~non sono~~
essere bilingua non è fondamentale
perché l'inglese è già la lingua ~~più~~
internazionale.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The essay is well planned and sequenced and the candidate clearly grasped the implications of the question, mentioning many relevant points: how useful languages are for getting a good job, especially in our global economy; how many nations are already becoming bilingual, for example the USA; how reading in a foreign language allows you to better appreciate foreign literature. However, they do conclude by conceding that for English speakers it is not as necessary as English is already the main international language.

Language is not 100% perfect (some errors in prepositions for example) but it is certainly very accurate with only minor errors.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

As two thirds of the marks for Q2 come from content, candidates should make sure they choose the most appropriate essay, and that they fully understand the title and all its implications. They must also ensure that content is relevant and always relates back to the title. Personal anecdotes are not normally suitable for these general essays.

As up to 15 marks are awarded for organisation and development they should plan their essay carefully, taking a stance if required and with a clear conclusion.

Language counts for one third of the marks so they should try to include a wide range of lexical items, with evidence of successful handling of complex structures and language.

Question 2 (e)

In this question, the influence of the media was discussed: most candidates focused on the role of the mass media in relation to following celebrities and the invasion of privacy. In addition, the impact of images of celebrities was mentioned by some candidates, and how these can influence young people in the form of ultra-thin models which encouraged dissatisfaction in ourselves, the effect of which could lead to eating disorders.

Some also discussed advertising and the ways in which society is influenced by different forms of media. Some argued the positives of the media, especially with reference to the transmission of information via news, and transmitting news of injustice around the world so that we could support, unite and act.

Some candidates further developed this idea with the view that the media are a vehicle for political parties to manipulate our views – especially in Italy and that corruption was a problem.

Most candidates agreed that the influence of the media was too much.

Interpretation of mass media often led to candidates reproducing prepared essays on the internet and social networks, and not addressing the question fully, which limited their marks. Some candidates focused instead on the advantages and disadvantages of media, therefore misunderstanding the question asked.

Question 2 (f)

This was the second most popular question. Candidates had differing views on whether they consider marriage to be a valid institution nowadays or not.

Most candidates seemed to feel that it is still valid.

Candidates who felt that marriage was still valid discussed factors such as tradition, religious beliefs, cultural background, love between two people, children and stability as reasons. Many also discussed the struggle for gay marriage as an argument of the enduring validity of the institution itself.

Those who felt that it is no longer valid mentioned factors such as unnecessary expense, the increase in the number of divorces, the changing nature and attitudes of society and the waning influence of the church as reasons.

Many candidates presented balanced arguments and most of the responses showed good understanding of the questions. Better candidates considered the main implications of the questions while those who did not score as highly tended to have a narrower focus and as such only addressed some of the main implications, or made it too personal.

Question 2 (g)

There were few responses to this question.

Candidates were asked to consider whether our consumeristic society encourages us to buy more than we really need. Most candidates felt that society does encourage us to consume products that we do not need. They discussed some specific examples that mainly referred to technology (mobile phones, TVs, computers), with references to advertising and sometimes the role of the media. Some candidates misunderstood the meaning of “*consumare*” and based their responses entirely on the excessive consumption of unhealthy food, cigarettes and drugs, showing a limited understanding of the question.

Question 3 (b)

Candidates were asked to consider which factor most influenced events in their chosen historic period.

Responses were varied, with some showing a good degree of analysis and others being mainly narrative.

Candidates were generally able to identify the main factor that influenced the development of events during their chosen historical period and they generally showed a reasonable degree of knowledge. Where they were less successful was in the evaluative element of the response as to why they considered this to be the main factor, often failing to develop their ideas into a logical conclusion in response to the question.

Some responses which had a rather broad interpretation of 'fattore' (as broad as the First World War or the unification of Italy) were generally less focused.

