



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2019

Pearson Edexcel GCE
In Italian (8IN0) Paper 3A
Speaking

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Format of the Test

The test is divided into two tasks.

Task 1, requires the students to read and respond to two short texts on a stimulus card based on Theme 1: *I cambiamenti della società Italiana* and then hold a discussion. The teacher asks four compulsory Edexcel set questions in the order they are written. Compulsory questions may be repeated, but rephrasing is not allowed. Stimulus cards 1-6 are for Task 1. Students do not have a choice of cards for this task.

Task 2, requires the student to respond to a statement on a sub-theme, which is based on a discussion from Theme 2: *La cultura politica ed artistica nei paesi di lingua italiana*.

The teacher/examiner asks the two compulsory questions on the card, which is then followed by a broader discussion on any other aspect of the **same** sub-theme. Stimulus cards 7-12 are for Task 2. Students have a choice of sub-themes for this task, but must not be shown details of the stimulus cards before making their choice.

Teachers should not ask extra questions between Q1 and Q4 of Task 1 and Q1 and Q2 of Task 2.

General information

Timing for the speaking assessment:

Task 1: 7 to 9 minutes

Task 2: 5 to 6 minutes

Total assessment time: 27 to 30 minutes, (12 to 15 minutes of speaking plus 15 minutes preparation time for both tasks).

The assessment is out of 72 marks.

Task 1 is worth 42 marks and Task 2 is worth 30 marks.

Assessment principles

Task 1 is based on Theme 1 and is set in the context of Italy **only**.

Four-mark grids are applied to this task:

- responding to written language in speech (AO2)
- knowledge and understanding of society and culture (AO4)
- accuracy and range of language (AO3)
- interaction (AO1).

(AO2) assesses the student's response to the first three questions only.

The stimulus card for this task contains two short texts relating to the sub-theme. The student is asked **four** compulsory questions by the teacher-examiner **in the order** they appear on the card:

Question 1 requires the student to summarise the first text

Question 2 requires the student to answer a comprehension question on the first text

Question 3 requires the student to respond to information in the second text or both texts

Question 4 will stimulate wider discussion of the cultural and social context of the sub-theme beyond the focus of the texts of the stimulus card.

The teacher-examiner must ask follow-up questions for the remainder of the task time.

Teacher-examiner must avoid general or personal questions which tend to produce irrelevant answers.

Task 2 is based on Theme 2 and is set in the context of any Italian-speaking country and/or community.

Three-mark grids are applied to this task:

- knowledge and understanding of society and culture (AO4)
- accuracy and range of language (AO3)
- interaction (AO1).

The stimulus card for this task contains a statement on the sub-theme that will act as a springboard for the discussion.

There are two parts to the discussion:

Part 1 – the teacher-examiner asks the two compulsory questions then helps to develop the discussion by asking appropriate follow-up questions relating to the subject on the stimulus card.

Part 2 – for the second half of the time allocated, the teacher-examiner broadens the discussion by moving on to any other aspect of the **same** sub-theme.

Candidates' Responses

The current AS level examination in Italian is still relatively new, having been set for the first time in 2018. It was, therefore, encouraging to see just how well many candidates tackled the revised type of tasks. As in previous years candidates fell into quite distinct categories – native Italians, candidates of Italian origin, foreign students who, having spent in many cases a considerable amount of time in Italy, finally came to settle in England. Rather fewer in number were standard British students, who, based on several hours study per week, sought to improve their command of the Italian language to the level required by the AS examination.

Task 1

AO1 Interaction: many students achieved a mark of 3 or 4 because they could respond with a measure of spontaneity and fluency, developing their answers, apart from those candidates whose overall oral response was not fluent, perhaps because they had entered for an examination, the high level of which they not anticipated. The requirement for the candidate to ask a question sometimes stopped the natural flow of the conversations. Some examiners treated it as an irrelevance, offering a bland response; others responded at length, eating into the candidate's precious available time. There were isolated examples of over preparation on the part of the candidate, where the teacher examiner might have been wise to follow through what the candidate had said at a given point in the test, rather than relying on a pre-determined question, thought out by the teacher examiner prior to the test.

AO2 - Response to Written Language: this is applied to the first three questions of Task 1. Most students could give a clear summary of the text. Many candidates proved to be quite competent in the skills of oral résumé, offering responses worthy of a score of at least 9 and very often a little higher. Where responses were too short, this could often be attributed to the fact that a few teacher examiners moved too quickly on to question 2 and then 3. Such examiners need to bear in mind that the candidate needs time to reflect on the implications of each question, and not simply have to hand a ready-made response.

Only a very small minority of candidates showed little evidence of understanding of the text, giving personal opinions instead of a summary of the written sources.

AO3 - Accuracy and Range of Language: some students displayed a command of the language close to native speaker standard.

Some students had difficulty sometimes with very basic errors, e.g. in the use of the article.

In rapid speech the need for adjectival agreement was often ignored but this, too, remains a basic error. Some candidates use the relative form *chi* in subordinate clauses to indicate who and which, whereas correct Italian insists on *che*, regardless of whether it refers to a person or object. The use of the subjunctive after verbs of thinking remained a problem for some students who often replaced it with the indicative. Care need to be taken also with the use of the infinitive after modal verb forms such as *potere*, *volere* and *dovere*. Some languages allow a double verb form where the modal and associated verb are both conjugated. This obviously is not permissible in Italian or English.

