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**Examiners' Report**  
**Principal Examiner Feedback**

**Summer 2019**

**Pearson Edexcel GCSE**  
**In Greek (1GK0) Paper 2F: Speaking**

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## **Introduction**

This was the first year of the new specification and there were many changes in the content and the demand of the examination. The new speaking examination for the Foundation tier consists of three parts: a role play with 5 prompts and a maximum of 10 marks, a picture-based task with five prompts and a maximum of 24 marks and a conversation of two topic areas and a maximum of 36 marks. There are 10 Foundation role plays and 10 Foundation picture-based cards. There is also a sequencing grid that centres are asked to follow when deciding which student receives which role play, which picture-based card and the theme for the second conversation. Following the sequencing grid is very important, as it ensures that the student is tested in four out of five themes of the specification and it avoids duplication. The students have 12 minutes' preparation time to read through the role play and the picture-based card.

In the Foundation role play card usually the third prompt has an unpredictable question and the last prompt requires the student to ask a question. The first task for each picture-based card is a description of the photo, the third task requires a response within a past time frame and the fourth task requires a future time frame. For the Foundation and Higher role plays and picture-based tasks teachers are not allowed to rephrase questions. The questions may be repeated, but no more than twice, so overall the students may hear each question up to three times. In the picture-based tasks prompts 'Τίποτ' άλλο;' and/or 'Γιατί;' have been provided to enable students to develop their answers. Only these prompts may be used and there must be no other supplementary questions by the teacher.

The timing for the Foundation speaking examination is 7-9 minutes. This is only a guideline for the role play and picture-based tasks and it does not mean that the three tasks cannot be completed successfully in a shorter time. However, timings for the conversation tasks are prescribed and should be 3½ -5½ minutes for the Foundation tier and teachers should not extend conversation times to reach the total time of the complete examination. Any response started after 4½ min will not be given credit. An equal amount of time should be allocated to both parts of the conversation. If the first conversation is a monologue without questions and answers the mark for Interaction and Spontaneity is capped at 6.

## **Overview**

Even though this was the first time the new specification was assessed and many changes were introduced, the examination team was pleased to report that there were some very good performances and that most students were well prepared and achieved marks in the upper band.

## **Task 1: Role play**

It is worth mentioning that the role play task is marked for communication only, unlike the picture-based task and the conversation. Answers should be brief and to the point to avoid confusion and ambiguity. It is very important that students read the scenario carefully during the preparation time in order to understand where the role play is situated and what is expected of them. Crucially the teacher conducting the test should read out the small introduction in Greek before asking the questions. A few teachers failed to do so and that created initial confusion. Also, there were some teachers who omitted one of the questions or rephrased one of the questions and as a result they disadvantaged students. The teachers are reminded that any supplementary questions do not get any credit and often confuse the students affecting their performance. Most importantly, it is not acceptable to say 'Θέλετε να με ρωτήσετε κάτι?' or 'Πρέπει να κάνεις μια ερώτηση τώρα' before the student needs to ask a question, as any response after that gets no credit. Many students were successful with the unpredictable question and with the formation of a question for Q5 of the role play. Some students were less successful in framing a question and lost marks due to poor pronunciation and intonation.

Finally, it is worth remembering the Marking Principles agreed across all modern languages:

If a teacher changes a question or inserts a supplementary question, there can be no credit for a response made by the student.

- Where a student has offered an incorrect response to a question, the teacher may not repeat the question. If s/he does so and the student then gives a correct response, this is ignored.
- Teacher/examiners may repeat each question twice but may not re-phrase any of the questions.

### **FR2**

This role play was used very few times and there were no problems.

### **FR3**

2. Some students did not understand the meaning of 'είδος'.

### **FR5**

4. 'διαγωνίσματα' was often not known to students.

## **FR6**

2. Some students did not know the word 'διαρκεί' and gave irrelevant answers.
5. Less successful students had difficulty asking the teacher about their plans after the celebration and ended up repeating the prompt.

## **FR7**

This role play was widely used and overall the students were successful.

1. Less successful students just repeated the prompt and their answer did not make sense.
5. Some bad pronunciations of the word 'μουσεια' were not credited a mark.

## **FR8**

This role play was handled well by mostly successful students.

1. Some students simply stated that they would like to help with the animals without specifying how 'πώς' they would like to help.

