



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Fourteen students presented for oral assessment in Hungarian in 2007. The general standard of spoken language was pleasing, and all students demonstrated a very high level of language proficiency.

Students need to be reminded that they should not divulge their name, their teacher's name or the name of their school during the oral examination.

Language

- *Kicsi* and *kis* were usually confused. *Kis* is used as an adjective (for example, *kis család*, *kis baba*, etc.), whereas *kicsi* is usually used as an adverb (for example, *Kicsit késtem*). However, it can be used as an adjective if it is not immediately preceding the noun (for example, *Kicsi a házuk*), or more in terms of tiny (for example, *Kicsi volt a kis cica amikor megtaláltam*).
- *Nem együtt* sounds odd – students should use *Külön*.
- *Pár* governs the singular (for example, *pár haverral*) not *haverokkal*.
- *Gondoskodni* means 'takes care (of)/provides (for)/looks after/takes charge (of)', not *gondolkodni*, which is 'think (about/of)'.
- Correct expressions were sometimes elaborated on when it was not needed. For example, *egyórás időként* should be *óránként* – the 'egy' is implied.
- *Mind* was often confused with *minden*, which is 'everything' or 'anything'. It governs the singular (for example, *minden diák átment a vizsgán*, *minden üzlet be volt zárva*). *Mind* governs the plural (for example, *a diákok mind jól vizsgáztak*). *Az üzletek – kivétel nélkül – mind be voltak csukva*.
- Comparisons caused some problems, but they are simple when using the *olyan mint*; for example, *A helyzet olyan rossz mint egy harmadik világban*.

Word order is flexible in Hungarian, so a lot of subject/predicate beginnings of sentences tended to give a monotonous flow. The vocabulary was often meagre, but top students were able to use a good range of appropriate vocabulary.

Simple structures must be stressed and practised with examples, and idiomatic usage should be pointed out.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Communication

Criteria 1 and 5

Most students were comfortable with the Conversation section. Information flowed freely, and students used a good variety of responses to the assessors' questions. Students demonstrated the ability to converse with spontaneity and used excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. They were generally able to self-correct errors and rarely needed prompting.

Although pronunciation was generally good, some attention needs to be paid to the use of the 'R', rather weak 'T's and double consonants. As in the past, the 'T' sound was often either weak or not evident, and the 'R' sound fared similarly. Intonation was sometimes very level or even ascending, rather than descending at the end of the sentence as should be the case in Hungarian. Also, the stress was not always on the first syllable of the word, which is the cardinal rule of Hungarian spoken language.

Content

Criterion 2

Students had prepared well and the information presented was original and well thought out. The high achievers presented an excellent range of information, opinions and ideas clearly and logically.

The range of information was well developed, although some students tended to repeat certain points. As most students had sufficient information about family, school, recreation and the future aspirations, in most cases there was an opportunity for them to elaborate on their ideas.



**Language
Criteria 3 and 4**

Students generally used a good range of accurate vocabulary. Strong students used a variety of vocabulary, but this was less evident at the lower end. Anglicisms still occurred frequently, particularly *magyart csinálok* instead of *magyarból érettségizem*. All students should be familiar with the correct **Hungarian** names and pronunciation of the subjects they have studied in Year 12.

Grammar was appropriate to the audience and context of the exam. Greetings were culturally correct and all students addressed the assessors in a polite manner. Some grammatical lapses occurred with the accusative 't', and there were some errors in word order, plural nouns with numerical adjectives and sentence structures. There were also some errors in case endings; for example, interchanging *-ba* and *-be* or *-hoz* and *-hez*.

The instrumental *-val*, *-vel* is invariably always used by the more hesitant students instead of using the assimilation with doubling the terminal consonants as in case of terminal *-z*, *-s*, *-g* and others. This resulted in errors such as *kézvel* instead of *kézzel* and *szüleimvel* instead of *szüleimmel*, etc. The use of singular nouns following definite or indefinite numerals was often incorrect; for example, *minden tárgyakat*.