AO4 - Knowledge and Understanding: the lack of focus on Italy can be an issue. Far too many examiners discussed the topic areas in the most general terms, referring minimally to Italy. To score well in the Knowledge and Understanding section the **focus** must be kept **on Italy**.

Most candidates will have spent a full term on the themes of family, school/study and work. They and their teachers are to be congratulated on the volume of cultural

background information they have acquired and on their reasoned responses to that information.

Often a comparison was invited between the UK and Italy. In the best cases, this led to a series of focused answers which kept Italy in the discussion.

By contrast it often became a general discussion with Italy absent. This is the biggest change from the legacy paper and teachers are advised to base their lessons firmly into the Italian speaking world to conform with this component of the test.

Nonetheless many students excelled in this part of the test, achieving a score of at least 9 and often more. Native candidates were not always the most proficient in this section of the test.

Task 2

Students have an element of choice in task 2 and they seemed to be more knowledgeable in the sub-themes, performing better at this task than in task 1. The most popular choice was the sub-theme of *Musica*, followed by *Feste e Tradizioni* whereas *Media* came last.

The media sub-theme revealed that few students knew very much about Italian speaking written press, radio or television. They spoke in general terms about technology.

It seems fair to point out that it is significantly more difficult to talk about topics such as media and the press than to give a personal response to music or talk about the Festival of Sanremo.

Likewise, to speak about topics such as the Carnival of Venice allow for a more narrative-dominated response than other topics and where time is short, this might lead to insufficient argument.

The main problem, again, was the correlation to Italian speaking countries. To have full access to marking grid for AO4 students must show their ability to communicate information about, and demonstrate appreciation of, different aspects of Italian-speaking culture and society.

Specific Comments on the Stimulus Cards

Task 1

Stimulus IN1

This card was usually very well done. Most candidates were well informed about the phenomenon of single-parent families, as well as reconstituted families, which has led to changes in people's lives and in society.

Stimulus IN2

The main text was usually well understood providing some very good ideas and comments on the change of attitudes towards men and women's roles in Italy. Many candidates were annoyed at the suggestion that a man could not be a house-husband and still have a dominant role in the family and in society.

Stimulus IN3

The text was usually well understood, but at times the conversation that followed was too general and not linked to the Italian education system.

Question 2 asked for a purely factual answer, for example a possible reply might have been "*per vedere videolezioni si dovranno usare gli occhialini.*" Some candidates simply did not know where in the text to find the answer or simply gave the wrong answer. A few candidates tried to *over-intellectualise* the question, which then led to some repetition of material from answer 1.

Stimulus IN4

Again, overall the main text was understood well. Q4 stimulated an interesting discussion on the school system in Italy and the phenomenon of the "*brain drain*".

Stimulus IN5

Students were very informed regarding the idea of "*lavoro agile*" - flexible work.

Stimulus IN6

Few students had a problem answering Q2 because they didn't understand the meaning of the word "*campo*".

Task 2

Stimulus IN7

Most students could answer the questions on this card explaining why Italian singers were inspired by new music imported from abroad and started to copy British and American hits.

Stimulus IN8

There were some great answers. Students had a good knowledge of Sanremo Festival and its importance to promote Italian music all around the world.

Stimulus IN9

This card posed difficulties because students did not know a lot about the enormous power of TV in Italy.

Stimulus IN10

This card posed a problem because the ideas and comments were too general. Students did not know a lot about Italian press.

Stimulus IN11

This card didn't pose any difficulties and it gave students the opportunity to speak about Festivals that stimulate economic activities since they provide employment opportunities to people.

Stimulus IN12

This card was very well done and often led to the most focused answers on Italian culture in part 2 of the exam. There were some good answers about Italian Carnivals .

Administration

Most examiners conducted the examination quite well. There were, however, a few issues (as identified below):

Timing:

- between 12 and 15 minutes (markers are told to stop listening after 15 minutes).

Recording quality:

- both teacher examiner and student should be audible
- check the recordings before sending them to the examiner
- record the exams in a quiet area
- label the CDs/USB sticks with the name of the candidate in the correct order of recording
- task 1 and task 2 must be on the same track.
- There is no need to encrypt a file.
- If encrypted files are sent to the examiner, please provide the **CORRECT** password.

Oral Forms and Centre Authentication Sheet:

- the Oral Form should display the number of the stimulus cards used in the spaces provided
- do not write any mark in the Oral Form
- send the authentication sheet with the student's and the teacher-examiner's signatures.

Conduct of the test:

- follow the order in which Stimulus cards must be issued to students (see page 4 of the stimulus card booklet)
- ask the compulsory questions in the order they are written
- rephrasing is not allowed
- **do not ask** extra questions between Q1 and Q4 of Task 1 and Q1 and Q2 of

Task 2

- ask follow-up questions on any aspect(s) of the **SAME** sub-theme
- it is the teacher-examiner's responsibility to cover all parts of each task to ensure that the candidate can access all parts of the marking criteria.

Congratulations to teachers and candidates!

This summer exams were very well conducted in several centres.
Many candidates seem to have embraced the demands of the new examination syllabus with enthusiasm and with careful and thorough preparation.
The more serious nature of the new topics has led to more thoughtful responses on the part of the candidates.
This would not have been possible without considerable effort on the part of their teachers.

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