Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2015

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
in Italian (5IN01/1H)
Paper 1H: Listening and
Understanding in Italian

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GCSE Italian
Unit 1 Listening and Understanding in Italian
Examiner Report

Paper 1H - Listening and Responding - Higher Tier

There are 8 questions in this paper:
four crossover questions;
two questions aimed at B grade students each carrying 4 marks and
two questions aimed at A and A* each carrying 8 marks.
The total mark for this paper is 40.

All questions are in English and invite non-verbal responses except for one
of the 8 mark questions inviting free-text English responses.

Question 1 – Holiday work
Question 2 – A trip to the mountains
Question 5 – At the supermarket
Question 6 – TV programmes

These were the crossover questions and were obviously answered better at
higher level, with a large proportion of candidates scoring all 4 available
marks, with the exception of question 1, where the average performance of
1H candidates was on average less than 1 mark better than that of 1F
candidates. This was the question with the lowest score in paper 1H,
possibly because of lack of familiarity with the task type.
On the whole, the performance of average 1H candidates on crossover
questions was comparable to that of top range candidates for 1F, which
shows that the questions were at the right level.

Question 3 – A wedding present

This was aimed at potential B graders and discriminated quite well. Only
one question was answered correctly by almost the entire cohort (3ii).

Question 4 – Emanuele's first day at work

Emanuele's first day at work required verbal responses in English. Having to
produce their own answers made this question the biggest hurdle for
candidates and the best discriminator for top performances. Some
candidates chose to answer (aii) with two single words: "hurried" and
"relaxed", which was good enough for both marks. Other candidates went
for more articulate answers, translating or paraphrasing the text. Some of
them were successful, some were not.

A large number of candidates specified that the "hurried" lunchtime
customers were mainly tourists and struggled to find a suitable label for the
more relaxed evening customers, coming up with "business people/regular
customers/local people" and many more, none of which was in the text.

These could have invalidated the rest of the answer, but it was decided to give the mark if the idea of "relaxed atmosphere" was conveyed thereafter. Only about half the candidates were able to understand (or to explain) why customers were kind to Emanuele (aiii) or why Emanuele was grateful to the other waiters (bii). As for question (b), it is possible that more candidates than those who provided a correct answer had understood the text, but did not pay sufficient attention to detail in their answers.

Question 7 – Around the town

Scores showed that this was found to be more accessible than the other question targeting potential B graders (Q3). Interestingly, candidates found it easier to understand that the town hall was where the wool market used to be than that the museum is opposite the town hall.

Question 8 – e-books or Traditional Books?

This question was made up of two sections with 2 different task types, and was found more accessible than it was intended to be.

The task for 8a was a compound one: 4 correct sentences had to be identified and paired with the person that had made the statement. The average score for this section was 3. As the question received a mark out of 4 according to the number of correct answers, we don't have any statistical information about performance with individual items.

Question 8b was a straightforward multiple-choice and was answered even better. The majority of candidates managed to score all the 4 marks available. Those who did not, lost marks mainly on items (i) or (ii). The question did not the produce the expected result of separating top candidates. However, this was achieved through other questions (Q1, Q3 and, above all, Q4) and the paper as a whole worked well.

Summary

On the whole, 1F and 1H were both good papers, with the right level of difficulty allowing differentiation between different abilities. The fact that all questions for the listening papers are set in English does not necessarily mean that answering them is easier than if they were in the target language: candidates cannot rely on clues coming from the recorded text and, in the case of verbal responses, there is no possibility of scoring thanks to a successful transcription of the targeted information.

Whilst the complexity of the text is fundamental to the candidates' results, evidence as demonstrated above suggests that the format of the question also has a significant impact. Therefore, candidates need to be familiar with the whole range of tasks. In particular, more practice is needed for verbal responses: reading and understanding the question, identifying the relevant information and transferring it into English.

Entry levels have been wisely chosen. The best foundation candidates appeared to be comfortable with the tasks without having wasted opportunity for a higher grade and very few of the candidates entered at Higher Level really struggled with the difficulty of the paper.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:
http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx