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Edexcel

Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Russian (1SP0) Paper 1H: Listening and
Understanding

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Introduction

Generally, candidates coped well with the test types and topics but some of the requirements proved challenging for candidates and the open-ended questions, requiring answers in English, proved daunting for less successful candidates. Candidates performed well across the paper as a whole and there were some excellent performances. There was evidence of some good listening and exam skills. A majority of candidates had used the five minutes reading time well (underlining key words in the title, rubric and questions, annotating questions), generally using the time to anticipate what they were about to hear. The questions that were intended to discriminate did so, all candidates understood enough, and felt confident enough, to attempt the whole paper, although a very small number of candidates answered the whole or parts of questions 6, 7 and 9 (open ended questions in English) in Russian. There were very few candidates who were unable to cope with the demands of the paper - the increase in difficulty as they progressed through did not lead any to give up.

Comments on individual questions

Question 1

Questions 1-4 are overlap questions found on both the 1F and 1H papers and included the two questions in Russian. At Higher level, performance on these questions was generally very good.

Questions 1 and 2 were in the target language and were tackled confidently. Candidates were generally more successful in answering Question 1, with 1 (a) and (b) being the most commonly correct and 1 (c) being the most challenging - possibly the juxtaposing of "триллеры" and "скучно" proved a distraction from the correct answer. Nearly all candidates clearly understood the rubric. A majority of candidates were able to use linguistic clues or context to arrive at the correct answers.

Question 2

Question 2 proved marginally more challenging. Candidates were required to insert names from a list given into sentences which paraphrased the information given on the recording. A small number of candidates appeared not to understand the rubric for these two questions and attempted to answer either with words outside the choices they were given or in English. The word "продавцы" was not known by some candidates and on part (e) some candidates missed the inference that "каждый день" would imply the shops were open on Sundays.

Question 3

Question 3 proved accessible to a majority candidates. Parts 3(ii) and 3(iii) relied on understanding inference. This multiple-choice question required careful listening to identify correct and incorrect choices for each part of the question and also the ability to process information.

Question 4

Question 4 included two inference questions and was well answered by all candidates.

Question 5

Question 5 was multiple choice and was generally well done by candidates who listened to the whole passage. Candidates need to be aware that at this level, more than one choice will be heard, and that ticking an answer because they recognise a word may lead them to incorrect answers. A small number of candidates did not notice the importance "оставить машину в гараже" (Question 5 (ii)) and "зонтик" (Question 5 (iii)) to guide them to the correct answers.

Question 8

Question 8 was also multiple choice, parts a (i, ii and iii) proving more accessible. As the level of English on the paper became more sophisticated, so did answering prove more challenging for a small number of candidates and part b appeared to be answered less well. Again, candidates needed to deduce the correct answers from what they heard.

Question 10

Question 10 was testing candidates at Grade 9, therefore going beyond the old A* equivalent. Candidates can therefore expect the linguistic content and level of vocabulary - including words which are not on the vocabulary list - to be more sophisticated and challenging than in previous tests. The emphasis is on drawing inference from a relatively long extract and candidates are advised not to approach this question as a translation exercise. The level of sophistication of language in both the Russian text and the English statements was reflected in the results produced by candidates. A majority of candidates found it difficult to link statement 10 (i) (c) "A good location is beneficial to character development", to "помогает поддерживать чувство независимости". Given the level of difficulty demanded of a Grade 9 question, a majority of candidates coped well, with few gaining no marks at all

Questions 6, 7 and 9

As always, the open-ended questions requiring answers in English proved a good discriminator. There were some excellent performances from more successful candidates on these questions, but they proved difficult for less successful candidates. Candidates' responses often indicated they had understood the gist of the extracts, although lack of attention to detail cost candidates marks. Only the most successful candidates were able to supply the detail and accuracy required at this level.

The incline in difficulty was evident. All candidates (provided they had answered in English) scored on all three questions and it is not possible to say with certainty, which of the questions proved most challenging. Where candidates did not understand the extract or the question, a majority of candidates either looked for single lexical items that might fit the question or came up with answers that weren't in the extract. Some common items of vocabulary were not known or confused with other words. It should be borne in mind that Question 7 targets Grade 7 and Question 9 Grades 8/9, however, all candidates should be encouraged to attempt all questions. They should attempt, insofar as it is reasonable to do so, to provide plausible answers to the questions set. It should also be noted that although candidates do not need to answer exactly in the words used in the mark scheme, their answers do have to be unequivocally correct. Some candidates had obviously understood words from the text but had expressed their answers in such a way that they were ambiguous or clearly incorrect.

In Question 6, which was generally very well answered, "lesson" could not be accepted for "лекции", nor "programmers" for "программисты". A number of candidates did not grasp that the idea of combining two skills was attractive to Petya (Question 6d) and also could not be credited with "learning" as opposed to "working" with Japanese.

Question 7 had a number of familiar topics at its root, but lack of attention to detail and lack of precision again cost candidates marks. In Question 7a candidates were required to convey that it was cheaper to get to Germany than to get to any other European country but confusing use of English prepositions led some candidates to imply that in all European countries Germany was the cheapest to get to, for which marks could not be awarded. Question 7b posed few problems but in Question 7c marks were lost by candidates who answered that Alyosha wanted a career WITH medicine as this was deemed ambiguous.

In Question 9, part (a) proved the most demanding question on the paper, with relatively few correct answers. Candidates needed to convey that Margarita REPRESENTED Russian business. The remainder of this question was answered very well although some candidates did confuse 15 and 19 (answered the wrong was round) and used roubles, instead of dollars in their answer to Question 9b (iii).

Advice to centres

For this paper, candidates need to:

- carefully read the questions
- be able to understand the questions in Russian and look for linguistic clues
- recognise familiar language in unfamiliar contexts

- listen to the whole rather than focus in on individual items of vocabulary
- recognise the use of negation
- recognise the use of tenses and time indicators
- pay attention to detail, give full rather than partial answers
- have a sound knowledge of vocabulary
- express themselves clearly and unambiguously when writing in English and relate their answers to what is heard in the extract
- apply logic
- read over and correct their answers

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