

Examiners' Report /
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2012

International GCSE English as a
Second Language (4ES0) Paper 02

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Examiner Report

The listening paper is divided into three sections. In this session, the first was a monologue by the principal of a school welcoming students back at the start of the new term. Candidates were required to complete notes based on the information provided. In the second part, the candidates listened to a student and his teacher discussing a food and technology project. Candidates were required to answer multiple choice questions and label a diagram. In the third part, candidates listened to a monologue on urban foxes. They were required to complete summary sentences based on the talk.

Candidate responses

Generally candidates did well or very well on this paper, although each section of the paper presented challenges for the candidates.

Detailed comments

There were two general types of questions on this paper: multiple choice and text completion.

Multiple choice (Part 2)

Candidates followed the instructions given in the rubric for this type of question.

Text completion (Parts 1, 2 and 3)

Generally these questions were well attempted, although not all candidates adhered to the word limit given in the rubric.

Two issues arose out of these types of questions which require candidates to provide the word or words for the answers themselves.

Spelling

This proved to be a problem for some candidates. The general rule applied during the marking was that if the answer affected communication, candidates were not awarded a mark. Candidates were not penalised for misspelling a word if it sounded like the target word. For example, Q7 (answer football shirts) a

spelling such as 'football shirtes' was accepted. However, if the word sounded like a different word or was a different word, e.g. football shorts, candidates were not awarded a mark.

Grammar

In a few questions, for example Q23, candidates were required to complete a sentence using the correct grammatical form. Although these forms were given in the recording, some candidates made errors in their answers.

Comments on sections of the paper

The paper is devised to become increasingly difficult, although in this session Part 2 proved to be the most accessible section for candidates.

Part 1

Part 1 required candidates to listen for specific information such as numbers or high-frequency vocabulary items e.g. tennis and football. The most able candidates found this section straightforward and scored well. Less able candidates had some difficulty with some of the questions in this section, particularly questions 1 and 5. There were a number of candidates who did not adhere to the word limit (three words maximum in this instance). It is important for candidates to follow these instructions as they were not awarded a mark if they did not.

Part 2

Candidates generally performed well in this section, particularly in the diagram labelling activity. Less able ones struggled with this section, however. There were a very few number of candidates who provided multiple answers for some questions, and did, in consequence, lose marks.

Part 3

This section required candidates to complete sentences by providing the correct word or words (a maximum of four in this instance). This was the most difficult part of the paper as candidates needed to process the information they heard more in order to provide the answer. As in Part 1, a number of candidates did not adhere to the word limit. Less able candidates had the most difficulty with this section and tended to score few, if any, marks in this section. The most able candidates could identify the correct words and provide grammatically correct answers.

Advice to centres

It is recommended that candidates listen to a wide range of different types of texts such as current affairs, TV and radio programmes in order to familiarise themselves with a wide range of topics.

Centres should prepare candidates for the listening examination by familiarising them with the style of the test and with the types of questions they can expect to find on the paper.

Candidates should make good use of the time before the tape is played to predict possible answers and consider the context when providing their answers.

Candidates should be advised to follow the instructions in the rubric when answering the questions and to adhere strictly to the word limit. Candidates should consider the grammatical fit of their answers in sentence completion questions.

Candidates should consider the spelling of words when providing their answers.

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