The most popular historical period was fascism, with candidates discussing factors such as Mussolini's rise to power (*Marcia su Roma*), the introduction of the racial laws and the Lateran Pacts. There were a few answers on the *Risorgimento* discussing the *Spedizione dei Mille* and the role of Cavour.

Unfortunately, some historical themes which were not directly related to the culture and society of Italian-language countries were present, such as World War 1, Hitler, Martin Luther and the Protestant Reform, the Russian revolution.

Question 3 (c)

Candidates had to consider what the factors are that makes life difficult for young Italians at present.

Most candidates discussed the current economic situation in Italy and the lack of jobs for young people. There were some good responses that blamed the lack of jobs and the high unemployment rate on the political uncertainty, showing good knowledge and understanding of the question.

Some candidates discussed what they perceived to be the problem with the education system.

Unfortunately, as in previous series, most responses were very general and almost like a discursive essay. Candidates did not show much evidence of reading and research and responses often became personal rants about the current state of affairs for young people in Italy with no real conclusions being drawn. Often the register was inappropriate.

Question 3 (d)

This was by far the most popular topic in section C.

The majority of responses were centred on *Io non ho paura*.

Most candidates discussed the novel and a few discussed the film version. The events that candidates identified as the most important in changing the main character, Michele, were; Michele finding Filippo, Michele discovering the truth about the kidnap and his parents' involvement in this and the final scene in the cave. Many candidates discussed how these events forced Michele to become an adult and contributed to his loss of innocence. Others discussed a struggle between right and wrong and how Michele had to take responsibility for the situation in order to save Filippo.

There were many good responses to this question with candidates showing good knowledge of the text and an ability to analyse to a good degree.

Some candidates who showed an ability to analyse were inconsistent and included irrelevant or unclear material at times. Others simply examined Michele's character without looking specifically at the changes he underwent as the consequence of the events in the book/film.

Weaker candidates did not quite understand that the question was about how the events in the book/film changed his personality rather than picking the most relevant episodes, as was last year's question. A few candidates did not identify the "*protagonista*" correctly, (a few responses referred to Pino as the protagonist) or misunderstood the title and discussed whether Michele was indeed the "*protagonista*".

There were only a few responses that were predominantly narrative and/or descriptive.

The second most popular choice was possibly *La vita è bella*, with most candidates deciding that Guido did not change – despite all his experiences – in order to help Giosuè survive the experience.

There were a few candidate responses relating to *Il Gattopardo*, which were generally well done and some variable responses to *Volevo i Pantaloni*.

There were a few good answers on Moccia's *Tre metri sopra il cielo* this year. Discussions centred on how Pollo's death had a profound effect on changing the behaviour and attitude of Step, as well as how the development of the relationship between Babi and Step and falling in love changed these characters, depending on whom candidates considered to be the main character.

All of the responses relating to this book showed good understanding of the question and candidates were able to develop their ideas and draw conclusions and they scored well as a result.

The range of chosen texts has narrowed and there were virtually no responses on texts that were reasonably popular in the past, with only a few responses on Ginzburg's, *Le voci della sera*, Dante's *Inferno*, Pirandello's, *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* and Tabucchi's, *Sostiene Pereira*.

These answers did tend to be good, with candidates showing both good knowledge and a good degree of understanding in response to the question.

Overall, examiners felt that the standard of the responses to literature and the arts were similar to the previous year, and that candidates were reasonably well-prepared for the demands of the question.

Unfortunately, some candidates wrote about books and films that were not related to Italian culture or society, such as *Doctor Jekyll and Mister Hyde*. Candidates are reminded that they must choose works by Italian-language authors/directors.

This is quite a good response:

Reading, Research and Understanding: 19-24

Organisation and Development: 7-8

Quality of Language: 5

Secondo me, nel libro 'Io Non Ho Paura' di Niccolò Ammaniti, la scoperta di Filippo nel buco, e tutti gli altri avvenimenti legati, cambiano totalmente il protagonista, Michele Armitrano.