## **FR10**

2. Some students had difficulty answering this question because they did not recognise the phrase 'τι είδους'.

## **Task 2: Picture-based**

The Foundation tier students often offered short photo descriptions concentrating on the physical characteristics and the clothes of the people in the photos. Some went further and described what they believed was happening in the photo. In questions 2 and 5 some students gave straightforward predictable opinions with little or no justification and this prevented them from accessing the higher mark bands of 9-12 or above. Responses from these students were often quite brief and some questions required considerable prompting by the teacher using the prompts given within the task or were unanswered. Questions 3 and 4 proved to be good differentiators within the mark scheme. The most able students were able to use different time frames appropriately throughout the whole of their response. Less confident students could often use the appropriate time frame within the first part of any response but when following up with opinions and justification there were often errors in the formation of tenses and this led to some ambiguity. Within both tiers there was a wide variation in the pronunciation and intonation of students.

Centres are reminded that the questions within the picture-based discussion are set and they should not be altered in any way. Unfortunately, there were instances where teachers reworded or reframed questions or added extra prompts which did not allow students to be credited for responses to these questions. There were also occasions where supplementary questions were added in the middle of the task. No credit could be given for these responses and the practice caused confusion for these students who had prepared responses to the five bullet points.

Finally, it is worth remembering the Marking Principles agreed across all modern languages:

- Students must refer to the visual image in response to the first question.
- Where a teacher changes a question or changes the prompts ('Γιατί (όχι);' and 'Τιποτ' άλλο;') or inserts a supplementary question which is not scripted, there can be no credit for a response made by the student.
- Teachers may repeat each question twice but may not rephrase any of the questions.

## **FP2**

Parts of this picture-based card proved accessible to most students who managed to describe the photo sufficiently and talked about whether they like reading books or not. Responses to questions 3 and 4 were straightforward and many students used past and future references. Question 5 was the least successful when most students simply stated that they like books based on true stories but did not have the vocabulary to explain why.

## **FP3**

This was a popular card and many students were able to describe the photo well, more specifically the people, the surroundings and why they thought the people in the photo were at the front of the White Tower in Thessaloniki. Less successful students gave a very brief description and instead of describing a recent trip they briefly described how they usually spend their holidays. In question 4 some students mentioned where they are planning to go on their next trip but failed to say what they were planning to do. Question 5 was less successfully answered and students were less expansive when they tried to give their opinion on trips in the country they live.

#### **FP4**

Some students found this task difficult and beyond a simple description they did not expand to include comments on transport and traffic. They briefly gave their opinion on buses and they mentioned how they travelled last time they went on a trip for questions 2 and 3, but failed to explain further, include justification and describe what happened when they used the specific means of transport. In question 4 some students misunderstood 'πώς' with 'πού' and said where they are planning to go the following weekend and not how they are going to travel.

#### **FP6**

This was a popular card and many students were successful in describing the photo well. Some students even went beyond the description of the general characteristics of the people in the photo and talked about the people's feelings stating that 'φαίνονται χαρούμενοι, γιατί γελάνε'. Most students could relate to the theme and the questions of the card and they were able to say what they did with their classmates the day before and what they are planning to do the following Saturday. The last question was also successfully answered and students mentioned what they prefer doing during breaktime at school.

#### **FP7**

This was one of the most challenging cards either because some students were unfamiliar with the phrase 'εργασιακή εμπειρία' or because due to their young age they could not relate with the topic of work experience. Most students gave a short description of the photo and in questions 2 and 4 they were not able to explain why work experience is useful and what they plan to do about it in the future. They were more successful in question 3 when they explained how they helped their parents or a relative at work. Equally in question 5 most students had a clear idea whether they preferred to go to University or find a job but some less able did not offer a reason why.

#### **FP8**

Some students found this card difficult to describe due to lack of vocabulary related to professions. Some managed to overcome this barrier by giving a wider description of all the professions they thought the woman in the photograph was thinking of choosing in the future, e.g. 'δουλειά σε γραφείο' instead of 'γραμματέας' or 'χτίζει σπιτία' instead of 'μηχανικός'. Most students were able to say which job they would like to do in the future and offer a brief reason in question 2, but it was less straightforward to give an opinion on working abroad in question 5.

