

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

International GCSE Greek (4MG0)
Paper 1

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General Comments

The majority of candidates who sat the June 2011 examination in Modern Greek performed very well and provided competent translations, both from English into Greek and vice versa. Question 3 provoked relevant and interesting accounts and there was evidence of good language awareness, appropriate application of structures and broad range of vocabulary, in most essays.

This time too, there was noticeable improvement regarding rubric and wordage restrictions, as the vast majority of candidates adhered to the rubric. A small number of candidates failed to adhere to the conventions of orderly and clear presentation and produced essays which were hardly legible. This delayed and complicated the marking process considerably.

Comments on individual questions are as follows:

Question 1

Many candidates gained good marks in this section. They produced competent translations, with few grammatical inaccuracies. Despite evidence of occasional errors, the translations usually read well and communicated the sense of the source text correctly. The challenges which confronted a small number of candidates were mainly restricted to a few words (option, work experience, customer) and did not affect the communicative efficiency of the translations seriously.

Some linguistic structures which posed a challenge related to the translation of gerunds such as "working" and "finding". Many candidates opted for the Greek participles «δουλεύοντας», «βρίσκοντας», which were incorrect choices, as the Greek present participle cannot behave as a noun and cannot take the position of a subject in the sentence.

Questions 2a and 2b

Many responses showed evidence of fluency and satisfactory awareness of grammar and syntax.

Many responses to questions 2(a) and 2 (b) showed fluent command of vocabulary and idiom, good language awareness and consistently good application of the grammatical system.

With regard to vocabulary and structures, the following items seemed to pose some difficulty.

- A surprisingly large number of candidates failed to translate «μελέτη», «έρευνα» and «προτιμήσεις», in 2(a). Whereas some managed to convey communication efficiently by substituting "studying" for "lessons" and "classes", "research" and "preferences" often eluded even some of the more able candidates.

2(b) did not seem to contain such lexical challenges and where inability to translate a word occurred, it mostly related to the word «απαραίτητα».

- Syntax and word order relating to the position of subject and verb, in particular, posed some challenges in both 2(a) and 2 (b). On several occasions, word order in the source texts was conveyed in the target texts, without concern for the conventions of English syntax. The following sentences constitute frequent examples of such occurrences:
"finish lessons and exams" instead of "lessons and exams finish also" – 2(a)
"live 600 people in the island of ..." instead of "approximately 600 people live on the small island of .."
"before is taken the big decision" instead of "before the big decision is taken"
- Certain adverbs (περίπου, φέτος, καθόλου) and conjunctions (αλλά και, μόλις) were often completely ignored and as a result the meaning conveyed was significantly or slightly different to the one the source text conveyed
- Frequent misspellings occurred in relation to the following:
 - Through
 - Island
 - Decision
 - Discussions
- Quite often candidates were not familiar with the English equivalent of the phrase «κλείνω διακοπές» and wrongly opted for the literal translation "close a holiday".
- At times, the comparison in the last sentence of 2(a) was ignored. Even though the phrase was generally communicated with some degree of success, failure to indicate the comparison by saying that "67% will book their holiday over the internet, because this way it is faster as well as cheaper" took away an essential detail.

Question 3

Candidates used a wide range of vocabulary and employed complex structures and idiom in order to respond to the question. There was an obvious preference for the topics of "Joy and Sadness" and "The role of the Media", as well as for the creative topic about a serious dilemma (3e). A small number of candidates failed to address the role of Media in their country and wrote generic and extremely descriptive responses about what constitutes "media" or about technology in general and its significance for youth today. Unfortunately such responses failed to gain adequate or any credit.

Another case where the question was misunderstood related to 3(e). Many candidates were not aware of the meaning of the word dilemma and wrote about a problem they had.

A frequent example had to do with an argument with a friend, a death in the family or the parents' divorce. Candidates, in these essays, wrote emotional accounts about their predicament but did not seek advice

regarding a difficult choice between options. These essays failed to gain adequate or any credit.

Responses to 3(a) and 3(b) were generally successful. Few marks were lost when candidates argued indirectly in 3(b) and wrote about the traits/actions which **do not** constitute a good citizen. In 3(a), responses which were not entirely purposeful and pertinent offered very florid accounts of childhood in general, avoiding to personalise it and narrate specific events that marked one's growing up.

There was a noticeable pattern of candidates sticking to the prescribed word limit; this was very welcome.

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