Il fatto che Michele trovi un bambino di solo nove anni, come lui, in quelle condizioni e ^{che} poi ~~scopre~~ ^{scopra} che questa ^è terribile ingiustizia è causata dalle persone più vicine a lui, incluso suo padre, ~~che volutamente il suo essere~~ ~~come ogni bambino,~~ lo fa ^{crescere e} maturare in un modo straordinario. All'inizio del libro, Michele ha paura dei mostri e usa le sue ^{varie} tattiche, come tutti i bambini, per superare queste ^{varie} paure. Però, dopo la scoperta di Filippo, Michele è affrontato con la realtà che le streghe, i lupi mannari, ^e gli zingari sono ^{raramente} dettati dal denaro, ^{e la} ^{criminalità} e che suo padre è 'l'uomo nero'. Dunque, questi avvenimenti ~~gli~~ fanno trasformare la ^{sua} paura dei mostri in una paura dell'uomo; una cosa molto difficile da ^{stabilire} ~~risolvere~~ per un bambino, ~~di nove anni.~~

In più, Michele, guidato dalla sua purezza e senso di giustizia, ~~essa~~ ~~scopre~~ due aspetti del suo carattere evidenti dall'inizio del libro, da quando decide ^{di} fare la penitenza al posto di Barbara,

capisce quali sono le vere ^{persone} ~~persone~~ a cui
deve aiutare e sostenere. Lascia stare
l'ambiente dispettoso ~~dei~~ e traditore dei
suoi vecchi amici e si dedica a chi
merita la sua gentilezza, Filippo. Tradisce
anche suo padre, ~~una cosa che non~~
~~sarebbe mai fatto prima~~, per il senso
di responsabilità che sente nei confronti
del bambino del buco.

In conclusione, credo che se
Nichele non avesse trovato Filippo e
scoperto la verità, non sarebbe cambiato
in questo modo perché non ^{Sarebbe} ~~sarebbe~~
~~stato~~ stato testimone della realtà
criminale ^{e disperata} che lo circondava, ^{caratteristica} ~~caratteristica~~
in quei ^{in quei} ~~di quel periodo di~~ ~~esperienze~~ ~~rapimenti~~ ~~dei~~
casidetti 'Anni di Piombo'.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate clearly understands the question set and this is evident in the introduction and the conclusion. Development is logical and the material well planned. There is clear evidence of reading and research, as the candidate is familiar with the book (using some well-placed quotes) and most points are substantiated.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Candidates should bear in mind that marks are awarded for reading and research and also understanding, i.e. their personal evaluation and analysis of what they have studied. "Understanding" means understanding of the chosen topic but also understanding of the question set.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

Section A: Transfer of meaning

- Do not leave gaps by omission.
- Read the passage through carefully – do not rush to start until the passage is understood as a whole and the language is analysed.
- Ideally write a draft answer.
- Pay attention to details and check your work thoroughly for verb forms, endings, agreements and spelling.

Section B: Creative or discursive essay

- As two thirds of the marks for Section B come from content, candidates should make sure that they choose the most appropriate essay relating to their understanding and the implication of the question title to ensure that they are able to access the full range of the marking criteria.
- They must also ensure that content is relevant and always relates back to the title. Personal anecdotes are not normally suitable for these general essays.
- As up to 15 marks are awarded for organisation and development of ideas candidates are reminded that they should plan their essay carefully, taking a stance, if required, and with a clear conclusion.
- The language mark counts for one third of the marks so candidates should try to include a wide range of lexical items, including successful handling of complex structures and language.

Section C: Research based essay

- Make sure chosen topics are directly linked to the culture and society of an Italian-language country, or countries.
- Carry out some proper research by reading widely.
- Make sure your essay shows “understanding”, i.e. analysis and personal evaluation.
- Address the title.
- Be concise – bear in mind the word count.
- Plan work carefully.
- Check language at the end.

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