## **FP9**

Most students found this card challenging due to the theme (environment) and some lacked the basic vocabulary (e.g. the word 'σκουπιδία') to describe the photo and offer opinions on environmental issues in questions 2 and 5. However, there were some successful students who were able to say how they helped the environment in their area in question 3 and what they would say to their classmates in order to make them help the environment in question 4.

## **FP10**

This was the most popular card and many students answered parts of it successfully. There were mixed performances regarding the photo description and some students failed to go beyond a few short phrases 'βλέπω μπλε και άσπρα φώτα' or 'βλέπω μια συναυλία' and that prevented them from accessing the higher mark bands of 13-16. Similarly, they did not justify their opinions in questions 2 and 5, but simply stated that they like concerts and they like certain type of music (or just a singer) without giving a reason. However, some students were very successful when they talked about a recent concert and about a concert they plan to go in the future in questions 3 and 4 respectively.

### **Task 3: Conversations (conversation 1 on a chosen theme and conversation 2 on a theme prescribed by Pearson)**

In general, the conversations were well conducted and the skilful and appropriate questioning from the teachers afforded students the opportunities to fulfil their potential in line with the criteria enabling students to achieve their best. Most popular choices for conversation 1 for the foundation tier were: 'Who am I?', 'My holidays' and 'My school'.

It is essential to be careful with the timings and avoid any imbalance between the two conversations or any shortfall or excess in timings. Most teachers put their students at ease, using a friendly tone of voice and spoke clearly and slowly so that the students had little or no problems in understanding the questions. It must be reminded that theme 5 is only omitted from the role plays but this theme is best avoided across all tasks for less able Foundation students.

For the first Conversation, students should be encouraged to introduce the topic they have chosen for up to one minute prior to the interaction with the teacher. It is equally important to ensure that they are not allowed to go on beyond the 1 minute and teachers should interrupt with their first question if the student seems determined to continue with a monologue.

Unsurprisingly, the first prepared conversation was often more successful than the second and it was noticeable how the less successful students frequently found it difficult to complete their sentences as they struggled to find the right vocabulary, grammatical structures or verb tenses in conversation 2. Some teachers had clearly not been listening carefully to



what the students were saying and confused them by asking questions the answers to which had already been covered in the initial presentation. The conversations should be allowed to develop naturally and the teachers should listen carefully to what the student is saying and build the conversation accordingly.

Some students were disadvantaged because the teacher failed to ask any questions that required the use of a tense other than the present.

Finally, it is worth remembering the Marking Principles that have been agreed across all modern languages:

- Foundation Conversations should last for between 3½ and 4½ minutes
- Timings begin with the student's first utterance.
- Conversations that are too short are likely to be self-penalising.
- Conversations that are too long: once the 4½ minutes for Foundation tier students have passed, examiners stop listening and assessing at the end of the student's response to the current question.
- An equal amount of time must be allocated to each Conversation.
- Where the first Conversation is a monologue and has no interaction, students will be limited to a maximum score of 6 marks for Interaction and Spontaneity. The marks for Communication and Content and Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy, however, are unaffected.

## **Administration**

Administrative guidelines were followed by some centres and examiners received the examined CDs/USBs and the relevant paperwork within the timeframe allowed.

- Centres should check that all students have been successfully recorded before dismissing the student from the examination and before submitting their materials. This year some of the recordings were barely audible. It is good practice for centres to retain a copy of students' recordings, in case CDs or memory sticks become damaged or get lost during transit.
- Worryingly this year, an increasing number of centres did not send the correct CS2 form (<https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/GCSE/French/2016/forms-and-administration/GCSE-MFL-CS2-Form-editable-version.docx>). Each centre should fill in all the details and include the students' and teachers' signatures.
- Centres should send separate CS2 form for each tier.
- Centres should follow the sequencing grid.

- It is very useful if teachers announce the role play card number and the picture card number at the start of the tasks, as well as the theme for each of the Conversations at the beginning of each one.
- Centres are also reminded of the importance of labelling the CDs. Teachers have an important part to play, ensuring that the recording equipment is in good working order; that students are not sitting too far from the microphone; that outside noise is kept to a minimum and that all involved in the conduct of the tests are fully aware of the procedure to be followed. This is essential in the case of students who are not tested in the centre entering them or are examined by a native speaker who is not a teacher at their centre.

Finally, the examining team would like to thank the vast majority of centres and teachers for conducting the exam effectively and according to the instructions of the conduct of the examination, as well as for completing their administration efficiently.