Section 2 – Discussion

Teachers and students should choose topics that are interesting to the student and for which there is a lot of information. The Detailed Study should be based on a sub-topic related to one of the topics listed on page 13 of the study design.

Some students prepared 'Hungarian cuisine and customs' as their topic of discussion, while others discussed the historical personages of *Attila*, *Mátyás király*, *Hunyadi a törökverő*, *Petőfi Sándor*, *Bartók Béla* and *Szent István*. Several students presented 'Hungarian traditional celebrations' as their chosen topic; for example, *Luca széke*, *Ólomöntés*, *búzavetés*, etc.

**Communication
Criteria 6 and 10**

Most students spoke clearly about their chosen topics. They linked well with the assessors, answered any questions put to them and expressed their ideas and opinions appropriately.

At the top level, discussions flowed with ease and the exchange of ideas was exhilarating. These students had no difficulty with expressions and their pronunciation was close to perfect. On the other hand, weaker students were slower to respond, often hesitating and mixing English words into their responses. Some students did not know how to carry on the discussion even when the assessors offered them encouragement. Students should be aware that reading poetry is **not** considered to be a discussion.

Students need to be aware that they should be able to provide the names of specific resources used to research their topics as well as be able to extend the discussion to relevant points beyond the boundaries of the topic. Some students repeated a lot of information and treated their background references superficially. In some cases, assessors needed to provide extra support in order to bring 'life' into the discussion.

**Content
Criterion 7**

The historical topics and famous Hungarians' lives and work topics had the virtue of a livelier exchange between student and assessor, although a simpler vocabulary was often used. Some topics did not contain enough breath and depth of information.

Most students had prepared well for their exam. A variety of resources was used, including books, encyclopaedias and the Internet. Many students had also sought out interesting stories and anecdotal evidence. Opinions abounded in all discussions; however, underpinning opinions with reason and evidence was lacking in some instances. Some relied only on their own experiences, which was insufficient.

Students need to rely less on rote learning and practise more free-flowing conversations. Some students had difficulty answering broader questions, often stating, 'We did not learn that.' Teachers and students must ensure that a variety of information is studied which can then be used in general conversation. Some students' knowledge was restricted and therefore the discussion was very shallow, with no substance, new ideas or opinions. Students should be able to present a good range of information, ideas and opinions which are relevant to the chosen topic. The ability to converse fluently in Hungarian is not enough to achieve a high mark for the oral examination.



It is not advisable for students to present a lot of statistics in the Discussion. This approach can impede a good dialogue between the student and assessors because the student often concentrates too much on remembering data and does not consider the implications of the statistics – the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of the topic.

Language

Criteria 8 and 9

A range of accurate vocabulary and grammar was used. Many students showed that they had learnt a very good store of words. However, students who had not prepared as well demonstrated poorer vocabulary. Grammatical structures varied from elaborately complex or compound to simple. Although word order is flexible in Hungarian, verbal prefixes were often used haphazardly; plurals were misapplied (for example, *vannak egy pár*) and the ‘T’ of the accusative was often missing.

Bírok, bírhatj was often used in lieu of *tudok*, and *bírni* should only be used in a purely physical context; for example, ‘a weight is too heavy to carry’ is *nem bírom ezt a nehéz kosarat vinni*. The English expression ‘it takes more time’ is not *használják több időt*, but rather *sok időt vesz igénybe* or *sok időt tölt el azzal*.

Definite and indefinite numerals are always used with singular nouns. Students often make errors in this area as the language does not tolerate tautologies. The numeral expresses multiplicity, therefore there is no need for plural nouns. Correct case endings and idiomatic expressions should also be given further attention.

Some students had obviously translated directly from English, resulting in some quaint expressions such as *királyos* instead of *királyi* and *gazdag* instead of just *sok*. Some students did not know modifying suffixes; for example, verbs from nouns. Instead of *csináltam tenisz*, the simple *teniszezni* would do, keeping in mind that many such transformations exist in the language. Abstract nouns are easily formed from common nouns; for example, ‘-ség’ – *fejedelmet elvenni* instead of *fejedelemséget*.