Examiners' Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Russian (1RU0)

Paper 1H: Listening and Understanding in Russian

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Introduction

This qualification is divided into Foundation and Higher papers. There are 10 questions at Higher Level, covering grades 3-9 and the paper is worth 50 marks, (25% of the overall grade). The number of open response tasks in English has increased to 3, worth a total of 20 marks. There are also two questions in the target language accounting for 10 marks, previously there were no questions in the target language. There are also topic areas which appeared for examination for the first time in 2019, such as the global dimension and voluntary work. The content of the 2022 paper had been somewhat modified to take into account the possible effects Covid had had on teaching and learning over the past two years. For example, non MCV words were removed from the Transcript.

Generally, candidates were well prepared for the relatively new test types and topics, but some requirements proved challenging for some candidates and the open response questions, requiring answers in English, proved daunting for less successful candidates and in some cases, heritage 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. Many 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, many candidates understood enough, and felt confident enough, to attempt the whole paper, but there were blank answers for the whole or parts of questions 6, 7 and 9 (open response questions in English). There were some candidates who were unable to cope with the demands of the paper - the increase in difficulty as they progressed through led some to give up. These candidates would have possibly benefited from taking the Foundation rather than the Higher paper.

Comments on individual questions

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 better, but errors made were similar to those on the Foundation level paper.

Questions 1 and 2 were in the target language. Candidates were generally more successful in answering Question 1, with 1 (a) and (d) being the most commonly correct and 1 (b) being the most challenging. A surprising number of candidates (at both Foundation and Higher), opted for "фильмы" rather than "шоу" to answer (b) in spite of the correct answer being a cognate and the references to "театр" and "концерты" in the recording. Many were unable to use linguistic clues or context to arrive at the correct answer.

Question 2 proved more challenging, this task required candidates to process what they heard, understand inference and match this with a description of future plans, inserting a proper name to complete the answer. A small number of candidates had clearly not understood the rubric for these two questions and attempted to answer either with words outside the choices they were given or in English.

Question 3 proved accessible for most candidates. Parts 3(iii) and 3(iv) 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 included two inference questions. Most candidates were successful in correctly identifying at least two of the answers.

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 recognition of a single word will be needed to steer them to the correct answer.

Question 8 was also multiple choice and relied on candidates' ability to understand inference, this time for all answers. Key clues to the answers included, Question 8a (i), "чтобы объяснить, почему...", Question 8a (ii) "Сначала люди не понимали.... а сейчас..." Question 8a (iii), "В будущем.... меньше одежды" In Question 8b (i), candidates needed to link "у меня мало свободного времени", with the concept of leading a busy life. Similarly, in 8b (ii) inference had to be drawn from "приглашали соседей к нам чай пить" to guide the candidate to the fact that she got to know her neighbours better.

Question 10 was testing candidates at Grade 9, therefore going beyond the 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. However, for June 2022, all non MCV words were removed from the text. The emphasis is on drawing inference from a relatively long extract and candidates are advised not to approach this question as a translation exercise. Part (ii) was answered more successfully than Part (i), with only the best candidates arriving at Question 10 (i) A being a correct answer, from the understanding of "он редко спрашивает.... но делает всё, чтобы я забыла о проблемах" inferring that Ivan is sensitive.

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

The incline in difficulty was evident - the majority of candidates attempted and scored on **Question 6**, but in **Question 7** and **Question 9** there were more blank spaces and some candidates failed to score. Where candidates did not understand the extract, many either looked for single lexical items that might fit the question or came up with answers that were not 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.

In Question 6 (a) most candidates supplied the correct answer. In 6 (b) the key word was "любимых". Question 6 (c) the key word, "выставка" was not widely known, and a number of candidates assumed the answer has something to do with the history of the library. This word caused problems for heritage candidates too, many of whom struggled to render it into good, unambiguous English or mistakenly used a similar sounding, but incorrect word, such as "expedition". Candidates could not be awarded marks for Question 6 (d) if their answer was too general, i.e, they did not specify what the older and younger generations would get out of the project.

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. Candidates had two opportunities to find a correct answer for 7 (b) but some lacked logic and answered that no knowledge of Russian was necessary. 7 (d) was generally well answered, although again, there was some confusion in meaning of the English "fun" and "funny" – only the former could gain the mark.

Question 9, targeting Grades 8/9, proved to be a very good discriminator, as accuracy and attention to detail were the key to scoring well. "Hobbies/interests" or a similar word were required in addition to "supported" to gain the mark on 9a (i) and many lost a mark on 9a (ii) by missing "дальше", which implied "continued" to study. 9a (iii) was a chance for candidates working at this level to show their ability, as a large number of candidates clearly made a guess that Darina was a "good player".

Question 9, part (b) proved more demanding than part (a), as only the most successful candidates paid enough attention to detail to score both marks on the two-mark questions. The text was relatively long and contained a number of cognates and semi cognates - "позитивнее", "профессия", "спортсменок", "супер", and so on. There were also many familiar items of vocabulary which were perhaps being used in an unfamiliar context. A small number of words and phrases seemed to falsely sign post answers – in 9b (i) some candidates assumed "смотрят на" implied watching football, rather than how football was looked upon and "много команд" was taken to mean there were commanders, or someone giving lots of commands, in answer to Q9b (ii).

In part 9(b) (i) the best candidates were able to recognise "позитивнее" as a comparative and understand the need to supply how football was viewed compared to in Russia. Part (ii) was generally not well answered, as many candidates either ignored one part of the answer completely or struggled to express the idea of Russia lacking professional players. In such instances, credit was given where possible, but answers must be unambiguous. 9b (iii) was generally well answered. In 9b(iv) most candidates understood that the answer concerned football facilities for women/girls, but did not include they would be free, which lost them the mark.

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